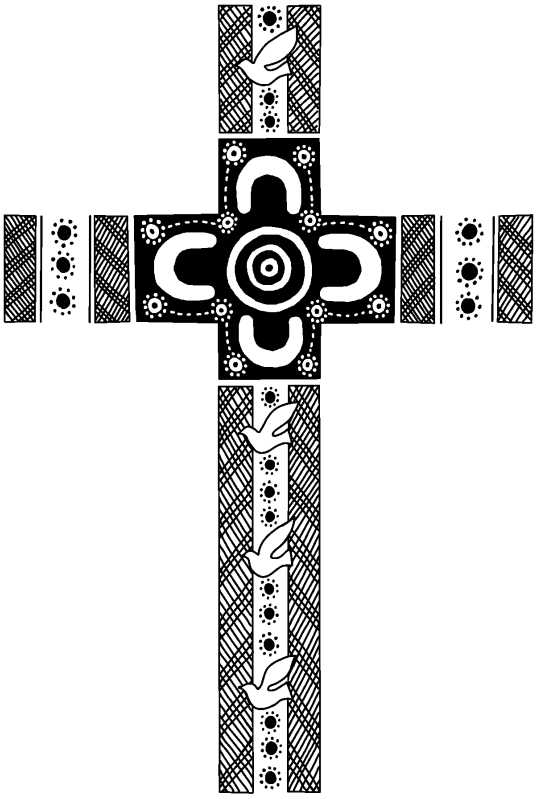
Holy Bible

Plain English Version



Portions of the Old Testament and New Testament

Holy Bible

Plain English Version

Portions of the Old Testament and New Testament
translated for speakers of
Australian Indigenous languages

BibleLeague®
INTERNATIONAL

Holy Bible (Plain English Version)
2024 expanded edition

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The artwork on the cover is by Andrew Wanimilil Malibirr, from Ramingining. Used with permission.
The whole artwork, in the shape of a cross, is a picture of Jesus's sacrifice. The bit in the middle represents the Last Supper, with Jesus and his disciples sitting around a fire, symbolic of the Holy Spirit. The cross hatching is a symbol of the water and blood that flowed out of Jesus's body. And the small dots are from the Ganalbingu people's story of the flying fox, and here represent Jesus's blood taking away the sin of the world. The picture uses art styles from Arnhem Land and Central Australia, reminding us that Jesus's story is for everyone.

Other illustration acknowledgements are on page 592.

ISBN 978-0-6451735-1-2

The different parts of this Bible are on these pages

About this Plain English Version Bible 5
List of maps 7

Old Testament

The first stories about God and his people (Genesis) 11
Stories about the men called Samuel, Saul, and David (Parts of 1 Samuel) 120
The story about the big boss called David (Parts of 2 Samuel) 148
Songs and poems (Psalms) 160
The story about Jonah (Jonah) 168

New Testament

Some important parts of Matthew's good news about Jesus (Matthew) 177
Mark wrote this good news about Jesus (Mark) 211
Some important parts of Luke's good news about Jesus (Luke) 260
John wrote this good news about Jesus (John) 297
The followers of Jesus did great things (Acts) 350
Some important parts of Paul's letter to the Christians at Rome (Romans) 423
Paul's 1st letter to the Christians at Corinth (1 Corinthians) 443
Paul's letter to the Christians at Galatia (Galatians) 474
Paul's letter to the Christians at Ephesus (Ephesians) 485
Paul's letter to the Christians at Philippi (Philippians) 496
Paul's letter to the Christians at Colossae (Colossians) 504
Paul's 1st letter to the Christians at Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians) 512
Paul's 2nd letter to the Christians at Thessalonica (2 Thessalonians) 519
Paul's 1st letter to Timothy (1 Timothy) 524
Paul's 2nd letter to Timothy (2 Timothy) 534
Paul's letter to Titus (Titus) 541
Paul's letter to Philemon (Philemon) 545
The letter that James wrote (James) 548
The 1st letter that Peter wrote (1 Peter) 557
The 2nd letter that Peter wrote (2 Peter) 567
The letter that Jude wrote (Jude) 573

More information about this translation 577

Read or listen

on your smartphone or computer



Plain English Version Bible
app on the Google Play Store

Online at
aboriginalbibles.org.au

YouVersion Bible app

Google Play Store

Apple App Store

About this Plain English Version Bible

This is a translation of the Holy Bible for Indigenous Australians that grew up talking their own language, and then later they learned to talk English. We wanted to make the message of the Holy Bible clear for them, so we used the plain sort of English that they use and understand. That is why we call it the *Plain English Version*.

We want to thank all the Indigenous people that helped us with this translation.

About the Plain English Version (PEV)

Thousands of years ago God got men to write his message for people. Those men did not write it in English. Most of them wrote it in their own language, or in a language that lots of people knew at that time.

The 1st part of the Bible is called the Old Testament, and most of it was in the Hebrew language. The writing in the Hebrew language looked like this,

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ

That is the Hebrew for,

First of all, a long time ago, God made everything.

The 2nd part of the Bible is called the New Testament, and it was in the Greek language. The writing in the Greek language at that time looked like this,

ΑΡΧΗΤΟΥΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΥΙΗΣΟΥΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΥΙΟΥΘΕΟΥ

That is the Greek for,

This story is good news. It is all about Jesus Christ, God's son. The story starts like this.

Over the years a lot of people studied those languages and found out how to understand them properly, and they wrote books about it. So we used those books to help us with this translation.

We took 2 steps when translating the PEV.

1. We tried to properly understand the message that the writers wrote.
2. Then we tried to write that same message in plain English.

We know we can't always find a word in plain English that means the same thing as a word in the writer's language, so we often used more English words to make the passage mean the right thing. We reckon it does not matter how many words we use, so long as it has the same message that the writer wrote. We explain this a lot more on page 577 to page 581 at the back of this Bible.

Pictures and maps

Everything in this book happened a long time ago, so today nobody properly knows what those people or places looked like, but we put some pictures in this book to help the people reading it get some idea about how things looked.

We also put in some maps for people to see where the different places are.

We got the pictures and maps from other people, and they said we can put them in this Bible. We have a list of all those people on page 592.

Sorry, this is only some parts of the Holy Bible

We know that all of the Holy Bible is important, because it is God's Word. It has his messages to everybody in the world. But it will take us a long time to translate all of it into plain English. It has taken us years to translate this much of the Holy Bible, and it will probably take us a lot more years to translate the rest. So we are printing this much now, so that people can read this much of it, and they can learn what God has to say to them. We don't want to make everyone wait until we translate all the rest of the Holy Bible.

There are 26 books here in this Bible. Some of them have some parts missing because we have not yet translated those parts. Wherever there is a bit missing, we put a note in brackets *(like this)* to explain why it is missing. For example, at the end of Matthew chapter 18, you will see this note, *(We have not yet translated chapter 19. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 10:1-31.)*

In the New Testament there are 4 books that tell us about Jesus when he was here on the earth. They tell us about the things that he did and the important things that he said. The men that wrote those books were Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. None of those men wrote about all the things that Jesus did and said, but sometimes they wrote about the same things. This Bible has each of those books, but there are some parts of Matthew's book and Luke's book that we have not yet translated. We translated the stories in Matthew's book and Luke's book that are not in Mark's book or John's book, so this Bible has all the stories about Jesus and the important things he said.

Most English Bibles write the names of books in a short way. For example, they call one of the books *The Acts of the Apostles*, or sometimes just *Acts*. But a lot of those names are not very clear, so we have given them names that are more easy to understand. For example, instead of *Acts* we called that book *The followers of Jesus did great things*. Then we put in something to show the name that other Bibles have for that book. So at the start of that book, under its name, we put *(The book in the Holy Bible called **Acts**)*.

In each book we use normal letters, that stand up straight, for the bits that the writer wrote. But we have also put other words into each book, that the writer did not write. So, as much as possible, we use sloping letters, *like these letters*, for the words that we put in. Those words are the headings, and parts called *About this book*, and that sort of thing. And in some places we use those sloping letters for names, and for the meanings of names, in the bit that the writer wrote. The sloping letters are there to help people understand what they read in this book.

We hope God teaches you a lot as you read this Bible.

PEV Translation Team

Maps are on these pages

A map that shows where Abram went.....29
A map of Israel country when David was alive 121
A map of Israel country when Jesus was on earth 179
A map of where Paul went the 1st time he left Antioch..... 380
A map of where Paul went the 2nd time he left Antioch..... 389
A map of where Paul went the 3rd time he left Antioch 396
A map of where they took Paul from Jerusalem to Rome 417
A big map of some of the places in the Bible..... inside back cover

Old Testament

The first stories about God and his people

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **Genesis**)*

About these stories

This is the 1st book in the Holy Bible, called Genesis. *That word* Genesis *means* start. *It is the book that tells us how God started everything that is here today.*

Genesis was in God's book that the Jewish people had before Jesus came to this earth. That book is now the first part of the Holy Bible, called the Old Testament.

Genesis is a very old book. The Jewish people say that Moses wrote it about 3,400 years ago. He was their leader at that time.

Genesis is a very important book for us today. It tells us that God made everything. He made the world and everything in it, and he made people. Genesis tells us that people went wrong, but God was still good to them. God picked a man called Abraham, and God promised to use Abraham's family to do good things for all the people in the world. This book has lots of stories about the people in Abraham's family.

Genesis shows us that God is really good and really powerful. He will always look after the people that trust him and do what he says.

Chapter 1

God made everything

1 First of all, a long time ago, God made
everything. He made the sky, and he made
the earth. He made all the things that are
everywhere. 2 The earth didn't have any
shape. It didn't have anything. It was covered
with deep water. Everything was dark. It
was dark all over the water, but God's spirit
moved around on the top of the water.

Day number 1

3 God said, "I want light." Straight away,
light was shining everywhere. * 4 God looked
at it, and he saw that it was good. So God
split up the light and the dark. 5 He called
the light *day time*, and he called the dark
night time.

After that all happened, there was night time and there was morning time. That was day number 1.

Day number 2

6 Then God said, "I want something to split
the water in half." * 7 So God made the sky
to split the water in half. God left some
of the water up high, and he left some of
it on the ground, and he put the sky in
the middle. 8 And when God made it, he
called it *sky*.

After that all happened, there was night time and there was morning time. That was day number 2.

---

* **1:3** 2 Corinthians 4:6 * **1:6** 2 Peter 3:5

Day number 3

9 Then God said, "I want all the water that is on the ground to come together to one place, and I want dry ground to come up." Then the water moved to the places where God wanted it, and the dry ground came up. 10 God called the dry ground *land*, and he called that water *sea*. God looked at the land and the sea, and he saw that everything was good.

11 Then God said, "I want the land to grow all sorts of plants on the earth. I want plants with seeds, and trees with fruit that have seeds inside." And God made it happen. 12 So all sorts of plants grew on the land, plants with seeds, and trees with fruit that have seeds inside. God looked at all those plants, and he saw that everything was good.

13 After that all happened, there was night time and there was morning time. That was day number 3.

Day number 4

14 Then God said, "I want some lights in the sky. I want the lights to split up the day time from the night time. They will show the time. They will show the season, and the time of the year, and the time of day. 15 I will put these lights in the sky to shine on the earth." So God did that. 16 He made 2 big lights. He made one light brighter than the other light. That bright light shines in the day time. We call it the *sun*. The other light shines in the night time. We call it the *moon*. And God made the stars too.

17 God put all those lights in the sky to shine on the earth. 18 One light shines during the day, and another light shines at night. Those lights split the day time from the night time. God looked at those lights, and he saw that everything was good.

19 After that all happened, there was night time and there was morning time. That was day number 4.

Day number 5

20 Then God said, "I want the water to be full of fish and all sorts of living things. And I want birds that fly around in the sky, above the earth." 21 So God made all the different sorts of things that live and move in the sea. He made the great big sea animals and a lot of other things that live in the sea. And God made all the different sorts of birds too. God looked at all those things, and he saw that everything was good.



God made the fish and the birds

22 God was good to them, and he said to them, "All of you living things will have lots of young ones, so that the sea will be full of fish, and lots of birds will fly around everywhere."

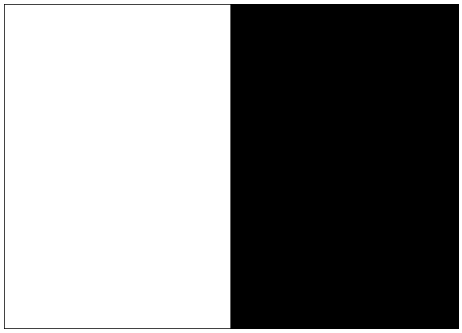
23 After that all happened, there was night time and there was morning time. That was day number 5.

Day number 6

24 Then God said, "I want the land to be full of all different sorts of animals. I want animals that are wild, and animals that are not wild. I want lizards, and insects,

God made everything like this

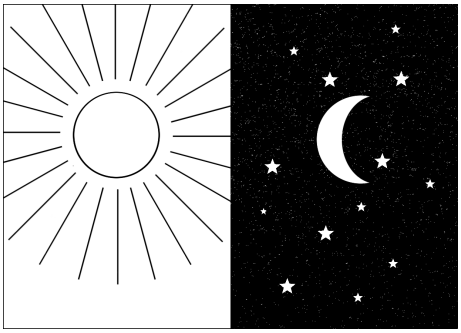
Day 1



God made day time *And God made night time*

Day time and night time

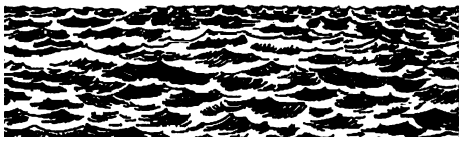
Day 4



God made the sun to shine in the day time *And God made the moon and stars to shine in the night time*

Day 2





God made the sky and left some water up high and some water on the ground

Water and sky

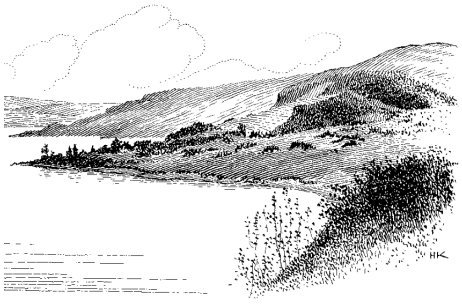
Day 5



God made things that live in the water and birds that fly in the sky

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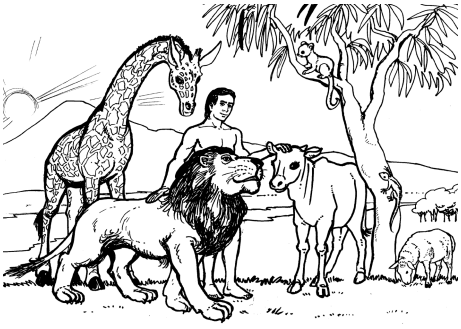
Day 3



God made dry land come up and grow all sorts of plants

Land

Day 6



God made people and animals that live on the land

and other things that crawl around on the ground." And God made it happen just like that. 25 God made all the different sorts of animals, the animals that are wild and the animals that are not wild. And he made all the different sorts of lizards, and insects, and other things that crawl around on the ground. God looked at all those things, and he saw that everything was good.

26 Then God said, "We are going to make people. They will be like us. They will be boss over the fish and everything that lives in the sea, and they will be boss over the birds that fly in the sky, and they will be boss over all the animals that are on the land, the animals that are wild, and the animals that are not wild, and all the lizards, and insects, and other things that crawl around on the ground. People will be boss over all of them."*

27 So God made people to be like himself. He made them man and woman.*

28 God was good to them, and he said to them, "You will have lots of kids, and the earth will be full of people. You people will be boss over all the earth. You will be boss over the fish in the sea, and you will be boss over the birds in the sky, and you will be boss over all the animals that live on the land."*



God made people and all the animals

29 Then God said to them, "Look, I made lots of food plants for you. I made plants that have seeds in them, and trees with fruit on them too. You can eat the seeds from those plants and the fruit from those trees. That bush tucker will be your food. 30 And I made green plants too, for all the animals of the earth to eat, and for all the birds of the sky to eat, and for all the lizards, and insects, and other things that crawl around on the ground to eat too. Everything that breathes air can eat those green plants."

31 God looked at everything he made, and he saw that all of it was very good.

After that all happened, there was night time and there was morning time. That was day number 6.

Chapter 2

Day number 7

1 God finished making everything. He finished making the sky, and the earth, and everything that is on the earth too. 2 After God finished all that, it was day number 7, and God rested on that day.* 3 So God made day number 7 a good and special day. He said, "I've finished making everything now, and I'm resting on day number 7. So day number 7 is a special day."*

At first everything was different

4 This story is about the time when God made the earth and the sky. 5 At first, God didn't send any rain on the earth, and there were no people to make the ground right for the plants. So nothing was growing on the earth at that time. 6 Water used to come up

* **1:26** 1 Corinthians 11:7 * **1:27** Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6 * **1:27-28** Genesis 5:1-2 * **2:2** Hebrews 4:4, 10
* **2:3** Exodus 20:11

from under the ground and wet the top of all the ground.

God made the first man

7 God took some dirt, and he made a man out of it. Then God breathed into the man's nose, and God's breath gave him life. So that man became a living person. *

The garden in Eden

8 Then God made a garden in a place called Eden. It was in the east part of the land. And God put the man in that garden. 9 And God made some trees grow there in that garden. They were pretty, and they had fruit that was good to eat. And God put 2 special trees in the middle of the garden. If people eat the fruit of one of those trees, they will stay alive. And if they eat the fruit from the other tree, they will know if the things they do are good, or if they are bad. *

10 A river started in Eden, and it watered the garden. Then that river flowed out and split up into 4 rivers. 11 The 1st river was called Pishon. It flowed around the land called Havilah. In that country there was lots of gold. 12 It was really good gold. And there were pretty stones and good perfumes there too.

13 The 2nd river was called Gihon. It flowed all around the country called Cush.

14 The 3rd river was called Tigris. It flowed east of the country called Ashur.

The 4th river was called Euphrates.

15 God put the man into the garden in Eden and gave him some work to do. He had to look after the garden and make sure all the plants grew strong and healthy.

The special tree

16 And God told the man, "You can eat fruit from the trees in this garden. 17 There is only one tree that you can't eat its fruit. You can't eat the fruit from that tree that lets you know if the things you do are good, or if they are bad. I'm telling you, if you eat any fruit from that tree, you will die, for sure."

God made the first woman

18 And God said, "It is not good for this man to be by himself. I'm going to make somebody else to be a mate for the man, somebody that will be good for him."

19 And God made all the animals and birds out of dirt from the ground, and he brought them to the man. God wanted the man to give all the animals and birds their names. The man could say any name he wanted for each one, and those names stayed with them. 20 So the man gave each animal a name. He named all the wild animals, and all the animals that are not wild, and all the birds. That man's own name was *Adam*. (That name means *man*.) There were lots of animals and birds, but none of them were the right sort of mate that was good for Adam.

21 So God made the man go to sleep. It was a really strong deep sleep. And while he was asleep, God took out one of his rib bones. Then God closed up the place where that rib was. 22 Then God used the man's rib bone and made a woman from it. After the man woke up, God took the woman over to the man. 23 The man looked at that woman, and he said, "This is really good. Now I have a mate. God took out a part of my body, and he made it into a mate for me. Yes, he used my rib bone to make her. God made her out of a man's body, so I'm going to call her *woman*."

24 That's how God made a woman, he made her out of a man's body. That is the reason why a man will leave his mother and father

* **2:7** 1 Corinthians 15:45 * **2:9** Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14

and marry a woman. The man and his wife will join with each other, and their bodies will be like one body.*

25 The man and his wife didn't have any clothes on. They were both naked, but they didn't feel any shame.

Chapter 3

The snake tricked the woman

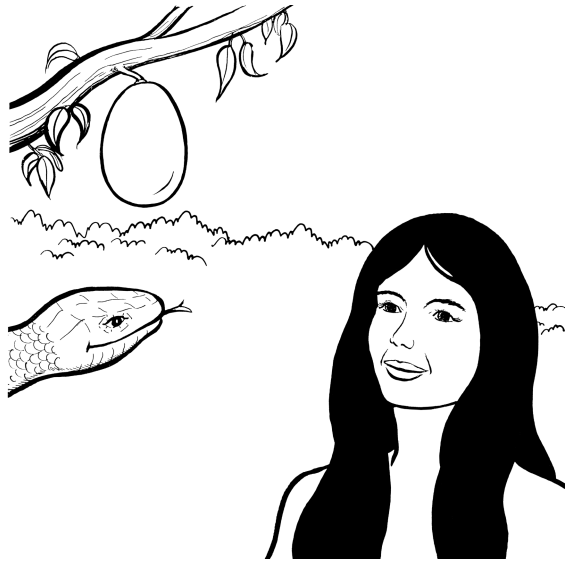
1 You know, God made lots of animals, but the snake was more smart than all the other animals. He was really smart and tricky. One day, the snake went to the woman and said to her, "Did God say, 'You can't eat fruit from any of the trees in the garden'? Is that true?"*

2 The woman said, "No, that's not true. We can eat fruit from those trees there in the garden. 3 God said that there is only one tree that we can't eat from. We can't eat any fruit that comes from one of the trees that is in the middle of the garden. God will not even let us touch that tree. He said that if we eat fruit from that tree, we will die."

4 The snake said to the woman, "You will not die. 5 God knows what will happen if you eat fruit from that tree. He knows that if you eat fruit from that tree, you will know more things, like God himself. You will know if the things you do are good, or if they are bad."

The man and the woman did the wrong thing

6 The woman looked at that tree. It was pretty, and the fruit on that tree looked really good to eat, and she reckoned that if she eats some of that fruit, she will think properly. So the woman got some of that fruit, and she ate it, and she gave some of it to her husband, and he ate that fruit too. 7 Straight away, the man and the woman knew more things. They knew that they were naked, and they



The woman believed the snake, and she thought the fruit on the tree looked good, so she ate some

felt shame. They wanted to make clothes to cover up their naked bodies, so they picked some big leaves from a tree and sewed the leaves together to make some clothes.

The man and the woman tried to hide from God

8 Later on, in the cool part of the day, the man and the woman heard God walking in the garden. So they got behind some trees in the garden to hide from God.

9 God called out to the man, "Where are you?"

10 The man said, "I heard you walking in the garden, and I was frightened, because I'm naked. So I hid from you."

11 God asked the man, "How do you know that you are naked? Did you eat some of that fruit from the tree that I told you not to eat from?"

12 The man said, "Yes, but it was the woman that you put here with me, she gave me fruit from that tree, so I ate it."

---

* **2:24** Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7-8; 1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31 * **3:1** Revelation 12:9; 20:2

13 Then God said to the woman, "Why did you do that bad thing?"*

The woman said, "That snake tricked me. That's the reason why I ate that fruit."

God judged the snake

14 Then God said, "Snake, you did the wrong thing, so I will curse you. I will not curse the other animals, but I will curse all you snakes. From now on, you are going to crawl around on your bellies. You will always be down on the ground in the dirt. 15 The woman's kids will hate you, and so will all their kids, and all the people that will be born later on. People will always be your enemies. And Snake, your kids will hate the woman's kids, and so will all the snake mob that will be born later on. You snake mob will always be the people's enemies. They will hit your heads, and you will bite their feet."*

God judged the woman

16 Then God said to the woman, "I'm going to give you a lot of trouble. You are going to have a lot of pain whenever you have a baby. It will hurt you a lot. But you will really want to have a husband, and your husband will be your boss."

God judged the man

17-18 Then God said to the man, "I told you not to eat any fruit from one of the trees in the middle of the garden, but you listened to your wife, and you ate that fruit. So I will curse the ground and make it bad for you. It will never be easy for you to get your food from the plants in the ground any more. The ground will have lots of rubbish plants and prickles in it.* 19 You will work very hard to get your food, so you will get hot, and you will sweat a lot. And later on, you will die. I made you from the dirt, and after you die, your body will turn back into dirt."

God hunted Adam and Eve out of Eden

20 Adam's wife was the first woman, and all the people in the world came from her. So Adam gave her the name *Eve*. That name means *somebody that gives life*. 21 God made some clothes from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

22 After that, God said, "These people are like us now. They know what things are good, and what things are bad. We have to stop them, so they will not eat fruit from the other tree in the middle of the garden, the tree that makes people stay alive. If they eat that fruit, they will live for ever."* 23 So God hunted them out of the garden. To get food, they had to dig the ground and grow plants. You know, God made that man out of the ground, and after they left the garden, that man had to dig that same ground.

24 After God hunted them out of the garden, he made sure that they couldn't get back. He put some of his angel workers as guards just outside the east side of the garden in Eden. And he put a long knife there with them. That knife kept on moving around all the time, and it looked like it was on fire. Those angel workers and that long knife, they kept everyone away from that tree that makes people stay alive.

Chapter 4

Cain and Abel gave things to God

1 Adam and Eve slept together, like a man does with his wife, and then Eve had a baby boy. Eve said, "God has helped me make another human." So she gave him the name *Cain*. That name means *make*. 2 After that, they had another son, and she gave him the name *Abel*.

---

* **3:13** 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:14 * **3:15** Revelation 12:17 * **3:17-18** Hebrews 6:8 * **3:22** Revelation 22:14

Abel grew up, and he looked after sheep and goats all the time. Cain grew up, and he became a gardener. He dug the ground and grew plants for people to eat.

3 One day, Cain brought a gift to give to God. He brought some food from his garden. 4 And Abel brought a gift to give to God too. He gave God some of his young sheep and goats. They were the first ones born to their mothers. Abel brought the best bits of meat from those sheep and goats. And God was happy with Abel, and with his gift.* 5 But God was not happy with Cain, or with his gift. Then Cain got very angry. His face changed, and he looked very sad.

6 God said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why do you look sad? 7 If you do the right thing, I will be happy with you. But, if you don't do the right thing, look out, you will always want to do more bad things. But you have to control yourself and stop doing bad things."

8 After that, Cain went to his brother Abel, and Cain said, "Let's go for a walk." So Cain and Abel went out bush together. While they were there, Cain hit his brother, and killed him dead.*



Abel gave God some sheep and goats

9 Later, God said to Cain, "Where is your brother, Abel?"

Cain said, "I don't know where my brother is. It's not my job to look after him."

10 God said to Cain, "You did a really bad thing. Your brother's blood is on the ground. It's like his blood is calling out to me. It is telling me you killed him.* 11 So now I'm going to curse you. You killed your brother, and his blood is on the ground. So I will make the ground bad for you. 12 If you try to grow plants in the ground, nothing will grow for you. You will go away from me. And you will walk around in lots of places, but you will not have a home."

13 Cain said to God, "God, you are too hard on me. 14 If you make me leave this land where I grow my food, and if you make me go away from you, then I will have to walk around everywhere, and I will not have a home. Then somebody will find me and finish me."

15 God said, "I will not let that happen. I'll tell everybody that if they kill you, then I will punish them properly. I will do 7 times as much payback to them." So God put a mark on Cain's head, so that everybody will know that they can't kill him.

The people born into Cain's family

16 After that, Cain went away from God and went to live in a place called Nod. That country was on the east side of Eden. 17 Cain slept with his wife, like married people do together, and then she had a baby boy, called Enok. Cain built a town, and he also called it Enok, after his son. 18 Enok grew up, and he had a son, called Irad.

Irad grew up, and he had a son, called Mehujayel.

Mehujayel grew up, and he had a son, called Methushayel.

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* **4:4** Hebrews 11:4 * **4:8** Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51; 1 John 3:12 * **4:10** Hebrews 12:24

Methushayel grew up, and he had a son, called Lamek.

19 Lamek grew up, and he married 2 women. One wife's name was Adah, and the other wife's name was Zillah.

20 Lamek's wife Adah had a baby boy, called Jabal. Jabal grew up, and he looked after animals. He took those animals around and camped in different places. He was the first person to do that.

21 Adah had another son, called Jubal. Jubal grew up and was the first person to play musical instruments. He played a harp and a flute.

22 Lamek's other wife, Zillah, had a son called Tubal Cain. Tubal Cain grew up and made tools from iron and from a brown metal called bronze.

Zillah also had a daughter, called Namah.

23 One day, Lamek said to his 2 wives,
"Adah and Zillah, listen to me properly. A young man hit me and hurt me, so I killed him dead. 24 God said that if anyone killed Cain, he will punish that person properly. He will do 7 times as much payback to them. I reckon I'm more important than Cain. So if somebody kills me for killing that young man, I reckon God will do 77 times as much payback to that person."*

Adam and Eve had another son

25 Adam and Eve slept together again, like a man does with his wife, and they had another son, and they gave him the name *Seth*. That name means *gave*. Eve said, "God gave me another son to take the place of Abel, our son that Cain killed."

26 Seth grew up, and he had a son too, and he gave him the name Enosh. At that time people started to call God by his special name *Yahweh* when they showed respect to him.

Chapter 5

The people born into Adam's family

1 This is the story about Adam's family. You see, when God made people, he made them to be like himself. 2 And he made them men and women, and he called them *human beings*, and he was good to them.*

3 Adam lived a long time. He was 130 years old when he had his son called Seth. He was a human being, just like Adam, his father. 4 After Seth was born, Adam lived for another 800 years, and he had more sons and daughters. 5 He died when he was 930 years old.

6 Seth lived a long time too. He was 105 years old when he had a son called Enosh. 7 Then Seth lived for another 807 years, and he had more sons and daughters. 8 He died when he was 912 years old.

9 Enosh lived a long time too. He was 90 years old when he had a son called Kenan. 10 Then Enosh lived for another 815 years, and he had more sons and daughters. 11 He died when he was 905 years old.

12 Kenan lived a long time too. He was 70 years old when he had a son called Mahalalel. 13 Then Kenan lived for another 840 years, and he had more sons and daughters. 14 He died when he was 910 years old.

15 Mahalalel lived a long time too. He was 65 years old when he had a son called Jared. 16 Then Mahalalel lived for another 830 years, and he had more sons and daughters. 17 He died when he was 895 years old.

18 Jared lived a long time too. He was 162 years old when he had a son called Enok. 19 Then Jared lived for another 800 years, and he had more sons and daughters. 20 He died when he was 962 years old.

21 Enok lived a long time too. He was 65 years old when he had a son called

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* **4:24** Matthew 18:22 * **5:1-2** Genesis 1:27-28; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6

Methuselah. 22-24 Then Enok lived for another 300 years after Methuselah was born, and he had more sons and daughters.

Enok was always God's friend, and he spent a lot of time with God. One day, when he was 365 years old, he wasn't here on the earth any more. Nobody could find him anywhere. You see, he didn't die, but God took him straight up to heaven. *

25 Methuselah lived a long time too. He was 187 years old when he had a son called Lamek. 26 Then Methuselah lived for another 782 years, and he had more sons and daughters. 27 He died when he was 969 years old.

28 Lamek lived a long time too. He was 182 years old when he had a son. 29 He named his son *Noah*. That name means *help people be happy*. Lamek said, "God cursed the ground, so we have to work really hard to dig the ground, but Noah will help us be happy, even though we have to work really hard." 30 Then Lamek lived for another 595 years, and he had more sons and daughters. 31 He died when he was 777 years old.

32 Noah lived a long time too. After he was 500 years old, he had 3 sons. They were called Shem, and Ham, and Jafeth.

Chapter 6

There were big, strong fighting men

1 The people on the earth kept on having lots of kids, and those kids grew up and kept on having more kids, so after some time there were lots of people on the earth. And some people had very pretty daughters.

2 There were some men that everyone called the *Sons of God*. They looked at the pretty young women, then they picked out the women they wanted, and they married them. 3 God looked at everything that was happening. He said, "I gave people their breath, but I will not let it stay in them for ever. They are just people. They will live for only 120 years."

4 Those men that were called the Sons of God, they slept with the pretty women, like men usually sleep with their wives, and then those women had kids called Nefalim. Those Nefalim kids grew up to be big, strong fighting men. They were the great fighters in the stories from a long time ago. *

People kept on doing bad things

5 God looked at the people on the earth, and he saw them doing lots of bad things. He knew the way they were thinking. They were thinking bad things all the time. God saw that the people were very bad. 6 So God was feeling sad. He really felt no good inside. He thought to himself, "I should not have made all these people."

7 And God said, "These people keep on doing bad things, and that makes me really sad. I'm sorry that I made them. I'm sorry I made everything on the earth. I want to finish up everything. I want to kill all the people I made, and I want to kill all the animals on earth, the big animals, and the little animals, and even the animals that crawl around on the ground, and I want to kill all the birds that fly in the sky."

8 But God looked at the man called Noah, and Noah made God happy.

The story about Noah

9 This is the story about Noah and his family. Noah was a good man. He didn't do anything wrong. He was God's friend, and he spent a lot of time with God. * 10 He had 3 sons. Their names were Shem, Ham, and Jafeth.

11-12 Everyone on the earth kept on doing bad things. They were doing wrong to each

* **5:22-24** Hebrews 11:5; Jude 1:14 * **6:4** Numbers 13:33 * **6:9** 2 Peter 2:5

other, and fighting and hurting each other. God looked down and saw all the bad things that were going on. The people were always doing things that were really bad.

13 So God said to Noah, "Look, everyone is doing bad things and hurting each other. I'm going to kill everyone, and I will finish up everything on the earth."

God told Noah to build a big boat

14 Then God said to Noah, "Make a really big boat for yourself. Make it out of that strong wood called cypress. Make some rooms in the boat. And get some tar, and paint the inside of the boat, and paint the outside too. That will keep the water out of the boat.

15 Listen, this is how big I want you to make the boat. It has to be 140 metres long, and 23 metres wide, and 13½ metres high. 16 I want you to make a roof for that boat, but leave ½ a metre between the top of the walls and the roof, all around the top of the boat. And put a door in the side of the boat. And make 3 floors in the boat, one floor on the bottom and the other 2 floors upstairs.

17 You see, soon I will bring a lot of flood water, and it will cover the earth, and everything that is on the earth will die. Everything that breathes air will die, wherever they live. 18 But don't worry. I'm making a strong promise to you, that I will look after you. I will look after you, and your wife, and all your kids, and their wives too. You all have to go into that boat. *

19 And you have to bring lots of animals into that boat too. Every sort of animal that is on the earth has to go into that boat, so that they will stay alive in the big flood. Get one male and one female of each sort of those animals, and take them into the boat with you. You see, you have to keep those animals alive. 20 And you have to do the same thing for all those different sorts of birds. Get one male and one female of all of those birds. And you have to do the same thing for all those animals that crawl around on the ground. You have to get one male and one female of all those animals too. I will get 2 of every sort of animal to come to you, so you can keep them alive.

21 And you have to gather up lots of food, all the sorts of food that people eat, and all the things that animals eat too. You have to put it all in the boat, so that you will all have enough food."

22 Then Noah did all of that. He did everything that God told him to do. *

Chapter 7

God told Noah to get ready for a flood

1 After that, God said to Noah, "You are the only man that lives the right way. Get your family and take them into the big boat. 2 You have to take every sort of animal with you into that big boat. You know the sorts of animals that are right for you to give to me? Well, get 7 males and 7 females from each of those sorts of animals. And get all the other animals too, the animals that are not right to give to me. Get one male and one female from each of those sorts of animals. They all have to go on to the big boat. 3 And the birds too. They have to go on to the big boat. Get 7 males and 7 females from each sort of bird. That's how you can keep those birds and animals alive, so that there will always be birds and animals on the earth.

4 You see, I'm going to send a big rain. That rain will come in 7 days time. Then it will keep on raining all the time for 40 days. The flood water will come up and wash away all the things that I have made."

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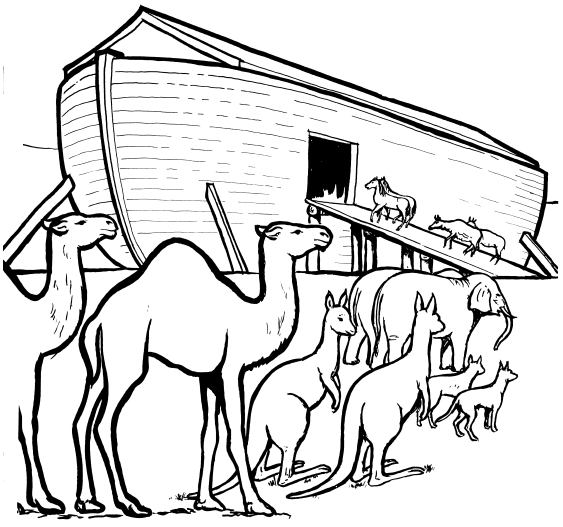
* **6:18** 1 Peter 3:20 * **6:22** Hebrews 11:7

5 So Noah did everything just the way God told him to.

The flood water came

6-7 Noah was 600 years old at the time that he went into the big boat to be safe from the flood. Noah, and his wife, and his 3 sons, and their wives too, they all went into the big boat. 8-9 And a big mob of animals came to Noah, and he took them into the boat too, just like God told him to. There were all sorts of animals. There were animals that were the right sort to give to God, and animals that were not the right sort to give to God. And there were birds and even animals that crawl around on the ground. And there were males and females of each sort of animal, and they went in 2 at a time. They all came together on that big boat, just like God wanted them to.

10 Then, 7 days later, the flood water came, just like God said. 11-16 Noah was 600 years old at the time that the flood water came. It came on the 17th day of the 2nd month of that year.



Males and females of each sort of animal went on to the boat

Noah, and his wife, and his sons, and their wives too, they all went into the big boat. The names of Noah's sons were Shem, and Ham, and Jafeth, and they each had a wife. They all went into the boat with all the animals. There were wild animals, and animals that are not wild, and animals that crawl around on the ground. And all the birds were there too. There were males and females of every bird and animal on that big boat. All of the different sorts of animals went into that big boat with Noah. They went in 2 at a time, just like God told Noah. And after the last animal went into the boat with Noah and his family, God shut the door.

Then, on that same day, the rain came out of the sky. It rained really hard all the time. It was like God opened up a big window in the sky, and rain poured down. And water came up from springs, and from everywhere under the ground too. It kept on raining all the time for 40 days. 17 The flood water kept on getting higher and higher for all those 40 days, and the big boat started to float on the water. 18 The water got deeper and deeper, but that boat was all right, it floated on top of the water, high above the ground.

19 The water got so deep that it covered all the big mountains everywhere. 20 It covered the tops of those mountains with about 7 metres of water. 21 All the people and animals that lived on the earth died. Only the people and animals on that big boat didn't die. The flood water killed all the birds, and it killed all the animals, the wild animals and the animals that are not wild, and it killed all the animals that crawl around on the ground, and all the people.* 22 They all died, everything that breathed air and lived on the ground. 23 There were

* **7:21** Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27; 2 Peter 3:6

no people or animals left on the earth. There were no birds, and no animals that crawl around on the ground, and no other animals, and no people. God killed them all and washed them away. The only ones that stayed alive were the animals and birds on the big boat with Noah and his family.

24 And that flood went on for a long time. The water covered the earth for 5 months.

Chapter 8

The flood water went down

1 And then God thought about Noah and the animals with him in that big boat. And he made a strong wind blow on the flood water to help it to go down. 2 And God stopped the water from coming up from under the ground, and he stopped the rain falling from the sky.

3 The flood water went down slowly, and after 5 months it was a lot lower. 4 So 5 months after the start of the flood, the big boat got stuck in the mountains called the Ararat mountains. 5 The flood water kept going down for the next 2½ months, and then they saw the tops of the mountains, sticking up out of the water.

Noah let some birds go out of the boat to fly around

6 Then, 40 days later, Noah opened a window in the big boat. He wanted to find out if the water went down, and if a bird could find some dry ground. 7 So he let a crow go out of the window. The crow didn't come back to the big boat. It just kept on flying around until the flood waters dried up.

8-9 So Noah let a pigeon go out of the window. But the flood water still covered the ground, and the pigeon couldn't find a place to stop and rest, so it went back to the big boat. Noah held out his hand for the bird, and he helped it back into the boat.

10 Noah waited for 7 more days, and then he let the pigeon go out of the boat again. 11 This time the pigeon came back just before night time. It had a fresh leaf from an olive tree in its mouth. Then Noah knew the flood water was getting lower, and the trees were growing again. 12 Noah waited 7 more days, then he sent the pigeon out again. This time the pigeon didn't come back to the big boat.



The pigeon came back to Noah with an olive tree leaf

Everyone left the boat

13 Noah was 601 years old at that time.

The water was still going down, and on the 1st day of the new year, Noah took off some of the roof from the big boat and looked around. He could see that the ground was getting dry. 14 After another 2 months, the earth was dry. 15 Then God said to Noah, 16 "You can go out of the big boat now. You can all go out, you, and your wife, and your sons, and their wives too. 17 And bring all the animals out of the big boat. Bring out all the animals, and the birds, and the animals that crawl around on the ground. They can all come out, so they can live on the earth and

have lots of young ones, so that they will go everywhere on the earth."

18-19 So Noah, and his wife, and his sons, and their wives, they all came out of the big boat. And all the animals and all the birds came out of the big boat too. They came out in groups. Each sort of animal was in its family group.

Noah said thank you to God

20 Then Noah piled up stones to make a special table with a flat top, and he got one of each sort of animal and bird that are the right sorts to give to God, and he killed them, and he put them on that special table, and he burned them there. He did that to give them to God, to say *thank you* to God.



Noah killed animals and burned them to say thank you to God

21-22 God smelled the meat cooking on that stone table, and he was happy. Then God said to himself, "People always just want to do bad things. They do that all their lives, from when they are little kids, right up until the time they die. But I will never again punish them the same way that I did this time. I will never again finish up everything that breathes air, and I will never again curse the earth. While the earth is still here, the seasons will stay the same. There will always be day and night, and every year there will be a hot time and a cold time, a wet season and a dry season. There will always be a right time to plant seeds for food, and a right time to get the food from those plants."

Chapter 9

God promised not to cover the earth with water again

1 God was good to Noah and his sons. God said to them, "I want you to have lots of kids, and fill the earth with people.* 2 I'm making you boss over everything that lives on the ground, all the animals and all the birds, and I'm making you boss over the fish and everything in the sea too. They will be frightened of you.

3 I gave you bush tucker to eat, and now I'm giving you meat to eat too. You can eat anything that moves. 4 But I'm telling you this about blood. Blood is important. It keeps a body alive. So don't eat any blood. You have to drain the blood out of the animal before you eat it. Don't eat any meat that still has the blood in it.* 5 And I will punish anyone and anything that kills a person dead. If an animal kills somebody, it has to die. And it is the same for a person that kills another person, that murderer has to die. 6 You see, I made people to be like myself, so they are important. So if somebody kills another person dead, you have to kill that murderer dead.*

7 But I want you mob to have lots of kids, so that there will be lots of people everywhere on the earth."*

8 Then God told Noah and his sons, 9 "I promise this to you and to your kids, and

* **9:1** Genesis 1:28 * **9:4** Leviticus 7:26-27; 17:10-14; 19:26; Deuteronomy 12:16, 23; 15:23
* **9:6** Genesis 1:26; Exodus 20:13; 21:12 * **9:7** Genesis 1:28

to all the people that will be born later on.
10 And I promise this to all the animals that
live on the earth too, all the birds, and all
the wild animals, and all the animals that
are not wild. I promise this to all of the
animals that came out of the big boat with
you. 11 I promise that there will never again
be a real big flood of water that will finish
up everything on the earth. There will never
again be a big flood that kills all the people
and animals."

God sent a rainbow to help people remember what he promised

12 And God said, "I will give you something
to help you remember what I promised to
you, and to all of the animals living on the
earth, and to your kids, and to all the people
that will be born later on. 13 It is my rainbow,
up there in the sky. I'm putting it there to
help you remember what I promised to you,
and to everything that lives on the earth. I
promised that I will never again send a real
big flood to finish up everything on the
earth. 14 Sometimes I will send rain clouds
into the sky, and there will be a rainbow
in the clouds too. 15 Then I will remember
what I promised to you, and to all the living
animals. And there will never again be a
flood that will kill all of the animals on the
earth. 16 Every time I look at the rainbow in
the clouds, I will remember what I promised
to you, and to all the animals on the earth.
I will never break that promise. It will last
for ever."

17 And God said to Noah, "This is very
important. That rainbow will help you
remember that I myself promised that for
every living thing."

Noah got drunk

18-19 Noah had 3 sons. Their names were
Shem, and Ham, and Jafeth. They were
on the boat with Noah, and after they got
off the boat, they had their own sons and
daughters. One of Ham's sons was called
Canaan, and there were lots of other sons
and daughters too. And later, all those kids
had more kids, and it kept going like that.
All the people in the world are from Noah's
family.

20 Soon after Noah came out of the big boat,
he started growing a garden. He planted
some grape vines, and they grew some
grapes. Then he made some wine from those
grapes. 21 Noah drank some of that wine and
got drunk. He took his clothes off and went
to sleep in his tent. 22 Ham (Canaan's father)
went into the tent and saw his naked father.
Ham didn't respect his father, so he went
outside and told his brothers what happened.
23 Shem and Jafeth got a coat. They held it
over their shoulders and walked backwards
into the tent. They put the coat on their
father to cover his naked body. They didn't
turn around and look at their naked father.

24 After Noah woke up, he found out what
Ham, his youngest son, did to him. 25 Then
Noah said, "I'm going to curse Canaan,
Ham's son. He will have to work hard for
his relatives, without pay. 26 God is good.
I'm going to ask God to look after Shem,
but Canaan will work hard for him with no
pay. 27 I'm going to ask God to give Jafeth
a big country. Jafeth and Shem will share
that country, and Canaan will work hard for
them with no pay."

28 Noah lived for another 350 years after
the flood. 29 He died when he was 950 years
old.

Chapter 10

The story about Noah's sons and their families

1 This is the story about Noah's sons and
their families. His sons were Shem, and
Ham, and Jafeth, and after that big flood,
they had kids too.

The tribes from Jafeth's family

2-5 A long time later, the people that were born into Jafeth's family split up into different tribes and nations. Each tribe had their own language, and their own country. Jafeth's sons were Gomer, and Magog, and Madayi, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshek, and Tiras.

The tribes that were from Jafeth's son Gomer and his family were the Ashkenaz mob, and the Rifath mob, and the Togarmah mob.

The tribes that were from Jafeth's son Javan and his family were the Elishah mob, and the Tarshish mob, and the Kit mob, and the Rodan mob.

Javan's people lived near the sea.

The tribes from Ham's family

6 The people that were born into Ham's family split up into different tribes too, and each tribe had their own language, and their own country. Ham's sons were Cush, and Egypt, and Put, and Canaan.

7 The tribes that were from Ham's son Cush and his family were the Seba mob, and the Havilah mob, and the Sabtah mob, and the Ramah mob, and the Sabteca mob. And the tribes that were from Ramah and his family were the Sheba mob, and the Dedan mob.

8 One of the men that was born into Cush's family was called Nimrod. After he grew up, he became a strong fighter. 9 He was the best hunter in the world too. Whenever people talked about good hunters, they said things like this, "That man is a really good hunter. He is just like Nimrod, the best hunter in the world."

10 Nimrod controlled the country called Babylonia, and he was the boss over the cities called Babel, and Erek, and Akad. 11 After that, Nimrod got the country called Ashur, and he built the towns called Nineveh, and Rehoboth-Ir, and Calah. 12 Then he built a big town called Resen. It was between Nineveh and Calah.

13 The tribes that were from Ham's son Egypt and his family were the Lud mob, and the Anam mob, and the Lehab mob, and the Naftuh mob, 14 and the Pathrus mob, and the Casluh mob, and the Caftor mob. (Later the Philistia nation were from the Caftor mob.)

15 Ham's youngest son was called Canaan. Canaan had 2 sons. His 1st son was called Sidon, and his other son was called Heth. 16 The tribes that were from Canaan and his family were the Jebus mob, and the Amor mob, and the Girgash mob, 17 and the Hiv mob, and the Arek mob, and the Sin mob, 18-19 and the Arvad mob, and the Zemar mob, and the Hamath mob. All those tribes were from Canaan, and they went as far north as the town called Sidon, and as far south as the town called Gaza, and as far east as the towns called Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboyim, near Lasha.

20 They were all the tribes and nations that were from Ham and his family. Each tribe had their own country, and their own language.

The tribes from Shem's family

21 Shem was Jafeth's older brother. The Eber mob are from Shem's family. 22 Shem's sons were Elam, and Ashur, and Arfaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

23 The tribes that were from Shem's son Aram and his family were the Uz mob, and the Hul mob, and the Gether mob, and the Mash mob.

24 Shem's son Arfaxad had a son called Shelah, and he had a son called Eber. 25 Eber had 2 sons. The 1st son was called Peleg, and his young brother was called Joktan. That name *Peleg* means *split up*. He got that name because all the people split up into different tribes after he was born.

26 The tribes that were from Eber's son Joktan's family were the Almodad mob, and the Shelef mob, and the Hazarmaveth mob,

and the Jerah mob, 27 and the Hadoram mob, and the Uzal mob, and the Diklah mob, 28 and the Obal mob, and the Abimayel mob, and the Sheba mob, 29 and the Ofir mob, and the Havilah mob, and the Jobab mob. 30 All of those people were born into Joktan's family. Their country was in the mountains in the east, the country you see if you go from Mesha all the way to Sefar.

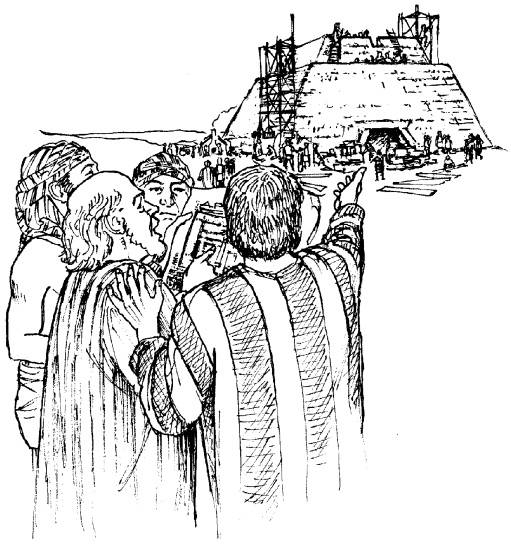
31 They were all the tribes and nations that were from Shem's family. Each tribe had their own country, and their own language.

32 That is the big list of all the families and tribes that were born into Noah's family. They split up into their own nations, and they went everywhere after the big flood.

Chapter 11

People tried to build a tall building

1 You know, at first everyone talked the same language. 2 And as people moved from place to place in the east, they got to some flat country in Babylonia, and they stayed there. 3-4 Then they said to each other, "Look, we can make bricks here. So come on, let's do that. We will bake them properly so that they are good strong bricks, and we will use them to build a city here. So come on, let's build a big tall building in that city. It will be so tall that it will go right up into the sky." You see, they had bricks and tar instead of stones and cement. And they said, "If we do that, everyone will think we are smart. Then we will not go and live all over the earth, but we will stay together right here."



The people started to build a really tall building

God made people talk in different languages

5 So the people started to build a city and a really tall building, and God came down to look at those things. 6 He said, "These people can all talk to each other in the same language, so they can do anything they want. If they keep on going this way, nothing will stop them from doing anything. 7 Come on, let's go down to these people, and we will make them talk in different languages. Then they will not understand each other, and they will be all mixed up. They will not work things out with each other, so they will not keep on building this city."

8 So God made all the people talk in different languages. None of them could understand anything the other people were saying. So they stopped building their big city. 9 They all left that city and went to live



God made people talk different languages so they didn't understand each other

in lots of different places, all over the world. That's how God got people to be in different tribes all over the world. And they called that city *Babel*. That means *mixed up*. They gave it that name because God mixed up their languages at that time.

The story of Shem's family

10 This is the story about Shem's family.*
Shem was 100 years old when he had a son called Arfaxad. That was 2 years after the big flood. 11 Shem lived for 500 years after he had Arfaxad, and he had more sons and daughters.

12 Arfaxad was 35 years old when he had a son called Shelah. 13 Arfaxad lived for 403 years after he had Shelah, and he had more sons and daughters.

14 Shelah was 30 years old when he had a son called Eber. 15 Shelah lived for 403 years after he had Eber, and he had more sons and daughters.

16 Eber was 34 years old when he had a son called Peleg. 17 Eber lived for 430 years after he had Peleg, and he had more sons and daughters.

18 Peleg was 30 years old when he had a son called Reyu. 19 Peleg lived for 209 years after he had Reyu, and he had more sons and daughters.

20 Reyu was 32 years old when he had a son called Serug. 21 Reyu lived for 207 years after he had Serug, and he had more sons and daughters.

22 Serug was 30 years old when he had a son called Nahor. 23 Serug lived for 200 years after he had Nahor, and he had more sons and daughters.

24 Nahor was 29 years old when he had a son called Terah. 25 Nahor lived for 119 years after he had Terah, and he had more sons and daughters.

26 Terah had 3 sons after he was 70 years old. Their names were Abram, Nahor and Haran.

The story of Terah's family

27 This is the story about Terah's family. Terah had 3 sons, called Abram, and Nahor, and Haran.

Haran had a son called Lot. 28-29 And he also had 2 daughters called Milcah and Iscah. After that, Haran died, while his father Terah was still alive. He died in the town called Ur, in Chaldia country, the place where he was born.

Nahor, Haran's brother, married Milcah. And Abram married a woman called Sarai, 30 but Abram and Sarai didn't have any kids. Sarai just couldn't have a baby.

31 Then Terah went away from Ur, in Chaldia country, and he took some of his family with him. They were his son Abram, and Abram's wife Sarai, and his grand-son Lot. They all left Ur, and they started to go to the country called Canaan. But they stopped half-way, at a town called Haran, and they stayed there.

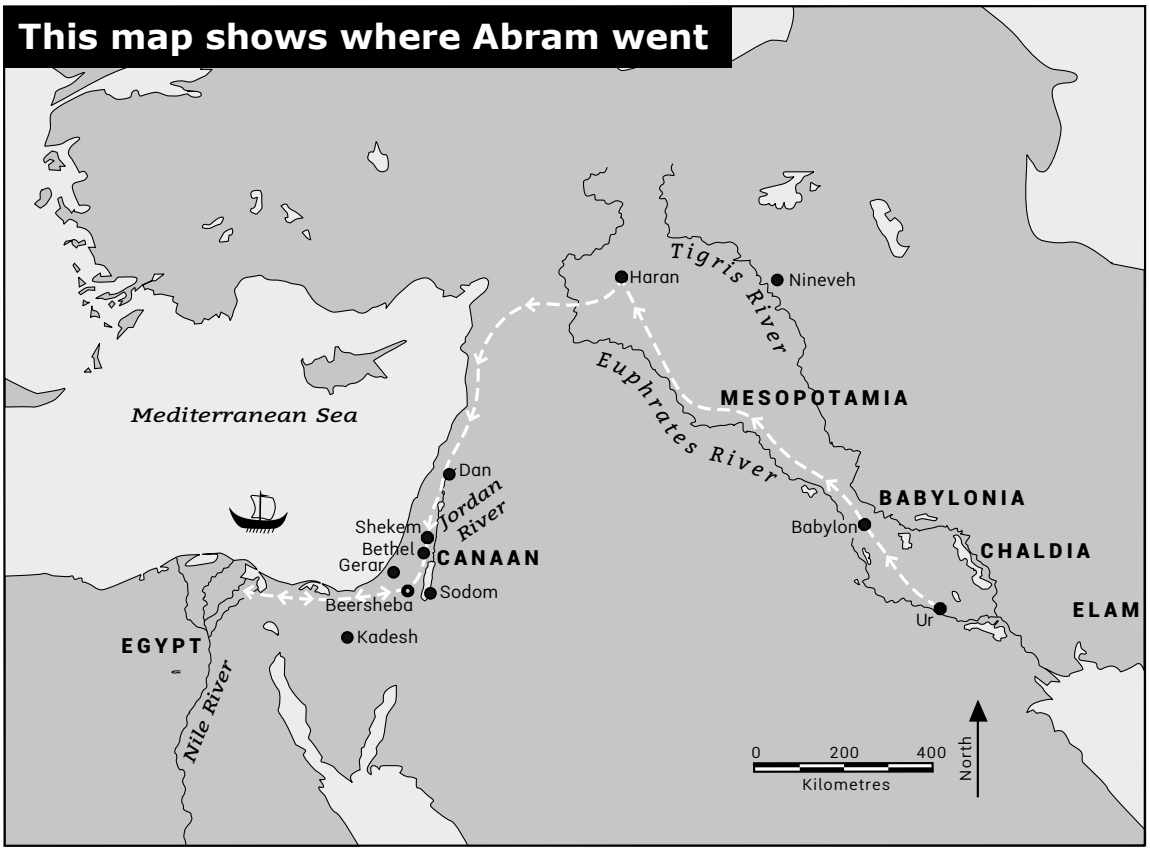
32 Terah lived until he was 205 years old. Then he died there in Haran.

Chapter 12

God picked Abram

1 This story about Abram started when God said to him, "Abram, I want you to leave your country, your father's family and all your relatives, and go to the country that I will show you.* 2 And I will give you a big family, and they will become a great nation, and I will do good things for you and your family, and I will make your mob strong. Then everyone will know about you and your family, and everyone will respect

* **11:10** Genesis 10:21; Luke 3:35-36 * **12:1** Acts 7:2-4; Hebrews 11:8



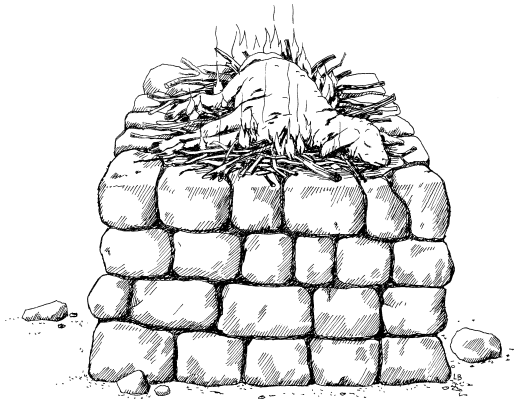
you. And you and your family will do good things for other people. 3 If anyone does good things for you and your family, I will do good things for them. But, if anyone does bad things to you, and if they make trouble for you and your family, I will curse them and make trouble for them. I will use your family to do good things for all the families in the world."*

Abram and his family went to Canaan country

4-5 Abram was 75 years old when he left the town called Haran and went to the country called Canaan. That was the country that God told him to go to. He took his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot with him. He also took all the things and all the workers that they got in Haran, and they all went to the new country called Canaan. 6 Abram and everyone with him walked through that new country, and they went to a town called Shekem, and they camped there, near a big tree at a place called Moreh. The people that lived in that country were called the Canaan mob, and they didn't know God. 7 God showed himself to Abram there, and God said to him, "I will give this country to your son, and to all the people that will be born into his family later on." So Abram piled up stones to make a table with a flat top. It was a special place for him to burn animals to show right respect to God.*

8 Later on, Abram and his mob left Shekem, and they went south to the hill country

* **12:3** Galatians 3:8 * **12:7** Acts 7:5; Galatians 3:16



Abram made a special stone table, and he killed animals and burned them on it to show respect to God

that was on the east side of a town called Bethel, and they camped between Bethel and another town called Ayi. Bethel was to the west of his camp and Ayi was to the east. Then Abram piled up stones there to make another special table, and he burned animals on it to show respect to God. He prayed to God, and he called God by his special name *Yahweh*.

9 After that, Abram and his mob kept going south to the dry desert country.

Abram and his family went to Egypt country

10 At that time, there was no rain and no food plants growing in that country. Nobody had enough food, so Abram and everyone with him went south to live in another country, called Egypt. 11 Just before they got to Egypt, Abram said to his wife Sarai, "You are a really beautiful woman. 12 I reckon the men in Egypt will see you, and they will say, 'That beautiful woman is Abram's wife. Let's kill Abram, so that we can have her for ourselves.' Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 So listen. You have to tell everyone that you are my sister. Then they will be good to me, and they will not kill me."*

14 And that's what happened. They got to Egypt, and the people there looked at Sarai, and they saw that she was really beautiful. 15 Some of them worked for the big boss of Egypt, and they told him, "Sarai is really beautiful." So that big boss took her to live in his house. 16 That boss was very good to Abram, because he thought that Abram was Sarai's brother. He gave Abram sheep, and goats, and cows, and bulls, and donkeys, and camels, as well as men and women that had to work for Abram.

17 God was not happy, because Sarai was living with the big boss of Egypt, so God made him really sick, and God made everyone that lived in his house really sick too. 18-19 Then that big boss found out that Sarai was already Abram's wife, and he got really wild. He sent somebody to get Abram, and he said to Abram, "You did a really bad thing to me. You tricked me. You didn't tell me that Sarai is your wife. You said, 'She is my sister,' and you let me marry her. Now, here is your wife. Take her back, and then get out of my country." 20 Then the big boss told his soldiers, "Get Abram, and Sarai, and everything they own, and all their workers, and send them out of Egypt. Send them away, and do it right now." So his soldiers did that. They sent Abram and his mob away from Egypt.

Chapter 13

Abram and his nephew Lot split up

1 So Abram, Sarai, and Lot left Egypt and went back to the dry desert country. They took everything they owned, and all their workers. 2 Abram was a very rich man. He had a lot of silver and gold, and a big mob of animals.

3 They were in that dry desert country for a while, then they went north from place

* **12:13** Genesis 20:2; 26:7

to place until they got back to the town called Bethel. They camped in the same place that they camped at before. It was between Bethel and the town called Ayi. 4 That was the place where Abram built a special stone table to burn animals, to show respect to God. After Abram got back there, he prayed to God, and he called God by his special name *Yahweh*.

5 Abram and his nephew Lot were still together. And Lot also had a big mob of sheep, and goats, and cows, and bulls. And he had a lot of tents for all his workers too. 6-7 But there was a problem. There were other people already living in that country. They were called the Canaan mob, and the Periz mob. And they had animals too, and all those animals needed grass and water, as well as Abram's animals, and Lot's animals too. But there wasn't enough grass and water in that place for all those animals. So Abram's work-men and Lot's work-men started to argue and fight with each other about whose animals got the grass and water. 8 Then Abram said to Lot, "I don't like this trouble. You and me, we are family, and I don't want trouble between us. And I don't want our work-men to argue and fight with each other. 9 Look, there is a lot of country here. Just look around, and you will see that there's plenty of country for both of us. So I reckon we have to split up. I want you to pick the part of the country you want, and then I will go somewhere else. If you pick the country to the east, then I will go to the country to the west, but if you pick the west country, then I will go to the east country."

10 Lot looked to the east, towards a town called Zoar, in the flat country around the Jordan River. He saw that the flat country had plenty of grass and water. It looked just like God's garden, and like the country



Abram told Lot to pick the part of the country he wanted

in Egypt. (That was before God burned up the towns in the flat country called Sodom and Gomorrah.*) 11-12 So Lot picked the flat country around the Jordan River, to the east.

Then Abram did what he promised, and he went to the country called Canaan.

In that way, Lot's mob and Abram's mob went to different places, and there was no more trouble between their work-men.

Lot went to the flat country around the Jordan River. There were some towns there, and Lot camped near the town called Sodom. 13 The people that lived in Sodom were very bad. They were always going against God, and they did bad things all the time.

God made a promise to Abram

14 Then, after Lot left, God said to Abram, "Look at all the country around you. Look to the north, and to the south, and to the east, and to the west. 15 I will give you all the country that you can see. Later on, you will have a son, and lots of people will be born into his family, and they will own all this country, for ever.* 16 Look at the ground

* **13:10** Genesis 19:24 * **13:15** Acts 7:5

you are standing on, it has lots of little bits of dirt. Nobody can count all those little bits of dirt on the ground, and just like that, nobody will be able to count all the people that will be in your family later on. 17 All right, Abram, I want you to get up and walk all around the country that I'm giving you, and look at it all properly."

18 So Abram went to the big trees that belonged to a man called Mamreh, near a town called Hebron, and he camped there. He piled up stones there and made another special table with a flat top, so that he could burn animals to show respect to God.

Chapter 14

Soldiers grabbed Lot and his family and took them away

1-9 This story is about the people in the flat country, and it started before Lot went to live near the town called Sodom. There were 5 tribes in that flat country at that time, and each tribe had a leader. These were the 5 tribes and their leaders,

- A tribe called Sodom, and their leader was called Bera.
- A tribe called Gomorrah, and their leader was called Birsha.
- A tribe called Admah, and their leader was Shinab.
- A tribe called the Zebo mob, and their leader was Shemeber.
- A tribe called Zoar. They are also called Bela.

There were another 4 tribes in the country to the east. These were those 4 tribes and their leaders,

- A tribe called Elam, and their leader was Kedorlayomer.
- A tribe called Babylonia, and their leader was called Amrafel.
- A tribe called Ellasar, and their leader was called Ariok.
- A tribe called the Goy mob, and their leader was Tidal.

And Kedorlayomer was the boss over those 4 tribes in the east. Those 4 tribes sent their soldiers to fight the other 5 tribes, and the 4 tribes from the east won. So Kedorlayomer became the boss over the other 5 tribes too.

Those 5 tribes let him be their boss for 12 years. Then the next year, their leaders told Kedorlayomer that they didn't want him to be their boss any more. Kedorlayomer got really angry, and the next year, he got soldiers from the 4 tribes in the east, and they went to fight those 5 tribes.

On the way to that fight, Kedorlayomer's soldiers had other fights with some other tribes, and they won all those fights. They beat the Refa tribe at a place called Ashteroth-Karnayim, and they beat the Zuz tribe at a place called Ham, and they beat the Em tribe at a place called Shaveh-Kiriathayim, and they beat the Hor tribe in the hill country called Seir. They chased the Hor soldiers all the way to a place called El-Paran, near the desert. Then Kedorlayomer and the soldiers from the east, they all went back to a place called En-Mishpat. Another name for that place is Kadesh. Then Kedorlayomer and his mob fought the Amalek tribe and beat them, and took control of their country. Then they fought the Amor tribe in Hazazon-Tamar country, and beat them too.

While Kedorlayomer and his mob were fighting those other people, the 5 tribes that didn't want Kedorlayomer to be their boss, they went to the valley called Sidim. (Today there is salt water in that valley, and we call it the *Dead Sea*.) The soldiers of those 5 tribes got ready there to fight against Kedorlayomer and his 4 tribes from the east.

So when Kedorlayomer and his mob got to that Sidim valley there was a big fight. 10 Kedorlayomer and his mob won that fight.

They beat those 5 tribes, and their soldiers all ran away. In that flat country there were lots of holes in the ground that were full of sticky black stuff, called *tar*. So when the soldiers from the 5 tribes ran away, some of them fell into those holes. But the rest of them ran up into the hills.

11 So Kedorlayomer and his soldiers went to Sodom and Gomorrah, and they grabbed all the people that lived there. And they took everything the people owned, even their food, and then they started to go back to their own country. 12 At that time, Abram's nephew Lot lived in Sodom, so the soldiers grabbed Lot too, and his family, and all their things. Those soldiers took all of Lot's mob away with them.

Abram saved Lot and his family

13-14 A man got away from Kedorlayomer and his mob, and he went and told Abram that they got Lot. At that time, Abram was living near the big trees that belonged to a man called Mamreh. Abram was a good friend of Mamreh, and also of Mamreh's 2 brothers. Their names were Eskol and Aner. Mamreh and his brothers belonged to the Amor tribe, and Abram belonged to the Hebrew tribe, but they all looked after each other.



A man told Abram that Kedorlayomer's mob got Lot

Abram had 318 men that knew how to fight. They worked for Abram all their lives, and Abram really trusted them. So Abram got those men, and Mamreh, Eskol and Aner got their fighting men, and they all went to fight Kedorlayomer and his soldiers. They followed them, and they found them at a place to the north, called Dan. 15 Then, in the night time, Abram split up all the fighting men into groups, and they attacked Kedorlayomer and his soldiers. Abram and his men won that fight, and they chased those other soldiers all the way to a town called Hobah, north of Damascus town. 16 That's how Abram's mob saved Lot, and all the women, and the other people from the towns called Sodom and Gomorrah, and they got all their things too. Then they all started to go back south.

Abram met Melkizedek

17 After Abram's mob beat Kedorlayomer and his mob, and while they were going back south on their way home, the leader of Sodom went out to meet Abram in the valley called *Shaveh*. Another name for that place is *the valley that belongs to the leader*.

18 There was a town in that country called Salem, and the boss over that town was called Melkizedek. He was also a leader of God's ceremonies. He worked for God, the one that is more powerful than any other god. Well, Melkizedek also went out to meet Abram and his men, and he gave them some bread and some wine. 19 Then Melkizedek prayed for Abram. He said,

"God, you are more powerful than any other god.

You are the one that made heaven and
earth.
I'm asking you to be really good to
Abram.
20 I want everyone to say that you are great,
and more powerful than any other god.
You are the one that helped Abram
fight with his enemies and win."
Then Abram got all the things he got after the fight, the things that used to belong to the Sodom and Gomorrah mob, and he split those things up into 10 groups. And he gave one of those groups of things to Melkizedek.*
21 Then the leader of Sodom said to Abram, "I only want my people back. You can keep those other things."
22 But Abram said, "I made a strong promise to my God. His name is Yahweh. He is more powerful than any other god, and he made heaven and earth. 23 I promised that I will not take anything that belongs to you. I will not even take a bit of string, or anything that belongs to you. You see, I don't want you to tell everyone that you gave me a lot of things and made me rich. 24 No. The only thing that I will keep is the food that I ate and the food that my fighting men ate. And these men, Mamreh, and Aner, and Eskol, and their fighting men, they helped me save your people and your things too, so you can give them some of those things."

Chapter 15

God promised to give Abram a son

1 Later on, after Abram saved Lot, Abram had a dream, and God talked to him in that dream. God said, "Abram, don't be frightened, I will always keep you safe, so that nobody can ever hurt you, and I am going to give you lots of good things."
2-3 Then Abram talked to God, and he called God by his special name Yahweh. He said, "Yahweh, you are very powerful. But look, I've got no son, so it doesn't matter what you give me. You haven't given me the one thing I really want. You haven't given me any kids. So when I die, one of my work-men will get all my things. His name is Eliyezer. He is from Damascus."
4 Then Abram heard God talk to him again. God said, "I tell you, that work-man will not get all your things after you die. I am going to give you a son, and he will get all your things after you die."
5 Then God took Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky and try to count all those stars. There are a lot of stars. You can't count them all. Well, you will have a son, and later on lots of people will be born into his family, and later on they will be a real big family. And just like nobody can count the stars, nobody will be able to count all your family."*
6 And Abram believed what God said, so God was really happy with him, and told him, "You believe me, so now I'm saying you are properly good, like you never did anything wrong."*



God promised Abram a really big family, he promised him lots of people, just like there are lots of stars

* **14:18-20** Hebrews 7:1-10 * **15:5** Romans 4:18; Hebrews 11:12
* **15:6** Romans 4:3, 9, 22; Galatians 3:6; Hebrews 11:11; James 2:23

God did a ceremony to make Abram sure about his promises

7 Then God said to Abram, "I am God, and my name is Yahweh. I am the one that brought you out of your home country, from the town called Ur, in Chaldia country. And I am going to give you this country here. It will be yours. You will own all this country."

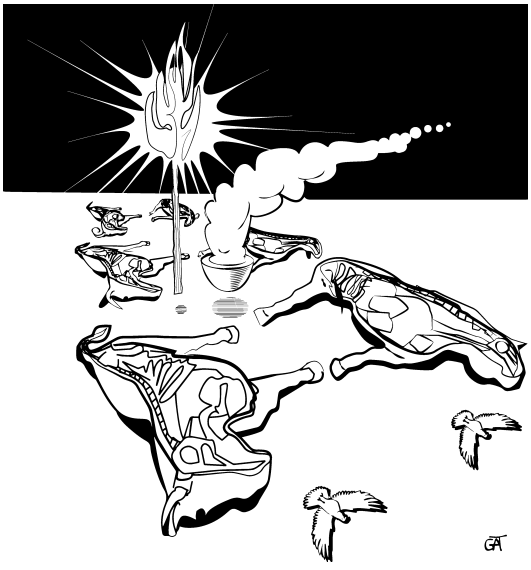
8 Abram said to God, "Yahweh, I know you are very powerful, but how can I be really sure that I will get all this country?"

9 So God said to Abram, "Bring me a cow that hasn't had a baby, and a female goat, and a male sheep. All those animals have to be 3 years old. And I want you to bring me 2 different sorts of pigeons too."

10 Then Abram did what God told him. He killed those animals and birds, and he cut the animals in half. He put the halves of each animal on the ground in 2 lines facing each other. But he didn't cut the birds in half. 11 Then some hawks flew down and tried to eat the animals, but Abram chased them away.

12 While the sun was going down, Abram went to sleep. It was a strong deep sleep. Then Abram had something like a dream. It was really dark for him, and he felt really frightened.* 13-15 God said to Abram, "I want you to know for sure what will happen after you get really old. You don't have to worry about anything. You see, you will live to be a very old man, and then, when you are dying, you will feel good inside, and your family will bury you right here, in this country. But I have to tell you something. After you die, your family will leave this country and move to another country that belongs to other people. Your family will live in that country, and later on, the other people in that country will make your family like prisoners, and your family will have to work very hard for them. Those people will do really bad things to your family for 400 years. After that, I will save your family from that hard time, and I will punish those people for doing bad things to your family. Then your family will leave that country, and they will take a lot of animals and things with them. They will be really rich.* 16 And I will bring your family back here to this country. You see, the Amor tribe that are here in this country now, they do really bad things, and they are getting worse and worse. But I will not punish them yet. I will punish them later, after your grand-kids grow up and have grand-kids. Then I will do payback to the mob in this country for the bad things that they do. I will take their country from them, and I will give it to your family." That's what God told Abram.

17 After the sun went down and it was dark, Abram saw a bucket full of fire, with smoke coming out of it, and he saw a burning stick



God made a bucket of fire and a burning stick move between the animals, to show Abram that he was going to do everything he promised

* **15:12** Job 4:13-14 * **15:13-15** Exodus 1:1-14; Acts 7:6

with it. That bucket and stick moved along between the halves of those animals that Abram killed. 18-21 That's how God showed Abram that he was really going to do everything that he promised. God said, "I am going to give all this country to the people that will be born into your family. From the river in Egypt in the south, right up to the big river called Euphrates in the north.

These are the tribes in this country now,
– the Ken tribe,
– the Keniz tribe,
– the Kadmon tribe,
– the Heth tribe,
– the Periz tribe,
– the Refa tribe,
– the Amor tribe,
– the Canaan tribe,
– the Girgash tribe,
– the Jebus tribe.

I will take this country away from all those tribes, and I will give it to your family." God promised that to Abram. *

Chapter 16

The story about Hagar and Ishmael

1-3 Abram and Sarai lived in that Canaan country, and after they were there for 10 years, they still had no kids. Sarai had a woman from Egypt working for her, called Hagar. She was Sarai's slave. That means Sarai owned Hagar, and Hagar had to do everything that Sarai told her to do.

Sarai was sad because she had no kids, but she got an idea about how to get a baby for herself. So she said to Abram, "God has stopped me from having my own kids. But listen. I want you to sleep with Hagar, like she is your wife. You see, she belongs to me, so if she has a baby, that baby will really belong to me." So Abram did that, just like Sarai said. 4 He slept with Hagar like she was his wife.

Then Hagar found out that she was going to have a baby, so she started rubbishing Sarai all the time, because Sarai didn't have any kids. 5 So Sarai said to Abram, "I blame you for this trouble. I gave Hagar to you, and now she is going to have a baby, and she is rubbishing me all the time. I reckon God knows that I am right, and you are wrong."

6 But Abram said to Sarai, "Hagar belongs to you. You are her boss, so do whatever you want with her." Then Sarai started to treat Hagar in a really bad way. So Hagar left Abram and Sarai's camp and ran away.

7 Hagar started walking through the desert, along the road that went to a town called Shur, near Egypt. She sat down next to a water-hole there in the desert. God's angel messenger went to her there. 8 He said, "Hagar, you belong to Sarai, so why are you sitting out here in the desert? Where are you going?"

Hagar said, "I'm running away from my boss Sarai. She is too hard on me."

9 God's angel messenger said to her, "Don't do that. Go back to your boss, and do what she says." 10 And the angel also said, "God is going to give you a really big family. You will have a son, and later on lots of people will be born into his family, and they will be a real big family, so that nobody will be able to count all those people." 11 The angel said, "You are going to have a baby boy, and you will name him *Ishmael*, because that name means *God listens*. You see, God listened to you. He heard about your trouble, and he will help you. 12 And Ishmael, your son, he will live like a wild donkey. He will go anywhere he wants to, and he will fight against everybody, and everybody will fight against him. He will not live close to his relatives."

* **15:18-21** Acts 7:5

13 Then Hagar said to herself, "I have seen
the God that sees me, and he looks after me."
So she gave God a name, she called him *the
God that sees me*. 14 So that's why people call
that water-hole *the water-hole that belongs
to the one that is alive and sees me*. That
water-hole is between a place called Kadesh
and a place called Bered.

15 Soon after that, Hagar had a baby boy,
and Abram named him *Ishmael*.* 16 Abram
was 86 years old at the time when Ishmael
was born.

Chapter 17

God made an agreement with Abram

1 Later on, when Abram was 99 years old,
God showed himself to Abram and said, "I
am God. I have power over everything. I
want you to live my way and always do the
right thing. 2 If you do that, I will make an
agreement with you, and I will give you a
really big family. You see, you will have a
son, and later on lots of people will be born
into his family, and they will be a real big
family."

3 Abram got down on his knees and put
his face near the ground, to show respect
to God, and God said to him, 4 "I promise
that I will do this for you. I will give you a
big family. Lots of people will be born into
your family, so that you will be the father
of lots of nations. 5 So I am changing your
name from *Abram* to *Abraham*." (That name
Abram means *father that people respect*, and
that name *Abraham* means *father of lots of
people*.) And God said, "Yes, I will make you
the father of lots of nations.* 6 I will give you
a real big family later on, and they will split
up into lots of nations. And some of your
people will be the big bosses of those nations.

7 I am making this agreement with you,
and with the people that will be born into
your family later on. This agreement will
last for ever. It will never end. I promise that
I will be your God for ever.* 8 You see, you
are now living in this country called Canaan,
but it doesn't belong to you. But later on, I
will give all this country to the people that
will be born into your family. They will have
this country for themselves for ever, and I
will be their God."*

9 Then God said to Abraham, "You have to
agree to this. You and everyone that will be
born into your family later on, you mob have
to always respect me and let me be your God.
10-11 This is what you have to do to show that
we made this agreement together. You and
every man in your camp has to have the
young man operation. And all the men born
into your family later on will have to have
it too.* 12-13 From now on, every baby boy
in your camp has to have that young man
operation 8 days after he is born. Every man
in your family has to have that operation.
And if you buy a man to work for you, he
has to have that operation too. Every male
person has to have that mark on his body. It
will show that we made this agreement, you
and me, and that this agreement will last
for ever. 14 Any man that doesn't have that
operation will be breaking our agreement,
and I will take him away from your family."

God promised a son to Abraham and Sarah

15 Then God said to Abraham, "I am changing
your wife's name too. Don't call her *Sarai*
any more. Call her *Sarah*." (Both of those
names mean *important woman*.) 16 And God
said, "I will do a good thing for her too. She
will have a son, and you will be his father.
Yes, I will do that good thing for her. Lots
of people will be born into her son's family,
and they will split up into lots of nations.

* **16:15** Galatians 4:22 * **17:5** Romans 4:17 * **17:7** Luke 1:55 * **17:8** Acts 7:5 * **17:10-11** Acts 7:8; Romans 4:11

And some of those people will be the big bosses of those nations."

17 Abraham got down on his knees again and put his face near the ground, and he laughed. He thought, "I am nearly 100 years old, and Sarah is nearly 90. We can't have a baby. We are too old." 18 So then Abraham said to God, "Look, I already have a son, Ishmael. I want you to be good to him, so that he will be that son you are talking about."

19 God said, "No, not Ishmael. Listen, your wife Sarah will have a baby boy. He will be your son, and you will call him *Isaac*." (That name *Isaac* means *laugh*.) And God said, "He will be the son I'm talking about. I will keep this agreement going with him. It will be the same for him, and for all the people that will be born into his family later on. This agreement will go on for ever.

20 And you asked me to do good things for Ishmael. Well, I listened to you, and I will be good to him too. He will have a big family, and later on, 12 big bosses will be in his family. I will make his mob into a great nation. 21 But my agreement will not be with Ishmael. You see, about this time next year, your wife Sarah will have a baby boy. He will be your son, and you will call him *Isaac*, and I will make the same agreement with him that I just made with you."

22 After God said all that, he left Abraham.

23-27 Then, on that same day, Abraham did a young man operation on every man and every boy in his camp. All Abraham's work-men had that operation. They were the work-men that Abraham bought, and the work-men that were born in his camp. And Abraham and his son Ishmael had that operation too. They all had that operation on the same day. Ishmael was 13 years old, and Abraham was 99 years old, when they had that young man operation.

Chapter 18

God promised again to give Abraham and Sarah a son

1 Abraham camped for some time near the big trees that belonged to a man called Mamreh. One day, God came to Abraham there. It happened like this. Abraham was sitting in the doorway of his tent, at the hottest part of the day, 2 and he looked up and saw 3 men standing nearby. He got up quickly, and he ran to meet them, and he got down on his knees and put his face near the ground to show them respect. * 3 Abraham said, "Sirs, please come and sit at my place for a while. Let me look after you. 4 I will get a work-man to bring water so that you can wash your feet, and then you can rest in the shade of this tree. 5 And I will get some food for you, so that you will be strong enough to keep walking to the place where you are going. I really want to do that for you."

The 3 men said, "All right. We will rest here while you do that."

6 Then Abraham went quickly into the tent to tell Sarah, and he said, "Quick, get a big bag of really good flour and make some damper for our visitors."

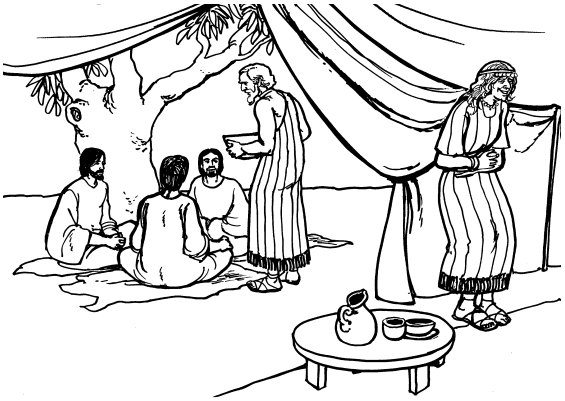
7 Then he ran to his mob of cows and picked out a really good young cow. He gave it to one of his work-men and said, "Quick, kill this young cow, and cook it for our visitors." 8 Then Abraham gave the men that cooked meat, and some cheese and milk. And Abraham stood near them in the shade of that tree, and he looked after them while they ate that food.

9 Then they said to Abraham, "Where is your wife, Sarah?"

Abraham said, "She is right here, in our tent."

10 You know, one of those men was God, but he made himself to be like a man when

* **18:2** Hebrews 13:2



God said that Sarah was going to have a baby boy, and Sarah laughed

he talked to Abraham. He said, "I will come back to you at this time next year, and Sarah will have a baby boy."*

Sarah was at the doorway of the tent, and she listened to them talking. 11 Abraham and Sarah were both very old. She knew she was too old to have a baby, 12 so when she heard him say that, she laughed quietly and said to herself, "I am too old and worn out to have a baby, and my good boss, my husband, he is old too. If I had a baby, I would be really happy. But I'm too old for that now."*

13 God said, "Why did Sarah laugh? Why did she say to herself, 'I can't have a baby now, I am too old'? 14 I'm telling you, nothing is too hard for me. I am God, and my name is Yahweh. Just like I said, at this time next year, I will come back, and Sarah will have a baby boy."*

15 Sarah was frightened, and so she lied and said, "I didn't laugh."

But God said, "That's not true. You did laugh."

God talked to Abraham about the town called Sodom

16 Then the 3 men got up to leave, and Abraham went with them for a little while to say goodbye. They went to a hill where they looked down at the town called Sodom. 17 God said, "Maybe I will tell Abraham what I am going to do. 18 You know, Abraham's family will be a big and powerful nation one day, and I will use his family to do good things for all the nations in the world.* 19 I have picked him out so that he can teach his family to live my way, and do what is good and right. Then I will keep my promise to him."

20 So God said, "Abraham, I heard about all the really bad things that people do in those 2 towns down there, called Sodom and Gomorrah. A lot of people are telling me that those people are always doing bad things. 21 I will go down and find out if they are really doing those bad things that I heard about." That's what the man said, the one that was God.

22 Then the other 2 men turned and walked towards Sodom. They left Abraham standing in front of God.

23 Abraham went up close to God and asked him, "Are you going to kill all the good people, as well as the bad people? 24 There might be 50 good people that live the right way down there in that town. Will you still finish up that town? Or will you save that town to save those 50 good people? 25 I don't think you will kill 50 good people. I know that you are the judge of everybody in the world, and you always do what is right. I don't think you will kill the good people with the bad people."

26 God said, "If I find 50 good people in Sodom, I will not finish up that town. I will save that town so that I can save those 50 good people."

27 Then Abraham said, "Look, I know that I am just a man and you are God, but I'm being brave and I'm talking to you. I want

* **18:10** Romans 9:9 * **18:12** 1 Peter 3:6 * **18:14** Luke 1:37 * **18:18** Galatians 3:8

to ask you another question. 28 What if you find only 45 good people in that town, will you still finish up that town?"

God said, "If I find 45 good people there, I will not finish up that town."

29 Then Abraham asked God again, he said, "What if you find only 40 good people there?"

God said, "If I find 40 good people there, I will not finish up that town."

30 Then Abraham said, "God, please don't get angry with me, but I will say a little bit more. What if you find only 30 good people in that town?"

God said, "If I find 30 good people there, I will not finish up that town."

31 Then Abraham said, "I know that I am being brave to talk to God like this, but what if you find only 20 good people in that town?"

God said, "If I find 20 good people there, I will not finish up that town."

32 Then Abraham said, "God, please don't get angry with me, but I will ask one more question. What if you find only 10 good people in that town?"

God said, "If I find 10 good people there, I will not finish up that town."

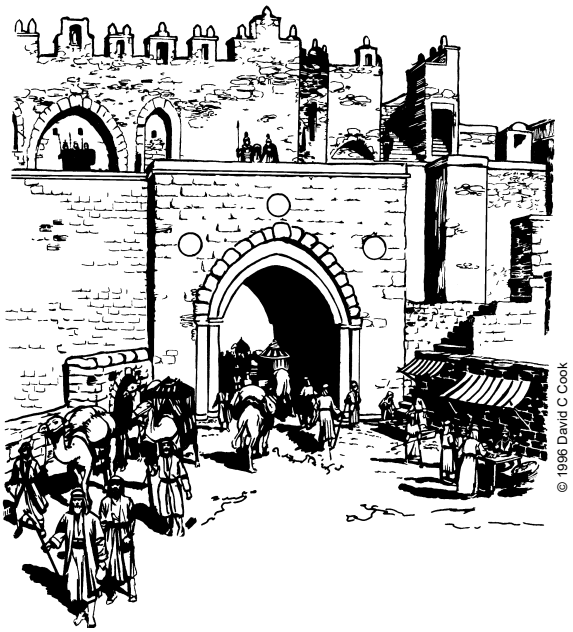
33 Then they finished talking, and God left Abraham, and Abraham went back to his camp.

Chapter 19

The men in Sodom were really bad

1 Later that day, while the sun was going down, those other 2 men walked into the town called Sodom. They were God's 2 angel messengers.

Abraham's nephew, the man that was called Lot, he was sitting near the town gate, and he saw those men come into the town. So he got up to meet them, and he got down on his knees and put his face near the ground, to show them respect. 2 He



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Town gates looked like this

said, "Sirs, come and stay in my house. You can wash your feet and sleep here tonight, then you can go on your way tomorrow morning."

The men said, "No, it's all right. We will sleep outside in the park."

3 But Lot kept on asking them strongly to stay with him, so they agreed, and they went with him to his house. Then Lot cooked some flat damper and other food for them, and the men ate it.

4 Before they went to bed, all the men that lived in Sodom, both the young men and the old men, they came and stood around Lot's house, 5 and they all yelled out to Lot. They said, "Where are the 2 men that came to your house today? Bring them out here so that we can sleep with them like a man sleeps with his wife."

6 Lot went out to talk to them and shut the door behind him. 7 He said, "My friends, please don't do that really bad thing. 8 Look, I've got 2 daughters. They have never been married. They have never slept with any


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Lot tried to talk to the men that lived in Sodom

man. Let me bring them out here for you, and you can do whatever you want to do with them. But please don't do anything bad to these men. They are staying in my house, so I have to keep them safe."*

9 But the men of Sodom said to each other, "This man came from another town to live here, and he wants to tell us what to do. He can't do that." And they said to Lot, "Get out of our way, or we will do even worse things to you than we will do to those men." And they pushed hard against Lot so they could get to the door, to break it down and grab the men that were inside.

10 But those 2 men were really God's angel messengers, and they quickly opened the door and pulled Lot inside with them, then they quickly shut the door. 11 Then they used their power to make all the men outside the house go blind, the young men as well as the old men, so that they couldn't find the door to get in.*

The angels told Lot to leave Sodom

12-13 Then the 2 men said to Lot, "God heard about all the bad things that the people in this town do, so he sent us to finish it up. You and your family have to get out of this town real soon. Maybe you have sons, or more daughters, or sons-in-law, or other family here. You all have to leave this town before we finish it up."

14 So Lot went and found the men that his 2 daughters were promised to. He said to them, "God is going to finish up this town, so we have to get out now. Come on, let's go." But those 2 men thought that Lot was joking, so they didn't go with him.

15 Very early the next morning, the 2 angels tried to get Lot to leave Sodom quickly. They said, "Hurry up Lot. Get your wife, and your 2 daughters, and get out of this town. If you don't get out quick, you will die, like everyone else." 16 But Lot didn't hurry, so the angels grabbed Lot's hand, and his wife, and his 2 daughters, and they quickly pulled them out of the town. You see, God was good to Lot and wanted to save him and his family.*

17 As soon as the angels took Lot and his family out of the town, one of the angels told them, "Run away quickly to save your life. Don't look back, and don't stop anywhere in the flat country, but keep going until you get to the hill country. If you don't do that, you will die, like all the people in Sodom are going to die."

18 But Lot said to them, "Please sirs, no. 19 That's too far. You have been very good to me and saved my life, but I can't run fast enough to get to the hill country in time. If I try to do that, the trouble will come before I get there, and I will die too. 20 Look, there is a town over there. It's not too far for me. And it is only a little town, with only a few people. Let us go there, and then don't finish up that little town. Then we will be safe."

21 The angel said, "All right, I will do that for you. I will let you go to that little town, and I will not finish it up. You will be safe there. 22 But go quickly, because I have to wait until you get there before I finish up Sodom."

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* **19:4-8** Judges 19:22-24 * **19:11** 2 Kings 6:18 * **19:16** 2 Peter 2:7

Later, that little town was called *Zoar*. That name means *little*.

God burned up Sodom and Gomorrah

23 Just after the sun came up, Lot got to Zoar. 24 Then God sent fire down from the sky on to Sodom and Gomorrah, and he sent down burning rock, called sulphur, with that fire. 25 God burned up those towns, and he burned up the flat country around them too. Everybody that lived in those towns died, and all the plants in that country died too. *

26 But Lot's wife turned around and looked back at what was happening to Sodom, and straight away her body turned into a block of salt. *

27 Early in the morning, Abraham went to the hill where he talked with God before. 28 He looked down at Sodom and Gomorrah and all the flat country around them, and he saw a lot of smoke, like a really big bush fire.

29 That's how God finished up those towns in the flat country, but he remembered everything he said to Abraham, and he saved Abraham's nephew Lot. Yes, God took Lot out of Sodom, where Lot lived, before he finished up that town.

Lot's daughters did a bad thing

30 Lot was frightened to stay in Zoar, so him and his daughters, they went and lived up in the hill country, in a big hole in the rock, called a cave.

31 One day the oldest daughter said to her sister, "Our father is old, and we haven't got any kids, and there are no men around here for us to marry. 32 So let's get our father drunk, and then we can pretend to be his wives, and sleep with him. Then we can have babies, so that we will always have a family."

33 So that night, they got their father drunk, and the oldest daughter pretended to be his wife, and she slept with him. Lot was so drunk that he didn't know what was happening.

34 The next day, the oldest daughter said to her sister, "Last night I slept with our father like I was his wife. Let's get him drunk again tonight, then you go and pretend to be his wife. Then we will both have babies, and we will always have a family."

35 So that night, they got their father drunk again, and the youngest daughter pretended to be his wife, and she slept with him. And again, Lot was so drunk that he didn't know what was happening.

36 So both of Lot's daughters had babies, and Lot was the father of those babies. 37 Lot's oldest daughter had a son, and she called him *Moab*. That name means *from our father*. His mob are called the Moab tribe, and they are still living today. 38 Lot's youngest daughter also had a son, and she called him *Ben-Ammi*. That name means *son of my relative*. Ben-Ammi's mob are called the Ammon tribe, and they are still living today.

Chapter 20

Abraham tried to trick a big boss called Abimelek

1 At one time, Abraham moved his camp south to the Negev desert, and he lived between the 2 towns called Kadesh and Shur. Then later, he moved his camp to a town called Gerar. 2 While Abraham and Sarah were in Gerar, Abraham told everyone that his wife Sarah was his sister, not his wife. The big boss of Gerar was called Abimelek. He believed Abraham, so he sent somebody to get Sarah so that he could marry her. *

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* **19:24-25** Matthew 10:15; 11:23-24; Luke 10:12; 17:29; 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 1:7 * **19:26** Luke 17:32
* **20:2** Genesis 12:13; 26:7

3 God was not happy that Abimelek was going to marry Sarah, so one night he gave Abimelek a dream, and in that dream, God told him, "You are going to die. You took Sarah to be your wife, but she is already married to Abraham."

4 Abimelek said, "But God, I haven't married Sarah yet. I have not slept with her, like a man sleeps with his wife. Me and my people, we haven't done anything wrong. Will you kill us for nothing? 5 Abraham told me himself that Sarah was his sister. And she said that Abraham was her brother. I didn't know that she was already married to him. I didn't want to do anything wrong."

6 God kept talking to him in that dream. He said, "Yes, I know that you didn't want to do anything wrong. You didn't know that Sarah was a married woman. That's why I did not let you touch her. I stopped you from doing a bad thing. 7 So now, give Sarah back to Abraham. He is my special man, and he will pray for you, so that you will not die. But I'm telling you, if you don't give her back to Abraham, I will kill you, and I will kill everyone that lives with you."

8 So early in the morning, Abimelek called a meeting for all his important workers. He told them everything that God said, and they were all very frightened. 9 Then Abimelek sent somebody to get Abraham, and Abraham came to that meeting. Abimelek said to Abraham, "Look, you have made trouble for me and my people. What did I do to you, so that you paid me back with this trouble? You have done a bad thing to us. 10 Why did you do that? Why did you tell us that Sarah is your sister?"

11 Abraham said, "I'm sorry. I thought that nobody here respected God, so I was frightened of you mob. I reckoned that you would kill me so that you can marry Sarah. 12 But anyway, Sarah really is my sister. We have the same father, but different mothers." You see, in Abraham's culture, men could marry their half-sisters.

13 Then Abraham said, "God told me to leave my father's country, so we moved around from place to place, and I was frightened of the people. So I told Sarah, 'Be good to me and tell everyone that you are my sister. Then I will be safe.' "

14 Then Abimelek did what God told him to do. He gave Sarah back to Abraham, and he also gave him some sheep, and some goats, and some cows, and some bulls, and some workers, both men and women. 15 And Abimelek said to Abraham, "Friend, look around at all my country. You can live anywhere you like in this country." 16 Then Abimelek said to Sarah, "I'm giving Abraham, your brother, a lot of money, to pay for the trouble I gave you. I'm giving him 1,000 pieces of silver money to show your mob, and everyone else, that you did nothing wrong."

17-18 Then Abraham prayed to God and asked him to make Abimelek and his mob better. You see, before, at the time when Abimelek got Sarah so that he could marry her, God made Abimelek sick and stopped all the women in Abimelek's house from having babies. But then God talked to Abimelek, and Abimelek gave Sarah back to Abraham. So then Abraham prayed to God, and God made Abimelek better, and he made Abimelek's wife better, and he made all the women that lived in Abimelek's house better too, so that they had babies again.

Chapter 21

Abraham and Sarah had a son, Isaac

1 God was good to Sarah, and he kept his promise to her, 2 and a baby started to grow inside her. Then that baby boy was born at the time that God said he would be born. Abraham was an old man, and that



Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 when their son Isaac was born

baby was a son for Abraham.* 3 Abraham called his son *Isaac*. That name means *laugh*.

4 And when Isaac was 8 days old, Abraham did the young man operation on him, just like God told him to do, to show that Isaac belonged to God.*

5 Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. 6 Sarah said, "God is giving me something to laugh about now, and everyone that hears this story will be happy with me, and they will laugh too." 7 She also said, "Nobody reckoned that I can ever have a kid. But look, now Abraham is old, and I had a son for him."

Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael away from his camp

8 When Isaac was about 3 years old, he stopped drinking Sarah's milk, and Abraham gave him a big party. 9 Then Sarah saw Ishmael laughing at Isaac. Ishmael was the son of Abraham and Hagar. Hagar was Sarah's worker, and she was from Egypt country. 10 Then Sarah said to Abraham, "When you die, my son Isaac has to get all your things. I don't want Ishmael to get anything, he is just the son of a worker woman. So you have to tell that woman and her son to get out of our camp. Send them right away from here."*

11 Abraham was really upset by what Sarah said. Ishmael was his son, so Abraham reckoned it was wrong to send him away. 12 But God said to Abraham, "Don't worry about Ishmael or his mother. You see, the family that I promised you will come from Isaac, not from Ishmael. So listen to Sarah, and do what she says.* 13 Don't worry, I will give Ishmael a big family too. Later on, his family will grow into a big nation. I will do that for him, because he is your son too."

14 So early the next morning, Abraham got some food, and a leather water bag. He put them on Hagar's shoulder, and he sent her and Ishmael out of his camp. They walked around in the desert country near Beersheba. 15 They kept going until there was no water left in the water bag. Then they stopped, and Hagar left Ishmael in the shade of a little tree. 16 And then she went and sat by herself a little way from him, because she thought, "I don't want to watch him die." And she started to cry out loud.

17 Ishmael was crying too, and God heard him, and he sent an angel messenger from heaven to talk to Hagar. The angel said, "Why are you upset? Don't worry. God has heard Ishmael crying, under that tree. 18 Go and take care of him. Listen, I will give him a big family, and they will become a great nation." 19 Then God showed her a water-hole. So she got up and filled her water bag, and she gave Ishmael a drink.

20-21 God kept Ishmael safe as he grew up in the desert called Paran. He learned how to use a bow and arrows properly, so he became a good hunter. And later on, Hagar got a wife for him from Egypt country.

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* **21:2** Hebrews 11:11 * **21:4** Genesis 17:12; Acts 7:8 * **21:10** Galatians 4:29-30 * **21:12** Romans 9:7; Hebrews 11:18

Abraham and Abimelek made strong promises to each other

22-23 One day, Abimelek went to talk to Abraham. Abimelek was the big boss of the country where Abraham lived. And Ficol, the leader of Abimelek's army, went with him. Abimelek said to Abraham, "You know, you are not one of my people. You came from another place to live here in my country. But I have been good to you, and to all your people. So I want you to promise me that you will never try to trick me, or my kids, or anyone that is born into my family. I want you to promise that you will be good to them. We know that God is very good to you, and he helps you with everything you do. So I want you to make that promise to me while God is listening. I want you to tell God to punish you if you break that promise."*

24 So Abraham made that promise to Abimelek. He said those words in the way that Abimelek wanted.

25 But then Abraham also complained to Abimelek. He said, "I've got a problem. Some of your workers took one of my water-holes, and then they stopped my workers from getting any water there."

26 Abimelek said, "I'm sorry, Abraham. I don't know who did that. I never heard about it, and you didn't tell me about it until now."

27 At that time, Abraham gave Abimelek some of his sheep, and goats, and cows, and the 2 men made strong promises to each other. 28 Then Abraham also picked out 7 young female sheep from his animals, and he put them to one side. 29 Abimelek asked him, "Why did you put these 7 sheep to one side? What do you mean by that?"

30 Abraham said, "I want to give you these sheep as a special present. Take them. That's how you can show people that you agree with me, that I dug that water-hole and that I own it."

31 From that time on, that place was called *Beersheba*. That name means *water-hole where they made a promise*. It was where Abraham and Abimelek made strong promises to each other.

32 After they made those promises, Abimelek and Ficol went back to their home, in Philistia country. 33 Then Abraham showed respect to God there in Beersheba. He called God by his special name *Yahweh*, and he planted a special tree to remember that place. Yahweh is the true God that lives for ever.

34 Abraham and all his people lived for a long time in the country that belonged to the Philistia mob.

Chapter 22

Abraham showed that he really trusted God

1 A long time later, God tested Abraham. God wanted to see if Abraham trusted him properly, and if Abraham would do anything God told him to do.

God called out, "Abraham."

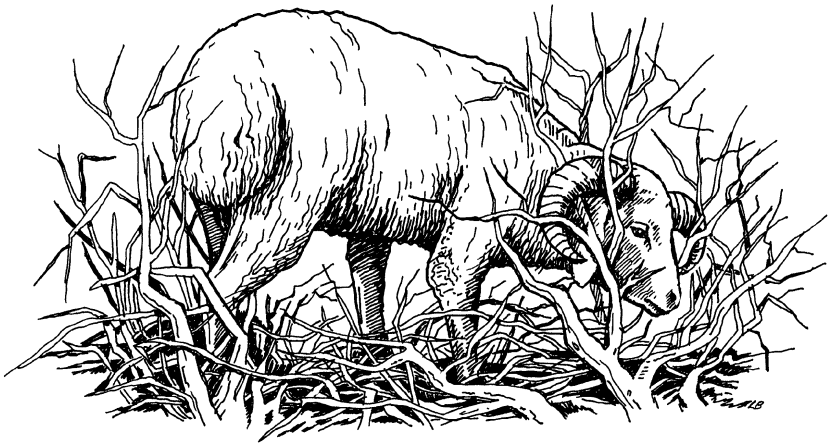
And Abraham said, "Yes, God, I am listening to you."

2 Then God said, "I know that you love your son Isaac, and he is your only son, but I want you to take him to the country called Moriah, to one of the mountains that I will show you. I want you to kill Isaac for me, and burn his body on a table made of stones, to show me that you respect me."*

3 Abraham listened to God, so the next morning, Abraham chopped up some wood for the fire and tied the wood on to his donkey. Then, he got Isaac and 2 of his work-men, and they all started to go to the place God told him about.

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* **21:22-23** Genesis 26:26 * **22:2** 2 Chronicles 3:1



Abraham saw a male sheep stuck in a tree

4 They walked for nearly 3 days, then
Abraham looked up and saw the place God
told him about. It was still a long way ahead
of them. 5 Abraham said to his work-men, "I
want you to stay here with the donkey. And
me and Isaac, we will go over there to show
respect to God. After we do that, we will
come back to you."
6 Abraham put the wood on to Isaac's back
for him to carry, and Abraham carried some
fire and his knife.
As they walked along, 7 Isaac said, "Dad."
Abraham said, "Yes, son?"
And Isaac said, "We've got the wood, and
the fire, but where is the sheep that we are
going to burn to show respect to God?"
8 Abraham said, "Son, God will give us the
sheep, so that we can show him respect."
And they kept on walking together.
9 Then they got to the place that God told
Abraham about, and Abraham piled up
some stones to make a table with a flat top,
and he put the wood on top of it. Then he
tied Isaac's hands and feet together, and
he put him on top of the wood. * 10 Then
Abraham picked up his sharp knife, and he
was just about to kill Isaac, 11 but God's angel
messenger called out to him from heaven.
He said, "Abraham, Abraham."
Abraham stopped, and he said, "Yes?"
12 The angel said, "Don't kill that boy.
Don't hurt him in any way. Now I know
that you respect God so much that you will
do anything he tells you to do. You will even
kill your only son for God."
13 Then Abraham looked behind him, and
he saw a male sheep with its head stuck
in a little tree. He quickly took Isaac off
the wood and untied the ropes from him.
Then Abraham grabbed that sheep, and
he killed it instead of his son, and he
burned it on that stone table, to show
respect to God.
14 And Abraham called that place, *God will
give you what you need*. Even today, people
say, "On God's mountain, he will give you
what you need."
15 Then God's angel messenger called
out again from heaven to Abraham. 16 He
said, "This is what God wants to tell
you, Abraham. God says, 'I am making
this really strong promise to you. You
can know that I will keep this promise,
because I am God. My name is Yahweh.

* **22:9** Hebrews 11:17-19; James 2:21

You listened to me, and you were ready to give me your only son. 17So I will do really good things for you. And I will give you a really big family. You see, lots of people will be born into your son's family later on, and they will become a really big mob of people. There will be lots and lots of them, just like there are lots of stars in the sky, and lots of little bits of sand at the beaches beside the sea. And when other nations get up to fight against them, your family will win, and they will take the towns from those other nations. * 18And I will use your family to do good things for all the nations in the world. I will do all this because you listened to me, and you did what I told you to do.' " *

19Then Abraham and Isaac walked back to the place where Abraham's work-men were waiting with the donkey, then they all went back to their camp at Beersheba.

Abraham and all his people camped there for a long time.

Abraham heard that his brother Nahor had sons

20Later on, somebody said to Abraham, "Your brother's wife Milcah, she had kids too. They are sons for your brother Nahor. 21The oldest son is called Uz. The next son is called Buz. The next son is called Kemuel, and he has a son called Aram. 22Milcah's other sons are called Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaf, and Bethuel."

23They were the 8 sons of Milcah, and Abraham's brother Nahor was their father.

After Nahor's son Bethuel grew up, he had a daughter called Rebekah.

24And Nahor had another wife, and she had sons too. That other wife's name was Rumah, and her sons were Tebar, Gaham, Tahash, and Macah.

Chapter 23

Sarah died and Abraham bought some land to bury her body

1Sarah lived a long time. She lived until she was 127 years old. 2Then she died in the town called Hebron, in the country called Canaan. Another name for that town is Kiriath Arba. Abraham was very sad, and he sat next to Sarah's body and cried.

3After that, Abraham got up and left the place where Sarah's body was, and he went to the town gate to talk to the people that owned that country. They were from the Heth tribe. 4Abraham said to them, "This is your land, and I am just camping here. I need to bury my wife's body. Can I buy some of your land to use for a grave?" *

5The Heth people said to Abraham, 6"Sir, we know that you are a great leader for your people, and we respect you a lot. We want you to use one of our best graves to bury your wife. Yes, you can pick any grave you want, and we will let you use it to bury your wife."

7Then Abraham got down on his knees in front of the Heth people, to show them respect. 8-9He said to them, "Thank you for saying that you will help me bury my wife. There is a cave in your country that I want to use for a grave. You know the man called Efron, the son of Zohar. He's one of you Heth people. He has some land in the place called Makpelah, and there's a cave in the rock at one end of that land. I want to put my wife's body in that cave. Can you ask Efron if I can buy that cave? I want to pay him the full price for it. And you can all watch me buy that cave from him. Then it will belong to me, and I can put my wife's body there."

10Efron was sitting there with the other

* **22:17** Hebrews 11:12 * **22:18** Acts 3:25 * **23:4** Hebrews 11:9, 13; Acts 7:16

Heth people at the town gate. He talked to Abraham so that everyone could hear him. 11 He said, "Sir, I will give you that cave, and I will give you the land around it too. I'm telling you straight in front of all my people, I will give you that cave and that land, so that you can bury your wife."

12 Then Abraham got down on his knees again in front of the Heth people, to show them respect. 13 He talked to Efron so that everyone could hear him. He said, "Thank you. All right, I will buy that cave and that land from you. Tell me the right price for it, and I will pay you. Then that land will belong to me, and I can bury my wife there. Do you agree?"

14 Then Efron said to Abraham, 15 "Sir, the right price for that land is just 4 kilograms of silver money, but let's not talk about money all day. The most important thing is that you can bury your wife." 16 And all the Heth people heard Efron say that price.

So Abraham agreed, and he got out his silver money. He weighed that money properly, and he gave 4 kilograms of it to Efron.

17-18 Then that land, and the cave, and all the trees on that land, they belonged to Abraham. That land was in the place called Makpelah, to the east of the place called Mamreh. All the Heth people that were at the town gate, they saw Abraham buy Efron's land, so they knew that it belonged to Abraham.

19 After that, Abraham put Sarah's body in the cave in that land. It was in the place called Makpelah, to the east of the place called Mamreh, in the country called Canaan. Another name for Mamreh is Hebron.

20 That is how Abraham bought some land and a cave from the Heth people, to use for a grave.

Chapter 24

Abraham sent his worker to find a wife for his son Isaac

1 Abraham was very old, and God was very good to him in every way.

2 Abraham had workers that looked after everything he owned. One of those workers was older than all the other workers, and he was in charge of all the other workers too. One day, Abraham talked to that oldest worker. He said, "I want you to make me a strong promise. So come here and put your hand under my leg." You see, in Abraham's culture, people sometimes made promises to each other that way. The person that made the promise, they put their hand under the other person's leg, and that showed that they had to keep their promise.

3 Abraham said to the worker, "I want you to make this promise with God listening. His name is Yahweh, and he is the boss of heaven and earth. Promise me that you will not get a wife for my son Isaac from this country that we are living in. Don't get him a wife from the Canaan people that live here. 4 No, I want you to go back to my home country and get a wife for Isaac from my relatives."

5 Then Abraham's worker said, "Yes, I will do that. But think about this. Maybe I will pick a woman to be Isaac's wife, and that woman will not want to leave her home country and come with me here, to Canaan country. Then what do you want me to do? Maybe I can come back here and get Isaac, and then I can take him to your home country to get married?"

6 Abraham said, "No way. Make sure that you never take Isaac back to my home country. He has to stay here in Canaan country. 7 You know that Yahweh my God is the boss in heaven. He took me away from my father's family and my home country,

and he brought me here to Canaan country. And God made me a strong promise. He said, 'I am going to give this country to all the people that will be born into your family later on.' "

Then Abraham said, "I know that God will help you find a wife for my son. Yes, God will send an angel worker to my home country to get things ready for you. When you get there, you will find a woman for my son Isaac to marry. 8 But if that woman doesn't want to leave her home country and come back here with you, then don't worry. You will not have to keep that promise any more. But I tell you again, you can never take my son Isaac back to my home country."

9 So Abraham's worker put his hand under Abraham's leg, and he made that strong promise, just like Abraham told him to. He said, "I promise that I will not get a wife for your son Isaac from the Canaan people that live here in this country. I promise that I will go back to your home country and get a wife for Isaac from your relatives."

10 Abraham wanted to give lots of really good presents to his relatives, so the worker got those presents ready, and he got 10 of Abraham's camels to carry everything, and he got some of Abraham's other workers to go with him. They all left that place, and they went north, all the way to Abraham's home country. That country was called Aram Naharayim. When they got to that country, they went towards the town where Abraham's brother Nahor lived.

Abraham's worker met Rebekah

11 Abraham's worker stopped near that town, next to a water-hole, and he let the camels lie down there to rest. It was nearly night time, and the young women that lived in that town, they were going to the water-hole to get water. They used to do that at the same time every day.

12 Abraham's worker saw those young women, and he prayed to God. He said, "Yahweh, you are the God of my boss Abraham. Please be very good to Abraham, just like you promised him. Please let me find a wife for Abraham's son Isaac today. 13 Look, I am standing next to this water-hole, and the young women that live in the town are coming out to get water. 14 Please show me which woman you picked to be Isaac's wife."

Then Abraham's worker said to God, "I will talk to one of those women, and I will say, 'Please give me a drink from your jar of water.' Maybe that woman will say to me, 'Yes, I will give you a drink, and I'll give your camels some water too.' If she says that, then I will know that she is the woman you picked to be Isaac's wife. And I will know that you have been very good to my boss Abraham, just like you promised him."

15 While Abraham's worker was still praying, a young woman walked out of the town with a jar on her shoulder. That woman's name was Rebekah, and her father's name was Bethuel. Bethuel's mother was Milcah, and Bethuel's father was Nahor. And Nahor was Abraham's brother.

16 Rebekah was a very beautiful young woman, and she wasn't married. She never slept with a man, like a woman sleeps with her husband.

Rebekah got to the water-hole, and she went down to the water and filled up her jar, and then she came back up.

17 Then Abraham's worker ran to meet Rebekah. He said to her, "Please let me drink a little bit of water from your jar."

18 Rebekah said, "Yes, please have a drink, sir." Straight away, she took the jar off her shoulder. Then she held the jar in her hands and gave Abraham's worker a drink.

19 After Rebekah finished giving him a drink, she said, "Now I will get water for



Rebekah got water for the camels

your camels too, until they have enough to drink." 20 Then she quickly poured the rest of the water from her jug for the camels to drink. Then she ran back to the water-hole to get more water. She kept on doing that until all the camels had enough to drink.

21 While Rebekah was getting the water, Abraham's worker kept on looking at her, but he didn't say anything. He waited to see if she was the woman that God picked to be Isaac's wife.

22 After the camels finished drinking, Abraham's worker got some of Abraham's presents out, and he gave Rebekah some jewellery. He gave her a gold nose ring and 2 heavy gold bracelets for her arms. That nose ring was made out of 6 grams of gold, and those bracelets were made out of 120 grams of gold each. 23 Then the worker said to Rebekah, "Please tell me, who is your father?" Then he said, "Me and my men, we want to stay here in this town tonight. Is there enough room for us to stay at your father's house?"

24 Rebekah said to the worker, "My father's name is Bethuel. His mother's name is Milcah, and his father's name is Nahor." 25 Then Rebekah said, "We have plenty of food for your camels, and we have plenty of dry grass for them to sleep on. And we have plenty of room for you and your men to stay with us tonight."

26 Then Abraham's worker knew that Rebekah was Abraham's relative, and he knew that God picked her to be Isaac's wife. So he got down on his knees and put his face near the ground, to thank God and show him respect. 27 He said, "Yahweh, you are really great. You are the God of my boss Abraham. You keep on being very good to him, just like you promised him. We can always trust you. You brought me straight to Abraham's relatives, so that I can get a wife for Isaac."

Abraham's worker talked to Rebekah's family

28 Rebekah ran home and told her family what happened. 29-30 She told them everything that Abraham's worker said to her at the water-hole, and she showed them the gold nose ring and the gold bracelets that Abraham's worker gave her. Rebekah's brother Laban was there, and straight away he ran to the water-hole to find Abraham's worker, and he found him standing there next to his camels. 31 Then Laban said to Abraham's worker, "Sir, I can see that God is good to you. Please, don't keep on standing here at the water-hole. Come home with me. I have a room ready for you, and I have a place for your camels to stay too."

32 So Abraham's worker, and the other men that were with him, they went to the house with Laban. Then they took the bags off the camels, and Laban got food for the camels to eat and dry grass for them to sleep on.

He also got water so that Abraham's worker and his men could wash their feet. 33 After that, he got Abraham's worker and his men some food. But Abraham's worker said, "I will not eat yet. First I have to tell you why I came here."

Laban said to him, "Yes, tell us."

34 So Abraham's worker talked to Laban and the other people in Rebekah's family. He said, "I work for Abraham. 35 His God Yahweh is really good to him, and now Abraham is very rich. Yes, God gave him a lot of sheep, and cows, and camels, and donkeys, and a lot of silver and gold. God also gave him a lot of men and women to work for him. 36 And Abraham has a son too. Yes, Abraham's wife Sarah had a baby boy when she was very old. That boy is a man now, and later, when Abraham dies, he will get everything that belonged to Abraham."

37 Then Abraham's worker said, "My boss Abraham got me to make him a strong promise. He said, 'Promise me that you will not get a wife for my son from this country that we are living in. Don't get him a wife from the Canaan people that live here. 38 No, you have to go to my father's family and my other relatives, and get a wife for my son.'

39 Then I said to my boss Abraham, 'Maybe I will pick a woman, and that woman will not want to leave her home country and come with me here, to Canaan country. Then what do you want me to do?'

40 Then my boss Abraham said, 'Listen, I trust Yahweh my God, and I always live his way. I know that he will send an angel worker to go with you and help you, so that you will find a wife for my son from my father's family. 41 But if you pick a woman to be my son's wife, and her relatives will not let her go with you, then don't worry. You will not have to keep that promise any more.' "

42 Then Abraham's worker said, "Today, I came to the water-hole that is near your town. Then I prayed to God. I said, 'Yahweh, you are the God of my boss Abraham. Please let me find a wife for Abraham's son today. 43-44 Look, I am standing next to this water-hole, and the young women that live in the town, they are coming out to get water. Please show me which one you picked for Abraham's son. I will talk to one of those women, and I will say, "Please let me drink a little bit of water from your jar." Maybe that woman will say to me, "Yes, I will give you a drink, and I'll give your camels some water too." If she says that, then I will know that she is the woman you picked for Abraham's son.'

45 While I was still praying quietly to God, Rebekah walked out of the town with a jar on her shoulder. She went down to the water-hole and got some water. Then I said to Rebekah, 'Please let me have a drink.' 46 Straight away, she took the jar off her shoulder and she said, 'Yes, have a drink. And I will get water for your camels too.' So I had a drink, and then she got water for my camels.

47 Then I said, 'Who is your father?' And she said, 'My father's name is Bethuel. His father's name is Nahor, and his mother's name is Milcah.' Then I knew that Rebekah is from Abraham's family, and I knew that God picked her to marry Abraham's son. So I gave Rebekah a gold nose ring and 2 gold bracelets for her arms. 48 Then I got down on my knees and put my face near the ground, to thank God and show him respect. I said, 'Yahweh, you are really great. You are the God of my boss Abraham. You brought me straight here to Abraham's relatives, so that I can get a wife for Abraham's son.' "

49 Abraham's worker kept on talking to Rebekah's family. He said, "Now I'm asking you to be very good and fair to my boss

Abraham. Will you let me take Rebekah to Canaan country, so that she can marry Abraham's son? Please tell me if you will say *yes* or *no*. Then I will know what I have to do after this."

50 Then Rebekah's brother Laban, and her father Bethuel, they talked to Abraham's worker. They said, "Those things that you told us, we know that God made them happen. So we can't argue with you. 51 Look, here is Rebekah. Take her with you to Canaan country, so that she can marry Abraham's son. That is what God wants."

52 Then Abraham's worker got down on his knees and put his face near the ground, to thank God and show him respect. 53 After that, the worker gave Rebekah and her family some presents from Abraham. He gave Rebekah some clothes, and some pretty things made out of silver and gold. And he also gave presents that cost a lot of money to Rebekah's brother Laban, and to her mother.

Rebekah left her family and went to Canaan country

54 Abraham's worker and his men ate some food, and then they stayed the night with Rebekah's family. The next morning, they got up, and Abraham's worker talked to Rebekah's family. He said, "Let me take Rebekah and go back to my boss Abraham."

55 But Rebekah's brother and mother said, "Let Rebekah stay here a bit longer, maybe 10 more days, and after that she can go with you."

56 Abraham's worker said, "Please don't make me wait any longer. You know that God picked Rebekah to marry Abraham's son, and he helped me find her. So please let her come with me now, so that we can go back to my boss Abraham."

57 Then Rebekah's brother and mother said, "All right, we will get Rebekah and ask her what she wants to do." 58 So they got Rebekah, and they said to her, "Do you want to go with this man to Canaan country now, so that you can marry Abraham's son?"

Rebekah said, "Yes, I will go now."

59 So Rebekah's family said to Abraham's worker, "All right, Rebekah can go with you and your men to Canaan country now. And she can take some women that work for our family. They can live in Canaan country with her and work for her there." One of those women used to look after Rebekah when she was a little girl.

60 Then Rebekah's family asked God to be good to Rebekah. They said to her,

"We are asking God to give you lots of kids and grand-kids,
so that your family will become a really big mob of people.
And we are asking God to make them strong,
so that when other people fight against your mob, your mob will win,
and then your mob will take the towns that belonged to those other people."

61 Then Rebekah and her working women, they got on camels, and they went with Abraham's worker and his men, to go all the way to Canaan country.

Isaac met Rebekah and married her

62 Abraham's son Isaac was living in Canaan country. You see, before this time, Isaac went south, away from Abraham's camp, and he made his camp in the south part of the country called the Negev, near a water-hole. That water-hole was called *the water-hole that belongs to God, he is alive and sees me*. Then when Abraham's worker was away in Haran, Isaac came back home.

63 Then one afternoon, when it was nearly night time, Isaac went out to the grass lands to think about things. Then he looked up and saw camels coming, so he walked out to meet them. 64 Rebekah was riding on one

of those camels, and she looked up and saw Isaac coming towards them. Straight away, she got off her camel. 65 Then she said to Abraham's worker, "I can see a man walking towards us. Who is he?"

The worker said, "He is my boss Isaac."

Rebekah didn't want Isaac to see her face, so she got a scarf and put it over her head. You see, in that culture, that is what a woman did when she met the man that she was going to marry. 66 Then Abraham's worker talked to Isaac, and he told Isaac everything that happened.

67 There was a tent there that used to belong to Isaac's mother Sarah. Isaac took Rebekah into that tent, and Rebekah became Isaac's wife. Isaac loved Rebekah.

Some time before this, Isaac's mother Sarah died, so Isaac was sad. But after he married Rebekah, he was happy again.

Chapter 25

Abraham had other sons

1 Abraham married another woman too. Her name was Keturah. 2 Abraham and Keturah had 6 sons together. Their names were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuwah.

3 After Jokshan grew up, he had 2 sons. Their names were Sheba and Dedan. The tribes that were from Dedan and his family were the Ashur mob, the Letush mob, and the Leyum mob.

4 After Midian grew up, he had 5 sons. Their names were Efah, Efer, Hanok, Abida, and Eldah.

All of those men were Keturah's sons and grand-sons.

5 One day Abraham said, "After I die, I want my son Isaac to have everything that I own. He is the son of my 1st wife Sarah." 6 But Abraham wanted to be good to his other sons too, those sons that he had with his other wives. So Abraham gave presents to those other sons. Then he sent them to go and live in a country to the east, a long way away from his son Isaac.

Abraham died

7-8 Abraham lived a long time, until he was a very old man. He lived until he was 175 years old. He had a good long life, then he breathed for the last time, and he died.

9-10 Then Abraham's 2 oldest sons, Isaac and Ishmael, they took Abraham's body to the cave at the place called Makpelah, to the east of the place called Mamreh. You see, a long time before that, Abraham bought that cave and the land around it from a man called Efron. Efron's father was called Zohar, and they were from the Heth tribe. And Abraham put his wife Sarah's body in that cave. So after Abraham died, Isaac and Ishmael put his body in that cave, next to Sarah's body. *

11 After that, Abraham's son Isaac went to live near the water-hole called *the water-hole that belongs to God, he is alive and sees me*. And God kept on being good to Isaac. *

The story of Ishmael's family

12 This is the story about Ishmael's family. Ishmael was Abraham's oldest son, and his mother's name was Hagar. Hagar was from Egypt country, and she worked for Abraham's wife Sarah.

13 Ishmael had 12 sons. His oldest son was called Nebayoth, and his next son was called Kedar, then Adbeel, Mibsam, 14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15 Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Nafish, and Kedemah. 16 Later on, those 12 sons of Ishmael became the bosses of 12 tribes, and all those tribes lived in their own camps.

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* **25:9-10** Genesis 23:3-16 * **25:11** Genesis 16:14

17 Ishmael lived until he was 137 years old.
Then he breathed for the last time, and he
died.
18 Ishmael's sons and their tribes, they
went and lived far away from their other
relatives. They went and lived between the
place called Havilah and the place called
Shur, near Egypt country. Shur is also near
the place called Ashur.

Isaac and Rebekah had 2 sons

19 This is the story about Abraham's son Isaac
and his family.
20 When Isaac was 40 years old, he married
Rebekah. Her family was from the Aram
tribe, and they lived in Paddan Aram
country. Her father's name was Bethuel, and
her brother's name was Laban.
21 At first, after Isaac and Rebekah got
married, they didn't have any kids. Rebekah
just couldn't have a baby. So Isaac prayed
strongly to God. He said, "Please let Rebekah
have a baby." God listened to Isaac, and
God made 2 baby boys start growing inside
Rebekah. 22 But while those babies were still
inside her, they started to fight with each
other. Rebekah felt them moving inside her,
and she was worried about it. So she said to
God, "Why is this happening to me?"
23 God said to Rebekah,

"There are 2 babies inside you. They
will grow up and have kids, and
their kids will become 2 nations.
Right from the start, those 2 nations
will fight against each other.
One of those nations will be stronger
than the other nation.
Yes, the younger son's nation will be
stronger, and his nation will be boss
over the older son's nation."*

24 Later on, the time came for Rebekah
to have her babies, and 2 boys were born.
25 The 1st baby that was born, his skin colour
was a bit red. He also had hair all over his
body, like an animal skin. Isaac and Rebekah
named that baby *Esau*. 26 Straight away, the
2nd baby was born. And when that baby
came out, he was holding the back of Esau's
foot. So Isaac and Rebekah named that baby
Jacob. That name means *he holds the back
of the foot*.
Isaac was 60 years old when Rebekah had
those 2 babies.

Esau let Jacob be the next leader for their family

27 Isaac and Rebekah's sons grew up and
became men. Their son Esau became a good
hunter. He liked to go out bush and catch
wild animals to eat. But their son Jacob was a
quiet man, and he liked to stay at their camp.
28 Isaac loved to eat the wild animals that
Esau caught. So Isaac loved Esau more than
Jacob. But Rebekah loved Jacob more than
Esau.
29 One day, while Esau was out bush, Jacob
cooked some soup with red beans in it.
While Jacob was cooking that soup, Esau
came back home, and he was really tired and
hungry. 30-34 So Esau said to Jacob, "Please
let me eat some of that red soup right now.
I'm really tired and hungry."*
Jacob said to Esau, "First, I want you to
do something for me. You are the oldest son
in our family. That means you are the most
important son, and you will be the next
leader for our family. But I want to be the
most important son, instead of you. I want
to be the next leader for our family. So you
have to promise that you will let me be the
most important son now, instead of you.
Then you can eat some soup."
Esau said, "Look, I'm so tired and hungry
that I'm going to die. So it doesn't matter if

* **25:23** Romans 9:12 * **25:30-34** Hebrews 12:16


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Esau really wanted some soup, so he promised that Jacob can be the next leader for their family

I stop being the next leader for our family. I just need some food right now."

But Jacob said, "First, you have to make me that strong promise." So Esau did what Jacob asked. He said to Jacob, "I promise that you can be the most important son in our family, instead of me, and you can be the next leader for our family." Then Jacob gave Esau some of that soup with red beans in it, and some bread. Esau ate that red soup and bread, and then he got up and left.

That's the story about how Esau let Jacob be the most important son. So Esau wasn't the most important son any more, but he didn't care.

Later on, people sometimes called Esau a different name. They called him *Edom*. That name means *red*, like that red soup.

Chapter 26

God made the same promise to Isaac that he made to Abraham

1 At another time, there was no rain and no food plants growing in the country where Isaac and Rebekah lived. It was like the time when there was no rain a long time before, while Abraham was still alive.

So Isaac and his family left that country, and they went to the town called Gerar, in Philistia country. The big boss of the Philistia people was called Abimelek, and he lived in that town.

2 God showed himself to Isaac in that place, and God said, "Don't go to Egypt country to try to get food. I'm going to tell you where you have to live. 3-4 I'm telling you to camp here, in this country. You don't need to worry. I will be with you, to take care of you. I will keep on being good to you. Remember that strong promise that I made to your father Abraham. Now I'm making the same promise to you. I will give you a really big family. You see, lots of kids and grand-kids will be born into your family later on, and they will become a really big mob of people. There will be lots and lots of them, just like there are lots of stars in the sky. And I will give them all of this country, and I will use them to do good things for all the nations in the world.* 5 You know, your father Abraham listened to me and did what I told him to do. That's why I'm making that same promise to you that I made to him."

6 So Isaac set up his camp in Gerar, just like God told him to.

Isaac tried to trick the men in Gerar

7 The men in Gerar saw Isaac's wife Rebekah, and they asked Isaac, "Who is that woman?"*

You know, Rebekah was very beautiful. So Isaac got worried about those men. He thought, "Maybe those men want to marry Rebekah. If I tell them that she is my wife, maybe they will kill me to get her."

So Isaac lied and said, "She is my sister."

8 After that, Isaac and Rebekah lived in Gerar for a long time. But one day Abimelek, the big boss of the Philistia people, he looked out of his window, and he saw Isaac

* **26:3-4** Genesis 12:2-3, 7; 15:5; 22:16-18; Acts 3:25 * **26:7** Genesis 12:13; 20:2

hugging Rebekah. Then Abimelek knew that Rebekah was Isaac's wife. 9 So Abimelek sent somebody to get Isaac. Then Abimelek said to Isaac, "Now I know that Rebekah is your wife. Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?"

Isaac said, "I was too frightened to say, 'She is my wife.' I thought that the men in Gerar will kill me and take Rebekah for themselves. So I said, 'She is my sister.' "

10 Then Abimelek was angry. He said to Isaac, "That was a bad thing that you did to us. You didn't tell us that Rebekah is your wife. We thought that she is not married. What if one of my men slept with her, like men sleep with their wives? Think about that. Then me and all my people, we would be guilty of that bad thing."

11 After that, Abimelek talked strongly to all the people in Gerar. He said, "If any one of you hurts Isaac or Rebekah, I will kill you."

God was good to Isaac

12 While Isaac lived in Gerar, he planted seeds in the ground. And God was really good to Isaac. That same year, those seeds grew into really good food plants, so Isaac had lots and lots of food. 13 And Isaac got more and more money and good things, and he became very rich. 14 He had lots of sheep and cows, and lots of people that worked for him.

The Philistia people that lived in Gerar, they saw that Isaac was very rich, and they got jealous of him. 15 So they got dirt and filled up the water-holes that Isaac was using. A long time before that, Isaac's father Abraham got his workers to dig those water-holes.

Isaac dug some water-holes

16 Then Abimelek, the big boss of the Philistia people, he said to Isaac, "Listen, you and your mob are a lot stronger than us now, so I don't want you to keep on living here. You have to leave this place."

17 So Isaac and his family left Gerar, and they moved their camp to a place called the Valley of Gerar, and they lived in that place for a long time.

18 A long time before this, when Isaac's father Abraham was alive, Abraham and his workers dug lots of water-holes in that place, and Abraham gave all those water-holes names. But then, after Abraham died, the Philistia people filled up all those water-holes with dirt, so nobody could get water from them. Now, when Isaac moved there, he got his workers to take the dirt out of those water-holes, so that everybody could get water again. And Isaac gave those water-holes the same names that Abraham gave them a long time before.

19 One day, Isaac's workers dug a new water-hole in the valley, and they found fresh running water in that hole. 20 But there were some men there from Gerar, looking after their animals, and those men came and argued with the men that looked after Isaac's animals. The men from Gerar said, "That water belongs to us." So Isaac called



The Gerar men argued with Isaac's workers about the water-hole

that water-hole *Esek*. That name means *they argue*.

21 After that, Isaac's workers dug another water-hole, but the men from Gerar came and argued with them about that water-hole too. So Isaac called that water-hole *Sitnah*. That name means *they are enemies*.

22 Then Isaac moved his camp to a new place, and his workers dug a water-hole in that place. This time, nobody argued with them about the water-hole. So Isaac called that water-hole *Rehoboth*. That name means *big place*. And Isaac said, "God has given us a big place to live. Our family will grow here, and our life will be good."

God talked to Isaac at Beersheba

23 Later on, Isaac moved his camp to the place called Beersheba.

24 When Isaac got to Beersheba, that same night, God showed himself to Isaac. God said, "I am God. I am the one that looked after your father Abraham. Don't be frightened. I am here with you, to take care of you. I will be good to you, and I will give you a really big family, just like I promised to your father Abraham."

25 Then Isaac wanted to show respect to God, so he piled up stones to make a table with a flat top. It was a special place for him to burn animals to show right respect to God. Then Isaac prayed to God, and he called God by his special name *Yahweh*.

After that, Isaac set up his camp, and he sent his workers to go and dig a water-hole.

Isaac and Abimelek made an agreement

26 Abimelek, the big boss of the Philistia mob, he wanted to talk to Isaac again. So he left his home in Gerar, and he went to Isaac's camp in Beersheba. He took 2 other men with him. One of those men was called Ahuzath, and he was Abimelek's helper. The other man was called Ficol, and he was the leader of Abimelek's army.

27 When Isaac saw Abimelek and the 2 other men, he was shocked, and he said, "You told me to leave your country, so I know you hate me. So why did you come here to talk to me?"

28 Then they said to Isaac, "We know that Yahweh your God is with you, and he helps you with everything you do. So we want you to make an agreement with us. 29 We want you to promise that you will never hurt us or our people. Remember that time when you lived in our country. We never hurt you, and we always did good things for you. Even when we told you to leave our country, we didn't make trouble for you. After that, your God kept on being good to you. That's why we are asking you to promise that you will never hurt us."

30 Then Isaac agreed to make that promise, and he got lots of good food ready for Abimelek and the other 2 men. They all ate that food together, and then they stayed the night in that place. 31 Early the next morning, they got up, and Isaac and Abimelek made strong promises to each other. They said, "I promise that I will never hurt you or your people." So Isaac and Abimelek both felt happy and quiet inside themselves. Then Isaac said *goodbye* to Abimelek and the other 2 men, and they left to go back to their home country.

32 Later that day, Isaac's workers came to him, and they said, "We dug a water-hole, just like you said, and we found water." 33 Then Isaac called that water-hole *Sheba*. That name means *promise*. So people kept on calling the town near there *Beersheba*. That name means *water-hole where they made a promise*. They still use that town's name today.

Esau married 2 women

34 Isaac and Rebekah's oldest son was called Esau. When Esau was 40 years old, he

married 2 women. One of those women was called Judith. Her father was called Beeri, and he was from the Heth tribe. The other woman was called Basemath. Her father was called Elon, and he was from the Heth tribe too. 35 Those 2 women gave Isaac and Rebekah a lot of trouble, and that made them very sad.

Chapter 27

Rebekah and Jacob tricked Isaac

1 A long time later, when Isaac was old, his eyes got really weak and he couldn't see. One day, Isaac sent somebody to get his oldest son Esau. Then Esau came to him, and Isaac said, "My son."

And Esau said, "Yes, Father?"

2 And Isaac said, "Listen, I am very old. Maybe I will die soon. 3-4 You are my oldest son, so you will be the next leader for our family. I have to do a ceremony with you, to show that you will be the next leader. First, I want you to get your bow and arrows. Go out bush and kill a wild animal, then cook it and make some good food for me, just the way I like it. Then bring me that food, and I will eat it. Then I will do that ceremony with you, to show that you are the next leader for our family. I will ask God to be good to you as the next leader for our family. I have to do that ceremony before I die."

5 Isaac's wife Rebekah was nearby, and she heard Isaac say those things to Esau. But Isaac didn't know that she heard him.

After that, Esau did what Isaac told him to do. He got his bow and arrows, and he went out bush to look for a wild animal to kill.

6 Straight away, Rebekah talked to her son Jacob. She said, "I heard your father talk to your brother Esau. 7 Your father said, 'Go and kill a wild animal and make some good food for me. I will eat that food, and then I will do a ceremony with you. I will ask God to be good to you as the next leader for our family, and I know that God will listen. I have to do that ceremony before I die.'"

8 Then Rebekah said to Jacob, "My son, I want you to be the next leader for our family, not your brother Esau. So listen to me and do what I say. 9 Go to the place where we keep our goats. Get 2 really good young goats and bring them back here. I will cook those goats and make some good food for your father, just the way he likes it. 10 Then I will give you that food to take to your father. He can't see, so he will think that you are Esau, and he will do that ceremony with you before he dies. He will ask God to be good to you as the next leader for our family."

11 But Jacob said to Rebekah, "You know that my brother Esau has hair all over his skin. But I have smooth skin, I don't have any hair on my skin. 12 Maybe my father will touch my smooth skin, and then he will know that I am Jacob, not Esau. And he will know that I am tricking him. Then my father will not ask God to be good to me. No, he will ask God to curse me, and God will make trouble for me."

13 But Rebekah said, "Don't worry. If God wants to curse you, I will ask him to curse me instead. Just do what I say. Go and get those 2 young goats for me."

14 So Jacob went and got 2 young goats, and he took them to his mother Rebekah. She cooked those goats, and she made some good food, just the way Jacob's father liked it. 15 Rebekah's older son Esau, his best clothes were in Rebekah's tent, so Rebekah got those clothes and gave them to her younger son Jacob, and she told him to put them on. 16 Then she took some bits of hairy skin from the 2 goats, and she tied those bits of skin around Jacob's arms and neck. 17 Then Rebekah gave Jacob the good food that she made, and some bread. 18 Jacob took that food, and he went to his father Isaac's room.



Jacob pretended that he was his brother Esau

Jacob said, "Father." And Isaac said, "Yes, son. Who are you? Are you Esau, or are you Jacob?"

19 Then Jacob lied and said, "I am Esau, your older son. I killed a wild animal and I made some good food for you, just like you said. Sit up and eat it. Then you can ask God to be good to me as the next leader for our family."

20 But Isaac said, "My son, how did you get that wild animal so quickly?"

Jacob lied again and said, "God, the one that looks after you, he let me find that wild animal really quickly."

21 Then Isaac said, "My son, come close to me, so that I can touch your arms. If your arms are hairy, then I will know that you really are my son Esau."

22 So Jacob went close to his father Isaac, and Isaac touched Jacob's arms. Then Isaac said, "Your voice is like Jacob's voice, but your arms are like Esau's arms. They are really hairy." You see, when Isaac touched Jacob's arms, he touched those bits of hairy goat skin that Rebekah tied around Jacob's arms. That's the reason why Isaac said, "Your arms are like Esau's arms."

23 So Isaac didn't know that Jacob tricked him. He thought, "Now I know that this is Esau, because his arms are really hairy. I will eat that food that he made, and then I will ask God to be good to him as the next leader for our family."

24 Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Are you really my son Esau?"

And Jacob lied and said, "Yes, I am."

25 So Isaac said, "My son, bring me that food that you made. I will eat that food, and then I will ask God to be good to you as the next leader for our family." Then Jacob gave Isaac that food, and Isaac ate it. Jacob also gave Isaac some wine, and Isaac drank it.

26 Then Isaac said to Jacob, "My son, come close to me and kiss me on the cheek." 27 So Jacob went close to Isaac and kissed him, and Isaac smelled the clothes that Jacob was wearing, those clothes that belonged to Esau. Then Isaac thought again, "Yes, I know that this is Esau."*

Then Isaac asked God to be good to his son and to the people born into his son's family later on. He said,

"My son smells like land where God
makes lots of good things grow.
28 I'm asking God to send water to make
your land wet,
so that your land will grow really good
food plants,
and so that you will have lots of food
and wine.
29 I'm asking God to make you boss over
other nations,*
so that those other nations will work
for you and show you respect.
I'm asking God to make you boss over
your relatives,
so that they will show you respect.
If anyone makes trouble for you, I'm
asking God to curse them,
but if anyone is good to you, I'm asking
God to be good to them."

* **27:27** Hebrews 11:20 * **27:29** Genesis 12:3

30 After Isaac finished saying those things,
Jacob left Isaac's room.

Esau found out that Jacob cheated him

Straight away after that, Esau came home.
He had a wild animal that he killed out
bush. 31 Esau cooked that wild animal and
made some good food, just like Rebekah did.
Then Esau took that food to his father Isaac.
Esau said, "My father, I killed a wild animal
and cooked it for you. Please sit up and eat
this good food. Then you can ask God to be
good to me as the next leader for our family."

32 Then Isaac said to him, "Who are you?"

And Esau said, "I am your son Esau, your
older son."

33 Isaac got a big shock, and his body
started to shake. Isaac said, "But another
man already killed a wild animal and made
food for me. He gave that food to me, and
I ate it. I want to know, who was that man?
I asked God to be good to him, as the next
leader for our family, and I know for sure
that God will do that."



Esau killed an animal to make food for his father Isaac

34 Then Esau got really upset, and he yelled
out. Then he said, "My father, please ask God
to be good to me too."

35 But Isaac said, "No, I can't do that. Your
brother Jacob tricked me. He pretended to
be you, and he got me to do that ceremony
with him, instead of you. I asked God to be
good to him, and he will be the next leader
for our family."

36 Then Esau got angry, and he said, "My
brother is called Jacob, and that is the
right name for him. That name can mean
he cheats. Yes, Jacob cheated me 2 times.
First, he made me promise that I will let
him be the most important son, instead of
me.* And look, now he got our father to do
that ceremony with him, and he will be the
next leader for our family."

Then Esau talked to Isaac again. He said,
"Is there something else that you can ask God
to do for me? Please ask God to do something
good for me too."

37 But Isaac said, "No, I can't do that. I
made your brother Jacob boss over you, and
I made him boss over all his other relatives
too, so that they will have to work for him.
And I asked God to keep giving Jacob plenty
of good food and wine. So there's nothing I
can ask God to do for you, my son."

38 Then Esau kept on talking to Isaac. He
said, "Please, my father, ask God to do just
one good thing for me. Please ask God to
be good to me too." Then Esau started to
cry really loud.*

39 Then his father Isaac said to him,

"I'm telling you that you and the
people born into your family later
on, you will live in a place where the
ground is dry.
God won't send any water to wet that
land, and there won't be any good
food plants growing there.*

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* **27:36** Genesis 25:29-34 * **27:38** Hebrews 12:17 * **27:39** Hebrews 11:20

40 Your tribe will always fight and steal
from other people to get their food.
Your brother's tribe will be boss over
your tribe.
But one day, your tribe will fight back,
and then your brother's tribe will not
be boss over your tribe any more."*

Esau wanted to kill Jacob

41 Esau was really angry, because Jacob tricked their father, and their father made Jacob the next leader for their family. So Esau hated Jacob. And Esau said to himself, "My father is going to die soon. When he dies, we will all cry for a time, and then I will kill my brother Jacob."

42 But somebody told Rebekah that her older son Esau said those things. So Rebekah sent somebody to get her younger son Jacob. Then she said to Jacob, "Listen. Your brother Esau wants to do payback to you. He is planning to kill you. 43 So, my son, do what I say. Leave this place straight away, and go quickly to the town called Haran, in Paddan Aram country. My brother Laban lives in that place. 44 Stay with Laban for a little while, until your brother Esau stops being angry. 45 One day, Esau will forget about what you did, and he will not be angry with you any more. Then I will send somebody to Haran to get you, and you can come back here. But if you stay here now, Esau will kill you, and then somebody else will do payback to Esau and kill him. I don't want both of you to die on the same day. So you have to go away from this place."

Rebekah talked to Isaac about a wife for Jacob

46 Then Rebekah went and talked to her husband Isaac. She wanted Isaac to send Jacob away, so that Jacob will be safe from his brother Esau. But she didn't tell Isaac what she said to Jacob. She said, "You know those 2 women that our son Esau married. They are from the Heth tribe, and their people live here in Canaan country. Those women make my life rubbish. If our son Jacob keeps on living here in Canaan country, maybe he will marry a woman from the Heth tribe too. Then my life will be so rubbish, I will want to die."

Chapter 28

Jacob left home

1 Isaac sent somebody to get Jacob, and Jacob came to Isaac's room. Then Isaac talked strongly to Jacob. Isaac said, "My son, don't marry any women that live here in Canaan country. 2 I want you to marry somebody from our family. So leave this place straight away, and go to Paddan Aram country. Your mother's father Bethuel, he lives in that place. And your mother's brother Laban, he lives there too. I want you to pick one of Laban's daughters and marry her."

3 Then Isaac said, "God has power over everything. So I'm asking God to be good to you. I'm asking him to give you lots of kids and grand-kids, so that your family will grow into lots of different tribes. 4 And I'm asking him to give all this country to you and the people that will be born into your family later on. Right now, this country doesn't belong to you. You are just camping here. But one day, your family will take this country for themselves, just like God promised to your grand-father Abraham."*

5 Then Isaac sent Jacob away, and Jacob left to go to his uncle Laban in Paddan Aram country. Laban was the brother of Rebekah, she was Jacob and Esau's mother. Laban and Rebekah's father was Bethuel, and he was from the Aram tribe.

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* **27:40** Genesis 36:8; 2 Kings 8:20 * **28:4** Genesis 17:4-8

Esau married another woman

6 Esau found out that Isaac asked God to be
good to Jacob, and that Isaac said to Jacob,
"Don't marry any of the women that live here
in Canaan country." And he found out that
Isaac sent Jacob to Paddan Aram country,
to find a wife there. 7 And Esau knew that
Jacob left to go to Paddan Aram country,
just like his father and mother told Jacob to.
8 Then Esau knew that his father Isaac didn't
like the women from Canaan country. 9 Esau
already had 2 wives, and they were both
from Canaan country. So he thought, "I have
to marry a woman from our own family, so
that my father will be happy with me again."

So Esau went to the place where his uncle Ishmael lived. Ishmael was Abraham's son. And Esau married Ishmael's daughter Mahalath. Her oldest brother was called Nebayoth.

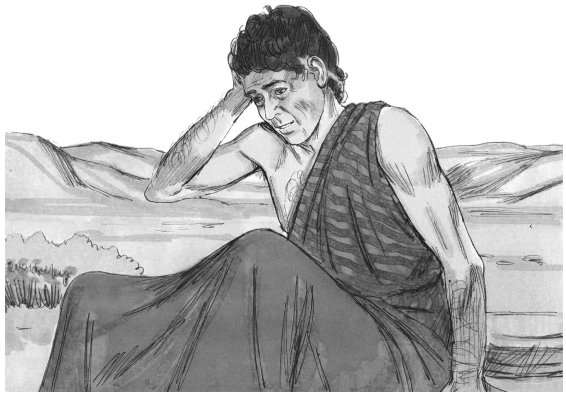
Then Esau had 3 wives.

Jacob saw God in a dream

10 This is the story about what happened to
Jacob next, after his father Isaac sent him
away to find a wife.

Jacob left his home in Beersheba, and he started to go towards the town called Haran, in Paddan Aram country. 11 He kept on walking until the sun started to go down. Then he stopped for the night. There were lots of stones in that place, and Jacob got one of those stones, and he put it on the ground at his head. Then he lay down and went to sleep.

12 While Jacob was asleep, he had a dream.
In that dream, he saw lots of steps going
up from the earth, and those steps went all
the way up into the sky. And Jacob saw lots
of God's angel messengers on those steps.
Some of those angel messengers were going
up the steps towards the sky, and some of



Jacob had a dream

them were going down the steps towards the
earth.* 13 Then Jacob saw God standing near
him. And God talked to Jacob. He said, "I am
God, my name is Yahweh. I am the one that
looked after your grand-father Abraham and
your father Isaac. I'm making you a promise
about this country where you are sleeping
right now. I will give all this country to
you and to the people that will be born
into your family later on.* 14 Lots of people
will be born into your family, and they will
become a really big mob of people. There
will be lots and lots of them, just like there
are lots of little bits of dirt on the ground.
And those people in your family, they will
spread out a long way, and they will live in
lots of different places. Some of them will
go west, some of them will go east, some
of them will go north, and some of them
will go south. And I will use your family
to do good things for all the families in the
world.* 15 You can be sure that I will be with
you wherever you go. I will look after you
and I will keep you safe. Right now, you are
going to another country. But one day, I will
bring you back to this country again. Yes, I
will stay with you, and I will keep all these
promises that I'm making to you."

* **28:12** John 1:51 * **28:13** Genesis 13:14-15 * **28:14** Genesis 12:3; 22:18

16 Then Jacob woke up, and he said, "Now I
know that God is in this place. I didn't know
that before, but now I do." 17 So Jacob got
frightened. He said, "This place frightens
me. I know for sure that God lives here. This
place joins up with heaven."
18 Early the next morning, Jacob picked up
the stone that was at his head, and he stood
it up and poured olive oil on top of it. Jacob
did those things to show that God was in
that place, and that place was special. 19 And
Jacob named that place *Bethel*. That name
means *God's house*. At that time, the town
nearby was called Luz. But later, people
called that town Bethel.
20-22 Jacob prayed to God. He said, "God,
you know that I'm walking a long way to
Haran. Please stay with me and look after
me while I'm away. Please give me food to
eat and clothes to wear. And please keep me
safe, so that one day I can go back home to
my family."
Then Jacob made promises to God. He
said, "God, if you will do all those things
that I asked, then I will respect you properly,
and you Yahweh will be my God. And this
special stone that I put here, it will show
people that you are here in this place, and
people can come here to show you respect.
And I promise that whenever you give me
good things, I will always split them up into
10 parts and give one part back to you."

Chapter 29

Jacob went to Haran

1 Then Jacob left that place, and he kept on
walking towards the east, until he got to
Paddan Aram country. 2-3 Then Jacob looked
at the land that was in front of him, and he
saw a water-hole with a really big flat stone
over the top, like a lid. And he saw 3 mobs
of sheep lying next to that water-hole. There
were some work-men there that looked after
those sheep. Every day, those work-men used
to meet together at that water-hole with
their sheep, and then they worked together
to move that big stone that was on top of
the water-hole, and they got water for their
sheep to drink. Then every day they put that
big stone on top of the water-hole again.
4 Jacob went and talked to those work-
men. He said, "Hello. Where do you mob
come from?"
The work-men said, "We are from Haran."
5 Then Jacob said, "Do you know Laban?
His grand-father's name is Nahor."
The work-men said, "Yes, we know him."
6 Jacob said, "How is he?"
The work-men said, "He is good." Then
they said, "Look over there. Laban's daughter
Rachel is coming here with some sheep."
7 Then Jacob talked to the work-men
again. He said, "Why are you mob waiting
here, next to the water-hole? It's only the
middle of the day. It's too early to bring
your animals together to take them home.
You should get water from the water-hole
for your sheep to drink, and then take your
sheep away and find grass for them to eat."
8 But the work-men said, "No, we can't do
that yet. We always wait until all the other
work-men come here with their sheep. After
that, we will move that big stone that is on
top of the water-hole, and then we will get
water for our sheep to drink."
9 While Jacob and the work-men were
still talking to each other, Laban's daughter
Rachel came to the water-hole with some
sheep. Those sheep belonged to Rachel's
father Laban, and Rachel looked after those
sheep for her father.
10 As soon as Jacob saw Rachel and those
sheep, he felt really happy, because Rachel
was his relative. Her father Laban was the
brother of Jacob's mother. So Jacob quickly
went to the water-hole, and he moved that
big stone that was on top of the water-hole,

and he got water for Laban's sheep to drink.
11 Then he kissed Rachel on the cheek, and
he started to cry out loud because he was
so happy. 12 Jacob said to Rachel, "I am
your father's relative. My mother's name
is Rebekah, and she is your father's sister."

Then Rachel ran home and told her father
Laban what happened.

13 As soon as Laban heard that his sister's
son Jacob came to Haran, he ran to meet
Jacob. Then Laban hugged Jacob and kissed
him on the cheek, and he took Jacob to
his house. And Jacob told Laban about the
things that happened to him. 14 Then Laban
talked to Jacob, and he said, "You and me,
we are both from the same family." After
that, Jacob stayed at Laban's house for one
month, and he worked for Laban.

Jacob married Leah and Rachel

15-18 Jacob's uncle Laban had 2 daughters.
His older daughter was called Leah, and
his younger daughter was called Rachel.
Leah had pretty eyes, but Rachel was really
beautiful. So Jacob loved Rachel, and he
wanted to marry her.

After one month, Laban talked to Jacob.
Laban said, "You are working for me, but I
am not paying you anything, because you
are my relative. Is that fair? No way. I want
to start paying you for the work that you
do for me. Tell me, how much do you want
me to pay you?"

Jacob said, "You don't have to pay me
anything. I just want to marry Rachel, your
younger daughter. If I work for you for 7
years, will you give her to me to marry?"

19 Then Laban said, "All right. You are our
relative, so it's best for Rachel to marry you,
not another man. Stay here and work for
me for 7 years, and then I will give her to
you to marry."

20 So Jacob worked for Laban for 7 years,
so that he could marry Rachel. Jacob really
loved Rachel, and he felt really happy that
he was going to marry her. He was so happy
that those 7 years only felt like a few days.

21 At the end of those 7 years, Jacob said
to Laban, "I worked for you for 7 years, just
like you said. So now, let me marry your
daughter Rachel."

22 Then Laban made a wedding party. He
got all the people that lived in that place to
come to that wedding party, and he gave
them lots of good food.

23 But then, that night, Laban tricked Jacob.
Laban took his daughter Leah to Jacob's
room, instead of his daughter Rachel. Then
Jacob slept with Leah, like a man sleeps
with his wife. But Jacob didn't know that
he slept with Leah. He thought that he slept
with Rachel.

24-30 The next morning, Jacob saw that
Leah was in his room, instead of Rachel. So
Jacob was angry, and he went and talked to
Laban. Jacob said, "You told me that I have
to work for you for 7 years, and then I can
marry Rachel. So I worked those 7 years,
just like you said, but then you tricked me.
You gave me Leah to be my wife, instead
of Rachel. Why did you do that bad thing
to me?"

Laban said, "Leah is my older daughter,
and Rachel is my younger daughter. In our
culture, the older daughter always gets
married first. That's the reason why I gave
you Leah to be your wife, instead of Rachel."

Then Laban said, "Listen, your wedding
party will finish in one week. So spend this
week with Leah, and after that, I will give
you Rachel to marry as well. But after you
marry Rachel, you have to work for me for
7 more years."

Jacob agreed to do what Laban said. After
one week, Jacob and Leah's wedding party
finished. Then Laban gave his daughter
Rachel to Jacob, and Jacob married Rachel
as well. And Jacob slept with Rachel, like

a man sleeps with his wife. So then Jacob had 2 wives, but he loved Rachel more than Leah.

Laban had some women that worked for him. And Laban gave one of those women to his daughter Leah, to work for her, and he gave another of those women to his daughter Rachel, to work for her. The woman that worked for Leah was called Zilpah, and the woman that worked for Rachel was called Bilhah.

Then Jacob worked for Laban for 7 more years.

Leah had 4 sons

31 Jacob didn't love his wife Leah. He only loved his wife Rachel. And God saw that Jacob didn't love Leah. So God felt sorry for Leah, and he let her have kids. But Rachel couldn't have any kids.

32 This is the story about Leah and her kids.

A baby started to grow inside Leah, and she had a baby boy. Leah named that baby *Reuben*. That name means *this is my son*. And Leah said, "God saw that I was sad, so he gave me a son. Now I reckon my husband will love me."

33 Later on, Leah had another baby boy. And Leah said, "God heard that my husband doesn't love me, so he gave me another son." And Leah named that baby *Simeon*. That name means *he heard*.

34 Later on, Leah had another baby boy. And Leah said, "Now I reckon my husband will love me and stay close to me, because I gave him 3 sons." And Leah named that baby *Levi*. That name means *stay close*.

35 Later on, Leah had another baby boy. And Leah said, "Now I will say *thank you* to God, and I will tell everybody that God is really great." And Leah named that baby *Judah*. That name means *thank you*.

After that, Leah stopped having babies for a while.

Chapter 30

Rachel's working woman had 2 sons

1 Leah already had 4 kids with Jacob, but her sister Rachel didn't have any kids. So Rachel got jealous of Leah. Then Rachel said to Jacob, "Give me kids. If you don't, I will be so sad that I will die."

2 Then Jacob got angry with Rachel. Jacob said, "God is the one that stopped you from having kids. I can't change that. I'm not God."

3 So Rachel said, "All right, this is what you can do. Look, here is Bilhah, the woman that works for me. I want you to sleep with her, so that she will have babies. Bilhah belongs to me, so if she has babies, those babies will belong to me too. They will be just like my own kids."

4 Then Rachel gave Bilhah to Jacob, and Bilhah became Jacob's wife. And Jacob slept with Bilhah, like a man sleeps with his wife. 5 Then Bilhah had a baby boy. He was another son for Jacob. 6 Then Rachel said, "God has been very good and fair to me. He heard me ask for kids, and he gave me a son." And Rachel named that baby *Dan*. That name means *he was fair*.

7 Later on, Jacob and Bilhah slept together again, like married people do. Then Bilhah had another baby boy. He was the 2nd son that she had for Jacob. 8 Then Rachel said, "I used to be jealous of my sister Leah, because she had kids and I didn't. But now I have 2 sons. It's like I had a big fight with Leah, and I won." And Rachel named that baby *Naphtali*. That name means *my big fight*.

Leah's working woman had 2 sons

9 Leah wanted to have more kids, but no babies grew inside her. So she thought, "I will get Jacob to marry my working woman Zilpah, so that she will have babies. Zilpah belongs to me, so if she has babies, those babies will belong to me too. They will

be just like my own kids." So Leah gave Zilpah to Jacob, and she became Jacob's wife.
10 Jacob slept with Zilpah, like a man sleeps with his wife, and she had a baby boy. He was another son for Jacob. 11 Then Leah said, "I'm really lucky." And Leah named that baby *Gad*. That name means *lucky*.

12 Later on, Zilpah had another baby boy. He was another son for Jacob. 13 Then Leah said, "I'm so happy. I reckon other women will say, 'Leah is happy now.' " And Leah named that baby *Asher*. That name means *happy*.

Leah had 2 more sons and a daughter

14 One day, Leah's oldest son Reuben went to the place where the wheat plants grow. At that time, some work-men were cutting down those wheat plants, to get the food from them. And Reuben found some special plants, called *mandrakes*, in that place. So Reuben took those mandrakes, and he gave them to his mother Leah. But Leah's sister Rachel, she saw those mandrakes, and she wanted to have them. Rachel thought, "If I eat a mandrake, maybe I will have a baby." You see, mandrakes were like bush medicine. People thought that if a woman eats a mandrake, it will help her have a baby.

So Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of those mandrakes that your son found."

15 Then Leah got angry with Rachel. She said, "Listen, I married Jacob first, but he loved you and married you. It's like you took my husband away from me. That's really bad. And now, you want to take my son's mandrakes too. No, you can't have them."

But Rachel still wanted those mandrakes. So she said to Leah, "All right, if you give me your son's mandrakes, you can sleep with Jacob tonight." And Leah agreed.

16 Later on, while the sun was going down, Jacob finished working outside, and he came back home. Leah went out to meet Jacob, and she said, "You have to sleep with me tonight. You see, my son found some mandrakes, but I gave those mandrakes to Rachel, so that I can sleep with you. It's like I paid for you with those mandrakes." So that night, Jacob slept with Leah, like a man sleeps with his wife.

17 God was good to Leah. He knew that Leah wanted to have more kids. So after Jacob slept with Leah, God made a baby start growing inside her. Later on, Leah had that baby, and it was a boy. He was another son for Jacob, and he was son number 5 for Leah.
18 Then Leah said, "I reckon God is happy with me, because I let Jacob sleep with my working woman Zilpah. And now, God let me have another baby. It's like God is paying me for that good thing I did." And Leah named that baby *Issachar*. That name means *pay*.

19 Later on, Leah had another baby boy, so Jacob had another son. He was son number 6 for Leah. 20 Then Leah said, "God gave me lots of sons. They are like a really special present from God. Now I reckon my husband Jacob will respect me, because I gave him 6 sons." And Leah named that baby *Zebulun*. That name means *respect*.

21 Later on, Leah had a baby girl, and Leah named that baby *Dinah*.

Rachel had a son

22-23 But Leah's sister Rachel still wanted to have her own kids. And God was good to Rachel, and he gave her what she wanted. Before this time, Rachel didn't have any kids, but then God let a baby start growing inside her. Rachel had a baby boy. Then Rachel said, "I used to feel shame, because I didn't have any kids. But now, God gave me a son, so I don't feel shame any more." 24 And Rachel named that baby *Joseph*. That name means *he will give more*. And Rachel said, "I'm asking God to give me another son."

Jacob got lots of sheep and goats

25 After Rachel had that baby, Jacob talked
to his uncle Laban. Jacob said, "Let me go
back to my home country. 26 And let me take
my wives and my kids. You know, I worked
really hard for you so that I could marry
your daughters. So now, let me take them
back to my home country."

27 But Laban said, "Please listen to me. I'm
asking you to stay here with me. You see,
Yahweh your God is only good to me when
you are here. I learned that by magic. 28 If
you stay here, I will pay you to work for
me. Just tell me how much you want, and
I will pay you."

29-30 Jacob said to Laban, "Look, you know
that I worked really hard for you. When I
came here, you only had a few animals. I
looked after those animals for you, and they
kept on having lots of babies, so now you
have lots and lots of animals. Yes, Yahweh
my God was good to you all the time that I
worked for you. But I don't have any animals
myself. So now it's time for me to look after
myself and my own family."

31 Then Laban said, "All right, how much
do you want me to pay you?"

But Jacob said, "I don't want you to pay me.
I will keep on looking after your animals, if
you will do this one thing for me. 32 Today,
let me go to the place where you keep your
sheep and goats, and let me take some of
those sheep and goats for myself. You know,
most of your sheep have white wool, and
most of your goats have black wool. I will
not take any of those white sheep or any of
those black goats. But you have some funny
coloured sheep and goats too. You have
some spotty goats and some black sheep. I
will take those funny coloured sheep and
goats, and they will belong to me. They
will be my pay. 33 Later on, those sheep and
goats will have babies, and those babies will
have funny coloured wool too. So they will
belong to me. I promise I will never steal
any white sheep or any black goats from you.
Whenever you come and look at my sheep
and goats, you will see that I only have
spotty goats and black sheep. Then you will
know that I kept my promise."

34 Then Laban said, "All right, I agree. You
can take all the funny coloured sheep and
goats, and they will belong to you."

35 But that same day, Laban cheated Jacob.
Laban went to the place where he kept his
sheep and goats, and he took all the funny
coloured ones away. He took the stripy goats
and the spotty goats, any that had white bits
on their wool, and he took all the black sheep.



Laban took away all the funny coloured sheep and goats

Then Laban gave those sheep and goats
to his sons, to take them far away. 36 So his
sons walked with those sheep and goats for 3
days, and then they stopped and camped. But
Jacob stayed at Laban's camp, and he looked
after Laban's other sheep and goats. All those
sheep were white, and all those goats were
black, and they belonged to Laban, just like

he agreed with Jacob. So Jacob didn't have any sheep or goats for himself.

37 Then Jacob cut off some young green branches from 3 sorts of trees that were in that place. Those trees were called poplar trees, almond trees, and plane trees. Then Jacob pulled off some of the bark that was on the outside of those branches, so that he could see white bits under the bark. He did that so that those branches looked like they had spots on them. 38 Then Jacob put those spotty branches in the place where the sheep and goats came to drink water. And whenever the sheep and goats came to that place to drink water, the males and females joined together to make babies. 39 So whenever the males and females did that, those spotty branches were there in front of them. Later on, when their baby animals were born, they had spots and stripes on their wool.

40 Jacob did another thing with Laban's animals too. He took the white sheep, and he got those sheep to look at the stripy animals and the black animals.

After the babies were born, Jacob split up the animals. He took all the funny coloured animals for himself, just like he agreed with Laban. But all the white sheep and black goats belonged to Laban. And Jacob didn't mix them together.

41 Jacob wanted his sheep and goats to be stronger than Laban's, so he wanted the strong babies to be born with funny coloured wool. So whenever the strong sheep and strong goats came to drink water, Jacob put the spotty branches there, and the strong males and strong females joined together to make babies in front of those branches. Later on, when those babies were born, they were strong too, and they had funny coloured wool, so they belonged to Jacob.

42 But when the weak sheep and weak goats came to that place, Jacob didn't put those branches in front of them. Then the weak sheep had white babies, and the weak goats had black babies, so they belonged to Laban. But the strong baby sheep and goats, they had funny coloured wool, so they belonged to Jacob.

43 In that way, Jacob got lots and lots of sheep and goats, and he became very rich. He also owned lots of men and women that worked for him, and lots of camels and donkeys.

Chapter 31

Jacob ran away from Laban

1 Laban's sons talked to each other about Jacob. They said, "Jacob took everything that our father owned, and now it all belongs to Jacob, and he is rich." And Jacob heard that Laban's sons said those things. 2 Jacob also saw that Laban wasn't friendly to him any more.

3 Then God talked to Jacob. God said, "Leave this place, and go back to your home country, and to your relatives. I will go with you, to take care of you."

4 Jacob wanted to talk about that with his wives, Rachel and Leah. So he sent somebody to get them, and he met them in the place where he kept his sheep and goats. 5 Jacob said to them, "I can see that your father isn't friendly to me any more. But God is still with me. He is the one that looked after my father Isaac, and he is with me. 6 You both know that I worked really hard for your father. 7 But your father kept cheating me. He promised to give me things for working for him, but then he kept changing his mind. He did that lots and lots of times. He wanted to give me trouble, but God didn't let him. Yes, God looked after me. 8 Sometimes your father promised to give me all the spotty sheep and goats, and then all the sheep and goats had babies with spots on their wool.

And sometimes he promised to give me all the stripy sheep and goats, and then all the sheep and goats had babies with stripes on their wool. 9 You know, God was the one that made those things happen. It's like God took away your father's animals and gave them to me."

10 Then Jacob said, "One time, I had a dream. It was the month when the male and female animals join together to make babies. In that dream, I saw male and female goats joining together, and all the male goats had black and white spots and stripes on their wool. 11 Then in that dream there was an angel messenger from God, and he said, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Yes, I am listening.' 12 And he said, 'God says, "Look at the male goats that are joining together with the female goats. You can see that all those male goats have black and white spots on their wool. That shows that I am helping you to get sheep and goats for yourself, because I know that Laban is cheating you. 13 I am God. A long time ago, I came to you at the place called Bethel. That's the place where you poured olive oil on top of a stone to show that it was a special place, and you made promises to me. Now leave this country straight away, and go back to your home country." ' "*

14 Then Rachel and Leah said to Jacob, "We will go with you. We don't want to live here with our father any more. He will never give us anything. 15 He treats us like we are not part of his family. First, he got you to work for him so that you could marry us. It's like he sold us to you. Then you worked really hard for our father, so that he got very rich. But our father still didn't give us anything, even though we are his daughters. He cheated us, and he kept everything for himself. 16 But God took away some of our father's animals and gave them to you, and you got rich. So now all those animals and good things, they belong to us and our kids."

Then Rachel and Leah said to Jacob, "Do whatever God told you to do."

17-19 So Jacob and his family got ready to leave. Laban wasn't there at that time. He was cutting the wool off his sheep out in the grass lands, a long way away. So Laban didn't know that Jacob was getting ready to leave. And while Jacob was getting ready, Rachel went into Laban's tent, and she stole some little statues that belonged to Laban. Sometimes, Laban and his family used to pray to those statues and ask them for help. They thought that those statues were gods that had power.

Jacob went and got all his animals, and all the other things that he owned. You know, a long time before this, when Jacob came to Laban's home, he didn't own anything. But now he owned lots and lots of things. So Jacob took all those things that he owned, and he put them on camels. Then he helped his kids and his wives to get on camels, and he got his other animals to walk in front of him, and they all left quickly to go to Canaan country. That's the country where Jacob's father Isaac lived. 20 But Jacob tricked Laban, he didn't tell Laban that he left.

Laban belonged to the Aram tribe, and his country was called Paddan Aram. 21 So Jacob left Paddan Aram country with his wives, his kids, his animals, and everything that he owned. They crossed over the Euphrates River, and then they started to go south, towards the hill country called Gilead.

Laban found Jacob

22 2 days later, somebody told Laban, "Jacob ran away." 23 As soon as Laban heard that, he took some of his relatives with him, and they started to go after Jacob. 7 days later, they

* **31:13** Genesis 28:18-22

almost caught up to Jacob in the hill country called Gilead. 24 But that night, Laban had a dream, and he heard God talk to him in that dream. God said, "Be careful about the way you talk to Jacob. Don't make trouble for him."

25 The next day, Laban and his relatives caught up to Jacob. Jacob and his mob were in that hill country. That's where they set up their tents. So Laban and his relatives, they set up their tents in that place too.

26 Then Laban went and talked to Jacob. Laban said, "You did a bad thing to me. You tricked me, and you took my daughters away. It's like I'm your enemy and you came and stole my daughters from me. 27-28 Why didn't you tell me that you wanted to leave? You tricked me, and you ran away. That was a stupid thing to do. I didn't get to say *goodbye* to you properly. I wanted to have a party for you, with people singing and playing music on drums and harps. You didn't even let me kiss my daughters and my grand-kids and say *goodbye* to them."

29 Then Laban said to Jacob, "You know, I can hurt you and your family. But I will not do that. You see, last night, your father's God talked to me. He said, 'Be careful about how you talk to Jacob. Don't make trouble for him.' "

30 Laban kept on talking to Jacob. He said, "Look, I know that you want to see your father again, and that's the reason why you left. But why did you steal my little statues from my tent?"

You see, Laban didn't know that his daughter Rachel stole those statues. He thought that Jacob stole them.

31 Then Jacob talked to Laban. First, he told Laban why he ran away. He said, "I ran away because I was frightened of you. I thought that if I say, 'I want to leave,' then you will fight me and take your daughters away from me."

32 After that, Jacob talked about those little statues that belonged to Laban. Jacob didn't know that his wife Rachel stole those statues, so he said to Laban, "We didn't take your little statues. You can look in our tents, and you can look at all our things. If you find those statues, then you can kill the person that stole them. And if you find anything else that belongs to you, then tell me, and show our relatives here, and you can have it back."

33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent, and he looked all around. But he didn't find those statues. Then he went into Leah's tent and he looked all around there too. And then he went into the tent that belonged to those 2 women that worked for Rachel and Leah. Laban looked all around that tent too, but he didn't find those statues. After that, Laban went into Rachel's tent. 34 He looked through everything in her tent, but he didn't find those statues. You see, Rachel already hid those statues. She put them inside a soft seat, called a saddle, that she used to sit on when she rode her camel. Then she put that saddle on the ground, and she sat on it. 35 When Rachel's father Laban came into the tent, Rachel said to him, "Sir, I'm sorry, I can't stand up to show you respect, because I am bleeding, like a woman does every month. Please don't be angry with me." So Laban looked all around Rachel's tent, but he didn't find those statues.

36 Then Jacob got very angry, and he talked strongly to Laban. Jacob said, "Listen, I didn't do anything wrong to you. I didn't do any bad thing. You came after me for no reason. 37 And you looked through all my things. If you found anything that belongs to you, then you can put those things here, in front of all our relatives. And they can say which one of us is right and which one is wrong. Did you find anything that belongs to you? No you didn't. I didn't take any of your things."

38 Then Jacob said to Laban, "I worked hard
for you for 20 years, and I looked after your
sheep and goats really well. They had lots of
babies, and none of those babies died. And
I never took any of your sheep for my food,
not even your male sheep. 39 And whenever
a wild animal killed one of your sheep or
goats, I always paid for it. I never showed
you that dead sheep or goat, I never asked
you to pay for it. You made me pay for every
sheep or goat that somebody stole, even
if that happened at night time. That's not
fair. 40 And I had a really hard time when I
worked for you. In the day time, it was really
hot. And in the night time, it was really
cold. It was so cold that I couldn't sleep. 41 I
worked for you like that for 20 years. First,
I worked for you for 14 years so that I could
marry your 2 daughters. Then I worked for
you for 6 years, so that you would give me
some of your sheep and goats. You kept
promising to give me things for working for
you, but then you kept changing your mind.
That's not fair."

42 Then Jacob said to Laban, "I know that
you wanted to send me away with nothing.
But God was with me, and he helped me. He
is the one that looked after my grand-father
Abraham. And my father Isaac respected him
properly too. Yes, God helped me. He saw
that I worked very hard for you, and he saw
that you gave me trouble. So last night, he
talked strongly to you, and he showed you
that you did the wrong thing."

Jacob and Laban agreed to be good to each other

43 Then Laban said, "Your wives are my
daughters. Your kids are my grand-kids. All
these animals here, they belong to me, and
everything else here belongs to me too. But
I can't get my daughters and my grand-kids
back now. I know that they will go with you
to your home country, and I will go back
to my home country. 44 So before I go, let's
agree that we will be good to each other.
And let's put some stones in this place to
show that we made that agreement."

45 So Jacob got a big stone, and he stood it
up. 46 Then Jacob said to his relatives, "Pick
up some more stones." So they picked up
some more stones, and they piled those
stones on top of each other. Then Jacob,
and Laban, and all their relatives, they sat
down beside that pile of stones, and they
ate some food. 47 Laban named that pile of
stones *Jegar Sahadutha*. That name comes
from Laban's language. And Jacob named
that pile of stones *Gal-Ed*. That name comes
from Jacob's language. Both those names
mean *a pile that shows we agreed with each
other.* 48 And Laban said, "This pile of stones
shows that we agreed with each other today."
So that place is called Gal-Ed.

49-50 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Tomorrow,
you will go to your home country, and I will
go back to my home country, and we will
not see each other any more. So I'm asking
Yahweh your God to always watch both of
us. If you treat my daughters badly, or if you
marry any other women, remember that God
will see you do those things. Even if nobody
else sees you, God will see you."

So that place is also called *Mizpah*. That
name means *place where he watches*.

51 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Look at this
pile of stones, and this other big stone. We
have put them here, between my country
and your country. 52 This pile of stones,
and this other big stone, they show that we
agreed to be good to each other. I will not go
past these stones into your country, to hurt
you. And you will not go past these stones
into my country, to hurt me. 53 I'm asking
the gods of our grand-fathers to watch us
and judge us. I'm asking the God of your
grand-father Abraham, and the god of my
grand-father Nahor and their father Terah.

Those gods will keep on watching us, and they will know if one of us does the wrong thing."

Then Jacob made a strong promise to Laban. He said, "I promise that I will not go past these stones into your country, to hurt you. I'm making this promise with God listening. He is the one that my father Isaac respected."

54 Then Jacob killed an animal and burned it, to show respect to God. He did that right there, in the hill country. Then Jacob said to his relatives, "Come and eat food with me." So they all ate food, and then they spent the night in that place.

55 Early the next morning, Laban got up. He kissed his grand-kids and his daughters, and he said *goodbye* to them. Then Laban and his relatives left that place, and they went back to their home country.

Chapter 32

Angel messengers met with Jacob

1 Jacob and his relatives left that place, and they kept on going towards Jacob's home country. On the way, some angel messengers from God came to meet Jacob. 2 Jacob saw those angel messengers, and he said, "This place is God's camp." So Jacob called that place *Mahanayim*. That name means *2 camps*.

Jacob got frightened of Esau

3 Jacob's brother Esau lived in the place called Seir, in Edom country. Jacob thought, "Maybe my brother still wants to kill me." So when Jacob got near to Seir, he said to some of his men, "Go and talk to my brother Esau. 4 I want him to know that I respect him, just like a work-man respects his boss. Tell Esau that I said, 'I went and stayed with our uncle Laban for a long time, and now I'm coming back. 5 I have cows, and bulls, and donkeys, and sheep, and goats, and I have men and women that work for me. I sent some men to say these things to you, and I hope that you will be happy with me.' " So those men went and told Esau those things.

6 Then those men came back, and they said to Jacob, "We went and talked to your brother Esau, and now he is coming here to meet you. He has 400 men with him."

7 Jacob thought, "Maybe Esau and his men are coming to attack my camp." Jacob was really frightened and worried. So he split up all the people that were with him into 2 camps. And he split up all his sheep and goats, and his cows, and his bulls, and his camels. He split up all those animals into 2 groups, and he put one group in one camp and the other group in the other camp. 8 Jacob thought, "If Esau attacks one of those camps, maybe the people and the animals in the other camp will get away."

9 Then Jacob prayed to God, and he called God by his special name *Yahweh*. He said, "Yahweh, you are the God of my grand-father Abraham and the God of my father Isaac. You said to me, 'Go back to your home country and your relatives, and I will be good to you.' 10 God, you are my boss. You have been very good to me, just like you promised. I can always trust you. You did lots of good things for me, even though I'm not an important person. When I left my home country and I crossed over the Jordan River, I only had a walking stick with me. Now I'm going back to my home country, and I have lots and lots of people and animals with me. Yes, I have enough people and animals to make 2 camps."

11 Then Jacob said to God, "I'm frightened of my brother Esau. Maybe he will come and attack me and kill me, and even kill my wives and my kids. God, please save us from my brother. 12 Remember that promise you made to me. You said, 'I promise that I will be good to you, and I will give you a really big family. Lots of kids and grand-kids

will be born into your family later on, and they will become a really big mob of people. Nobody will be able to count them, just like nobody can count all those little bits of sand that are at the beaches by the sea.' Please be good to me and my family, God, just like you promised. Please don't let my brother kill us."*

13 Jacob stayed in that place that night. He wanted to give his brother Esau a present, so he picked some of his animals to give to Esau. 14 He picked 200 female goats, 20 male goats, 200 female sheep, 20 male sheep, 15 30 female camels with their babies, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys, and 10 male donkeys. 16 Jacob split up all those animals into groups, and he gave each group to one of his work-men to look after. He said to those work-men, "Take these groups of animals, and go ahead of me to meet my brother Esau. But don't all go at the same time. I want one group to go first. A bit later, I want the 2nd group to go. Then a bit later, I want the 3rd group to go. Keep on doing that until all the groups go."

17 Then Jacob talked to the work-man that was in charge of that 1st group of animals. He said, "You are going to meet my brother Esau first. I reckon he will say to you, 'Who is your boss? Where are you going? And who do these animals belong to?' 18 Then I want you to say to him, 'These animals belong to Jacob. He respects you, just like a work-man respects his boss. He sent these animals as a present for you. And he is coming to meet you too.' "

19 Then Jacob talked to the work-men that were in charge of the other groups of animals. He said, "You will each meet my brother Esau, and I want you to say those same things to him. 20 And make sure you say, 'Jacob is coming to meet you. He respects you.' "

Jacob thought, "Maybe my brother will stop being angry with me, because I'm sending my work-men to give him presents. They will give him those presents, and then I will go and meet him. Maybe he will be friendly to me."

21 So Jacob sent his work-men to give those animals to his brother Esau. But Jacob stayed in the camp.

A man wrestled with Jacob

22-23 That same night, Jacob got his 2 wives, and his 2 working women, and his 11 sons, and all the other men and women in his camp, and all the animals, and everything that he owned, and they left the camp, and they crossed over the Jabbok River. They all crossed over at a place where the river wasn't deep. 24 But Jacob didn't go with them. He stayed next to the river, and he was all alone.

Then a man came and grabbed Jacob, and that man wrestled with Jacob. They kept on wrestling all night, until it was nearly time for the sun to come up.* 25 That other man saw that he couldn't win, so he touched the joint at the top of Jacob's leg, and Jacob's



A man wrestled with Jacob

* **32:12** Genesis 22:17 * **32:24** Hosea 12:3-4

leg bone came out of the joint while they were wrestling. 26 Then that man said to Jacob, "Let me go. It's nearly time for the sun to come up."

But Jacob said, "No. First, I want you to promise that you will make things go well for me. Then I will let you go."

27 The man said, "What is your name?"

And Jacob said, "My name is Jacob."

28 Then the man said, "Now I'm giving you a new name. Your name will not be Jacob any more. You tried to fight with God and with people, and you won. So I'm giving you the name *Israel*."*

That name *Israel* means *fight with God*.

29 Then Jacob said to the man, "Please tell me your name."*

But the man said, "You don't need to ask my name." Then he said to Jacob, "Things will go well for you." And he left.

30 Jacob knew that God talked to him through that man, so he said, "I met God, and I'm still alive." Then Jacob named that place *Penuel*. That name means *God's face*.

31 Then the sun came up, and Jacob left Penuel and started walking towards his family. Jacob couldn't walk very well, because that man made his leg bone come out of the joint.

32 Later on, the Israel mob made a special law about their food. They said, "God touched the joint at the top of Jacob's leg bone. So when we kill an animal and eat it, we will not eat the stringy bits that are on the top of that animal's leg bone." And the Israel mob still keep that law today.

Chapter 33

Jacob met Esau again

1 Jacob and his family kept on walking towards the place where Jacob's brother Esau was. Then Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming towards him with 400 men. So Jacob stopped walking, and he split up his family into groups. He put his wife Leah with her kids, and he put his wife Rachel with her son Joseph, and he put his 2 working women with their kids. 2-3 Then they all started walking towards Esau again. Jacob walked in front, then the 2 working women and their kids, then Leah and her kids, then Rachel and her son Joseph. And Jacob got down on his knees and put his face near the ground, to show respect to his brother Esau. He did that 7 times, until he got near to Esau. 4 But Esau ran to meet Jacob. Then he put his arms around Jacob, and he hugged him and kissed him on the cheek. And Esau and Jacob both cried.

5 Then Esau looked up, and he saw the women and their kids. Esau said, "Who are these people with you?"

Jacob said, "These are my kids. God was very good to me, and he gave me these kids."

6 Then Jacob's 2 working women and their kids, they came over to Esau, and they got down on their knees to show him respect. 7 Then Leah and her kids, they did the same thing. They came over to Esau, and they got down on their knees. Then Rachel and her son Joseph, they came over and got down on their knees too.

8 Then Esau said to Jacob, "I met your work-men walking along this road, and they gave me lots of animals, and they said, 'These animals are a present from Jacob.' Why did you send those animals to me?"

Jacob said, "I respect you, just like a work-man respects his boss, and I want you to be happy with me. That's the reason why I sent those animals to you."

9 But Esau said, "My brother, I already have lots of animals, and I don't need any more.

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* **32:28** Genesis 35:10 * **32:29** Judges 13:17-18

Those animals that you sent to me, they belong to you. Keep them for yourself."

10 Then Jacob said to Esau, "No, I want you to have them. Please take them as a present from me. Then I will know for sure that you are happy with me. You know, when I saw you again, you were so friendly to me, it was like I saw God's face. 11 So please take the present that I sent to you. God has given me lots of good things, and I already have everything that I need."

Jacob kept on talking like that, so Esau took those animals as a present from Jacob.

12 Then Esau said, "Let's go now. Let's go to Seir, to the place where I live. We will go there together."

13 But Jacob said to Esau, "Sir, as you can see, my kids are young, and they can't walk very fast. And some of my animals have baby animals with them, and I have to look after those animals. If I make them walk fast, they will die after one day. 14 So please, sir, you go ahead. I will walk slowly with my kids and animals. Later on, we will see you there in Seir."

15 So Esau said, "All right. But I will leave some of my men with you, to help you."

But Jacob said, "Sir, you don't need to do that. You saw me, and you were friendly to me, so now I am happy. I don't need anything else."

16 So that same day, Esau left that place, and he went south to go back home to Seir.

17 But Jacob and his family, they went west. They stopped in the land there, and Jacob built a house, and he made shelters for his animals. Jacob called that place *Succoth*. That name means *shelters*.

Jacob went back to Canaan country

18 Jacob was born in Canaan country, and he grew up there. But then he went to Paddan Aram country for a long time. Now he finally got back to his home country again. When he got there, he set up his camp on some land outside the town called Shekem. 19 That land where Jacob put his tent, it belonged to a man called Shekem and his brothers. Their father was called Hamor. And Jacob bought that land from Shekem and his brothers. He paid them 100 pieces of silver money for that land.* 20 Then Jacob piled up stones there to make a special table with a flat top, so that he could burn animals to show respect to God. And Jacob called it *The God of Israel is God*.

Chapter 34

Shekem's mob tried to make an agreement with Jacob's mob

1-2 This story is about what happened to Jacob's family in the town called Shekem, in Canaan country. The big boss of that town was called Hamor, and he was from the Hiv tribe. And Hamor had a son called Shekem.

Jacob and Leah's daughter was called Dinah, and she was a young woman. One day, she went out to visit some other women that lived in that place. But that man Shekem, he saw Dinah, and he wanted to have her for himself. So he grabbed Dinah and he made her sleep with him, like a woman sleeps with her husband. Shekem really shamed Dinah.

3 Shekem fell in love with Dinah, and he thought that she was wonderful. So he talked to her and tried to get her to love him too. 4 Then Shekem talked to his father Hamor and said, "I want to marry that woman. Ask her father to give her to me, so that she can be my wife."

5 At that time, Jacob was in his camp, and Jacob's sons were out in the grass

* **33:19** Joshua 24:32; John 4:5

lands looking after Jacob's animals. Then somebody went and told Jacob that Shekem did that bad thing to his daughter Dinah. But Jacob didn't say anything, because he wanted to wait for his sons to come home.

6-7 Then somebody went and told Jacob's sons that Shekem did that bad thing to Dinah. So Jacob's sons got really upset and angry. They said, "Shekem slept with our sister. That was a properly wrong thing that he did. He made our family shamed." And Jacob's sons left the grass lands, and they quickly went back to Jacob's camp.

Hamor, Shekem's father, he went to Jacob's camp to talk to Jacob, and Shekem went with him. 8 And Hamor talked to Jacob and his sons. Hamor said, "My son Shekem, he loves your daughter Dinah, and he really wants to marry her. Please give her to him, so that she can be his wife. 9 And let's make an agreement between our families. Let's agree that the men in my family can marry the women in your family, and the men in your family can marry the women in my family. 10 You mob can live in our land, and you can do whatever you want here. You can buy things and sell things here, and you can even buy some of the land for yourself."

11 Then Shekem talked to Dinah's father Jacob and her brothers. He said, "Please be good to me and do what I ask, and I will give you whatever you want."

12 In that culture, when a man married a woman, he used to pay money to that woman's family and give them presents. So Shekem talked to Dinah's father and brothers about that. He said, "Tell me how much money you want, and I will give it to you. Even if you want lots and lots of money and presents, I will give them to you. Please just let me marry that young woman Dinah."

13 But Jacob's sons were still thinking about that bad thing that Shekem did to their sister Dinah. So they pretended to make an agreement with Shekem and Hamor, but really, they were tricking them. 14 Jacob's sons said, "You know, all of us men and boys in our mob, we had a young man operation. But you mob don't do that operation on your boys. We can't let our sister marry a man that didn't have that operation. That will make our family shamed. 15 So listen, we will make an agreement with you mob. You and all the men and boys in your mob, you have to have that young man operation. Then you will be like us. 16 If you agree to do that, then we will let our sister marry Shekem. We will let our women marry your men, and our men will marry your women. We will live with you, and our mob will join together with your mob, and we will become one tribe. 17 But if you will not agree to do what we say, if you will not do that young man operation on your boys and your men, then we will take our sister and we will leave this place."

18 Hamor and his son Shekem, they liked that idea, and they agreed to do what Jacob's sons said. 19 Shekem really loved Dinah, and he really wanted to marry her soon, so he went quickly to do those things. Shekem was the most important person in his father's family. 20 Hamor and his son Shekem, they went to the town gate, and they had a meeting with the other men that lived in that town. Hamor and Shekem said to those men, 21 "You know, that man Jacob and his sons, they are friendly to us. So let them live here in our land, and let them buy things and sell things here. Our land is big, and there is plenty of room for them. Our men can marry their women, and their men can marry our women. 22 But first, there is one thing that we have to do. All of us men and boys in our mob, we have to have a young man operation, just like Jacob and his family. If we do that, then Jacob and his sons will

agree to live with us, and their mob will join together with our mob, and we will become one tribe. 23 Then all their animals will belong to us, and everything else that they own, it will belong to us too. We just have to agree to do what they say. We have to have that young man operation. Then they will live here with us."

24 The men that lived in that town, they listened to Hamor and his son Shekem, and they agreed to do what Hamor and Shekem said. So all the boys and all the men that lived in that town, they had a young man operation.

Jacob's sons finished up Shekem's mob

25 That young man operation hurt a lot. And 3 days later, all the men in Shekem's mob still felt really weak. Then 2 of Jacob's sons, they got some long knives, and they went to attack Shekem's mob. Those 2 sons were Simeon and Levi, and they were Dinah's brothers. Nobody in Shekem's mob knew that Dinah's brothers wanted to attack them, so they were not ready to fight. Simeon and Levi went into the town, and they killed all the boys and men there. 26 They also killed Hamor and his son Shekem with those long knives.

At that time, Dinah was in Shekem's house. So Simeon and Levi got Dinah from Shekem's house, and they left the town.

27 Then Jacob's other sons went into the town, and they saw all the dead bodies of Shekem's mob. So Jacob's sons took everything that they wanted in that town. They thought, "Shekem did that bad thing to our sister, so we will take everything that belonged to his mob." 28 They took all the sheep, and cows, and donkeys. They took everything that was in the town, and everything that was in the grass lands. 29 They took everything that was in the houses. And they got all the women and all the young kids, and they took them away, like they were prisoners.

30 Then Jacob talked strongly to his sons Simeon and Levi. He said, "You made big trouble for me. You know about the other tribes that live in this land, the Canaan tribe and the Periz tribe. Well, now those tribes will hate us, because you finished up Shekem's mob. And maybe those tribes will join together and attack us. My mob is small, so we will not be able to fight those big tribes, and then they will finish us up, me and my family."

31 But Simeon and Levi said, "That man did a bad thing to our sister. He made her sleep with him, like a woman sleeps with her husband, and then he tried to pay us money for her. Somebody had to do payback to his mob."

Chapter 35

Jacob went back to Bethel

1 Then God said to Jacob, "Leave this place, and go to that special place called Bethel. Remember, a long time ago, you ran away from your brother Esau, and you went to that place, and I came to you there. Now I want you to go and live in that place, and I want you to pile up stones there, to make a special table. Then I want you to burn animals on that special table, to show respect to me, because I am God."

2-3 So Jacob talked to his family, and to all the other people that were in his camp. He said, "We are going to leave this place and go to the place called Bethel. I'm going to make a special table there, so that I can burn animals to show respect to God. You know, God is the one that helped me every time I got trouble, and he stayed with me wherever I went."

Jacob kept on talking to his mob. He said, "Some of you mob have little statues with

you, that came from other countries. Some people think that those statues are gods that have power. You mob have to get rid of those statues. Then you all have to wash your bodies and put on clean clothes, because we are going to a special place to show respect to God."

4 So Jacob's family, and everybody else in Jacob's camp, they went and got all their little statues, and they gave them to Jacob. They also took out the rings that were in their ears, and they gave those rings to Jacob too. And Jacob buried those statues and those rings under a big tree in the place called Shekem.

5 Then Jacob and his mob left Shekem, and they started to go towards Bethel. Jacob thought that the people in the towns nearby might attack them. But God looked after Jacob's mob. God made the people in those towns really frightened, so none of them attacked Jacob's mob.

6 Later on, Jacob and his mob got to the place called Bethel, in Canaan country. That place used to be called Luz.

7 Then Jacob piled up stones to make a table with a flat top, so that he could burn animals to show respect to God. And Jacob gave that place a new name. He called it *El Bethel*. That name means *God is in Bethel*. A long time before this, when Jacob ran away from his brother Esau, God came and talked to Jacob in that place. That's the reason why Jacob gave it that name.

8 At that time, there was a woman called Deborah in Jacob's camp. She used to look after Jacob's mother Rebekah, at the time when Rebekah was a little girl. Now Deborah was very old, and she died. So Jacob's mob buried Deborah's body under a big tree, near Bethel. And they called it *Allon Bakuth*. That name means *big tree where they cried*.

God talked to Jacob again

9 This is the story about how God talked to Jacob after he got back from Paddan Aram country.

God came to Jacob, and he promised to be good to him. 10 God said, "Before this, your name was Jacob, but your name will not be Jacob any more. I'm giving you another name. That name is *Israel*."*

In that way, God gave Jacob the name *Israel*.

11 And God said to Jacob, "I am God. I have power over everything. Your mob will have lots of kids, so that your family will get really big. Later on, your family will be so big that they will become a nation, and that nation will split up into lots of nations, and some of your people will be the big bosses of those nations."

12 Then God said, "A long time ago, I made promises to your grand-father Abraham and your father Isaac. I promised to give all this country to the people that will be born into their family. Well, now I'm making that same promise to you. I will give all this country to you and to the people that will be born into your family later on."*

13 God said all those things to Jacob, and then God left that place.

14 Jacob knew that God talked to him there, and he wanted to show that it was a special place. So he got a stone, and he stood it up. He poured out some wine on top of that stone, and he poured some olive oil on it too. 15 And Jacob gave a name to that place where God talked to him. He called that place *Bethel*. That name means *God's house*.

Jacob's wife Rachel died

16-17 Jacob and his family left Bethel, and they started going towards the town called Efrath. At that time, Jacob's wife Rachel

* **35:10** Genesis 32:28 * **35:12** Genesis 12:7; 26:3

had a baby growing inside her. And while they were still a long way from Efrath, the time came for Rachel to have her baby. A woman came to help Rachel have her baby, but Rachel had a lot of pain, and she had trouble having that baby.

Then Rachel had her baby, but that pain was really bad. That woman said to her, "Don't be frightened. You have another son."

18 But Rachel was dying. She said, "I want to name my son *Ben-Oni*." That name means *the son that I had when I was sad*. Then Rachel died.

But Jacob gave that baby a different name. He named him *Benjamin*. That name means *the son that is like my strong right hand*.

19 That's how Rachel died. Then Jacob's mob buried her near the road that goes to the town called Efrath. Another name for Efrath is Bethlehem. 20 And Jacob stood up a big stone at that place, so that people will know that Rachel was buried there. That stone is still there today.

Jacob's son Reuben did a bad thing

21 Then Jacob's mob left that place. They went past a place called Migdal-Eder, and then they set up their camp.

22 While they were living there, Jacob's son Reuben went to the woman called Bilhah. Bilhah worked for Jacob's family, and she was like another wife for Jacob. And Reuben slept with Bilhah, like a man sleeps with his wife. Then somebody told Jacob that Reuben did that bad thing.*

The names of Jacob's sons

These are the names of Jacob's 12 sons.

23 Jacob's wife Leah had 6 sons,
- Reuben. He was Jacob's oldest son.
- Simeon
- Levi
- Judah
- Issachar
- Zebulun

24 Jacob's wife Rachel had 2 sons,
- Joseph
- Benjamin

25 Rachel's working woman Bilhah, she had 2 sons,
- Dan
- Naphtali

26 Leah's working woman Zilpah, she had 2 sons,
- Gad
- Asher

All those men were Jacob's sons. Jacob's sons were born at the time when Jacob lived in Paddan Aram country. Jacob's other name was Israel.

Jacob's father Isaac died

27 Jacob went back home, to the place where his father Isaac lived. That place was called Mamreh, and it was near the town called Kiriath Arba. Another name for that town is Hebron. A long time before this, Jacob's grand-father Abraham lived in Mamreh too.*

28 Isaac lived until he was 180 years old. 29 Isaac had a good long life, and then he breathed for the last time, and he died. Then his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Chapter 36

The story about Esau's family

1 This is the story about Jacob's brother Esau and his family. Sometimes people called Esau a different name. They called him *Edom*.

2 Esau married some women from Canaan country. These are the names of those women,*
- Adah. Her father's name was Elon, and he was from the Heth tribe.

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* **35:22** Genesis 49:4 * **35:27** Genesis 13:18 * **36:2** Genesis 26:34

– Oholibamah. Her father's name was Anah. Her grand-father's name was Zibeyon, and he was from the Hiv tribe.
3 – Basemath. Her father's name was Ishmael, and her brother's name was Nebayoth.*
4 All of those women had sons with Esau. Adah had a son called Elifaz, Basemath had a son called Rewel, 5 and Oholibamah had 3 sons called Jeyush, Jalam, and Korah.

That's all the sons that Esau had, and they were all born in Canaan country.

6-8 Esau and his brother Jacob, they both lived in Canaan country. And Esau and Jacob both had lots and lots of animals. But there was a problem. There wasn't enough grass and water in that country for all of Esau's animals and all of Jacob's animals.

So Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and everyone else that lived in his camp, and he took all his animals and everything else that he owned, and he left Canaan country. He went to the hill country called Seir, and he set up his camp there. That place was a long way away from Jacob.

And you know, sometimes people called Esau a different name. They called him *Edom*.

The names of Esau's sons and grand-sons

9 Esau's family was called the Edom tribe, and they lived in the hill country called Seir. These are the names of Esau's sons and grand-sons.

10 Esau's 2 oldest sons were,
– Elifaz. His mother's name was Adah, and she was one of Esau's wives.
– Rewel. His mother's name was Basemath, and she was another one of Esau's wives.

11 These are the names of Elifaz's sons,
– Teman
– Omar
– Zefo
– Gatam
– Kenaz

12 Esau's son Elifaz had another son too. His name was Amalek, and his mother's name was Timna. That woman Timna, she was like another wife for Elifaz.

All those men were Elifaz's sons. They were the grand-sons of Esau and his wife Adah.

13 Esau's son Rewel had sons too. These are the names of Rewel's sons,
– Nahath
– Zerah
– Shammah
– Mizzah

They were the grand-sons of Esau and his wife Basemath.

14 Esau had another wife, and her name was Oholibamah. Her father's name was Anah, and her grand-father's name was Zibeyon. Oholibamah and Esau had 3 sons together. These are their names,
– Jeyush
– Jalam
– Korah

The names of clan leaders in Esau's tribe

15 Esau's tribe split up into clans, and all those clans had leaders. These are the names of those leaders.

Esau's oldest son Elifaz, he had these sons,
– Teman
– Omar
– Zefo
– Kenaz
16 – Korah
– Gatam
– Amalek

All those men were Elifaz's sons, and they were the leaders for their clans in Edom

* **36:3** Genesis 28:9

country. Their grand-mother was Esau's wife Adah.

17 These are the sons of Esau's son Rewel,
– Nahath
– Zerah
– Shammah
– Mizzah

Those men were Rewel's sons, and they were the leaders for their clans in Edom country. Their grand-mother was Esau's wife Basemath.

18 These are the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah,
– Jeyush
– Jalam
– Korah

Those men were Oholibamah's sons, and they were the leaders for their clans. Oholibamah's father was called Anah.

19 All those sons of Esau, they were the leaders for their clans.

And you know, sometimes people called Esau a different name. They called him *Edom*.

The names of clan leaders in the Hor tribe

20 There was another tribe living in that country too. They lived there before Esau's family came there. That tribe was called the Hor tribe. The people in that tribe were the kids and grand-kids of a man called Seir.

These are the names of Seir's sons,
– Lotan
– Shobal
– Zibeyon
– Anah
21 – Dishon
– Ezer
– Dishan

All those men were Seir's sons, and they were the leaders for their clans in Edom country.

22 Seir's son Lotan had these sons,
– Hori
– Hemam

Lotan also had a sister called Timna.

23 Seir's son Shobal had these sons,
– Alvan
– Manahath
– Ebal
– Shefo
– Onam

24 Seir's son Zibeyon had these sons,
– Ayah
– Anah. (Anah is the man that found springs in the desert. One day, he was out in the desert, and he was looking after some donkeys that belonged to his father Zibeyon. And he found some springs with hot water in them.)

25 Seir's son Anah had these kids,
– Dishon
– Oholibamah. She was Anah's daughter.

26 Seir's son Dishon had these sons,
– Hemdan
– Eshban
– Ithran
– Keran

27 Seir's son Ezer had these sons,
– Bilhan
– Zavan
– Akan

28 Seir's son Dishan had these sons,
– Uz
– Aran

29 These are the names of the leaders in the Hor tribe,
– Lotan
– Shobal
– Zibeyon
– Anah
30 – Dishon
– Ezer
– Dishan

All those men were in the Hor tribe, and they were the leaders for their clans in the country called Seir.

The names of the big bosses in Edom country

31 At first, the Israel mob didn't have big bosses over them. A long time later, they started having a big boss over them. But before that, the Edom mob had big bosses in their country. These are the names of those big bosses in Edom.

32 The 1st big boss in Edom country, his name was Bela. He lived in a town called Dinhabah, and his father's name was Beor.

33 Bela died, and then a man called Jobab became the big boss. He was from a town called Bozrah, and his father's name was Zerah.

34 Jobab died, and then a man called Husham became the big boss. He was from the land of the Teman clan.

35 Husham died, and then a man called Hadad became the big boss. He was from a town called Avith, and his father's name was Bedad. Hadad fought the Midian people in Moab country, and he won.

36 Hadad died, and then a man called Samlah became the big boss. He was from the town called Masrekah.

37 Samlah died, and then a man called Shawl became the big boss. He was from the town called Rehoboth, next to the river.

38 Shawl died, and then a man called Baal-Hanan became the big boss. His father's name was Akbor.

39 Baal-Hanan died, and then a man called Hadad became the big boss. He lived in a town called Pau, and his wife's name was Mehetabel. She was the daughter of Matred and the grand-daughter of Mezahab.

The names of clan leaders in Esau's tribe

40 Some people in Esau's tribe were leaders for their clans. And all those clans lived in different places. These are the names of those clan leaders,

– Timna
– Alvah
– Jetheth
41 – Oholibamah
– Elah
– Pinon
42 – Kenaz
– Teman
– Mibzar
43 – Magdiel
– Iram

Those people were the leaders for their clans in the Edom tribe. All those clans lived in different places.

All the people in the Edom tribe were the kids and grand-kids of Esau.

Chapter 37

Jacob's son Joseph had dreams

1 Jacob lived in Canaan country. That's the country where his father Isaac used to have his camp.

2 This is the story about what happened to Jacob's family.

Jacob's son Joseph was 17 years old. And Joseph and his brothers looked after the sheep that belonged to their father Jacob. Joseph used to help 4 of his brothers to look after those sheep. 2 of those brothers were Bilhah's sons, and the other 2 were Zilpah's sons. Bilhah and Zilpah were Jacob's wives.

And Joseph told his father that those 4 brothers were doing bad things.

3 Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons, because Joseph was born when Jacob was an old man. So Jacob gave Joseph a special coat.

4 Joseph's brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than them. So they hated Joseph, and they couldn't talk in a friendly way to him.

5 One night, Joseph had a dream. The next day, he told his brothers about his dream, and they hated him even more. 6 This is what Joseph told his brothers. He said,



In Jospeh's dream, his brothers' wheat bent down in front of his wheat

"Listen to this dream that I had. 7In my dream, you mob and me, we were out in the place where the wheat plants grow. We were cutting down those wheat plants to get the seeds from them for food. We cut down those wheat plants, and we put them in piles on the ground. Then we tied up those piles. Suddenly, the pile of wheat that I tied up, it got up from the ground, and it stood up straight, like a person. Then those piles of wheat that you mob tied up, they got up too. They went near to my wheat, and they bent down in front of it, to show it respect."

8Then Joseph's brothers thought, "That dream that Joseph had, it shows that he wants to be boss over us." So they said to him, "Do you think that you are going to be a big boss over us? Do you think that you are going to tell us what to do? No way."

Joseph's brothers were really angry about Joseph's dream, and they were angry about those things that he said to them. So then they hated him even more.

9Later on, Joseph had another dream, and the next day, he told his brothers about his dream. He said to them, "Listen, I had another dream. In my dream, the sun, the moon, and 11 stars, they all bent down in front of me, to show me respect."

10Joseph told his father about that dream too. Then Joseph's father talked strongly to Joseph. He said, "That is a stupid dream. Do you really think that me and your mother and your brothers, we will all come and bend down in front of you, to show you respect? That will not happen."

11Joseph's brothers were really angry with him about those dreams, and they hated him even more.* But Joseph's father kept on thinking about those things that Joseph said.

Joseph's brothers sold him to the Midian mob

12Jacob and his sons lived in a place called the Valley of Hebron. One day, Joseph's brothers took their father's sheep to the place called Shekem, so that the sheep had grass to eat. That place was a long way from Jacob's camp. All of Joseph's brothers went there, but Joseph stayed at home with his father Jacob.

13Then Jacob said to Joseph, "Your brothers are looking after my sheep in Shekem. I want you to go there and see how they are going."

And Joseph said, "Yes, I will go."

14So Jacob said to him, "Go and find out if everything is good with your brothers, and if everything is good with the sheep. Then come back here and tell me."

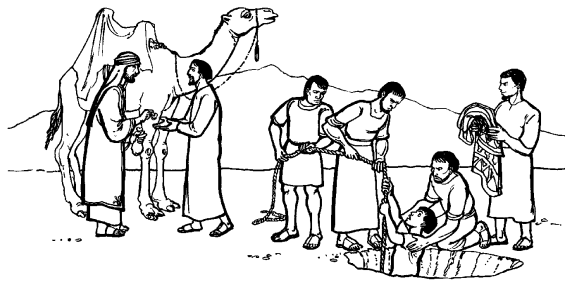
So Joseph left the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shekem. 15When he got to Shekem, he walked around in the grass lands and looked for his brothers. A man saw him and said, "What are you looking for?"

16Joseph said, "I'm looking for my brothers. They came to this place with my father's sheep. Please, can you tell me where they are?"

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* **37:11** Acts 7:9

17 The man said, "Your brothers left this
place. I heard them say, 'Let's go to the place
called Dothan.' "
So Joseph left Shekem, and he went to
Dothan. He saw his brothers there, and he
started to go towards them. 18 But Joseph
was still a long way away, and his brothers
saw him coming. So they talked quickly
to each other and made a plan to kill him.
19 They said to each other, "Look, there is the
young man that has stupid dreams. 20 Let's
kill him, and let's throw his body into one of
those big holes in the ground. Then we will
tell our father, 'A wild animal ate Joseph.' "
Then they said, "If we kill Joseph, that will
show that his dreams are rubbish, and that
he will never be boss over us."
21 But Joseph's oldest brother Reuben, he
heard his brothers say those things, and he
wanted to save Joseph. So Reuben said, "No.
We can't kill him."
22 Then Reuben said to his brothers, "Don't
murder Joseph. Just chuck him into one of
those big holes in the ground, here in the
desert. Don't hurt him yourselves, just leave
him there to die."
You see, Reuben wanted to save Joseph
from his brothers. He thought, "Later on, I
will pull Joseph out of that hole, and I will
take him home to our father."
23 Then Joseph got to his brothers. He was
wearing that special coat that his father
gave him. So Joseph's brothers pulled that
special coat off him. 24 And they grabbed
him, and they chucked him into a big hole
in the ground. That hole was empty, there
wasn't any water in it.
25 Then Joseph's brothers sat down to eat
some food. While they were eating, they
looked up, and they saw some men coming
towards them with camels. Those men were
from the Midian tribe. Their camels were
carrying bags on their backs, and those bags
had lots of bush medicine and perfumes.
Those men were taking those things from
Gilead country to Egypt country, to sell them
there.
26 One of Joseph's brothers was called
Judah. He talked to the rest of his brothers,
and he said, "We talked about killing Joseph
and tricking our father. But if we kill Joseph,
that will be a really bad thing, and we will
not get anything for ourselves. 27 So let's not
kill him. Let's sell him to this Midian mob.
You know, Joseph is our brother, and we
are all in the same family, so we shouldn't
hurt him."
The rest of Joseph's brothers agreed to do
what Judah said. 28 So when that Midian mob
got near to them, Joseph's brothers pulled
Joseph out of that hole, and they sold him
to the Midian mob for 20 pieces of silver
money. Then the Midian mob took Joseph
to Egypt country. *
29 Joseph's brother Reuben was somewhere
else, so he didn't see his brothers sell Joseph
to that Midian mob. He thought that Joseph
was still in that hole in the ground. And
Reuben wanted to save Joseph, so he went
to that hole to get him out. But he saw that
Joseph wasn't in that hole any more, and
he got really upset. He was so upset that he



Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the hole and sold him to the Midian mob

* **37:28** Acts 7:9

tore his clothes. 30 Then he went back to his brothers, and he said to them, "Our young brother isn't in that hole any more. I'm his oldest brother, but now there is nothing I can do to help him."

Joseph's brothers tricked their father Jacob

31 Joseph's brothers wanted their father to think that an animal killed Joseph. So they killed a goat, and they got some of that goat's blood, and they put the blood on that special coat that belonged to Joseph. 32 Then they went back home, and they took Joseph's special coat, and they showed it to their father Jacob. They said to their father, "Look, we found this coat. Does it belong to your son?"

33 Jacob looked at the coat, and he knew that it belonged to Joseph. So he said, "Yes, that is my son's coat." And Jacob saw the blood on that coat, so he said, "I know what happened. A wild animal ate Joseph. Yes, that animal tore him into little bits."

34 So Jacob was really sad, because he thought that Joseph was dead. He was so sad that he tore his clothes. Then he put on some clothes made out of a rough cloth, called sack-cloth, and he cried. You see, in that culture, people sometimes tore their clothes and wore sack-cloth to show that they were sad.



Jacob thought Joseph died, so he was really sad

Jacob cried like that for lots of days. 35 All of Jacob's sons and daughters, they talked to Jacob, and they tried to help him feel happy again. But Jacob said, "No, I can't be happy again. I will keep on crying for my son, until I die and go to join him." And Jacob cried a lot for Joseph.

36 But Joseph wasn't really dead. That Midian mob, they took Joseph to Egypt country, and they sold him to a man called Potifar. That man Potifar, he worked for the big boss of Egypt, called Pharaoh. Potifar was in charge of all the soldiers that guarded Pharaoh's house.

Chapter 38

The story about Judah's sons

1 This story is about something that Jacob's son Judah did.

Judah left his brothers, and he went to stay with a man from the town called Adullam. That man's name was Hirah. 2 While Judah was staying in that place, he saw a young woman. That woman's father was called Shua, and he was from the Canaan tribe. Judah married that young woman, and he slept with her. 3 Then that woman had a baby boy, and Judah named him *Er*. 4 Later, that woman had another baby boy, and she named him *Onan*. 5 And later, she had another baby boy too. She named that baby *Shelah*. At that time, Judah was staying in the town called Kezib.

6 Judah's oldest son Er, he grew up and became a man. And Judah found a woman for Er to marry. That woman's name was Tamar. 7 But Judah's oldest son Er, he did really bad things, and God was angry with him. So God finished up Er, and he died.

8 Then Judah talked to his 2nd son Onan. Judah said, "Your brother Er is dead, and he didn't have any kids. So now, you have to marry Er's wife and sleep with her, so that she will have kids. That's the rule in our

culture. And after those kids grow up, they will get everything that belonged to Er. It will be like they are his kids."

9 So Onan married Er's wife. But Onan didn't want to have kids with her, because he knew that those kids will not belong to him. So Onan did a bad thing. Every time they slept together, like married people do, he didn't sleep with her properly. He always stopped early, so she didn't get any babies growing inside her. 10 But God was angry with Onan for doing that bad thing, so God finished up Onan too.

11 Then Judah thought, "My sons Er and Onan, they are both dead, and they didn't have any kids with that woman. So now, my other son Shelah has to marry that woman and have kids with her. That's the rule in our culture. But if Shelah marries that woman, he might die too, just like Er and Onan." So Judah got worried, and he didn't want his son Shelah to marry that woman Tamar.

So Judah talked to Tamar, and he tried to trick her. He said to her, "My son Shelah is too young to marry you now. So go back to your father's house, and live there. Don't get married to anyone else. Later on, Shelah will grow up, and then you can marry him." So Tamar went back to her father's house, and she lived there.

Judah's son Shelah grew up and became a man. But Judah didn't keep that promise he made to Tamar. He didn't let her marry his son Shelah.

Tamar tricked Judah

12 Some time later, Judah's wife died. Her father's name was Shua. Judah missed his wife, so he felt very sad for a while. But later on, he felt all right again.

Judah's work-men were in the place called Timnah. They were cutting the wool off Judah's sheep. Judah wanted to visit his work-men, so he started to go towards Timnah, and his friend Hirah went with him. That man Hirah, he was from the town called Adullam.

13 Then somebody told that woman Tamar, "Your dead husband's father is going to Timnah to visit his work-men. They are cutting the wool off his sheep there."

14 Tamar thought about Judah's son Shelah. She knew that he was grown up now, but Judah still didn't let her marry him. So Tamar thought, "I will trick Judah and get him to sleep with me, like a man sleeps with his wife, so that I can have kids. Then those kids will belong to my dead husband Er."

At that time, Tamar was wearing the sort of clothes that widows wear. But then, Tamar changed those clothes, and she put on some pretty clothes, and she put a scarf over her head, to cover her face. Then she went and sat outside the town called Enayim. That town is on the road that goes to Timnah.

15-16 Later, Judah walked along that road, and he saw Tamar sitting there. She had that scarf over her head, and Judah couldn't see her face. So Judah didn't know that she was Tamar, his dead son's wife. He thought she was a woman that sleeps with men for pay. So Judah went to her, and he said, "I want to sleep with you, like a man sleeps with his wife."

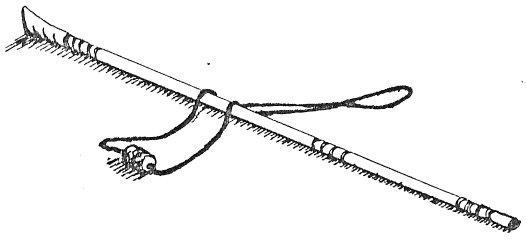
Tamar said, "If I sleep with you, then you have to give me something to pay me. What will you give me?"

17 Judah said, "After you sleep with me, I will send you one of my young goats."

Tamar said, "All right. But first, you have to give me something that belongs to you, to show that you promised to send me a young goat."

18 Judah said, "All right, I will give you something to show that I made that promise. What do you want me to give you?"

Tamar said, "Give me that necklace with your special stamp on it, and your walking



Judah gave Tamar his walking stick and the necklace with his special stamp

stick." (Judah used that special stamp like a signature.)

So Judah gave those things to Tamar. Then he slept with Tamar, like a man sleeps with his wife, and a baby started to grow inside her. 19 Then Tamar left that place, and she went home. She took off the scarf that was over her head, and she took off those pretty clothes, and she put on her widow's clothes again.

20 Judah talked to his friend Hirah, and he said, "Take one of my young goats, and give it to that woman that I slept with. Then tell her to give back my necklace with my special stamp on it, and my walking stick."

So Hirah took that young goat, and he went to look for that woman, but he didn't find her. 21 So he talked to the men that lived in that place, and he said, "Where is that woman that sleeps with men for pay? She was sitting next to the road, near the place called Enayim."

But those men said, "There isn't any woman here that sleeps with men for pay."

22 So Hirah went back to Judah, and he said, "I didn't find that woman. And the men that live in that place, they said to me, 'There isn't any woman here that sleeps with men for pay.' "

23 Then Judah said to Hirah, "All right, that woman can keep the necklace with my stamp on it, and my walking stick. I tried to keep my promise to that woman. Yes, I gave you a young goat to take to her. But you didn't find her. If you go and look for her again, everybody will laugh at us. So she can just keep my things."

Judah found out that Tamar tricked him

24 3 months later, somebody said to Judah, "Your dead son's wife Tamar, she did a bad thing. She slept with a man that isn't her husband. And now there is a baby growing inside her."

Judah wanted to punish Tamar for doing that. So he said, "Go and get her. Put her on a fire, and burn her until she dies."

25 So some people went to Tamar's house, and they started to take her to the place to burn her. But she said to them, "Take this necklace with a special stamp on it, and this walking stick, and show them to Judah, my dead husband's father. Say to him, 'The man that owns these things, he is the one that slept with me and made this baby grow inside me. So please look at this necklace with the special stamp on it, and this walking stick, and say who they belong to.' "

26 So they took those things to Judah, and they told him what Tamar said. And Judah looked at those things, and he knew that they belonged to him. Then Judah knew that Tamar tricked him, and he felt shame. He said, "You know, I did the wrong thing. I didn't let Tamar marry my son Shelah. But Tamar is better than me. She wanted to have kids that will belong to her dead husband, just like our culture says. That's the reason why she got me to sleep with her."

So Judah didn't punish Tamar, and he never slept with her again.

Tamar had 2 sons

27 Later on, the time came for Tamar to have her baby. At that time, Tamar found out that

she had 2 babies inside her. 28 There was a working woman there with Tamar, and that woman helped Tamar while she had her babies.

The 1st baby started to be born. His arm came out. And that working woman, she tied a bit of red string around that baby's arm, and she said, "This baby is first." 29 But then, that baby pulled his arm back in, and the 2nd baby came out. Then that working woman was shocked, because that 2nd baby came out before his brother. She talked to that 2nd baby, and she said, "You pushed really hard, and you came out first. It's like you broke out through a wall." So they named that baby *Perez*. That name means *break out*.

30 Then the other baby came out, with that bit of red string tied around his arm. And they named that baby *Zerah*.

Chapter 39

Joseph lived in Egypt country

1 This is the story about what happened to Joseph, after that time when his brothers sold him to the Midian mob. That Midian mob took Joseph to Egypt country. Then they sold Joseph to a man called Potifar. That man Potifar, he worked for the big boss of Egypt country, called Pharaoh. Potifar was in charge of all the soldiers that guarded Pharaoh's house.

2 God was with Joseph, and God helped him. So everything that Joseph did, it all went well. Joseph worked for Potifar, and he lived in Potifar's house.* 3 Potifar saw that Joseph did everything really well, and he knew that God was helping him. 4 So Potifar liked Joseph a lot, and he got Joseph to be his special worker. He put Joseph in charge of all the other workers in his house, and he got Joseph to look after everything that he owned. 5 As soon as Potifar put Joseph in charge, God started to be really good to Potifar. God made everything go well in Potifar's house, and he made lots of food plants grow on his land. 6 So Potifar really trusted Joseph, and he let Joseph look after everything that belonged to him. Potifar didn't worry about anything, because Joseph was in charge. Potifar just got to think about easy things, like the food he wanted to eat. Joseph looked after everything else.

Potifar's wife made trouble for Joseph

Joseph was a really good-looking man, with a strong body. 7 So after a while, Potifar's wife started to look at Joseph a lot, and she wanted to sleep with him, like a woman sleeps with her husband. She said to Joseph, "Come and sleep with me."

8 But Joseph said, "No, I will not sleep with you. You know, I work for your husband, and he trusts me. He got me to look after everything that belongs to him. He doesn't worry about anything, because I am in charge. 9 He made me the most important person in his house. He made me the boss of everything here. There's only one thing he will not let me touch. He will not let me touch you, because you are his wife. So I will not sleep with you. I will not go against God and do that wrong thing. No way."

10 But Potifar's wife did not stop. Every day, she kept on asking Joseph to sleep with her. But Joseph didn't listen to her. He didn't sleep with her, and he tried to be far away from her.

11 One day, Joseph went into Potifar's house to do his work, just like he always did. On that day, there weren't any other work-men in the house. 12 Then Potifar's wife came to Joseph. She grabbed him, and she held on

* **39:2** Acts 7:9

to his coat, and she said, "Come and sleep with me." So Joseph quickly ran out of the house. But Potifar's wife still had Joseph's coat in her hand.

13 Potifar's wife saw that Joseph ran out of the house, and she saw that she still had his coat in her hand. So she thought, "I will make trouble for Joseph."

14 Straight away, she shouted to the other work-men, and she said, "Come and see this." Then those work-men came to her, and she lied to them and said, "You know, my husband brought a man here from the Hebrew tribe. That man doesn't respect us mob. He wants to make fun of us. He came to me, and he tried to make me sleep with him, like a man sleeps with his wife. But I yelled out really loud. 15 And as soon as he heard me yell out, he left his coat next to me, and he ran out of the house."

16 After that, Potifar's wife put down Joseph's coat next to her, and she waited for Potifar to come home. Potifar was Joseph's boss. 17 Later on, Potifar came home, and his wife said the same things to him that she said to those work-men. She lied and said, "That work-man from the Hebrew tribe, the one that you brought here, he came to me, and he tried to sleep with me and make me shamed. 18 But I yelled out really loud, and straight away, he ran out of the house, and he left his coat next to me."

Potifar put Joseph in jail

19 Potifar heard his wife say that Joseph did those bad things to her. And Potifar got really angry. 20 Potifar was Joseph's boss, so he sent his men to grab Joseph, and they put him in jail. That jail belonged to Pharaoh, the big boss of Egypt country. There were other prisoners in that jail too. And Joseph stayed there in the jail.

21 But God was with Joseph, and God kept on being very good to him.* God got the boss of that jail to think in a good way about Joseph. So that jail boss liked Joseph a lot, 22 and he put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners in that jail. Whenever those prisoners had work to do, Joseph was their leader, and he made sure that they did their work properly. 23 Joseph did everything well, so that jail boss didn't worry about anything. He trusted Joseph to look after the prisoners and get all the work done. You see, God was with Joseph, and God made everything go well for him.

Chapter 40

Joseph understood 2 men's dreams

1-2 Some time later, Joseph was still in jail in Egypt country. The big boss of Egypt country was called Pharaoh, and he had lots of men that worked for him. This story is about 2 of those men.

The 1st man was Pharaoh's wine-boss. He used to make wine and other special drinks for Pharaoh. The 2nd man was Pharaoh's bread-boss. He used to cook bread and cakes for Pharaoh to eat. Both of those men were important workers in Pharaoh's house.

One day, that wine-boss and that bread-boss, they both did something that made Pharaoh really angry. 3 So Pharaoh put those 2 men in jail. That jail was the same one that Joseph was in. The soldier that guarded that jail, he was in charge of all the soldiers that looked after Pharaoh's house. 4 That soldier said to Joseph, "You have to look after these 2 men." So Joseph looked after that wine-boss and that bread-boss. And those 2 men stayed in jail for a long time.

5 One night, that wine-boss and that bread-boss, they were both sleeping in the jail, and

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* **39:21** Acts 7:9

they both had dreams. Both those dreams showed things that will happen later on. But those 2 men didn't understand what those dreams meant. So they felt sad and worried.

6 The next morning, Joseph went to those 2 men, like he always did. He looked at their faces, and he saw that they were sad and worried. 7 So he said to them, "Why are you so sad and worried today?"

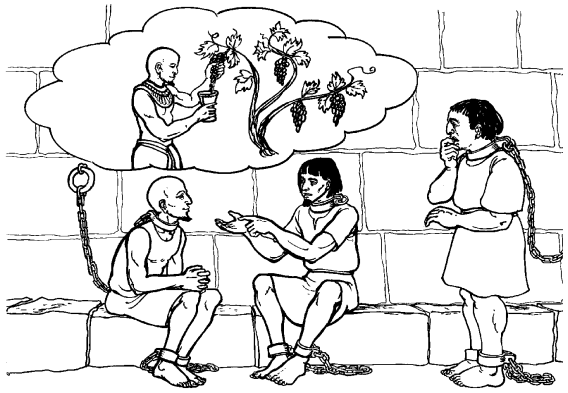
8 Then those 2 men said to Joseph, "We both had dreams last night, but we don't understand what those dreams mean, and there is nobody here that can tell us what they mean."

Joseph said, "Only God can tell people what dreams mean. Please tell me about your dreams. God will show me what they mean."

9 So the wine-boss told Joseph about his dream. He said, "In my dream, I saw a grape vine. 10 That grape vine had 3 branches. Little flowers started to grow on those branches, then straight away, those flowers got big, and grapes grew from them, then those grapes got big. 11 I had Pharaoh's cup in my hand. So I took those grapes, and I squeezed the juice into Pharaoh's cup. Then I gave that cup of juice to Pharaoh."

12 Then Joseph said to the wine-boss, "All right, I will tell you what that dream means. Those 3 branches that you saw, they are like a picture of 3 days. 13 In 3 days time, Pharaoh will take you out of this jail, and he will get you to work for him again. You will make wine and other special drinks, just like you did before, and you will take those drinks and give them to Pharaoh."

14 Then Joseph said to the wine-boss, "Now you know that everything will go well for you. So please be good to me, and don't forget about me. Please talk to Pharaoh, and say good things about me. Then maybe Pharaoh will take me out of this jail, and he will let me go free. 15 You know, I am from the Hebrew tribe, and I used to live with my people, in my home country. But then some men grabbed me, and they took me away from my home country, and they brought me here to Egypt country. And now I'm in jail, even though I didn't do anything wrong."



Joseph told the wine-boss what his dream meant

16 The wine-boss listened to all those things that Joseph said, and the bread-boss listened too. That bread-boss thought, "That other man's dream meant something good, so maybe my dream means something good too."

So the bread-boss talked to Joseph, and he said, "I had a dream too. In my dream, there were 3 baskets of special bread on my head. 17 The basket that was on top, it had all sorts of bread and cakes in it, and they were for Pharaoh to eat. But some birds were there, and they ate the bread and cakes that were in that basket."

18 Then Joseph said, "I will tell you what that dream means. Those 3 baskets that you saw, they are like a picture of 3 days. 19 In 3 days time, Pharaoh will take you out of this jail, and his soldiers will cut off your head. Then they will hang your body on a pole, and birds will come and eat bits of your body."

20 3 days later, it was Pharaoh's birthday. So Pharaoh had a big party, with lots of good food, and he got all his important workers

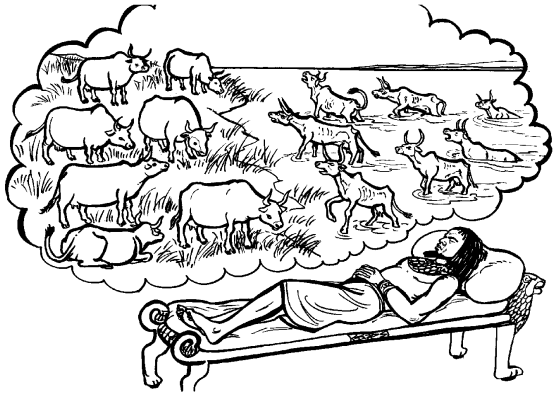
to come to that party. And Pharaoh got his soldiers to go and get that wine-boss and that bread-boss out of the jail. 21 Then Pharaoh got that wine-boss to work for him again. He made wine and other special drinks, just like he did before, and he took those drinks and gave them to Pharaoh. 22 But Pharaoh got his soldiers to kill that bread-boss, and they hung his body on a pole. All those things happened just the way Joseph said.

23 But that wine-boss forgot about Joseph, and he didn't talk to Pharaoh about him.

Chapter 41

Pharaoh had 2 dreams

1 2 years later, Pharaoh, the big boss of Egypt, he had a dream. In his dream, he stood next to the Nile River, 2 and he saw 7 cows coming up from the river. Those 7 cows were good-looking and fat, and they started to eat the long grass that was beside the river. 3 After that, another 7 cows came up from the river. Those other 7 cows were ugly and skinny, and they stood beside the river next to the 7 fat cows. 4 Then those 7 ugly, skinny cows, they ate the 7 good-looking, fat cows.



Pharaoh had a dream about 7 fat cows and 7 skinny cows

That was the end of Pharaoh's dream, and he woke up.

5 Then Pharaoh went to sleep again, and he had another dream. In his dream, he saw a plant that grows seeds for food, called wheat. That wheat plant had 1 stick part, and on top were 7 groups of wheat seeds growing on it. Each group had lots of good big seeds. 6 After that, another 7 groups of seeds started to grow. But they were small and dry, because a hot dry wind blew on them. 7 Then those 7 groups of small dry seeds, they ate the 7 groups of good big seeds, like a person eats food. That was the end of Pharaoh's dream, and he thought it was real. Then he woke up, and he knew that it was a dream.

8 The next morning, Pharaoh felt very worried, because he didn't know what those 2 dreams meant. So he said to some of his workers, "You know, there are some men here in Egypt country that can do magic, and there are some other men that are really wise. Go and get all those men, and bring them here. I want somebody to tell me what my dreams mean."*

So Pharaoh's workers went and got all those men, and they brought them to Pharaoh. Then Pharaoh told them about those 2 dreams that he had. But none of those men understood what the dreams meant.

9 Pharaoh's wine-boss was there, and he remembered that time when he had a dream in the jail, and he remembered that Joseph told him what his dream meant. So that wine-boss said to Pharaoh, "Sir, now I remember a time that I did the wrong thing. 10 You know, some time ago, you got really angry with me and your bread-boss. You put us in jail, and your most important soldier guarded us. 11 Then one night, me and that bread-boss, we both had dreams.

* **41:8** Daniel 2:2

We knew that those dreams showed things that will happen later on, but we didn't know what they meant. 12 But there was a young man with us in the jail. He was from the Hebrew tribe, and he worked for that important soldier, the one that guarded us. We told that young man about our dreams, and he told us what they meant. He said to me, 'Your dream shows that Pharaoh will get you to work for him again.' And he said to the bread-boss, 'Your dream shows that Pharaoh will get his soldiers to kill you.' 13 And everything happened just like that young man said. Soon after that, you got me to work for you again. But you got your soldiers to kill the bread-boss and hang his body on a pole."

Joseph told Pharaoh what his dreams meant

14 Then Pharaoh sent some of his workers to go and get Joseph. Those workers quickly went and took Joseph out of the jail. Then Joseph got ready to go and see Pharaoh. He cut his hair, and he shaved his beard, and he put on clean clothes. Then he went and stood in front of Pharaoh.

15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and nobody can tell me what it means. But somebody told me that you can understand dreams. They said that if somebody tells you about their dream, you can say what it means."

16 Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Sir, I can't do that by myself. God is the one that lets me understand people's dreams. He will show me what your dream means, and it will be good for you to hear it."

17 So Pharaoh told Joseph about his dream. He said, "In my dream, I stood next to the Nile River. 18 Then 7 cows came up from the river. Those 7 cows were good-looking and fat, and they started to eat the long grass that was beside the river. 19 After that, another 7 cows came up from the river. Those other cows looked really weak and sick, and they were very ugly and skinny. They were more ugly and skinny than any cows I saw in Egypt country. 20 Then those 7 ugly, skinny cows, they ate those 7 good-looking, fat cows, those ones that came up first from the river. 21 But after that, those ugly, skinny cows looked just the same as before. They were still very ugly and skinny, even though they ate those fat cows. That was the end of my dream, and I woke up."

22 Then Pharaoh said, "I went to sleep again, and I had another dream. In my dream, I saw a wheat plant. That wheat plant had 1 stick part with 7 groups of wheat seeds growing on top, and they had lots of good big seeds. 23 After that, another 7 groups of seeds started to grow. They were small and dry, because a hot dry wind blew on them. 24 Then those 7 groups of small dry seeds, they ate the 7 groups of good big seeds, like a person eats food. That was the end of my dream."

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I talked to the men that can do magic, and I told them about those dreams that I had. But they don't know what my dreams mean."

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Sir, both those dreams mean the same thing. God gave you those dreams to show you what he is going to do next."

26 Then Joseph told Pharaoh what those dreams meant. First Joseph said, "Those 7 good-looking, fat cows that you saw in your dream, they are like a picture of 7 good years. And those 7 groups of good big seeds on the wheat plant, they are like a picture of 7 good years too. Both those dreams mean the same thing."

27 Then Joseph said, "And you know those 7 ugly, skinny cows, those ones that came up from the river later on, they are like a picture of 7 dry years with no rain and no food plants growing. And you know those

7 small groups of seeds on the wheat plant. They were dry, because a hot dry wind blew on them. Well, they are like a picture of those 7 dry years too."

28 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Sir, God gave you those dreams to show you what he is going to do next, just like I said. 29 For 7 years, there will be lots and lots of food everywhere in Egypt country. 30 But after that, there will be 7 dry years. There will be no rain and no food plants growing anywhere in Egypt. Those dry years will be bad for the whole country. All the people in Egypt, they will forget about that time when there was lots and lots of food. 31 Those dry years will be so bad, it will be just like those 7 good years never happened. 32 Sir, God is going to make those things happen, for sure. And he's going to make them happen soon. That's the reason why he gave you 2 dreams about them."

33 Then Joseph said, "Sir, now I will tell you what you have to do. You have to pick a man that is really wise and thinks properly. And you have to put that man in charge of Egypt country. 34-35 Then you have to pick some other men to work for him. And those men have to go all over Egypt country, and they have to gather up food from all the farms. Every time the farmers have food plants with seeds that are ready to make flour, those workers have to say to the farmers, 'This is what Pharaoh says you have to do. Split up that food into 5 piles, and give one pile to us.' Then those workers have to put that food in big sheds in the towns, and they have to look after it. They have to keep on doing that for 7 years, while there is lots and lots of food in Egypt country. 36 At the end of those 7 good years, there will be 7 dry years. There will be no rain, and no food plants will grow in Egypt country. But all the people in Egypt country, they can eat the food that is in those sheds, and they can keep on doing that for those 7 dry years, so that they will not die."

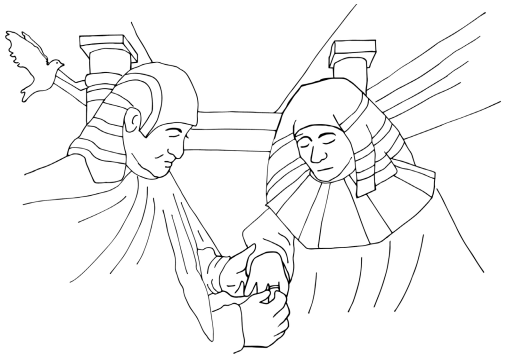
Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of Egypt country

37 Pharaoh and all his workers listened to Joseph, and they all liked Joseph's idea. 38 And Pharaoh said to his workers, "Now I know that this man has God's spirit in him. There isn't anybody else like him."

39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "God showed you what is going to happen, and he told you what to do. So I know that you are more wise than everybody else. You really know how to think properly. 40 So now I will make you my most important worker, and all the people in Egypt will have to do what you say. I will be the only one that is more important than you, because I am the big boss."*

41 After Pharaoh said those things, he said to Joseph, "Now I'm putting you in charge of all of Egypt country."

42 Pharaoh was wearing a ring with a special mark on it. That ring showed that Pharaoh was the big boss. So Pharaoh took off that special ring, and he put it on Joseph's finger, to show that Joseph was in charge.



Pharaoh put Jospeh in charge of Egypt country, and he gave Joseph his special ring

* **41:40** Acts 7:10

And Pharaoh gave Joseph some new clothes to wear. Those clothes were made out of a really good cloth, called linen. And Pharaoh put a gold necklace around Joseph's neck.* 43 Then Pharaoh got a special trailer with horses pulling it, and he got Joseph to ride in that special trailer to show that he was the 2nd boss over Egypt country. Pharaoh's soldiers went with Joseph, and they shouted out to all the people, "Joseph is coming. Show him respect."

In that way, Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of all of Egypt country.

44 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am the big boss, and you are my most important worker. If anybody in Egypt country wants to do something, they have to ask you first, and you can say *yes* or *no*."

45-46 Then Pharaoh gave Joseph a name in the Egypt language. That name was *Zafenath-Pania*. Pharaoh also gave Joseph a woman to marry. That woman's name was Asenath, and her father's name was Potifera. He was a ceremony leader for the Egypt people, at the town called Onn.

That's the story about how Joseph became Pharaoh's most important worker, and he started to be in charge of Egypt country. At that time, Joseph was 30 years old. Then Joseph left Pharaoh's house, and he went all around Egypt country.

Joseph got the Egypt people to put food in sheds

47 The next 7 years were really good years in Egypt country, because lots and lots of food grew on the land. 48 So for those 7 years, Joseph told the Egypt people to get food from the farms and take it into the towns. And the people did what Joseph said. Everywhere in Egypt country, the people got food from the farms, and they took that food into the towns that were near the farms. Then they put that food into big sheds, to keep it safe. 49 There was so much food in those sheds that nobody could count it, just like nobody can count all those little bits of sand that are at the beaches by the sea.

Joseph had 2 sons

50 Joseph's wife was called Asenath, and her father's name was Potifera. He was a ceremony leader for the Egypt people, at the town called Onn.

Joseph and Asenath had 2 sons. Both those sons were born at the time when there was still lots of food growing in Egypt country.

51 Joseph named his 1st son *Manasseh*. That name means *he let me forget*. Joseph said, "You see, God was good to me. He let me forget about all that trouble I had, and he even let me forget that I miss my family."

52 Joseph named his 2nd son *Ephraim*. That name means *he let me have kids*. Joseph said, "You see, God was good to me. He let me have kids in this country, even though I had lots of trouble here."

There was no rain and no food plants

53 For those 7 years, lots and lots of food plants grew in Egypt country. But at the end of those 7 good years, the rain stopped coming. 54 Then the 7 dry years started. There was no rain, and the food plants stopped growing. It happened just like Joseph said.*

The same thing happened in all the other countries around Egypt too. There was no rain and no food plants growing in those countries, so the people in those countries didn't have enough food. But there was still lots of food in those big sheds in Egypt.

55-56 This is what happened in Egypt country at the time when the rain stopped

* **41:42** Daniel 5:29 * **41:54** Acts 7:11

coming. It got dry all over Egypt country, and the food plants everywhere stopped growing. It got really bad, and all the Egypt people started to get hungry. So they went to Pharaoh, and they said to him, "Please, please give us food."

Then Pharaoh said to all the Egypt people, "Go to Joseph, and do whatever he tells you."*

So they went to Joseph, and they asked him for food. Then Joseph got his workers to go to all the towns in Egypt country and open those big sheds. There was lots of food in those sheds from the 7 good years. So Joseph's workers started to sell that food to the Egypt people.

57 And there was no rain in other countries too. It was really bad everywhere. So the people that lived in those other countries, they went to Egypt, and they bought food from Joseph's workers too.

Chapter 42

Joseph's brothers went to Egypt country

1 Joseph's father Jacob, he lived in Canaan country with his other sons. At that time, there was no rain and no food plants growing in Canaan country. Then somebody said to Jacob, "There is lots of food in Egypt country."

So Jacob talked to his sons, and he said to them, "Don't just stand around doing nothing. 2 Somebody told me that there is lots of food in Egypt country. Go there and buy food for all of us. If you don't go and buy food for us, we will die."*

3 So 10 of Jacob's sons left Canaan country, and they went to Egypt country to buy food there. Those 10 men were Joseph's half-brothers. They had the same father as Joseph, but different mothers. 4 You know, Joseph had one other brother too. His name was Benjamin. Joseph and Benjamin had the same father and mother. Their father Jacob really loved Benjamin. So Jacob didn't want Benjamin to go to Egypt with his brothers. He thought, "Benjamin might get hurt, or he might die." So Benjamin stayed at home with his father.

5 In Egypt country, Jacob's sons went to buy food, and there were lots of other people from Canaan country there too. You see, there was no rain and no food plants growing anywhere in Canaan, so the Canaan people had to go to Egypt to buy food.

Joseph pretended that he didn't know his brothers

6 At that time, Joseph was in charge of Egypt country, and he was the one that sold food to everybody. So Joseph's brothers came to him, and they got down on their knees and put their faces near the ground, to show him respect.* 7-8 But they didn't know that he was their brother Joseph. They thought that he was one of the Egypt people.

Joseph looked at those men, and he saw that they were his brothers. But Joseph pretended that he didn't know them. He talked to them in the Egypt language, and somebody else talked to Joseph's brothers in their own language and told them the



Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to get food

* **41:55-56** John 2:5 * **42:2** Acts 7:12 * **42:6** Genesis 37:7

things Joseph said. And Joseph talked in a rough way to them. He said, "Where do you mob come from?"

His brothers said, "We come from Canaan country. We want to buy food here in Egypt."

9 Then Joseph remembered those dreams that he had a long time before. Those dreams showed that one day, Joseph's brothers will all bend down in front of him, to show him respect. *

Joseph kept on pretending that he didn't know them. He said to his brothers, "I reckon you mob are lying to me. I reckon you are my enemies. You came here to find out about our country, so that your people can attack us."

10 But they said to him, "No, sir, that's not true. We respect you. We came here to buy food. 11 You know, we are all brothers, with the same father. We are good men, and we don't tell lies. We are not your enemies."

12 Joseph said, "I don't believe you. I reckon you came here to find out about our country, so that your people can attack us."

13 They said, "No, sir. Those things that we told you, they are true. We are from a family of 12 brothers. We all have the same father, and he lives in Canaan country. Our youngest brother stayed at home with our father, and our other brother isn't with us any more."

14 But Joseph said, "Stop talking, you mob. I know for sure that you are my enemies. 15 So I'm going to test you mob, to see if you are lying. You said, 'Our youngest brother is with our father in Canaan country.' All right, I want your youngest brother to come here, so that I can see him. I'm telling you strongly, if your brother doesn't come here, I will not let you leave this place. Pharaoh, the big boss of this country, he is the one that gives me the power to promise that."

16 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "This is how I am going to test you mob. One of you has to go back to your home country and get your youngest brother, then bring him back here. The rest of you mob have to stay here, and I will put you in jail. If your youngest brother comes here, then I will know that you told me the true story, and I will let you go free. But if he doesn't come, then I will know that you are my enemies. I will be really sure, just like I'm really sure that Pharaoh is alive."

17 Then Joseph put his brothers in jail, and they stayed there for 3 days.

18 At the end of those 3 days, Joseph talked to his brothers again. He said to them, "You know, I respect God and I want to do the right thing. So if you do what I say, I will not kill you."

19 Then Joseph said to them, "You told me that you are good men, and you don't tell lies. So listen, this is what you have to do. Pick one man from your mob, and I will keep that man here in jail. The rest of you mob, you can go back to your home country. You can take food with you, and you can give that food to your families, because they are really hungry. 20 Then get your youngest brother, and bring him here to me. Then I will know that you told me the true story, and I will not kill you."

So Joseph's brothers agreed to do what he said. But they still didn't know that he was their brother Joseph. They still thought he was an Egypt man.

21 Then Joseph's brothers talked to each other in their own language. They said, "You know, a long time ago, we made bad trouble for our brother Joseph. We chucked him into a big hole in the ground, and then we sold him to some men from the Midian tribe. At that time, we saw that he was really

* **42:9** Genesis 37:5-10

frightened, and he asked us strongly to be good to him, but we didn't listen. That's the reason why we've got this bad trouble now. God is punishing us for those things that we did to Joseph."

22 Then Joseph's oldest brother Reuben, he said to the others, "You know, I told you mob not to hurt Joseph, but you didn't listen to me. And look, now God is doing payback to us."*

23 Joseph listened to his brothers, and he understood what they said, because he knew their language. But Joseph's brothers didn't know that he understood them. You see, Joseph always talked to his brothers in the Egypt language, then somebody else talked to them in their own language and told them what Joseph said. So they thought he only talked the Egypt language.

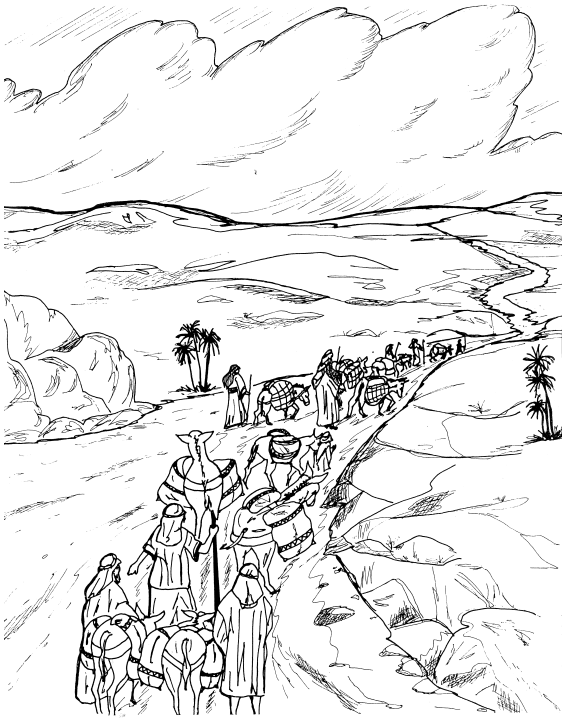
24 When Joseph heard his brothers say those things, he wanted to cry. So he went to a place where they couldn't see him, and he cried.

After a while, Joseph stopped crying. Then he went back to his brothers, and he talked to them in the Egypt language again. And Joseph picked his brother Simeon to stay in Egypt country. He told his men to tie up Simeon, and they tied him up in front of his brothers.

Joseph's brothers went back to Canaan country

25 Then Joseph got ready to send his brothers back to Canaan country. He said to his workers, "Fill up these men's bags with food, so that they can take it home to their families. And give them some food to eat on the way home too." And those workers did what Joseph said.

Joseph's brothers already paid for that food, but Joseph talked secretly to his workers, and he said, "Get the money that



Joseph's brothers put their food bags on their donkeys and walked back to Canaan country

those men paid us, and hide it in their food bags." So those workers did what Joseph said. Then they gave those food bags to Joseph's brothers, with the money inside. But Joseph's brothers didn't know that their money was in those bags.

26 Then Joseph's brothers put their food bags on their donkeys, and they left that place and started to go back towards Canaan country. 27 Later that day, they stopped in another place, to camp there that night. One of Joseph's brothers wanted food for his donkey, so he opened his food bag. Then he saw his money in there on top of the food, and he got a shock. 28 He said to his brothers, "Somebody gave my money back. They hid it in my bag. Look, here it is, on top of the food."

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* **42:22** Genesis 37:21-22

Then Joseph's brothers got really worried. They thought, "Those Egypt people will think that we stole this money." They were really frightened, and their bodies started to shake. They said to each other, "This thing that happened to us, it's really bad. God is punishing us."

29 The next day, they kept going towards Canaan country, and they kept on camping along the way. When they got to Canaan country, they went to their father Jacob, and they told him about the things that happened to them in Egypt country. 30 They said, "The man that is in charge of Egypt country, he talked in a rough way to us. He thought we were his enemies, and he said to us, 'I reckon you came here to find out about our country, so that your people can attack us.' 31 But we said to him, 'We are good men, and we don't tell lies. We are not your enemies. 32 We are from a family of 12 brothers, and we all have the same father. One brother isn't with us any more, and our youngest brother is with our father in Canaan country.' 33 Then that man, the one that is in charge in Egypt, he said to us, 'I'm going to test you mob, to see if those things you said are true. This is what you have to do. You have to pick one of your brothers to stay here with me. The rest of you mob can go back to your home country. You can take food with you, and give it to your families, because they are really hungry. 34 After that, you have to get your youngest brother, and you have to bring him here to me. Then I will know that you are not my enemies. Yes, I will know that you are good men, and you didn't lie to me. Then I will give your other brother back to you, the one that stayed here in Egypt country. And then I will let you buy and sell things in my country.' "

35 After Joseph's brothers told their father those things, they all opened their bags, and they started to take out the food. Then all of them saw their money in those bags. And their father Jacob saw that money too. They all got a shock, and they were frightened.

Jacob didn't let his sons take Benjamin to Egypt country

36 Jacob's sons wanted to take their brother Benjamin back to Egypt country, just like Joseph told them to. That made Jacob sad. So Jacob said to his sons, "I don't want to lose any more of my kids. My son Joseph isn't here any more, and my son Simeon isn't here any more. And now you want to take my son Benjamin away from me too. All those things are really sad for me."

37 Then Reuben, Jacob's oldest son, he talked to his father Jacob. Reuben said, "Let me take Benjamin to Egypt country. I will look after him, and I promise that I will bring him back to you. If I don't bring him back to you, then you can kill my 2 sons."

38 But Jacob said, "No. I will not let Benjamin go with you mob to Egypt country. You know that I really loved Benjamin's mother Rachel. We had 2 sons together, Joseph and Benjamin. Now Joseph is dead, and Benjamin is the only one left. If I let him go with you, he might get hurt, or he might die. You know, I am an old man. If you mob take Benjamin to Egypt country, and something bad happens to him, I will be so sad that I will die."

Chapter 43

Jacob told his sons to go to Egypt country again

1 Some time later, there was still no rain and no food plants growing in Canaan country, and everybody was really hungry. 2 Jacob's family finished eating all that food that they got in Egypt country, and they didn't have any more food. So Jacob said to his sons, "Go back to Egypt country, and buy a bit more food for us."



Jacob told his sons to go back to Egypt country and buy more food

3 But Jacob's son Judah said, "You know that we can't go back to Egypt country without our youngest brother Benjamin. That man that is in charge of Egypt, he will not let us do that. Last time we went to Egypt, that man talked strongly to us, and he said, 'You can only come back here if you bring your youngest brother with you.' "

4 Then Judah said to Jacob, "If you will let our brother Benjamin go with us to Egypt country, then we will go and buy food for you there. 5 But if you will not let Benjamin go with us, then we will not go to Egypt country, because that man said to us, 'You can only come back here if you bring your youngest brother with you.' "

6 Then Jacob said, "I don't want you mob to take Benjamin to Egypt country. Why did you make this problem for me? Why did you tell that man that you have another brother?"

7 Jacob's sons said, "That man asked us lots of questions about ourselves and our family. He said, 'Is your father still alive? And have you got another brother?' We just answered his questions. We didn't know that he was going to say, 'Bring your brother here.' "

8 Then Judah talked to his father Jacob again. He said, "I will look after that young man Benjamin. Let him go with me to Egypt country. We will go there straight away, with the rest of our brothers, so that we can buy food. If we don't go and buy food, our mob will get so hungry that we will all die. That's true for us, and you, and our kids. We all need that food, so that we can stay alive."

9 Then Judah said to his father, "I promise that I will look after Benjamin, and I will keep him safe until we come back. I'm telling you straight, if I don't bring Benjamin back here to you, then you can blame me and say that I am guilty, and you can keep doing that all my life. 10 But listen, we really need to go to Egypt country now. We already waited too long. We had enough time to go to Egypt and come back, and then go again and come back. But we didn't do that. We just stayed here in Canaan country."

11 Then their father Jacob said, "All right. I can see that you mob have to take Benjamin to Egypt country. But first, I want you to get some of the best things from our country, so that you can take them as presents for that man, the one that is in charge of Egypt. Get some honey, and some nuts. And get some perfume, and some bush medicine called myrrh. Put all those things into your bags, and take them to Egypt, and give them to that man that is in charge."

12 Then Jacob kept on talking to his sons. He said, "Remember, the last time you mob went to Egypt, you paid money for food. Then later on, you found that money in your food bags. I don't know why somebody put that money into your food bags. Maybe that person wasn't thinking right. So you have to take that money back to Egypt country, and you have to give it to that man that is in charge. And take some other money with you as well, to pay for the food that you will buy this time."

13 Then Jacob said to his sons, "Now get your brother Benjamin, and leave this place straight away. Go back to Egypt country,

and go to that man that is in charge. 14 You know, God is the one that has power over everything. So I'm asking God to make that man feel sorry for you mob. If he feels sorry for you, then he will let your brother Simeon go free, and he will let Simeon and Benjamin come back here with you. But if those things don't happen, and if my sons die, then I can't change that."

Joseph's brothers went to Egypt country again

15 Straight away, Jacob's sons did everything that Jacob said. They got those presents ready, and they got that money that they found in their food bags, and some other money. Then they got their brother Benjamin, and they went to Egypt country. After they got there, they went and stood in front of Joseph.

16 Joseph looked at those men, and he saw that his brother Benjamin was with them. So Joseph talked to his worker, the one that was in charge of all the other workers in his house. Joseph said to that worker, "I want these men to eat lunch with me at 12 o'clock. So take them to my house, and then go and get one of my animals and kill it. Cook the meat from that animal, and get it ready for us to eat."

17 So that worker started to take those men to Joseph's house, just like Joseph told him to do. 18 Then those men got frightened. They talked to each other, and they said, "You know, the last time we came here to Egypt country, we brought money with us, to buy food. But somebody put that money in our food bags, and then we took those food bags back home with us. We didn't know that our money was in those bags. Now that man is going to say to us, 'You mob stole that money.' That's the reason why he wants us at his house. Him and his men, they are going to attack us, and we will not be able to fight back, because they will be too strong for us. Then they will make us like prisoners, and we will have to work very hard for them. And they will take our donkeys too."

19 So when those men got near to Joseph's house, they stopped outside the door of the house, and they talked to Joseph's worker. 20 They said, "Please, sir, we want to tell you something. Some time ago, we came here to Egypt country, to buy food. We got lots of food, and we paid money for that food. 21-22 Then on the way home, we stopped at a place to camp for the night. Then we opened our food bags, and we saw that all our money was in those bags, on top of the food. We don't know who put that money in our bags. So now, we brought that money here, to give it back. And we brought some other money with us too, so that we can buy more food."

23 Then Joseph's worker said to them, "It's all right. Don't be frightened. I got the money that you paid for that food last time. The God that you and your father respect, he is the one that put that money in your food bags. It's like he gave you a special present."

Then that worker went and got Joseph's brother Simeon, that one that stayed in Egypt country last time. That worker took Simeon to his brothers, 24 and then he took all those men into Joseph's house. He got water for them to wash their feet, and he got food for their donkeys to eat. 25 And he said to those men, "You are going to eat lunch with my boss at 12 o'clock." So they washed their feet, and they got those presents ready for Joseph, the ones that they brought from Canaan country.

Joseph's brothers had lunch with him

26 Joseph came home for lunch, and his brothers gave him those presents that they brought from Canaan country. They still didn't know that he was their brother. They thought that he was one of the Egypt people.

So they got down on their knees and put their faces near the ground, to show him respect.

27 Joseph said to them, "How are you mob?" And he said, "The last time you came here, you told me about your father. So tell me, how is that old man? Is he still alive?"

28 They said, "Yes, our father is still alive, and he is good. He respects you." Then they all got down on their knees again, and they put their faces near the ground, to show respect to Joseph.

29 Joseph looked around, and he saw his brother Benjamin. You know, Joseph and Benjamin had the same mother and father. So Joseph said to those men, "You told me that you have another younger brother. Is this him?"

Then Joseph said to Benjamin, "Young man, I'm asking God to be very good to you."

30 Joseph was really happy to see Benjamin, because he loved him very much. He was so happy that he wanted to cry. But Joseph didn't want his brothers to see him crying, so he quickly went out of that room to find a place to cry. He went to his own room, and he cried.

31 After a while, Joseph stopped crying. Then he washed his face, and he went back to his brothers. And Joseph tried to be strong, so that he did not cry again. He said to his workers, "Bring the food that you made, so that we can eat it."

32 In that room there was Joseph, and Joseph's brothers, and some Egypt people. Joseph's workers went and got food for them all. Those Egypt people didn't want to sit with Joseph's brothers, because Joseph's brothers were from the Hebrew tribe, and the Egypt people reckoned it was wrong to eat food with Hebrew people. That's what their culture said. So those Egypt people sat by themselves, and Joseph had a special place for himself.

33 And Joseph got his brothers to sit together. He got his oldest brother to sit down first, and he got his 2nd oldest brother to sit down next, and then he kept on doing that with all his brothers, and he got his youngest brother to sit down last. So all his brothers were sitting down in order of their age, from the oldest to the youngest. Joseph's brothers were shocked. They thought, "That man knows how old we all are. How does he know that?"

34 Then Joseph's workers got food from Joseph's table, and they gave that food to Joseph's brothers. But they gave Benjamin more food than all the others. They gave Benjamin 5 lunches just for him. And all of Joseph's brothers, they drank a lot of wine with Joseph, and they felt very happy.

Chapter 44

Joseph pretended that Benjamin stole a cup

1 Joseph talked to his worker, the one that was in charge of all the other workers in his house. Joseph said to that worker, "Fill up those men's bags with food. Put lots of food in them, so that they are really full. Then get the money that they paid for that food, and hide that money in their bags, on top of the food. Do that for every one of those men."

2 Joseph also said, "Get my special cup, the one that is made of silver. Hide that cup in the youngest man's bag, on top of the food, with the money he paid for that food." And Joseph's worker did all those things that Joseph said.

3 The next morning, as soon as the sun came up, Joseph's workers helped those men get ready to go home. Those men got their food bags, and they put those bags on their donkeys, and then they started to go home.

4 When those men were just a little bit away from Joseph's town, Joseph said to his worker, "Quick, chase those men until

you catch up with them. Then say to them, 'My boss was very good to you, but you mob did a bad thing to him. You stole his silver cup. 5 That cup is really special. My boss drinks from that cup, and he uses it to find out things that will happen later on. But you mob stole that cup. That was a really wrong thing to do.' "

6 So Joseph's worker chased those men until he caught up with them. Then he talked to those men, and he said those things that Joseph told him to say. 7 But those men said to him, "Sir, we don't know why you said those things. We didn't steal your boss's cup. We respect you and your boss, and we don't want to do bad things to you. No way."

8 Those men kept on talking to Joseph's worker. They said, "Sir, think about that other time when we came to your country to buy food. On the way home to Canaan country, we found money in our food bags, on top of the food. But we didn't try to keep that money. No, we wanted to give it back to you. So the next time we came to your country, we brought that money with us, to give it to you. That shows that we are good men. So you can be sure that we didn't steal anything made of silver or gold from your boss's house."

9 Then those men said to Joseph's worker, "Sir, you can look in all our bags. And if you find that silver cup, then you can kill the man that has the cup in his bag. Then the rest of us mob, we will become your work-men, and we will work for you for no pay."

10 Joseph's worker said, "All right, I will look in all your bags. And the man that has the cup in his bag, he has to become my work-man. Then I will let the rest of you mob go free."

11 So those men quickly took their bags off their donkeys, and they all opened their bags. 12 And Joseph's worker started to look in all those bags. He looked in the oldest man's bag first, but the cup wasn't there. Then he went to the next oldest man, and he looked in that man's bag, but the cup wasn't there. And he kept on doing that with all the men. He looked in all of their bags until he got to the youngest man. That young man's name was Benjamin. Joseph's worker looked in Benjamin's bag, and he found that silver cup. 13 Then all those men got a big shock, and they thought, "Now Benjamin will have to stay in Egypt country and work for that man." So they got really upset. They were so upset that they tore their clothes. Then they put their bags back on their donkeys, and they went back to the town where Joseph lived.



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Joseph's worker found the silver cup in Benjamin's bag

Judah tried to save Benjamin

14 Joseph was in his house, and he was waiting for those men to come back. Then those men got to the house. The one called Judah, he went inside the house, and his brothers went inside too. You know, all those men were Joseph's brothers, but they still didn't know that he was Joseph. So they quickly got down on their knees and put their faces near the ground, to show him respect.

15 Joseph still wanted to trick them, so he said to them, "You know, I'm a very powerful



Judah told Joseph that they didn't steal that cup

man. I can do magic to find out things that nobody else knows. So I know that you mob stole my silver cup. Why did you do that bad thing?"

16 Judah said to Joseph, "Sir, we don't know what to say to you. We really don't know what to say. We didn't steal your cup. That's the true story, but we don't have any way to show you that it's true."

Then Judah said to Joseph, "Sir, a long time ago, we did bad things, and God knows that. Now God is showing you that we are guilty men. So listen, we will all become your work-men. Yes, that man that had your cup in his bag, he will become your work-man, and the rest of us mob, we will become your work-men too. And we will work for you for no pay."

17 But Joseph said, "No way. I don't want to punish all of you like that. The man that had my cup in his bag, he is the only one that has to become my work-man. The rest of you mob, you can go home to your father, and I will not make any trouble for you."

18 Then Judah went more close to Joseph, and Judah said, "Sir, please let me say something to you, even though I am not an important person. I know that you are very important, just like Pharaoh, the big boss of Egypt country. So please don't be angry with me for saying this. 19 You know, sir, the last time we came here, you asked us, 'Is your father still alive? And do you have another brother?' 20 Then we said to you, 'Yes, sir. Our father is alive, and he is an old man. And we have a young brother too. He was born when our father was already old. We had one more brother, but he died. That brother that died, and our young brother, they had the same mother. So now our young brother is the only kid left from his mother. And our father really loves him.' 21 Then you said to us, 'Go and get that young man, and bring him here to Egypt country, so that I can see him.' 22 But we said, 'Sir, we can't take that young man away from his father. If we do that, his father will be so sad that he will die.' 23 Then you said to us, 'You mob can only come back here if you bring your youngest brother with you.' "

24 Judah kept on talking to Joseph. He said, "Sir, we went back home to our father, and we told him those things that you said. 25 Then, some time later, our father said to us, 'Go back to Egypt, and buy a bit more food for us mob.' 26 But we said to him, 'That man that is in charge of Egypt, he said to us, "You mob can only come back here if you bring your youngest brother with you." ' So we said to our father, 'If you will let our youngest brother go with us to Egypt, then we will go. But if you don't let him go with us, then we can't go.' 27 Then my father said to us, 'Listen, you know that I really loved my wife Rachel, and we only had 2 sons together. 28 One of those sons went away, and he never came back. So I said, "I know what happened. A wild animal tore my son

into little bits." And I never saw him again.
29 So now your youngest brother, he is the
only one of Rachel's sons that I have left. If
you take him away from me, he might get
hurt, or he might die. You know, I am an old
man. If something bad happens to my son, I
will be so sad that I will die.' "
30-31 Judah kept on talking to Joseph. He
said, "Sir, our father really loves that young
man. He loves him more than anything else.
And you know, our father is very old. I'm
telling you, if I go back home to my father,
and if that young man is not with us, then
my father will be so sad that he will die. Yes,
as soon as he sees that the young man is not
with us, he will die straight away. We don't
want to do that to our father. 32 Sir, I promised
my father that I will look after that young
man, and keep him safe. I said to my father,
'If I don't bring that young man back here to
you, then you can blame me and say that I am
guilty, and you can do that all my life.' 33 So
please, sir, let me stay here and become your
work-man, instead of that young man. And
let that young man go back home with his
brothers. 34 If that young man is not with me,
I can't go back to my father. I don't want to
see my father get real sad and die. No way."

Chapter 45

Joseph told his brothers the true story

1 After Judah said all those things, Joseph
really wanted to cry, and he wanted to tell
those men that he was their brother. But lots
of Joseph's workers were there in that room,
so Joseph said to them, "All of you workers,
go out of this room." Then all of Joseph's
workers went out, and Joseph stayed there
with his brothers. 2 Then Joseph started to
cry really loud. He cried so loud that some
of the Egypt people heard him, and those
Egypt people went and told the people in
Pharaoh's house.
3 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am
your brother Joseph. You said that my father
is still alive. Is that true?" *
Joseph's brothers got a big shock. You see,
before this, they thought that he was one of
the Egypt people, but now they knew that he
was their brother Joseph. They were really
shocked and frightened, so they didn't say
anything.
4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please,
come and stand more close to me." So they
went more close to him.
And Joseph said, "I am your brother Joseph.
Remember, a long time ago, you sold me as
a work-man to that Midian mob, and they
brought me here to Egypt country. 5 Listen,
I can see that you are upset and angry with
yourselves, because you sold me as a work-
man. But don't be upset or angry. You know,
God was the one that made those things
happen. Yes, God sent me here to Egypt, so
that I can help people stay alive in these dry
years with no food plants growing. And later
on, he got you mob to come here to get food.
6 You know, we already had 2 dry years with
no rain, and there will be 5 more dry years.
Yes, for 5 more years, nobody will be able
to grow any food. 7 But God wants to save
you mob, so he did a great thing for you. He
sent me here to Egypt, to get things ready
for you. Now God is going to use me to make
sure that you and your families stay alive.
8 So I'm telling you, it wasn't you mob that
sent me here to Egypt. No, it was God that
sent me here. He made me Pharaoh's most
important helper, and he made me boss over
all of Pharaoh's workers, and he put me in
charge of all of Egypt."
9 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Now
you mob have to go quickly to my father.

* **45:3** Acts 7:13

Say to him, 'This is a message from your son Joseph. He says, "God put me in charge of all of Egypt country. Come and live in this country with me straight away.* 10 Bring your kids and your grand-kids, your sheep and cows, and everything that you own. You can live near me, in the place called Goshen. 11 You know, there will be 5 more years of no rain and no food plants growing. But I will give food to you and your family and your animals for those 5 years. I will do that for you, so that you will not become really poor, and you and your animals will not die."' "

12 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Now you mob know that I really am Joseph. And my brother Benjamin, he knows that too. 13 So you mob have to go and tell my father that I am very important in Egypt country. And tell him about everything else that you saw here. Go quickly, and then bring my father here."

14 Then Joseph put his arms around his brother Benjamin, and he hugged him. And Joseph cried, because he was so happy to see Benjamin again. And Benjamin hugged Joseph, and he cried too. 15 Then Joseph kissed all his brothers on the cheek, and he kept on crying while he did that. Then Joseph's brothers were not frightened any more, and they talked to Joseph.

Pharaoh was good to Joseph's brothers

16 Somebody went to Pharaoh's house, and they said to Pharaoh and his workers, "Joseph's brothers are here in Egypt country." And Pharaoh and his workers were happy that Joseph's brothers came. 17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers, 'This is what you have to do. Put your bags of food on your donkeys, and go back to Canaan country. 18 Then get your father and your families, and bring them back here to Egypt. I will give you the best land in Egypt, and you can live on that land. And you can eat the best food that is in this country.' "

19 Pharaoh kept on talking to Joseph. He said, "I want you to say to your brothers, 'This is what you have to do. Get some of our cows and trailers that are here in Egypt country, and get those cows to pull those trailers back to your home country. Then get your little kids and your wives to sit in those trailers, and then those cows can bring them back here to Egypt. And bring your father too. 20 You don't need to bring all the things that you own, because I am going to give you the best things that are here in Egypt.' "

21 Then Jacob's sons did those things that Pharaoh said. Joseph gave them some cows and trailers, just like Pharaoh told him to do, and he gave them some food to eat on the way home. 22 And he gave them all some new clothes. But he gave Benjamin more clothes than all the others. Yes, he gave Benjamin 5 sets of clothes. He also gave Benjamin 300 pieces of silver money.

23 Joseph wanted to send some presents to his father too. So he got 10 male donkeys, and he got some really good things from Egypt country, and he put those good things into bags, and he put those bags on the donkeys to send them to his father. Joseph also got 10 female donkeys to send to his father, and he got wheat seeds, and bread, and lots of other food, and he put all that food into bags, and he put those bags on those 10 female donkeys. Joseph wanted to send that food to his father, so that his father could eat it on the way back to Egypt. 24 After everything was ready, Joseph told his brothers to leave Egypt and go back to their home country. And he said to them, "Don't argue on the way home." So they left Egypt country to go home.

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* **45:9** Acts 7:14

Joseph's brothers told their father that Joseph was alive

25 Joseph's brothers went back to their father
Jacob, in Canaan country. 26 They said to
Jacob, "Joseph is not dead. No, he is still
alive, and he is in charge of all of Egypt
country."

Jacob got a big shock, and he didn't believe those things that his sons said. You see, he thought that Joseph was dead. 27 So Jacob's sons told him everything that Joseph said to them, and they showed him those cows and trailers that Joseph sent. They said, "Joseph sent these cows and trailers so that we can take you and our families to Egypt country."

Then Jacob felt better. 28 He said, "Now I know that those things that you said, they are true. My son Joseph really is alive. I have to go and see him before I die."

Chapter 46

God talked to Jacob

1 So Jacob left his home in Canaan country, and he started to go to Egypt country. He took his family with him, and everything that he owned. They got to the place called Beersheba, then Jacob killed some animals and burned them. He did that to show respect to God. God is the one that looked after his father Isaac.

2 That night, God talked to Jacob. God said, "Jacob, Jacob."

Jacob said, "Yes, I am listening."

3 And God said, "I am God, I am the one that looked after your father. Don't be frightened to go to Egypt. I will make your family into a great nation there."

4 Then God said to Jacob, "I will go with you to Egypt, and I will take care of you. One day, you will die in Egypt, and your son Joseph will be with you when you die. And I promise that later on, I will take your family back to Canaan country again."

Jacob and his family went to Egypt country

5 Then Jacob and his family left Beersheba. Jacob's sons got their father to ride in one of those trailers that Pharaoh sent. And they got their little kids and their wives to ride



Jacob and all his family went to Egypt country

in those trailers too. And the cows from Pharaoh, they pulled those trailers. 6 Jacob's family took all their animals with them, and everything else that they owned. They took all the things that they got while they lived in Canaan country. And they all went to Egypt country. *

That's how Jacob's whole family went to Egypt country. 7 Jacob took all his sons and daughters to Egypt, and all his grand-sons and grand-daughters.

The names of Jacob's kids and grand-kids

8 These are the names of Jacob's kids and grand-kids. All this mob went to Egypt country with Jacob.

The kids and grand-kids that Jacob had with Leah

Jacob and Leah's oldest son was Reuben.
9 Reuben's sons were,
- Hanok
- Pallu
- Hezron
- Carmi

10 Jacob and Leah's next son was Simeon.
Simeon's sons were,
- Jemuel
- Jamin
- Ohad
- Jakin
- Zohar
- Shawl. His mother was from Canaan country.

11 Jacob and Leah's next son was Levi.
Levi's sons were,
- Gershon
- Kohath
- Merari

12 Jacob and Leah's next son was Judah.
Judah's sons were,
- Er
- Onan
- Shelah
- Perez
- Zerah

But Er and Onan already died in Canaan country.
Perez's sons were,
- Hezron
- Hamul

13 Jacob and Leah's next son was Issachar.
Issachar's sons were,
- Tola
- Puvah
- Yashub
- Shimron

14 Jacob and Leah's youngest son was Zebulun.
Zebulun's sons were,
- Sered
- Elon
- Jaleel

15 Those were the sons and grand-sons that Jacob had with his wife Leah. There were 33 of them, and they were all born in Paddan Aram country. Jacob and Leah also had a daughter called Dinah.

The kids and grand-kids that Jacob had with Zilpah

16 Jacob and Zilpah's older son was Gad.
Gad's sons were,
- Zefon
- Haggi
- Shuni
- Ezbon
- Eri
- Arodi
- Areli

17 Jacob and Zilpah's younger son was Asher.
Asher's sons were,
- Imnah
- Ishvah
- Ishvi
- Beriah

* **46:6** Acts 7:15

Asher also had a daughter called Serah.
Beriah's sons were,
– Heber
– Malkiel
18 Those were the kids and grand-kids that Jacob had with Zilpah. There were 16 of them. That woman Zilpah, she used to work for Leah's father Laban. Then, at the time when Jacob and Leah got married, Laban gave Zilpah to Leah, to work for her.

The kids and grand-kids that Jacob had with Rachel

19 Jacob and his wife Rachel had 2 sons,
– Joseph
– Benjamin
20 Joseph had 2 sons in Egypt country. Their names were Manasseh and Ephraim. Their mother was Joseph's wife Asenath. Her father's name was Potifera, and he was a ceremony leader for the Egypt people, at the town called Onn. *
21 Benjamin's sons were,
– Bela
– Beker
– Ashbel
– Gera
– Nayman
– Ehi
– Rosh
– Muppim
– Huppim
– Ard
22 All those were the sons and grand-sons that Jacob had with his wife Rachel. There were 14 of them.

The kids and grand-kids that Jacob had with Bilhah

23 Jacob and Bilhah's older son was Dan.
Dan's son was,
– Hushim
24 Jacob and Bilhah's younger son was Naphtali.
Naphtali's sons were,
– Jahzeel
– Guni
– Jezer
– Shillem
25 Those were the sons and grand-sons that Jacob had with Bilhah. There were 7 of them. That woman Bilhah, she used to work for Rachel's father Laban. Then, at the time when Jacob and Rachel got married, Laban gave Bilhah to Rachel, to work for her.
26 All those kids and grand-kids of Jacob went to Egypt country with him. There were 66 of them. And Jacob's sons took their wives to Egypt too. 27 Jacob's son Joseph was already in Egypt, and Joseph's 2 sons were in Egypt too, because they were born there.
At that time, there were 70 people in Jacob's family, and they all went to live in Egypt country. *

Jacob and Joseph saw each other again

28 Jacob and his family got near to Egypt country. Then Jacob said to his son Judah, "Go to Joseph, and say to him, 'Please tell us how to get to the place called Goshen.' " And Judah did what Jacob said. Then Jacob and his family went to Goshen.
29 Joseph told his workers to get his special trailer ready, with horses to pull it. Then Joseph got into that trailer, and he went to Goshen, so that he could meet his father Jacob. As soon as Joseph saw his father, he went to him, and he put his arms around him and hugged him. Joseph held on to his father for a long time, and he cried a lot, because he was so happy to see him again.
30 Then Jacob said to his son Joseph, "Now I have seen you again, and I know that you

* **46:20** Genesis 41:50-52 * **46:27** Acts 7:14

are still alive. That's the only thing I wanted. So I'm ready to die now."

31 Then Joseph talked to his brothers, and to the rest of his father's family. He said, "Now I have to go and tell Pharaoh that you mob are here. I will say to Pharaoh, 'My brothers, and the rest of my father's family, they left their home in Canaan country, and they came here to Egypt country, so that they can live near me. 32 All the men in my father's family, they look after animals. They brought all their sheep here, and all their cows, and everything else that they own.'"

33 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "After I say those things to Pharaoh, he will say to me, 'Tell those men to come and see me.' And when you go to see him, he will say to you, 'What sort of work did you do in Canaan country?' 34 Then you have to say to him, 'Sir, ever since we were young men, we looked after animals. And our father and our grand-fathers, they used to look after animals too.'"

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "You know, the Egypt people hate men that look after animals. So they will not want you mob to live in their towns. But this place called Goshen, it's a long way from the other towns in Egypt country, so Pharaoh will let you live here."

Chapter 47

Pharaoh let Jacob and his family live in Egypt country

1 Joseph left Goshen, and he went to Pharaoh's house. Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "My father and my brothers came here from Canaan country. They brought all their sheep and cows with them, and everything else that they own. They are staying in the place called Goshen."

2 Joseph took 5 of his brothers to Pharaoh.
3 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph's brothers, "What sort of work do you do?"

Joseph's brothers said to Pharaoh, "Sir, we look after animals, just like our father and our grand-fathers used to." 4 Then they said, "Sir, it is a really hard time in Canaan country. There is no rain, so there are no food plants growing, and there isn't any grass there for our animals to eat. That's the reason why we came here to Egypt country. We want to live here for a while. Please, sir, let us stay in the place called Goshen."

5 Then Pharaoh talked to Joseph. He said, "It is good that your father and your brothers have come here to be with you. 6 There is lots of land here in Egypt country. Your father and brothers can live in the best part of the land. Let them live in Goshen, the land is good there."

Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "Maybe some of the men in your family are really good at looking after animals. You can tell those men to look after my animals for me."

7 Then Joseph got his father Jacob, and he took Jacob to meet Pharaoh. Then Jacob said good things to Pharaoh, and he showed him respect.

8 Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How old are you?"
9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "I am 130 years old. All my life, I've lived on country that belongs to other people. I never had my own land, just like my grand-fathers never had their own land. You know, my grand-fathers lived for a long time, and they died when they were very old. But my life has been short, and I had a lot of trouble in my life."

10 Then Jacob said *good-bye* to Pharaoh, and he went out of Pharaoh's house.

11 After that, Joseph gave his father and his brothers the best land in Egypt country, just like Pharaoh said, and they lived on that land. That land was in the place called Goshen, but later on, people called that place Rameses.
12 And Joseph gave food to his father, and his brothers, and the rest of his father's family.

He made sure that each brother always had enough food for their whole family.

Joseph gave the Egypt people food

13 There was no rain in all of Egypt and Canaan country, and no food plants grew. It was really hard for everyone. The people did not have enough food, so they got really hungry and weak.

14 At first, all the people in Egypt and Canaan country, they paid money to Joseph, and he gave them food. And Joseph took all that money into Pharaoh's house. 15 But after a while, the people in Egypt and Canaan country had no more money left. So all the Egypt people went to Joseph, and they said to him, "We've got no more money to buy food. You have to help us. Give us food, or we will die."

16 Joseph said to them, "All right. You don't have any money, so you can give me your animals instead of money, and then I will give you food."

17 So the people brought their animals to Joseph. They brought horses, and sheep, and cows, and donkeys. Every time somebody gave an animal to Joseph, he gave them some food, so they had enough food to eat. They kept on doing that for one year. Then after that, they had no more animals left.

18 The next year, the people went to Joseph again, and they said, "Sir, you know that we've got no money, and we gave you all our animals. The only things we have left are our own bodies and our land. There's nothing else we can give you. 19 We need food, and we need seeds to plant in the ground. We know we can plant seeds now, and those food plants will grow, but we don't have any seeds to plant. You have to help us, or we will die, and our land will be useless."

Then the people said, "This is what we want to do. We will give you our land and ourselves. Then all the land that belongs to us will belong to Pharaoh. And we will belong to Pharaoh too, we will become his workers. Then you give us food to eat and seeds to plant, so that we can grow food plants on the land again. It will be like we are paying for that food and those seeds with ourselves and our land. That way, we will have food to eat, and we will stay alive. But if you don't do that, we will die, and our land will be useless."

20 So Joseph did what the people asked. You see, there was no rain and no food plants growing in Egypt country. It was really bad, and the people needed food. So everyone in Egypt country gave all their land to Joseph, and he gave their land to Pharaoh. Then that land didn't belong to the people any more, it belonged to Pharaoh. 21 And Joseph got all the Egypt people to work for Pharaoh.

22-26 And Joseph said to the people, "Listen. Today I gave you mob to Pharaoh, to work for him. And I gave him your land as well. Now I will give you seeds to plant in the ground, so that you can grow food plants. Every time you take food from those plants, you have to split up that food into 5 piles, and give one pile to Pharaoh. You can keep the rest of that food for yourselves. Then you and your families and your little kids, and all the people that live in your homes, you will all have food to eat. And you can take some of the seeds from those food plants, and you can plant those seeds in the ground, so that you can keep growing more food plants."

Then the Egypt people said to Joseph, "Sir, you saved our lives. Thank you for being good to us. We will be Pharaoh's workers, just like you said."

So Joseph made a new law for Egypt country. That law said that every time the Egypt people got food from their food plants, they had to split up that food into 5 piles, and give one pile to Pharaoh. And you know, that law is still there in Egypt country.

After that time, Pharaoh owned all the land in Egypt country. Only the ceremony men still owned their own land. You see, Pharaoh always paid those ceremony men, so they didn't need to sell him their land to get food. So their land still belonged to them, it didn't belong to Pharaoh.

Jacob told Joseph to bury his body in Canaan country

27 At that time, Jacob and his family started to live in Egypt country, in the place called Goshen. They got their own land in that place, and lots more kids were born into their family, so that they became a really big mob of people.

28 Jacob lived in Egypt country for 17 years. He lived until he was 147 years old.

29 This story is about some things that happened before Jacob died.

Jacob knew that he was going to die soon, so he sent somebody to get his son Joseph. Then Jacob said to Joseph, "I am going to ask you to put your hand under my leg, and make me a strong promise." You see, in that culture, people sometimes made promises to each other that way. The person that made the promise, they put their hand under the other person's leg, and that showed that they had to keep their promise.

Then Jacob said to Joseph, "I know that you love me, so I want you to promise that you will be good to me, and do the right thing. When I die, don't bury my body here in Egypt country. 30 You have to take my body out of Egypt country, and go back to Canaan country, and bury me in the same grave as my father and grand-father."*

And Joseph said, "I will do those things that you said."

31 Jacob said, "Make me that strong promise." So Joseph put his hand under Jacob's leg, and he made him that strong promise. Then Jacob put his face down towards his bed, to thank God.*

Chapter 48

Jacob was good to Joseph's sons

1 One day, not long after that, somebody said to Joseph, "Your father is really sick. He might die soon."

So Joseph went to see his father Jacob. And Joseph took his 2 sons with him. Their names were Manasseh and Ephraim.

2 Joseph and his sons got to Jacob's house, and somebody went and told Jacob, "Your son Joseph has come here to see you."

Then Joseph and his sons went inside to talk to Jacob. Jacob was lying on his bed. He was really weak, so it was hard for him to move. But he really wanted to talk to Joseph, so he slowly sat up on his bed.

3 Then Jacob said to Joseph, "You know, a long time ago, I saw God. He is the one that has power over everything. He came to me at the place called Luz, in Canaan country. And he promised me that he will be good to me.* 4 He said to me, 'I will give you lots of kids and grand-kids, so that your family will grow into lots of different tribes. And I will give them all of this country, called Canaan. They will have this country for ever.' "

5 Then Jacob kept talking to Joseph. He said, "At that time, there will be one tribe for each of my sons, and each tribe will get part of the land. And your 2 sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, they will get part of that land too. It's like I'm adopting your 2 sons. There will be a tribe for Ephraim, and there will be a tribe for Manasseh, just like there will be a tribe for my son Reuben, and a tribe for my son Simeon, and for all my other sons. Your 2 sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, they were born

* **47:30** Genesis 49:29-32; 50:6 * **47:31** Hebrews 11:21 * **48:3** Genesis 28:13-14

here in Egypt country before I came to live here. 6 But if you have any other sons, they will not have their own tribes. No, their kids and grand-kids will belong to Ephraim's tribe and Manasseh's tribe. And their families will have some land in the land of Ephraim or Manasseh in Canaan country."

7 Jacob also said to Joseph, "I want your 2 sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, to have their own tribes and their own land, because your mother Rachel only gave me 2 sons. She had you and your brother Benjamin. And then she died, and I was really sad. At that time, we were going from Paddan Aram country to Canaan country. Your mother died in Canaan country, on the way to the town called Efrath. And I buried her body near the road that goes to Efrath." Another name for that town is Bethlehem. *

Jacob made Ephraim more important than Manasseh

8-10 Jacob was very old, and his eyes were weak, so he couldn't see very well. He looked at Joseph's 2 sons, and he said to Joseph, "Who are these 2 boys?"

Joseph said, "They are my sons, the ones that God gave me here in this country."

Then Jacob said, "Bring them near to me. I will put my hands on them, and I will ask God to be good to them."

So Joseph took his 2 sons near to Jacob. And Jacob hugged those 2 boys, and he kissed them on their cheeks. 11 Then Jacob said to Joseph, "You know, for a really long time, I thought you were dead. But a long time later, God let me see you again. And now, he let me see your kids too."

12 Then Joseph got his 2 sons to move away from Jacob. And Joseph got down on his knees and put his face near the ground, to show respect to his father Jacob.

13 Then Joseph stood up. He put his son Ephraim on his right side, and he put his son Manasseh on his left side, and he went near to Jacob with his 2 sons, so that Jacob can ask God to be good to them. Then Joseph put his younger son Ephraim in front of Jacob's left hand, and he put his older son Manasseh in front of Jacob's right hand. You see, in that culture, people thought that their right hand was more important than their left hand. So Joseph wanted Jacob to put his right hand on Manasseh, because he was the older son. And he wanted Jacob to put his left hand on Ephraim, because he was the younger son.

14 But Jacob didn't do that. No, he put his right hand on Ephraim's head, even though Ephraim was the younger son. And then he crossed his left arm over his right arm, and he put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the older son.

15 Then Jacob asked God to be good to Joseph and his sons. Jacob said,

"God, my grand-father Abraham
always lived your way, and so did my father Isaac.
God, you took care of me all my life,
and you still take care of me today.
16 You are the one that saved me and set
me free from all the bad things that
happened to me.
So now, I'm asking you to be good to
these 2 boys, Ephraim and Manasseh.
Let them be just like my own sons, and
give them those good things that you
promised to me, and to my grand-
father Abraham, and to my father
Isaac.
Let them have lots of kids and grand-
kids, so that their families will
become a really big mob here on
earth."

* **48:7** Genesis 35:16-19

17 While Jacob said all those things, he had
his right hand on Ephraim's head, and he
had his left hand on Manasseh's head. But
Joseph wanted Jacob to put his right hand
on Manasseh, because he was the older son.
So Joseph got upset, and he tried to move
Jacob's right hand from Ephraim's head to
Manasseh's head. 18 And Joseph said to Jacob,
"Father, don't put your right hand on my
younger son's head. Look, here is my older
son. Put your right hand on his head."
19 But Jacob didn't move his hand. He said,
"No, my son. I know for sure that I'm doing
the right thing. Listen, your older son will
have a big family, and they will become
an important tribe. But your younger son
will be more important than your older son.
He will have a really big family, and later
on, his tribe will be really big and really
important."*
20 That's the story about the way that
Jacob made Ephraim more important than
Manasseh.

Then Jacob said another good thing about
Ephraim and Manasseh. Jacob said to them,

"Later on, the Israel mob will always
remember that God was very good
to both of you. And sometimes they
will say to each other,
'I'm asking God to be good to you, just
like he was good to Ephraim and
Manasseh.' "

21 Then Jacob said to Joseph, "Listen, I am
going to die very soon. But God will be with
you and your family. Later on, he will take
your family back to that country where your
father and grand-fathers lived, and he will
give you land there."
22 Jacob also said to Joseph, "You know,
a long time ago, I fought the Amor tribe
with my long knife, and with my bow and
arrows. And I took a bit of their land from
them. Well, I'm giving you that bit of land
too. I'm not giving it to your brothers, I'm
only giving it to you."

Chapter 49

Jacob told his sons about things that will happen later on

1 Then Jacob sent somebody to bring all his
sons to him. And Jacob said to his sons,
"Come to me, all of you, and I will tell you
about the things that will happen to you and
your families. These things will happen later
on. 2 Come near to me, my sons. I am your
father Jacob, and my other name is Israel.
Listen to me."

Jacob talked to Reuben

3 Then Jacob said,

"Reuben, you are my oldest son.
You were born first. You were born at
that time when I was a strong young
man.
You were the most important and the
most powerful of all my sons.
4 But then you went and did whatever
you wanted, just like the wild water
in the sea.
You took one of my wives, and you
slept with her, like a man sleeps with
his wife.
That was a wrong and dirty thing you
did. You made me really shamed.
So you will not be my most important
son any more."

Jacob talked about Simeon and Levi

5 Then Jacob said,

"Simeon and Levi are just like each other.
They both like to fight, and they use
long knives to hurt people and kill
them.

* **48:19** Hebrews 11:21

6 They got really angry, so they killed a
big mob of men.
They are like people that caught a lot
of cows and cut their legs, for no
reason.
They make secret plans, but I will not
do that with them.
I will not go with them to do bad
things.
7 I'm asking God to curse Simeon and
Levi, because they are really angry
men, and they properly hurt people.
So God will split up their tribes, and
he will send their people all over the
land.
He will mix them up with all the other
tribes of the Israel nation."

Jacob talked to Judah

8 Then Jacob said,
"Judah, your tribe will fight against
their enemies, and your tribe will
win.
Then the tribes of all your brothers,
they will say that your tribe is really
great,
and they will bend down in front of
your tribe, to show them respect."
9 Jacob also said,
"My son Judah is like a strong young
lion,
like a lion that fought another animal
and won,
like a lion that killed an animal and
ate it.
He is like a lion that lies down to sleep,
and nobody is brave enough to wake it
up. *
10 Judah's tribe will always be important
and powerful.
Leaders and big bosses will come from
his tribe.
People from other countries will bring
them gifts.
And people from different nations will
respect them and do what they say.
11 Judah's land will be full of good grape
vines.
His tribe will even tie their donkeys
to those grape vines, so that the
donkeys can eat the grapes.
They will make lots of grape juice and
wine.
They will have even more grape juice
and wine than water.
12 There will be enough wine for
everybody in Judah's land,
and they will all have lots of milk to
drink."

Jacob talked about Zebulun

13 Then Jacob said,
"Zebulun's tribe will set up their camp
next to the sea,
and it will be a safe place for ships.
The north bit of Zebulun's land will
be near the town called Sidon, in
Fonisha country."

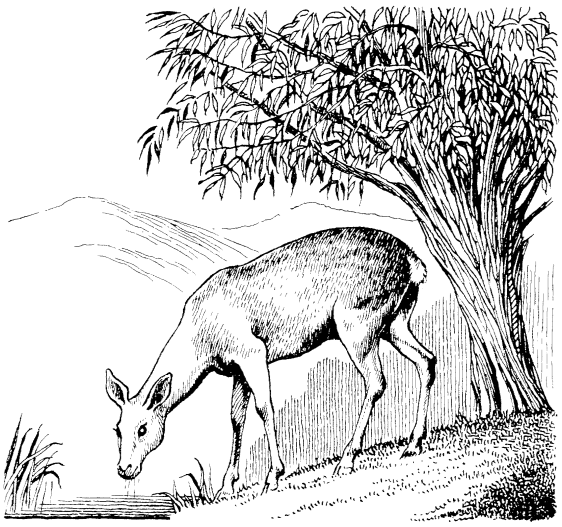
Jacob talked about Issachar

14 Then Jacob said,
"Issachar is like a strong donkey,
like a donkey with bags on its back,
that lies down to rest.
15 His tribe will see a country where the
land is really good,
and they will want to live in that land.
So they will agree to work for the
people that own that country,
and those people will make them work
really hard."

Jacob talked about Dan

16 Then Jacob said,

* **49:9** Numbers 24:9; Revelation 5:5



This is what a deer looks like

"Dan's tribe will have their own
bosses, just like all the other tribes of
the Israel nation.
Those bosses from Dan's tribe, they
will be good and fair to the people.
17 Dan's tribe will be smart, just like a
clever snake.
They will wait for their enemies, like a
snake hiding beside the road.
They will attack their enemies, and
they will win against those enemies,
like a snake that bites a horse's leg, so
that the man on the horse will fall
down."

Jacob talked to God

18 Then Jacob said, "God, I am waiting for
you to save us."

Jacob talked about Gad

19 Then Jacob said,
"Bad men will attack Gad's tribe, and
those bad men will try to steal Gad's
things,
but Gad's tribe will fight back and
attack those men, and those men will
run away."

Jacob talked about Asher

20 Then Jacob said,
"Asher's land will grow really good
food.
That food will be so good, rich bosses
will pay a lot of money to eat it."

Jacob talked about Naphtali

21 Then Jacob said,
"Naphtali is like a wild animal called
a *deer*,
that is free to run wherever it wants,
and has really pretty babies."

Jacob talked about Joseph

22 Then Jacob said,
"Lots of people will be born into
Joseph's family.
Yes, Joseph's family will grow big, just
like a grape vine that grows near a
spring of water,
and has lots of fruit.
Its branches are so long, they grow
over a big wall.
23 Joseph's enemies hated him,
they attacked him and made trouble
for him.
24 But he didn't give up,
God helped him to stand strong.
Yes, God, my God, he is the one that
has all the power.
God looks after his people properly,
just like a man looks after his sheep
properly.
God is like solid rock, he keeps his
people safe."
25 Jacob kept on talking to Joseph. He said,
"My God will help you.
God has power over everything, and he
will be good to you.
He will make rain come down from the
sky,
and he will make water come up from
springs under the ground,

so that your land will grow really good
food.
You will have lots of kids and
grand-kids,
and your animals will have lots of
babies.
26 I know that God will give you all those
good things,
and they will be better than anything
the old mountains can give you,
better than anything else on the earth."
Then Jacob said,
"Joseph, you are more special than all
your brothers,
so I'm asking God to give you all those
good things."

Jacob talked about Benjamin

27 Then Jacob said,
"Benjamin's tribe will be like a wild
dog that is really hungry.
In the morning, they will kill their
enemies and grab all their good
things,
and in the night time, they will share
those good things with each other."

28 In that way, Jacob talked to his 12 sons, and he told them about things that will happen to them and their families later on. He said different things to each of his sons, and those things that he said were right for each one of them.

You know, later on, Jacob's 12 sons became the grand-fathers of the 12 tribes in the Israel mob.

Jacob told his sons to bury his body in a cave

29-30 Then Jacob said to his sons, "I am going to die very soon. After I die, I want you mob to bury my body in that cave in Canaan country. My father's body and my grand-father's body are already in that cave. That cave is on some land in the place called Makpelah, to the east of Mamreh, in Canaan country. That land used to belong to a man from the Heth tribe, called Efron. My grand-father Abraham, he bought that land from Efron, to use as a grave.* 31 And Abraham buried his wife Sarah there. Some time later, Abraham died, and they buried him in that same place. My father Isaac and his wife Rebekah, they are buried there too. And I also buried my wife Leah there.* 32 That land and that cave, they used to belong to the Heth people, but now that place belongs to our family."

33 Jacob finished saying all those things to his sons, and he lay down on his bed. Then he breathed for the last time, and he died.*

Chapter 50

Joseph had a big funeral for his father

1 Then Joseph bent down and hugged his father's body. He cried, and he kissed his father's face. 2 Then Joseph talked to some of his workers. Joseph said to them, "My father Jacob died. Now I want you to get his body ready for the funeral. I want you to look after his body in that special way that you do for important people."

So those men worked on Jacob's body to get it ready, then they put special oils and perfumes on his body, so that it will not rot away. Then they wrapped his body in long bits of cloth, and they put it in a special coffin. 3 It took them 40 days to finish doing all those things.

The Egypt people cried for Jacob for 70 days.

4 At the end of those 70 days, Joseph talked to Pharaoh's important workers. Joseph said to them, "I want you to do something for me.

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* **49:29-30** Genesis 23:3-20 * **49:31** Genesis 25:9-10; 35:29 * **49:33** Acts 7:15



Some Egypt people put special oils on Jacob's body and wrapped it in long bits of cloth

Please be good to me, and do this thing that I ask. Please go to Pharaoh, and tell him that I said, 5 'My father talked to me before he died. He said, "I am going to die very soon. After I die, I want you to take my body to Canaan country, and put it in that grave that I got ready for myself." And my father got me to promise that I will do that.* So now, please let me go to Canaan country, so that I can bury my father there, just like he said. Then I will come back here.' "

6 So Pharaoh's workers went to Pharaoh, and they said everything Joseph asked them to say. And Pharaoh told them to say to Joseph, "Yes, you can go to Canaan country, and you can bury your father there, just like you promised him."

7 So Joseph left Egypt, and he started to go towards Canaan country. He took his father's coffin with him, so that he could bury him in Canaan country. And lots of people went with Joseph. All of Pharaoh's important workers went with him, and all the boss men from Egypt country went with him. 8 And Joseph's brothers, and the rest of his family, and his father's relatives, they all went with Joseph too. Only the little kids and the animals stayed in Egypt country, that was all. They stayed there in the place where they were living, called Goshen. Everybody else went with Joseph to Canaan country. 9 And some of Pharaoh's soldiers went with Joseph too. Some of those soldiers rode on horses, and some of them rode in trailers with horses pulling them. All of that mob went with Joseph to Canaan country. It was a really big mob of people.

10 After a while, Joseph and his mob got to the place called Atad, near the Jordan River. There was a place there with flat ground, where farmers sometimes sorted their plants. Joseph and his mob stopped there, and they cried loudly for Joseph's father. Joseph and his mob cried for 7 days, and they did other things to show that they were very sad.

11 The Canaan people lived in that land. They saw Joseph and his mob crying at the place called Atad, near the Jordan River. And they said to each other, "Look at that mob that came here from Egypt country. They are really sad." So the Canaan people gave that place a new name. They called it *Abel-Mizrayim*. That name means *the Egypt people are sad*.

12-13 Then Joseph and his brothers took their father's coffin to the place in Canaan country that their father told them about. They put his coffin in the cave there, just like he told them to. Jacob's family owned that cave and the land around it. You see, a long time before this, Abraham bought that land and that cave from a man from the Heth tribe. That man's name was Efron. Abraham bought that cave to use it as a grave. It was at a place called Makpelah, to the east of Mamreh.*

* **50:5** Genesis 47:29-31 * **50:12-13** Acts 7:16

14 That's the story about how Joseph buried his father. After that, Joseph went back to Egypt country with his brothers, and with everybody else that came to Canaan country with him.

Joseph did not do payback to his brothers

15 After Jacob died, Joseph's brothers started to worry, and they said to each other, "When our father was alive, Joseph was good to us. But maybe Joseph is still angry about all those bad things that we did to him. Now our father is dead, maybe Joseph will do payback to us."

16 So Joseph's brothers sent a message to Joseph. This is what they said in that message, "Joseph, our father talked to us before he died. 17 He told us to say to you, 'I know that your brothers did really bad things to you. They went wrong, and they hurt you. Please let go of all those bad things that your brothers did, and don't do payback to them.' "

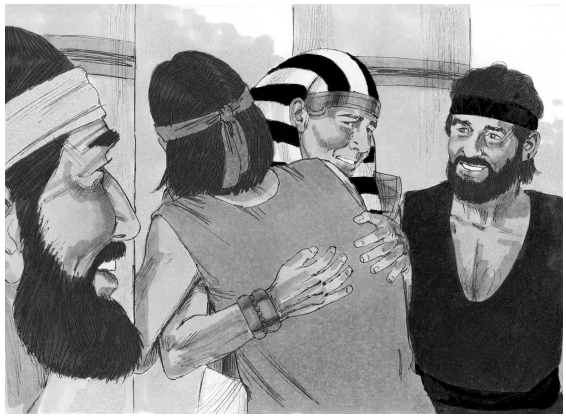
Joseph's brothers also said this in their message, "Please let go of all those bad things that we did, and don't do payback to us. We respect God, just like our father did."

Joseph listened to that message from his brothers, and he started to cry.

18 Then his brothers came to him, and they quickly got down on their knees and put their faces near the ground, to show respect to Joseph. And they said to Joseph, "You are our boss, and we are your work-men."

19 But Joseph said to his brothers, "Don't be frightened. God is the only true judge. I'm not God, so I will not judge you mob."

20 Then Joseph said, "You know, a long time ago, you mob made a plan to hurt me. But God had a plan too. His plan was good, and it was more powerful than your plan. You did bad things, but God used them to make good things happen. Yes, he brought me here to Egypt country, so that I helped lots of people stay alive when the food plants didn't grow. And those people are still alive today. 21 So don't be frightened. I will not do payback to you mob. No, I will keep on looking after you and your little kids, and I will make sure that you always have enough food to eat."



Joseph told his brothers that he will not do payback to them

In that way, Joseph talked in a friendly way to his brothers, and he helped them feel happy again.

Joseph got old and died

22 After that, Joseph kept on living in Egypt, and all his father's family lived there too. And Joseph lived until he was 110 years old.

23 While Joseph was still alive, his sons Ephraim and Manasseh had kids, and some of those kids had kids too. So Joseph got to see his great grand-kids. One of Manasseh's sons was called Makir, and later on, Makir had his own kids. Then Joseph adopted Makir's kids into his family, and they became like his own kids.

24 Then one day, Joseph said to his brothers, "I am going to die very soon. But don't worry. God is going to help you mob in a powerful way. Yes, one day, God will take all our mob out of this country, and he will give our mob all the land in Canaan country, just

like he promised to our great grand-father Abraham, and our grand-father Isaac, and our father Jacob."

25 Then Joseph got his brothers to make a strong promise. He said, "You have to promise that you will not leave my body here in Egypt country. When God takes our mob back to Canaan country, they have to take my body with them."*

26 Then Joseph died. He was 110 years old. The Egypt people put special oils and perfumes on Joseph's body, so that it will not rot away. Then they wrapped his body in long bits of cloth, and they put it in a coffin in Egypt country.

(We have not yet translated the books called Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. Some of the stories in those books tell us these things.

– Jacob's family lived in Egypt for about 400 years, and became the nation called Israel. The families that came from his 12 sons became the 12 tribes in the Israel nation.

– Then God got an Israel man, called Moses, to take the Israel nation out of Egypt, into desert country, and God gave Moses his law for those people.

– After that, God gave them the country called Canaan. Today we call that country Israel. Sometimes we call the Israel people the Jewish *people, or just the* Jews.*)*

* **50:25** Exodus 13:19; Joshua 24:32; Hebrews 11:22

Stories about the men called Samuel, Saul, and David

(From the book in the Holy Bible called 1 Samuel)

About these stories

These stories are about things that happened about 3,000 years ago, in the country called Israel.

Somebody wrote these stories in a big book called Samuel *with lots of other stories, but it was too big, so they split it into 2 books, called* 1 Samuel*, and* 2 Samuel*. They were in God's book, that the Jewish people had before Jesus came to this earth. They are now in the 1st part of the Holy Bible, called the* Old Testament.

We have not yet translated all of the stories from 1 Samuel.

The stories in this book are about 3 men called Samuel, Saul, and David.

Samuel was God's messenger to the Israel nation. God got him to pick Saul to be their big boss. At first Saul lived the right way, but later, he went wrong. So God told Samuel that he was going to make David the next big boss of the Israel nation. David was a very young man at that time. As he grew older, Saul got jealous of him and made trouble for him.

These stories are important, and we can learn a lot from them. They help us know what God is like, and how he looks after his people. And they show us the sort of person God wants.

Chapter 1

A woman that was called Hannah asked God for a baby boy of her own

1 There was a man called Elkanah. He was from Ephraim's tribe, and he lived in a town called Ramah in the hill country. His father was Jeroham, his grand-father was Elihu, and his great grand-father was Tohu. He belonged to the Zuf family. 2 He had 2 wives called Hannah and Penninah. Penninah had some kids, but Hannah had none.

3 Every year Elkanah used to go with his family from Ramah to Shiloh. They went to Shiloh to show respect to God, the boss of everything, and to burn meat for him. At that time, God's ceremony house was in Shiloh. An old man was there called Eli. He was the leader of God's ceremonies. His 2 sons, Hofni and Finiyas, also worked in God's house. They looked after God's ceremonies too.

4 When Elkanah was in Shiloh, he used to burn meat to give it to God, and he gave some of it to his family to eat. He gave meat to Penninah and her kids. 5 His other wife, Hannah, had no kids. You see, before this time, God stopped her from having kids. But Elkanah loved her very much, so he used to give lots of meat to her. 6 But Penninah used to make fun of her because she had no kids. So Hannah got upset. 7 Every year it was



like that. Whenever they went up to God's house at Shiloh, Penninah used to make fun of Hannah until she cried. She felt so sad she couldn't eat. 8 Her husband used to ask her, "Why are you crying? You have to eat. Don't be sad. Don't keep on worrying that you have no sons. I love you very much anyway."

9 One time at Shiloh, after they finished eating and drinking, Hannah got up and went to God's house to talk to God. The old man Eli sat on a chair at the door of God's house. 10 Hannah was so sad. She cried and prayed to God like this, 11 "God, you are the boss of everything. I am just your worker. I'm sad. Please help me. Don't forget about me. I want to ask you this. Let me have a little boy. If you do that, I'll give him back to you, so he can work for you until he gets old. Nobody will cut his hair, so that other people will see that he belongs to you."*

12-13 She talked quietly to God for a long time. Eli saw her mouth moving, but couldn't hear anything, so he thought she was drunk. 14 He said, "Why did you come here drunk? Throw that wine away."

15 Hannah answered, "No, old man. I'm not drunk. I haven't drunk any wine at all. I'm a sad woman. I talked to God, and I told him my story. 16 Please don't call me no good. I am properly sad. I want God to help me."

17 Eli said, "Don't worry. Go now. We Israel mob follow a good God. He will do whatever you ask him."

18 Hannah said to him, "Thank you, old man. You have made me feel happy now." And she left God's house, and she went and ate some food. Her face was not sad any more.

19 The next day, Elkanah got up and went with his family to show respect and pray to God once again. Then they went home to Ramah. Then Elkanah slept with his wife, Hannah, like married people do together.

But God didn't forget that Hannah asked for a boy. 20 Some time later, she really did have a little boy, and she named him *Samuel*. That name means *God heard*. She said, "I asked God for him, and he heard me, so I'll name him Samuel."

Hannah promised to give the boy Samuel to God

21 A year later Elkanah went with his family to Shiloh as usual, to show respect to God, and to burn meat and give it to him. You see, long before Elkanah promised to do that, so he wanted to keep on doing it. 22 But

* **1:11** Numbers 6:5

his wife Hannah stayed at home. She said, "My baby is still drinking my milk. After he stops drinking my milk, I will take him to Shiloh to give him to God. Then he will stay at that place all the time."

23 Elkanah said, "All right, if you like, stay here until your baby stops drinking your milk. After that, God will help you to keep your promise." So Hannah stayed home with her little boy while he was still drinking her milk.

24 Some time later, when the boy was bigger, he stopped drinking her milk. Elkanah went with his family as usual to God's ceremony house at Shiloh. Hannah and her son went too. They took a big bull, a bag of flour and a big leather water bag full of wine. 25 Elkanah and Hannah killed the bull and burned it for God. Then they took the boy to Eli, the old man that looked after God's ceremonies. 26 Hannah said to him, "Old man, do you remember me? A long time ago, I stood here with you. You heard the way I cried and prayed to God. 27 I wanted a little boy, and God heard me. He let me have this one, just like I asked. 28 Now I want to give him to God. He will work for God until he gets old." After she told him that, they showed respect to God.



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Hannah took Samuel to Eli

Chapter 2

(We have not yet translated 2:1-10.)

11 After that, Elkanah and his family went home to Ramah. Samuel stayed at Shiloh, and there Eli taught him the way to work for God.

Eli's 2 sons were no good

12 Eli's 2 sons both looked after God's ceremonies, but they were no good. They didn't respect God. 13 If somebody gave meat to God, those 2 used to take meat the wrong way from that person. You see, the Israel mob used to boil meat in a big cooking pot at God's ceremony house. One of Eli's sons used to tell a worker to get meat for him. 14 The worker used to come with a big fork and stick it into the cooking pot to stab some meat. Some bits of meat got stuck on the fork, and that meat was like pay for that ceremony man. Maybe the worker got lots of meat on the fork, maybe a little bit. All the Israel mob used to go to Shiloh to give meat to God. Those 2 did the same to everybody whenever they came to Shiloh. 15 But that was not the right way to do it. They should burn the fat in the fire first. But those 2 didn't do that. The worker used to tell the owner of the meat, "Give me meat for the 2 men that look after God's ceremonies, so they can cook it on the fire and eat it. They don't like meat that's boiled in water. Give them raw meat."

16 That man might answer, "Wait for me to burn the fat first. Then you can get the meat."

But the worker said, "No. Give it to me right now, or I will just take it from you."

17 So Eli's 2 sons kept on doing things the wrong way. They didn't respect God or his word. God was angry with them.

Hannah used to go and visit Samuel

18 The boy Samuel worked for God. He wore special clothes like those of a man that looked after God's ceremonies. 19 Every year Hannah went to Shiloh with her husband to burn meat for God, and every year she took a new coat to Samuel. 20 Eli used to pray to God for Elkanah and Hannah like this, "God, you gave this woman a boy, just as she asked, and she gave him back to you. So give them other kids now instead of him." Then they used to go back home. 21 And God was really good to Hannah. After that, she had some other kids. She had 3 boys and 2 girls.

All this time Samuel grew up in God's house, still working for him.

Eli warned his 2 sons

22 Eli became a really old man. He heard that his 2 sons did wrong things to the Israel people. He also heard that they slept with the women that worked in God's house, like men sleep with their wives, but those men were not married to those women. Those women worked at the front door of the house.

23 Eli said to his 2 sons, "Lots of people tell me that you do bad things. Why are you doing that? 24 My sons, stop it. Lots of God's people talk about you. That bad news is everywhere. 25 You know, if a man does wrong to another, somebody can ask God not to punish him. But if a man does wrong to God himself, nobody can ask God not to punish him."

But his sons didn't listen to him. You see, God already made up his mind to kill them. 26 But the boy Samuel was growing up the right way. God loved him and so did everybody else. *

(We have not yet translated 2:27-36.)

Chapter 3

God called out to Samuel

1 At that time, God talked only to a few people. Only a few saw dreams from God. The boy Samuel helped Eli, and he did his work for God. 2 Eli was a very old man, and he couldn't see very well. Every night he used to sleep in his usual place in God's house.

One night the old man lay asleep. 3 Samuel was a big boy by this time, and he slept in God's house too, near the place where they kept God's special box. After the sun went down, they used to light a lamp there. One night, when it was still burning, 4 God called out to the boy, "Samuel."

The boy answered, "Yes? What is it?" 5 And he got up and ran to Eli and said, "Yes? What is it? You called out to me."

Eli answered, "No, I didn't call you. Go back and lie down." So Samuel went back and lay down.

6 Then God called out again, "Samuel."

So the boy got up again and went to Eli and said, "Yes? What is it? You called out to me."

The old man said, "No, boy, I didn't call out to you. Go back and lie down." 7 You see, Samuel didn't know God yet. It was the first time God talked to him like that, and he didn't know his voice.

8 After that, God called out again, "Samuel."

So the boy got up, and he went to Eli again and said, "Yes? What is it? You called out to me."

Then the old man knew that it was God that called out to him, 9 so he said, "Go back and lie down. If somebody calls out, say like this, 'Yes, God, talk to me. I'm listening to you.' "

So Samuel went back and lay down. 10 God came and stood close to him, and he said the same thing again, "Samuel."

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* **2:26** Luke 2:52

Samuel said, "Yes, God, talk to me. I'm listening to you."

11 Then God said to him, "I will do something different in this place. After the Israel mob hear it, they will be shocked. 12 I will finish up Eli's family, as I said before. 13 I told Eli, 'I'm angry with you and your family, and I will finish you all. You knew that your 2 sons did wrong things, without any shame, and with no respect for my word. Everybody hates them now. But you didn't stop them at all. 14 Your family did wrong things lots of times, so I tell you and your family, that if you burn meat for me to try to make me happy, it will not work. I will still punish you mob.' " 15 Samuel heard it, and he went and lay down again.

Early the next morning he opened the door of God's house as usual. He was frightened to tell Eli the story God told him. 16 But the old man called out to him, "Samuel, come here."

Samuel answered, "Yes? What is it?"

17 The old man asked, "What did God say to you? Tell me straight. If you don't tell me straight, God will be very angry with you."

18 So Samuel told him the whole story, right to the end.

Eli said, "Truly he is the great God. He can do whatever he wants."

19 After that, Samuel grew up to become a man. And God was with him, so the words he said were really true. 20 All the Israel mob knew him, everybody from every place, from the north to the south. They all knew that Samuel was God's messenger. 21 Lots of times God came to him at that place called Shiloh. He showed himself to Samuel and told his message to him.

Chapter 4

1 That's the way Samuel talked to all the Israel mob.

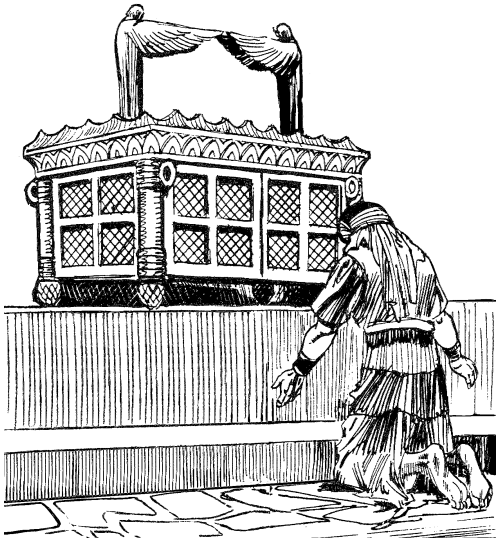
The Philistia mob stole God's special box

At that time, a lot of soldiers from Philistia came together to fight the Israel mob. The Israel mob camped near a place called Ebenezer. The Philistia mob camped near a place called Afek. 2 The 2 armies met in the middle for a big fight. The Philistia mob killed dead lots of the Israel mob. 4,000 of them died.

3 After that, the Israel mob went back to their camp. The elders asked each other, "Why did God let them beat our mob? Let's go to Shiloh, to get God's special box. If we have that box with us, God will help us whenever we fight the Philistia mob."

4 So they sent some men to Shiloh to get God's special box. They thought, "That box will be with us, so God will help us." Eli's 2 sons, Hofni and Finiyas, they went along too, to watch over the special box. God is the boss of everything. He sits on that box between the 2 statues of angel messengers. *

5 After they brought the box to their camp, the Israel mob were so happy that they shouted out real loud. Their shouts were



God's special box looked like this

* **4:4** Exodus 25:22

so loud they made the ground shake. 6 The Philistia mob heard it, and they asked each other, "What's happening? Why are the Israel mob shouting?"

Then they heard that the Israel mob had God's special box with them, 7 and they got frightened, and they said to each other, "Oh no. Their God has come to them. This is the first time this sort of thing has happened to us. Now we're in big trouble. 8 Nobody can save us from their powerful gods. Their gods helped them when they were in the desert. They hit the Egypt mob with all kinds of sickness and other trouble. 9 So we Philistia mob, we have to stay strong. We've got to beat them, so that we will be their bosses, otherwise they might become our bosses. Don't be afraid of them. Let's be real men and hit them hard."

10-11 And they really did get properly strong. They attacked the Israel mob again, and they killed dead lots of Israel's soldiers. 30,000 of them died. Then the Philistia mob stole God's special box. And they killed dead Eli's 2 sons, Hofni and Finiyas. They died there too. The other Israel soldiers, they just ran away. They ran straight back home.

Eli died

12 On that day a messenger ran from the fighting with the bad news. He was from Benjamin's tribe. He tore his clothes and put dirt on his head, to show he was upset about it, and he ran all the way to Shiloh.

13-15 Eli was a really old man by this time. He was 98 years old, and he was blind. He sat in a chair beside the road. He worried about God's special box. He was afraid something bad might happen to it.

After the messenger arrived at that place, he went around and told the bad news, and lots of people started to cry. Eli heard it and called out to the man, "What's happening? Why is everybody crying like that?"

16 The man ran over to Eli and said, "Old man, I ran away from the fighting."

The old man asked, "What happened?"

17 He answered, "We Israel mob ran away from the Philistia mob. They killed dead lots of our soldiers, and your 2 sons are dead too. And they even stole God's special box from us."

18 Eli was still on his chair at the door. After he heard that the Philistia mob stole the special box, he fell over backwards, and he broke his neck and died. You see, he was an old man and very fat. He was boss of the Israel mob for 40 years.

(We have not yet translated 4:19-22.)

Chapter 5

God made trouble for the Philistia mob

1 So the Philistia mob stole God's special box. They took it from Ebenezer to a town called Ashdod, in Philistia country. 2 They carried it into the house of their god. They called him Dagon. In that house was a big statue of Dagon, made of stone. The Philistia mob used to show respect to that statue, just like it was real. And they put God's special box next to it in that house.

3 The next morning, the Ashdod mob got up, and they saw their statue. It lay on the ground on its belly in front of God's special box. So they stood it up again.

4 The next morning, they saw it on the ground like that again. It was lying there on its belly, in front of God's special box. Its body was still good, but its head and arms were broken off. They lay in the doorway. 5 So Dagon's workers, and everybody else, they did not want to walk through that door any more. They jumped through the doorway every time they went inside that house, so they would not step on the place where bits of Dagon used to be. And they still do that.

6 Then God made trouble for the people of Ashdod and the country around that town. He made everybody really sick, with lots of boils. 7 After they saw that bad sickness, they said to each other, "We're in big trouble with the God of the Israel mob. And now he hits Dagon as well. We've got to throw away that special box." 8 So they sent messengers to the bosses from other places of the Philistia nation to come and meet together at Ashdod. They asked them, "What will we do with this box of the God of the Israel mob?"

They answered, "Send it to another place now, to the town called Gath." So then they took the special box to Gath.

9 But after they took it there, God made trouble for the Gath mob, in the same way. Everybody got really sick, with lots of boils. All the kids and the adults got sick. That made them really frightened. 10 So the Philistia mob took the special box to another place, this time to the town called Ekron.

After they arrived at Ekron with the special box, lots of people from that place shouted out as they saw it, "Oh no. They have brought that special box here now. We will all die." 11 So they sent messengers to the bosses from other places to come and meet together at Ekron. This time they said, "Send it away. Send it back to its own country. It might finish us up and everybody else in Philistia."

Lots of people in that place died from the same sickness. That's how God made them frightened. He made big trouble for all the Philistia mob. 12 The other people that were still alive, they were really sick, with lots of boils. They cried out to their gods, to ask them to help.

(We have not yet translated chapter 6. It says that the Philistia mob sent God's special box back to Israel, to a place called Kiriath-Jearim.)

Chapter 7

God rescued the Israel mob at Mizpah

1 The Kiriath-Jearim mob took God's special box back to their country, to the house of a man called Abinadab. That house stood on the top of a hill. And they picked his son Eleazar to look after that box.* 2 God's special box stood there at that house for 20 years.

All that time the Israel mob felt sad. They thought God left them, so they kept on asking him to help them. 3 Then Samuel asked them, "Is it true that you mob want to turn back to God? Well, you have to do this. Throw away all those statues made of wood and stone. Throw away those statues of women called Astarti. Those things do not belong to us Israel mob. They are from another place. You mob have to show respect only to God. Turn back to him. Give yourselves only to him. If you do that, he will save you from the Philistia mob." 4 So the Israel mob listened to him and threw away all those things, those statues like men called Baal and those other statues like women called Astarti. And they turned back to God and showed respect only to him.

5 Then Samuel told them all, "Send messengers to every place. I want all the Israel mob to meet together at that place called Mizpah. Then I will pray to God for everybody there."

6 So they all met together at Mizpah. They got some water from a spring and poured it on the ground. That was their way to tell God that they felt shamed. They were sorry that they showed respect to those statues. On that day they didn't eat any food as they prayed to him. They prayed like this, "Our God, we did wrong things. We didn't follow your way." That's the way Samuel led the people to go the right way.

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* **7:1** 2 Samuel 6:2-4; 1 Chronicles 13:5-7

7 After the bosses from Philistia heard that
the Israel mob came together at Mizpah, they
took their soldiers to that place. The Israel
mob heard they were coming, and they got
frightened. 8 So they said to Samuel, "Pray to
God for us. Keep on praying, don't stop. Ask
him to save us from the Philistia mob." 9 Then
Samuel got a young sheep, and he burned all
of it to give it to God. He kept on praying for
the Israel mob, and God took notice of him.
10 God heard Samuel's prayer. While he
burned the young sheep, the Philistia mob
came close, ready to attack the Israel mob.
But suddenly God made a really loud noise,
and it sounded like thunder. The Philistia
mob got really frightened and confused,
so the Israel mob easily beat them. 11 They
chased them from Mizpah almost as far as a
place called Beth-Car, and they killed lots of
people dead along the way. 12-13 The Philistia
mob ran away and went home. Then Samuel
got a big stone, and stood it up half-way
between 2 places, Mizpah and Shen, so that
everybody will remember the things that
happened. And he said, "God was helping
us." So he called the stone *Ebenezer*. That
name means *stone that belongs to the one
that helps us*. The Philistia mob sat quiet for
a long time. They didn't come back to the
Israel mob's country.

So God saved them from the Philistia mob
for a long time, until Samuel became an
old man.

(We have not yet translated 7:14-17.)

Chapter 8

The Israel mob asked for a big boss

1-2 Samuel had 2 sons. His older son was
called Joel, his younger son was called
Abijah. After Samuel became an old man,
he picked them to be bosses for the Israel
mob. They were court judges, working at
the place called Beersheba. 3 But they were
not like their father. They were greedy. They
thought only about money. Bad men used to
give them money in a quiet way, and then
they used to let those bad men go free.
4 So all the elders of Israel met together at
the town called Ramah, to talk to Samuel.
5 They said, "You are an old man now. Your
sons don't live straight like you, so they
shouldn't be judges for us. You have to pick
one man to be the big boss for us. In other
countries they have one big boss. We want
to be the same as them."*
6 Samuel wasn't happy about that, so he
prayed to God. 7 God said to him, "Listen to
them. Do what they are asking. They don't
hate you. Really it's me they hate. They hate
their God. They don't want me to be their
boss any more. 8 That's the way it was a long
time ago, while I led their grand-fathers back
from that country called Egypt. They used
to turn away from me and show respect to
gods from other places. Today they still do
the same thing. And now they don't want
you or your family to be bosses either. 9 But
it's good to listen to them. Let them have a
big boss. But warn them carefully, 'If you
have that sort of big boss, he will make it
hard for you mob. He will make you do all
kinds of hard things for him.' "
10 Samuel told that story to the elders, just
as God told it to him.

(We have not yet translated 8:11-18.)

19 But they didn't listen to him. They said,
"No. We want a big boss. 20 In other places
there is a big boss. We want that here too.
We want a big boss to lead us whenever we
fight with other mobs."

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* **8:5** Deuteronomy 17:14

21 Samuel told God everything that the elders said to him. 22 God said, "Listen to them. Do as they ask. Give them a big boss."

So Samuel said to the elders, "All right. I'll do that. So go back home now, all of you."

Chapter 9

God picked Saul to be the big boss for the Israel mob

1 There was an old man called Kish. He was an important man. He was from Benjamin's tribe. His father was Abiyel. His grand-father was Zeror. His great grand-father was Becorath, and his great great grand-father was Afiah. 2 Kish had a son called Saul. He was a young man with a properly good-looking face, and he was a lot taller than anybody else of the Israel mob.

3 Kish had some donkeys, and one day, those donkeys wandered away and got lost. Kish said to his son Saul, "Go and look for those donkeys. Take one of the working men with you."

4 So they went off to look for them. First they went and looked in the hill country that belongs to the Ephraim tribe. From there they went and looked in Shalisha country. But nothing, they didn't find them. From there they went to look in the Shalim country. Still nothing. They also looked in the country that belongs to the Benjamin tribe, but they didn't find them.

5 They went as far as the Zuf country. Then Saul said, "We've come a long way. Let's go back, or my father might worry about us now, instead of those donkeys."

6 But his working man said, "Wait a minute. What about that old man that tells God's messages? He lives in this place. Everybody knows that he is God's man. Whenever he says that something is going to happen, later it happens. We can ask him. He might tell us the place to look for the donkeys."

(We have not yet translated 9:7-13.)

14 After they got to that place, they saw the old man Samuel as he came towards them. He wanted to go up the hill, to the place where they used to burn meat to give to God. 15 You see, God talked to him the day before that, God said to him, 16 "I see that the Philistia mob makes trouble for my people. They cried out to me to help them, and I am listening to them. At about this time tomorrow, I will send a young man to you. He is from Benjamin's tribe. He will rescue my people from the Philistia mob. Pour olive oil on his head to show that I pick him to be the big boss for my people, the Israel mob."

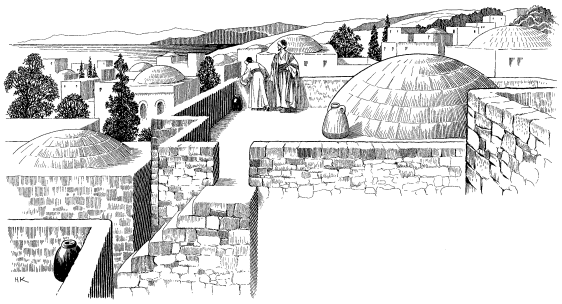
17 Samuel saw Saul as he came towards him, and God said to him, "There he is. He's the one I told you about yesterday. He will be the big boss for my people." 18 So Samuel waited for him at the town gate.

You see, Saul hadn't met that old man before. He didn't know him, so he said to him, "They say there's an old man that sees dreams from God, and he lives in this place. Where is his house?"

19 Samuel answered, "That's me. I'm the man that sees dreams. You 2 go ahead up that hill, to that place. We burn meat there to give it to God. Today you will both eat with me, and tomorrow I will tell you whatever you want to know. Then you can go back home. 20 Oh, and those donkeys that ran away 3 days ago, don't worry about them. Other people already found them. But think about this story now. Lots of people are saying, 'One of Kish's mob should be the big boss for us, the Israel mob.' "

(We have not yet translated 9:21-24.)

25 Later on, they came back from the top of the hill to Samuel's house, and Samuel took Saul up on to the flat roof, to a clear place,



People could go on the roof of some houses

so they could talk to each other. It was cool up on the roof at night, so Saul and his working man slept up there.

26 Early the next morning Samuel called out, "Get up you 2. It's time to go home now."

Saul got ready, then he and Samuel started to walk to the town gate. 27 Samuel said to him, "Send your working man ahead. You wait here. I want to tell you the word of God." So the working man started to walk ahead.

Chapter 10

1 Samuel got some olive oil and poured it on Saul's head. And then he kissed him on both his cheeks to show that he was his friend, and he said, "I pour this oil to show that God picked you to be the big boss for his people."

(We have not yet translated 10:1b-4.)

5 Then Samuel told Saul, "You can start going home now. Soon you will arrive at the hill near the town called Gibeah. There is an army camp for soldiers from Philistia at that place. People get together on the top of that hill to burn meat to give it to God. When you arrive, you will see a group of men who tell God's message, coming down that hill. And you will see other people in front of them, with all kinds of musical instruments. Those messengers and the musical people, they will all have special power from God, and they will tell his message. 6 And God's spirit will also come to you, and he will give you that power too. Then you will be a different person, and you will tell his word whenever the men that tell God's message meet together. 7 And after you see it happen like this, you will know that God will stay close to you. He will help you to do anything you think is right."

(We have not yet translated 10:8.)

9 Saul turned around and started to leave that place, then God suddenly changed him. That day he told people God's word, just like Samuel said.

(We have not yet translated 10:10-16.)

17 After that, Samuel told the Israel mob to come together at the place called Mizpah. So they met together at that place.

(We have not yet translated 10:18-23.)

24 Samuel told Saul to stand up in front of them. And he said to everybody, "Look at this man. God picked him to be the big boss. There's nobody else like him."

They all shouted happily, "Yes. He will be our big boss for ever."

(We have not yet translated 10:25-27.)

Chapter 11

Saul's soldiers rescued lots of people at Jabesh

1 After that, the big boss of the mob called Ammon went to the town called Jabesh, in the Gilead country. His name was Nahash, and he came with big mobs of soldiers. They all stood in a circle around Jabesh. Nobody in the town could go outside.

Then the Jabesh mob sent a messenger

to that boss. He said, "Don't kill us dead. We will let you be our boss. We will be your workers. Let's all agree about that. You promise not to kill us dead, and we will promise to be your workers."

2 Nahash sent the messenger back to say, "All right. I will not kill you mob dead. I will just take out your eyes. I will take out the right eye from every one of you. That's the way I will shame you Israel mob. Whenever people from other places look at you mob, you will feel ashamed."

3 The elders from that place sent the messenger back. They told him to tell Nahash, "First let us wait for 7 days. We will send messengers to every place in Israel. Maybe somebody will come to help us, maybe not. If not, we will give ourselves to you. Then you can take out our eyes."

4 So the messengers went around to every place in Israel. They arrived at Saul's camp at Gibeah with the bad news. The people there heard it, and they cried out loud. 5 Saul was out in the garden. As he came back with 2 bulls, he heard them crying and asked, "What's happening? Why is everybody crying?" They told him the story the messengers said.

6 Saul heard that message, and then the spirit of God came to him and gave him special power. He got wild with that boss from Ammon. 7 He killed his 2 bulls, and he cut them into bits. Then he gathered lots of messengers together, and he gave a bit of meat to each one. He sent them to every place in Israel to say, "Look at this bit of meat. Every man has to follow Saul and Samuel, to fight the Ammon mob. If any man stays behind, Saul will cut up his bulls into little bits, like this meat." God made Saul so strong that he made everybody frightened. So all the men came together. 8 Saul gathered them all together at a place called Bezek. 300,000 men came from the Israel mob and 30,000 came from the Judah mob.

9 Those men told the messengers from Jabesh, "Tell that Jabesh mob, 'Tomorrow morning we will hunt away that Ammon mob and then rescue you mob before the middle of the day.' "

The Jabesh mob heard that, and they were very happy. 10 So they sent a messenger back to the boss from Ammon, to tell him a lie, and say, "Tomorrow we will give ourselves to you. You can do whatever you like to us then."

11 Before the sun came up Saul divided his fighting men into 3 groups. At day-light they ran into the Ammon mob's camp and killed lots of them dead. They kept on killing them until the middle of the day. Only a few Ammon men were left, and they ran away in all directions.

(We have not yet translated 11:12—14:52.)

Chapter 15

Saul didn't listen to God

1 One day, Samuel came to Saul and said, "Listen, Saul. God is the boss of everybody. He was the one that told me to pick you to be the big boss for his people the Israel mob. So listen to this message that he told me today.* 2 He said, 'A long time ago, as the grand-fathers of you Israel mob came from Egypt, the Amalek mob attacked them. They did wrong to my people. And now, I want to punish them.* 3 So, Saul, I want you mob to go and kill the Amalek mob dead. Burn everything that belongs to them. Kill everything until there's nothing left. Kill the men, women, kids, babies, bulls, cows, sheep, camels, and donkeys too. Kill everything.

* **15:1** 1 Samuel 10:1 * **15:2** Exodus 17:8-14; Deuteronomy 25:17-19

That's the way you have to give them all to me.' "

4 So Saul sent messengers to every place, to tell the soldiers to meet together at a place called Telayim. Lots of soldiers came together at that place. There were 200,000 soldiers from Israel and 10,000 from Judah. 5 Then Saul led them to the town where the Amalek mob lived, and they went and hid in a gully nearby. 6 At that time the Ken mob lived in that country. Saul sent a messenger to them to say, "I want to finish up all the Amalek mob, so you Ken mob have to get out of the way. A long time ago, you mob helped us Israel mob, as we came from Egypt. So I can't hurt you now." So the Ken mob moved away from that place.

7 Then Saul and his men chased the Amalek mob from the place called Havilah in the east to the place called Shur in the west. Shur was half-way between Israel and Egypt. 8 Saul's mob killed dead all the men, and the women and the kids. They finished them up properly. But they didn't kill the boss of the Amalek mob, a man called Agag. 9 They kept him alive. They also kept a lot of the animals alive. They took all the good sheep and goats, and all the good cows and bulls, and their young ones too. They only killed the rubbish animals dead. They didn't finish all the animals properly.

10 That day God said to that old man Samuel, 11 "Saul didn't listen to me. He's turned away from me. Now I'm sorry that I picked him to be the big boss." Samuel heard that message, and he was very angry and upset. All night he talked to God about it.

12 Early the next morning, Samuel got up and went to look for Saul. Other people told him, "Saul isn't here. He went to the place called Carmel. After he finished up the Amalek mob, he wanted everybody to think he was a great soldier, so he stood up a big stone there to remind them. Then he went to another place called Gilgal."

13 Samuel went to Gilgal, and Saul said to him, "Samuel. I hope God makes you happy. I did everything he told me to do."

14 But Samuel said, "Really? So how come I can hear animals crying? I can hear sheep, goats, cows and bulls."

15 Saul answered, "It was the soldiers, they did that. They took the good animals that belonged to the Amalek mob. They kept them alive, to burn them for God. The other animals we finished properly."

16 But Samuel said, "Stop talking, and listen carefully to me. God talked to me last night. Let me tell you about it."

Saul said, "Yes, tell me."

17 Samuel said, "At first you called yourself nothing. You didn't try to be important. It was God that made you important. He picked you to be the big boss for the Israel mob. 18 And then he told you to kill all those bad Amalek people. He told you to finish them up properly. 19 So why didn't you listen to him? Why did you do something that he said was wrong? You kept the best animals, so he is angry with you."

20 Saul was confused. He said, "What? Truly I listened to God. I did everything he told me to do. I killed everybody dead. But I brought their boss Agag back alive. 21 The soldiers only brought back the good animals. They got the best sheep, goats, cows and bulls for you to burn for God here at Gilgal."

22 But Samuel answered, "God wants people to listen to his word properly and do what he says. He doesn't want us to do wrong things and then burn meat or fat to give it to him. He really likes it when we do what he says.* 23 You know, if somebody doesn't listen to God, that person truly does wrong. If somebody prays to bad spirits, it's just

* **15:22** Psalm 40:6-8; Isaiah 1:11-15; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Mark 12:33

the same. If somebody is proud, God is not happy with that person. If somebody shows respect to statues made of wood and stone, that's just the same. And you didn't listen to God, so he turned away from you. You did wrong things, so God says, 'You can't be the big boss any more.' "

24 Then Saul said, "I did wrong things. I didn't listen to God or to you. I was afraid of the soldiers, and I listened only to them. 25 Please don't be angry with me. Please forgive me. Don't leave me now. Come back with me to the people. I want to get down on my knees and show respect to God."

26 But Samuel said to him, "No. I can't go back with you. You didn't listen to God, so he will not listen to you now. You did wrong things, so God has said, 'You can't be the big boss any more.' "

(We have not yet translated 15:27-31.)

32 Then Samuel said to the soldiers, "Where's that Agag, the Amalek mob's boss? Bring him to me."

They brought Agag to Samuel. Agag was not afraid, and he thought, "It looks like they will not kill me dead after all."

33 But Samuel said to him, "You killed people with your own long knife. Now lots of women have no children any more. Well, just like that, your mother will have no children any more."

So Samuel killed Agag dead right there at Gilgal. And God watched him do it.

34 Then Samuel left and went back to his place in the town called Ramah. Saul went back to his place in Gibeah. 35 After that, Samuel never saw Saul again. He was very sad about what Saul did. And God was sad too. He was sorry that he made Saul to be the big boss of Israel.

Chapter 16

God picked David to be the big boss for the Israel mob

1 After that, God said to Samuel, "Saul is not a good boss any more. I will not help him now. Why do you keep on being sad for him? Forget about him now. Get a bottle of olive oil. Go and see that old man Jesse at the place called Bethlehem. I picked one of his sons to be the new big boss of Israel."

2 Samuel said, "I can't do that. Somebody might tell Saul, and he might kill me dead."

But God said, "Take a young cow with you. Say this to the Bethlehem mob, 'I came here to burn this young cow, to give it to God.' 3 And tell the old man Jesse and his sons to come too. At that time, I will show you the man that I picked. You have to pour olive oil on his head. That will show that I am picking him to be the big boss of Israel."

4 Samuel listened to God, and he went to Bethlehem. After he got there, the elders of the town came to meet him. They were really afraid. They were so frightened that they shook, and they asked, "Did you come with good news? Or are you angry with us?"

5 Samuel answered, "No, I came happily. I came to burn this young cow with you mob, to give it to God. You have to wash and get ready. You have to be clean in God's way before we can burn this young cow." He also told Jesse and his sons to come. And he helped them to get ready.

6 After they came together, Samuel saw Jesse's oldest son. His name was Eliab. Samuel thought, "I reckon this is the one God has picked to be the big boss."

7 But God said to Samuel, "No, not this one. I didn't pick him. You just see that he has a strong tall body. You people look at the outside of a person, but I know what they are like inside. I know the way they think."*

* **16:7** Luke 16:15

8 So Samuel asked Jesse to send the next
son to him. His name was Abinadab. He
came, and Samuel said, "No, God hasn't
picked this one."
9 Then Jesse sent Shammah, and Samuel
said, "No, God hasn't picked this one
either."
10 Jesse sent all 7 of his sons one by one to
stand in front of Samuel. But Samuel said to
him, "God hasn't picked any of these. 11 Do
you have another son?"
Jesse answered, "Yes. There is my youngest
son, David. But he is looking after the sheep
out in the bush."
Samuel said, "Send somebody to get him
and bring him here. We will wait for him.
We can't sit down and eat the meat without
him."
12 So Jesse sent somebody to get David,
and he brought him back. David was a
good-looking young man, with a strong
body and a nice face. God said to Samuel,
"This is the one. Stand up now, and pour
olive oil on his head. I picked him to be
the next big boss."
13 So Samuel got the bottle of olive oil,
and he poured oil on David's head, while
his older brothers were watching. God's
spirit went into David in a powerful way
and stayed in him from that day on. Then
Samuel went back to his place at Ramah.

David worked for the big boss Saul

14 Then God's spirit left Saul and did not go
back to him. God sent a bad spirit that often
made Saul frightened.
15 His workers said to him, "Boss. We
can see that God has sent a bad spirit to
make you frightened. 16 We will go and get
somebody to come here and play the guitar
for you. Whenever the bad spirit makes you
frightened, he will play that guitar, and you
will feel better then."
17 Saul said to them, "Yes, go and look for
somebody, a good guitar player. Bring him
to me."
18 One worker said, "I know an old man in
Bethlehem called Jesse. One of his sons plays
the guitar, and he's a really good-looking
young man. He's a good soldier too. He's
brave, and he talks clearly. God is close to
him."
19 So Saul sent messengers to Jesse to say,
"The big boss Saul wants you to send your
son to him, that David, the one that looks
after the sheep."
20 So Jesse got a donkey, and he put lots of
food on it. He also put some wine in leather
bags on the donkey. He said to his son, "Go
to the big boss's place, and take this donkey
and a little goat with you."
21 From then on, David worked for Saul.
He liked David very much, so he gave him
another job. Whenever the Israel mob went
to fight their enemies, David carried Saul's
spear and shield for him. 22 And Saul sent
a messenger back to Jesse, to say like this,
"Saul likes David very much. Let him stay
and work for Saul."
23 Lots of times God sent a bad spirit to
make Saul angry. So David used to play his
guitar to make him feel better. Then the bad
spirit went away, and Saul felt better.

Chapter 17

David killed the soldier Goliath dead

1 At one time the Philistia mob came together
at the town called Socoh in the Judah
country, to fight with the Israel mob. They
camped at a place called Efes-Dammim. It is
half-way between the town called Socoh and
the town called Azekah. 2 Saul gathered the
Israel soldiers together, and they camped in
the valley called Elah. They got ready there
to fight with the Philistia soldiers. 3 There
was a hill close by, so the Israel mob went
up from the valley on to that hill. From

there they saw the Philistia mob on the hill on the other side of the valley.

4 One of the Philistia soldiers was a really big man called Goliath, and he was from a town called Gath. He was really tall, about 3 metres. 5-6 In a fight he used to put on iron plates to cover his body. One covered his head, and 2 others covered his legs. Another covered his chest, and it was really heavy. It was about 60 kilograms. He carried 2 fighting spears, a short one and a long one. The short one was made of a brown metal called bronze. It was in a belt over his shoulder. 7 The long spear had a sharp point made of iron. The point was really heavy too, about 7 kilograms. Another soldier used to walk in front of Goliath, to carry his shield for him.

8 Every day, Goliath used to go out into the middle and call out to the Israel mob like this, "Hey Israel mob. What are you waiting for? You call yourselves soldiers? Look at me. I'm a real soldier, from Philistia. You mob are just Saul's working men. Listen. You pick one man and send him to me, so the 2 of us can fight. 9 If he kills me, we mob will let you take us all to Israel, to work for you mob. But if I kill him, we will take you mob back to Philistia, to work for us. 10 Don't be weak. Send one man to me so the 2 of us can fight." 11 Saul and the Israel mob heard that big man's words, and they got frightened and confused.

(We have not yet translated 17:12-14. Those verses say that 3 of David's big brothers were in that Israel soldier mob with Saul.)

15-16 That happened every day. Goliath used to go out and say that in the early morning and late afternoon. He did that for 40 days.

At that time, David kept on going back from Saul's place to his father's place, to look after his father's sheep.

17 One day, his father said, "Get this bag of cooked seed, and get 10 loaves of bread. Take them to your big brothers. 18 And take 10 big lumps of cheese too, and give them to the boss soldier. Go quickly. I'm worried about your big brothers. Bring back some news from them. Bring back something to show that they are still all right. 19 Go to the valley called Elah. That's the place where Saul and our mob are fighting with the Philistia mob."

20 David listened to his father. Then he told another man to look after the sheep. The next morning, he put all that food on a donkey and went to the valley called Elah. After he got there, he saw the soldiers as they got ready to fight. They shouted to make themselves brave. 21 The Israel mob and the Philistia mob watched each other across the valley. 22 David gave the food to the man that was in charge of all the food, then he ran out to the soldiers and said *hello* to his brothers. 23 While they talked, that big man from Gath, Goliath, he went out into the middle as before. And he went around and shouted out loud, as he always did. And David heard him talk like that. 24 Every time the Israel mob saw Goliath, they got frightened and ran away from him.

25 You see, they already said to each other like this, "Every day, that man comes to shame us and make fun of us. But if one of our men kills him, Saul will give him big money. He will also give him his daughter to marry. And Saul will not make his family pay tax money."

26 David said to the men that stood near him, "That man gives us shame. He doesn't know God. Somebody has to shut him up. What will Saul give if somebody kills him? We can't let him make fun of the true God and his army, no way."

27 They told him the same thing, "Saul will give big money to the man that kills Goliath.

And he will give him his daughter to marry. And Saul will not make his family pay tax money."

28 David's oldest brother, Eliab, heard them talking, and he was angry with David. He said to him, "Why did you come here? What about those few little sheep? Who is watching them today? You are doing wrong. Why do you try to make yourself big? I know what you are like. You just came here for fun, to see the fighting."

29 David asked, "Why are you angry with me? What did I do wrong? I'm just asking." 30 And he asked another man, "What will Saul give to the man that kills Goliath?" The man told him the same thing as before.

31 Somebody went and told Saul about David. So Saul sent a man to get him.

32 David said to him, "Boss. We can't be frightened of that man. I will go. I will fight with him myself."

33 Saul said, "No way. You can't fight with him. You are only a young man, and he's a brave soldier. He was a soldier since he was young."

34 But David said, "I look after my father's sheep and goats. A lion or a bear might grab a sheep, and drag it away to eat. 35 I chase it, and I hit the cheeky animal, until it lets the sheep go. If it tries to bite and scratch me, I grab it by the hair and kill it dead. 36 I've killed lions and bears dead. That cheeky man is shaming God's army, so I will kill him the same way. God is the only powerful one. 37 He has saved me from cheeky animals, and he will save me from that cheeky man too."


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A lion is a very cheeky animal

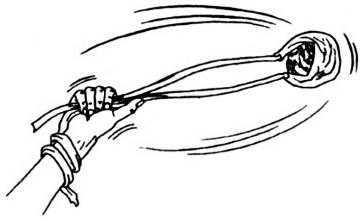


A bear is a cheeky animal, as big as a lion

Saul said, "All right, you go and fight him. God will go with you."

38 Saul had some iron plates there, to use in a fight. He used to put them on to cover his body. Those things were really heavy. He gave them to David to put on. He also gave him a hat made of bronze, to cover the head. 39 David also put on a belt and put Saul's long knife in it. It was the first time David put on heavy things like that, and he couldn't walk properly.

And he said to Saul, "I can't walk like this. I've never used this kind of thing before." So he took them off. 40 He got his walking stick and his thing for throwing stones, called a sling, and he went down to the creek. He picked up 5 smooth stones, and he put them in his bag. Then he walked up towards that Philistia man.



This is a sling for throwing stones

41 Goliath saw him and walked towards him
also. The other soldier that carried his shield
walked in front of him. And they came close
to David. 42 That big man laughed and made
fun of David, "You are just a young man,
a pretty boy. 43-44 Why are you coming at
me with a stick? Do you think I'm a dog?
All right, come. I will kill you dead, so the
birds and the wild animals can eat your
body. I will kill you dead properly." And
he called out to his gods and told them to
curse David.

45 David answered, "You think you will kill
me dead. You come to me with a long knife
and 2 spears. But God sent me to fight you.
He is the boss of everything, and he is with
me now as I go to you, and I will kill you
dead. God is the only powerful one, and he
is the leader of the Israel soldiers. But you
made fun of him. 46 So today God will help
me to win. And I will kill you and cut off
your head. Today you Philistia mob will all
lie dead, and the birds and the wild animals
will eat your bodies. Then everybody will
know that the only real God is Israel's God.
47 All of us here will know that God looks
after his people, but he doesn't have to use
long knives and spears. He does it
his way. God is boss of this fight. So
we Israel mob will finish up all of
you Philistia mob."

48 Goliath moved closer to hit David,
but David quickly ran towards him.
49 He took out a stone from his bag,
and he used his sling to throw it at
Goliath, and that stone hit Goliath
on the forehead and went through
the bone in his head. He fell on his
face on the ground and lay there.

50 And that's how David won. He
didn't use a long knife. No, he killed
that Philistia man dead just with a
sling and a stone. * 51 Then he ran up to him
and stood on top of him. He took out the
long knife from Goliath's belt and cut off
his head. *

After the Philistia mob saw that their big
soldier lay there dead on the ground, they
all turned around and ran away. 52 The
Israel mob shouted out loud and chased
them. They kept on chasing them along the
Sharayim road as far as those 2 places called
Gath and Ekron. Lots of Philistia people lay
dead along that road.

(We have not yet translated 17:53—18:5.)

Chapter 18

Saul was jealous of David

6 Then the Israel mob all went back home,
and women came from lots of places to meet
Saul, the big boss. They danced and sang
happily. Some played little drums and others
played guitars. 7 They sang like this as they
went, *

"Saul killed dead a thousand enemy
soldiers.
David killed dead 10,000 of them."



The Israel soldiers came home, and the women danced and made music

* **17:50** 2 Samuel 21:19 * **17:51** 1 Samuel 21:9 * **18:7** 1 Samuel 21:11; 29:5

8 Saul heard their words, and he was really
angry. He thought, "They reckon David
killed more enemy soldiers than me. Maybe
they want to make him the boss of us Israel
mob, instead of me?"
9 From then on, he was jealous of David,
and he watched him all the time.
10 The next day, God sent a bad spirit to
Saul. It made him go really mad. He just
sat there in his house and screamed. David
played the guitar for him as before. Saul
was holding a spear in his hand, 11 and he
thought, "I will spear David straight through
and hang him on the wall." So he threw it
at him. But David quickly jumped out of
the way, and the spear missed him. That
happened 2 times, and he missed David
each time.

(We have not yet translated 18:12-30. It tells that Saul gave his daughter to David, to be his wife. Her name was Mihal.)

Chapter 19

Saul tried to kill David

1 One day, Saul said to his son Jonathan and
to his workers, "David has got to die. You
have to kill him."
But Jonathan was good friends with David,
2 so he told David, "Look out. My father is
trying to kill you. Run away and hide over
there in the bush. Wait there and watch out
for somebody tomorrow morning. 3 I will
go for a walk with my father near the place
you are hiding. I will talk to him about you.
After he goes back, I will tell you whatever
he says."
4 Next morning Jonathan and his father
went for a walk in the bush, and they talked
about David. Jonathan said good things
about David like this, "He didn't do wrong to
you. He did all kinds of good things for you.
He did things that helped you. You can't do
wrong to him now. 5 He didn't worry about
dying. He bravely fought that Philistia man,
Goliath, and killed him dead. God used him
to really help the Israel mob. You saw it too,
and you were happy about it. Why do you
want to kill him? He did nothing wrong."
6 Saul listened to his son Jonathan, and he
said, "God hears us, so I'm talking straight
to you. I will not try to kill David."
7 After Saul went back, Jonathan called
to David to come out. He told him
everything his father said. So they went
back to Saul, and David started to work
for him again.
8 One day, the Philistia mob came again,
to fight with the Israel mob. David was a
boss soldier at that time, and he attacked
and killed lots of Philistia men dead. The
rest of them ran away frightened.
9 Then David went back to Saul's place,
to work for him again, and God sent a bad
spirit to Saul again. David played the guitar
as before. At that time, Saul was holding a
spear in his hand, 10 and he tried to spear
him straight through and hang him on the
wall. But again David quickly jumped out
of the way, and the spear only hit the wall.
That night David ran away safely from Saul's
house.
11 Saul sent men to watch David's house
that night and to kill him in the morning.
But while it was still night time, David's
wife, Mihal, she saw them and said to
David, "Run away quickly, right now. Don't
wait, or in the morning they will kill you
dead."* 12 Then she put a rope down from
the window, and he climbed down it and
ran away safely.

(We have not yet translated 19:13-24.)

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* **19:11** Psalm 59

Chapter 20

Jonathan helped his brother-in-law David

1 After that, David ran away from the community called Nayoth in the town called Ramah. He went to Jonathan's place and asked him, "What have I done? What wrong thing did I do? Why does your father keep on looking for me, to kill me?"

2 Jonathan answered, "No way. That is not true. He will not kill you. My father has not told me that he wants to do that. He always tells me what he is thinking. That's his way. He does not tell lies to me."

3 But David said, "Listen. Let God punish me if what I said is not true. Your father knows that you and I are close friends. We are also brothers-in-law. He might think like this, 'I can't tell my son. He might get upset.' No, listen to me. God is listening, so I can't tell lies. Today I might die."

4 Jonathan said, "All right, if that's the way you feel, tell me what I should do for you now."

5 David said, "Tomorrow, people will come together for the new moon ceremony, as they always do. Lots of people will be at your father's place to eat food together. He told me to come and eat with him there too. But for the first 2 nights I don't want to be at the food table, but I will hide in the garden. Is that all right?* 6 If your father asks about me, tell him, 'David asked me, "Is it all right for me to go to my home town, Bethlehem? Every year my family comes together there, to kill animals and burn them for God."' 7 If he says, 'All right,' you will know that he will not hurt me. But if he gets angry, you will know that he wants to kill me."

(We have not yet translated 20:8-23.)

24 So David went to hide in the garden.

The next day, lots of people came together at Saul's place for the new moon ceremony. Saul sat down in his chair to eat. 25 His chair was near the wall as usual. Jonathan sat on the other side of the table. The boss soldier called Abner was also there, in the chair next to Saul. But David was not there. His chair was empty. 26 Saul noticed that he was not there, but he thought to himself, "Maybe something has happened to him, so he can't eat at the ceremony?" (You see, God said that if something happened to somebody first, like maybe they touched a dead body, then they can't eat at a special ceremony.) So Saul did not ask anybody about David.

27 The next day, David's chair was still empty. So Saul asked Jonathan, "Why is David not here? And he was not here yesterday."

28 Jonathan answered, and he told a lie like this, "David kept on asking me to let him go to Bethlehem. 29 He said, 'Every year my family comes together there, to burn animals and give them to God. My older brother told me to come. So please, let me go to see my brothers.' He told me that, and that's why he can't be here to eat food with you."

30 Saul got very angry with his son, and he yelled at him like this, "You stupid fool. I know that you listen to David and not to me. That's a shame job. You even shame your own mother. 31 If David is still alive, you can't be boss in Israel after me. Send some men straight away, to grab David and bring him to me. He has got to die."

32 Jonathan asked his father, "Why has he got to die? What wrong thing did he do?" 33 But as soon as Saul heard that, he suddenly threw his spear at his son. He meant to kill him dead, but he missed. So then Jonathan knew that his father really wanted to kill David.

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* **20:5** Numbers 28:11

34 Jonathan got wild and stood up and went outside. He was so upset that he did not eat anything all day. He was very sad that his father treated David so badly like that.

35 The next morning, he went out to the garden to meet with David.

(We have not yet translated 20:35b-41a.)

41 David came out from behind a rock. He got down on his knees and put his face near the ground 3 times to show respect to Jonathan. They kissed each other and cried for each other. But David cried more than Jonathan.
42 Jonathan said, "Go carefully now. God will take care of you. You and I will be friends for ever. And God hears us whenever we talk like this. He will help your mob and my mob to live quietly for ever." So David went away then, and Jonathan went back again to his home.

Chapter 21

An old man called Ahimelek helped David

1 After that, David went to a place called Nob. There was an old man there called Ahimelek. He used to look after God's ceremonies. He saw David coming with no soldiers. There were just a few work-men with him. This made Ahimelek afraid. He was so frightened that he shook. He asked David, "Why did you come here all by yourself? Where are your soldiers? What happened?"

2 David told a lie. He said, "Saul sent me to do a secret job for him. I can't tell you about it. I told my soldiers to go ahead of me, and to meet me at another place. 3 Do you have any food? I need some. Maybe 5 loaves of bread? Or maybe some other kind of food?"

4 The old man said, "I have nothing, no bread, I only have this special bread, that we make to give to God. Only men that do my kind of work can eat it. I'll let you take it, but only if your men have not slept with women, like men do with their wives."

5 David said, "Yes, we always do that when we work for the big boss. Today we have a special job to do, so we have to properly follow that rule. We have not slept with any women."

6 So the old man gave him the special bread that was left from the day before, because the fresh bread was still on God's table.*

7 On that same day a working man came to that place to show respect to God. He heard David and Ahimelek as they talked together. His name was Doeg, and he came from the country called Edom. He worked for Saul, and he looked after Saul's sheep.

8 David said to the old man, "I came with nothing. The big boss told me to go quickly, so I came without my spear and my long knife. Do you have one here?"

9 The old man answered, "Yes, there is that long knife that belonged to Goliath from Philistia. You killed him dead, down in the valley at Elah. That is all I have. If you like, you can take it. There it is, covered with a blanket, near the special ceremony clothes."*

David said, "That is a good knife. It is better than anyone else's knife. Give it to me."

(We have not yet translated 21:10—22:8.)

Chapter 22

Saul told the soldiers to kill the men that look after God's ceremonies

9 That man Doeg, from Edom, he went back and told Saul, "I saw David at Nob. He went to see that old man Ahimelek, Ahitub's son.
10 That old man prayed to God for David. He asked God what David should do. And

* **21:1-6** Leviticus 24:5-9; Matthew 12:3-4; Mark 2:25-26; Luke 6:3-4 * **21:9** 1 Samuel 17:51

he gave him food. He also gave him the long knife that belonged to Goliath from Philistia."*

11 As soon as Saul heard it, he sent a messenger to get Ahimelek and his family to come to him. You see, at that time, Ahimelek and the men in his family used to look after God's ceremonies at Nob. After they got Saul's message, they all went to his place. 12 Then Saul said, "Listen to me, son of Ahitub."

And Ahimelek said, "What is it, boss?"

13 Saul asked, "Why do you want to trick me? You don't think about me any more. You want to make David the big boss. You helped him with food, and you gave him a long knife. And you even prayed to God for him. David has turned against me. He's just waiting to kill me dead some time."

14 The old man answered, "No way, boss. David truly works for you. He is your best worker. And he is also your son-in-law, a boss soldier. Everybody that works for you respects him very much. 15 I have prayed lots of times to God for him, but you did not get angry with me before. Do not blame me and my family. We know nothing about whatever is going on."

16 But Saul said, "You and everybody in your family will die today." 17 And he told his workers, "Kill all these men dead. They listen to David and not to me. They knew that he ran away from me, but they did not tell me."

But the workers said, "No. We can't kill these men that look after God's ceremonies."

18 So Saul said to Doeg, "All right. You kill those men yourself." Doeg was from Edom, a different country. He didn't care about those men, so he listened to Saul and did what he said. He got up straight away, and he killed dead 85 men that looked after God's ceremonies, men that used to wear the special ceremony clothes. 19 Then he went to Nob, the town where Ahimelek's family lived. They were the people who used to look after God's ceremonies. Doeg killed dead everybody there too. He killed men dead, also women, kids, babies, bulls, donkeys, and sheep. He killed everything dead.

20 Only one man ran away safely from there. His name was Abiathar, one of Ahimelek's sons. He ran away and joined up with David's mob.

(We have not yet translated 22:21—23:29.)

Chapter 24

David shamed Saul properly

1 Another time Saul and his soldiers went to fight with the Philistia mob. After they came back, somebody told him this story, "David's mob are in the desert at En-Gedi." 2 So Saul got 3,000 of his best soldiers together from every place in Israel. And they went off to look for David and his men in the hill country, near a place called *the rocks of the wild goats*.

3 There were yards for sheep and goats at that place, near a cave. David and his men were in that place before Saul and his men got there, and David's mob went into the cave to hide. Later on, Saul and his men came, and Saul went into the cave by himself to go to the toilet. But David and his men were already in that cave, right at the back. The cave was very big, so Saul did not see them.* 4 David's men said to him, "You remember that God said this, 'I will help you to beat your enemy that does wrong to you. You can do whatever you like to him.' So you can kill him dead now." David went quietly up behind Saul and cut off a little bit of his coat with his knife. Saul just sat there. He did not know what David was doing.

* **22:9-10** 1 Samuel 21:7-9; Psalm 52 * **24:3** Psalm 57; 142



David cut off a bit of Saul's coat

5 But after he cut off that bit of Saul's coat,
David felt really shamed about it. 6 He said
to his men, "God picked Saul to be the big
boss of Israel, so I can't do wrong to him.
I can't touch him, no way."* 7 In that way,
David told them not to hurt Saul. Soon after
that, Saul stood up and went out of the cave.
8 David waited a few minutes, then he went
out too. He called out to Saul, "Hey boss."
Saul looked back over his shoulder. David
got down on his knees, to show him respect.
9 David said, "Some men reckon that I want
to hurt you. Don't listen to them. 10 Just now
God brought us together in this cave. I could
do whatever I liked to you. Some said to
me, 'You can kill him dead now.' But I was
sorry for you. I said, 'No, I can't kill my boss.
God picked him, to be the big boss of Israel.'
11 Look at this, boss. I'm holding a little bit
of your coat. I cut it off just then, when you
were in the cave, but I did not kill you. This
shows that I am not trying to do any wrong
to you. I can't make myself the big boss
instead of you. But you keep on looking for
me, to kill me. 12 One day, God will judge
you and me. If you do wrong to me, he will
punish you. But I can't kill you. No way.
13 You know what people often say, 'Only bad
people do bad things.' I do not want to be a
bad person, so I will not touch you."

(We have not yet translated 24:14-15.)

16 After David said that, Saul asked him, "Is
that really you, my son David?" And he cried
out loud. 17 He said to David, "You are a good
man, I am not. You are good to me, but I am
giving you a hard time. 18 And now you have
just told me that you feel sorry for me. God
brought us together in the cave, but still you
did not kill me. 19 Whenever a soldier finds
his enemy, he can't let him go. He never
does that. But you are not like that. You are
good to me. You did good to me today, so
God will do good to you. 20 I know that one
day you will be the big boss of Israel. 21 So
promise me right now, with God listening,
that you will not kill my family dead after
you become the big boss. And after you
become the big boss, keep on being good to
them, so that my family will not finish up."
22 David promised to do what Saul asked.
Then Saul went back home. But David went
back with his men to the hill country, and
they stayed in a safe place.

Chapter 25

Nabal and his wife Abigail

1 About that time the old man Samuel died.
The Israel mob came together and cried for
him. They buried him at his place in the
town called Ramah.

After that, David and his men went back
to the desert country called Maon. 2-3 There
was a man there called Nabal. He belonged
to Caleb's family. His farm was near the

* **24:6** 1 Samuel 26:11

town called Carmel, in that Maon country. He had lots of money, 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. He was a hard man and a cheeky man. His wife was called Abigail. She was very beautiful and very clever.

One day, Nabal started to cut wool from the sheep. They always used to have a party after they finished that job. 4 David was in the desert country nearby, and he heard about it. 5 So he told 10 young men, "Go to Carmel and see that man Nabal. Say to him, 'Our boss David says to say *hello* to you. 6 God will look after you and your family and your animals. 7 I heard that you are now cutting wool from your sheep. You know, whenever we camped with your work-men that look after your sheep in the bush, we always looked after them carefully and did not steal from them. Other soldiers are thieves. But we are good to other people, and we don't think about stealing. 8 You can ask your workers. They will tell you the same story. It is like we are your working men too, so please be good to us. I also heard that it is party time at your place. But think about us too. Can you give us some food?' "

9 The young men went to Nabal's place and told him David's message. But at first Nabal did not answer.

10 Then he asked them, "Who does this man David think he is? That son of Jesse is just like other workers that run away from their bosses. 11 I only give bread, meat and water to my own workers. I can't just give it to some other mob. I don't know where they came from."

12 So they went back to tell David what Nabal said. 13 Then David said to his men, "Get your long knives, you mob. We will go and fight him." They got their long knives and put them in their belts, and David got his long knife as well. He went off with 400 of his men. His 200 other men stayed behind to watch the camp.

14 One of Nabal's workers heard what Nabal said to David's men, and he ran to tell Abigail, Nabal's wife. He told her, "David sent messengers from the desert country to talk to our boss. But he talked badly to them. 15 Truly David's mob were good to us, while we looked after the sheep. They did not steal from us. 16 Day and night they watched over us whenever we looked after the sheep. 17 This boss of ours has made trouble for us now. Something really bad might happen to us here. Can you do something about it? He's no good. I can't talk to him at all."

18 Abigail did not wait. She quickly gathered all kinds of things together. She got 200 loaves of bread, and 2 leather bags that were full of wine, and 5 cooked sheep, and 5 bags of cooked seeds, and lots of fruit like bush tomato, and lots of fruit like bush figs. And she put all this food on some donkeys. 19 She said to her workers, "You mob go ahead. I will follow behind you." She did not say anything to her husband about it.

20-22 So Abigail went off on a donkey. You see, David talked to himself like this, as he went along, "I looked after Nabal's men and his sheep in the desert country just for nothing. I didn't take anything that belonged to him. I was good to him, but he talked badly about me. Tonight, while it is still dark, I will kill all the men and boys at his place. If I do not do that, I will ask God to make big trouble for me." That's the way David talked.

As Abigail went along on her donkey, she went through a gap in the hills. She saw David as he came with his men. 23 As soon as she saw him, she quickly jumped off the donkey and got down on her knees to show respect to him, her face close to the ground. 24 She said, "Boss. Please wait and listen to me now. Be angry with me, not Nabal. Forget him. 25 Do not listen to that no good man. That name *Nabal* means *stupid one*. He's

always like that. You see, I was not there, at the time your workers came to our place.
26-27 But now I have brought all kinds of food for you and your men to eat. So don't be angry with us now. I know for sure that it is God that stopped you here, so that you did not kill lots of people dead. And I want God to kill anybody that does wrong to you, just like I reckon he will kill Nabal one day. 28 So please let us go, even though my husband did wrong to you. I know that God will make you the big boss of all of us Israel mob. And later, after you die, your family will keep on being our bosses. I know that you fight against the people that God wants to fight. I hope you will keep on living straight always, for the rest of your life. 29 If other people chase you, to kill you, God will look after you and will keep you safe. You are his special one. He will soon finish up those other people. 30 After he does that, you will be boss in Israel, the way he promised before.
31 So here today do not do payback to us. Do not kill us just for nothing. If you kill us, you will bring big shame on yourself. If you kill people now that are not guilty, it will be a problem for you later. But if you don't kill us, that will be good. I know that God will make you the big boss one day. At that time, please do not forget me, but be good to me." That's the story Abigail told David.
32 Then David settled down and said to Abigail, "I reckon God is really great. He sent you to meet me here. 33 You thought carefully about it, then you came and met me here. So now I ask God to be good to you. Yes, I came to fight, but you stopped me, so I didn't kill lots of people dead. 34 God knows that this is true. He stopped me, or I might have killed you mob dead. Every man and boy in this place might have died before tomorrow morning. But you came quickly to meet me and stop me."
35 And David thanked her, and he told his men to get all the food from Abigail. And he said to her, "All right. You can go home now. I have heard you, and I will do what you are asking me."
36 While Abigail was away, other people came together at their house, to have a big party with her husband. Nabal was happy, and he got very drunk. After Abigail got back, she did not tell him about David. 37 In the morning Nabal was sober, so Abigail told him about David. As soon as he heard he was so shocked that he had a stroke. He became just like a stone and couldn't move. 38 After 10 days, God hit him properly, and he died.
39-40 As soon as David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Praise God. That old man talked badly to me. He talked very badly, so God finished him properly. God also stopped me so that I didn't do wrong."
So David sent messengers to Carmel, and they went and said to Abigail, "David sent us. He wants you to come with us, to marry him."
41 She got down on her knees to show respect, her face close to the ground, and she said, "Yes, I will go. I am happy to work for him and his men, and I will even wash their feet too." 42 She quickly got on a donkey and went off. 5 working women also went with her. They all went to David's camp. And then David and Abigail got married. 43-44 You see, David's first wife was Saul's daughter, Mihal. But Saul took her away and gave her to another man called Paltiel. His father's name was Layish, and he came from a place called Gallim. After that, David got another wife called Ahinoam. She came from a place called Jezreel. So Abigail and Ahinoam, they were both his wives. *

* **25:43-44** 2 Samuel 3:14-16

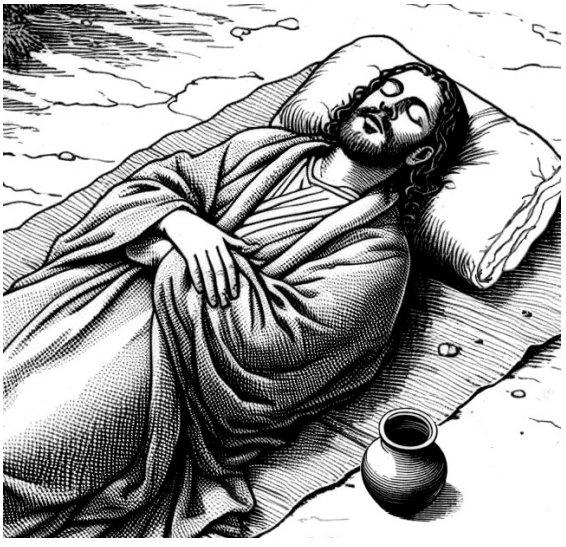
Chapter 26

David shamed Saul again

1 One day, some men from a place called Zif
went to see Saul at his place at Gibeah. They
said, "David's mob are hiding in a cave at the
hill called Hakilah near Jeshimon town."*
2 Saul quickly gathered together 3,000 of
his best soldiers from Israel. They went off
to look for David in the desert called Zif.
3 They camped in the hill country beside the
road. David's mob stayed in the bush. After
he heard that Saul was at Hakilah, 4 he sent
some men to have a look. They saw that
Saul's mob really was there, so they came
back and told David.

5 That night David went close to Saul's
camp. From his hiding place he saw Saul
and the boss soldier Abner, Ner's son. They
slept in the middle. The other soldiers all
slept around them.

6 There were 2 men with David. They were
Ahimelek, the man who used to belong to
the Heth mob, and Abishai, Zeruiah's son.



Saul was asleep, but David didn't kill him

Zeruiah was David's older sister. Her other
son was Joab. David said to them, "I am
going to go quietly into the middle of their
camp, to where Saul is. Which of you 2 will
do that with me?"

Abishai said, "I'll go with you."

7 So in the middle of the night, David
and Abishai went quietly into Saul's camp.
Everybody was asleep. They found Saul
asleep in the middle of the camp. His spear
stood there, stuck in the ground near his
head. Other soldiers lay asleep nearby.
One of them was Abner, the boss of Saul's
soldiers. 8 Abishai said, "Boss. Look at this.
God wants you to kill that old man. He did
wrong to you. I will stab him right through
with his spear. I'll only stab him one time.
I'll use that spear like it is a big pin, and
I'll pin him to the ground, and he will die
straight away."

9 But David answered, "You can't kill him.
God will punish you. He picked Saul to
be our big boss. 10 Some time God himself
will finish him up, maybe through sickness,
maybe through fighting. 11 But not us. We
can't kill him. God does not want me to kill
this man that he picked. Let's just take his
spear, and that billycan of water that is near
his head, and we will go back."*

12 So David took the spear and the billycan,
and they went away quietly. Nobody saw
them. God made everybody sleep properly,
so nobody woke up.

13 Then they went across to the other side
of the valley and stood on the top of a hill a
long way away. 14 David called out to Abner,
"Hey, Abner. Can you hear me?"

He answered, "Who's that calling out?
Who's waking up the big boss?"

15 David made fun of him, and he said,
"Abner, what kind of man are you? You call
yourself a big boss soldier, greater than all

* **26:1** Psalm 54 * **26:11** 1 Samuel 24:6

the other soldiers. But you don't look after your boss. Just now somebody went into your camp and nearly killed him dead. 16 You are a boss soldier for nothing. God should kill you, and your soldiers too. You mob don't look after the big boss, the one God picked. Look there. Where's the big boss's spear? Where's his billycan? I've got those 2 things here."

17 Saul heard David's voice, and said, "David, my son. Is that you talking?"

David answered, "Yes, boss. It's me. 18 Why do you always chase me? I did not do anything wrong. Why do you blame me? 19 Listen carefully to me. Did God tell you to hate me? If yes, then I have to burn meat to give to him, so he will change his mind. But maybe it was some other men that told you to hate me? They hunted me away from my people, so God has to punish them. They don't let me live in my country. I'm like a stranger. I have to live in another country now. The people there follow other gods. I can't live for God properly. 20 This place is a long way from God. I do not want to die here. I'm just nobody, not a boss man. Why do you keep on looking for me? You keep on chasing me like you are hunting for meat."

21 Saul said, "I did the wrong thing. You are good to me. I can't do wrong to you again. You didn't kill me, but I truly did wrong. I was a stupid fool. You are like my son. Come back to me."

22 David said, "Your spear is here. Send a man to come and get it. 23 Just now God brought us together, and I did not kill you. He picked you to be boss, so I will not kill you. God is good to people that listen to him. He is good to people that live straight. 24 That's why I want him to be good to me. I want him to keep me alive, just like I was good to you today, and did not kill you."

25 Then Saul said, "Truly God will be good to you. You will do great things for him. Whatever you do will work out well."

Then David left that place, and Saul went back home.

(We have not yet translated 27:1—28:2.)

Chapter 28

Saul talked to Samuel's spirit

3 A long time before this, Saul stopped the clever men and women from talking to the spirits of dead people, and he hunted them away from Israel. You see, that is in God's law.

When the old man Samuel died, the Israel mob all cried for him, and they buried him in his own town, called Ramah.*

4 Some time later, the Philistia mob came together at a place called Shunem to fight with the Israel mob. Saul gathered his soldiers together at another place called Gilboa, not far from Shunem. 5 As soon as he saw the Philistia mob, he was really frightened and confused. 6 He prayed to God, but God did not answer him. God didn't talk to Saul in dreams, and nobody came to bring him a word from God. Nothing. So he got the special stone that they used to find out what God wanted, and he threw it down, to see if it lay on its back or on its side. But still God did not show him anything.* 7 So Saul said to his men, "Go and look for a clever woman, one that can talk to dead people's spirits. I want her to ask Samuel for me. He might give me an answer."

They said to him, "There's one at that place called Endor."

8 So Saul put on some working man's clothes to make himself look different. Then, at night, he went with 2 of his men to look

* **28:3** Leviticus 20:27; Deuteronomy 18:10-11; 1 Samuel 25:1 * **28:6** Numbers 27:21

for that woman. He found her and said, "Will you talk to a dead man for me? I will call the dead man's name, and you get him for me."

9 But the woman said, "I can't do that. You know, Saul hunted the clever men and women away from Israel. You are making trouble for me. If I do this for you, Saul might send people to kill me dead."

10 Saul answered, "God is listening, so I tell you straight. Nobody can kill you or do payback to you."

11 The woman answered, "All right, who do you want me to get for you?"

Saul said, "That old man Samuel. Get him for me."

12 Then she talked to Samuel's spirit, and he came to her. As soon as she saw him, she was frightened and yelled at Saul, "You tricked me. You are Saul."

13 Saul said, "It's all right. Don't be frightened. What can you see?"

She said, "I can see a spirit coming out of the ground here."

14 Saul asked, "What does it look like?"

She said, "It's an old man wearing long clothes."

Saul knew it was Samuel, and he got down on his knees and put his face near the ground to show respect to that spirit.

15 Samuel said, "I was dead. Why did you wake me up? Why did you bring me back?"

Saul stood up and answered, "Things are really bad for me now. The Philistia mob will try to kill me dead. God turned away from me, and he doesn't answer me. He doesn't talk to me through a man, or a dream. Nothing. That's why I'm here now, to ask you what I have to do."

16 Samuel said, "Yes, God turned away from you. He is your enemy now. Why do you ask me to help you? 17 While I was alive, he told me the story about you. And I told it to you. Now it's come true. You are not the big boss of Israel any more. God has already picked David to be the big boss instead of you. * 18 You did not listen to God, so he did that. He was angry with the Amalek mob, so he told you to finish all of them up, and their animals too. He told you what to do, but you didn't do it. * 19 So now the Philistia mob will kill you and your soldiers. Tomorrow God will let them beat you mob. They will kill you and your sons dead. You will all come to sit with me, here, with all the dead people."

20 You see, from early that day Saul didn't eat any food, and he ate nothing all that night too. So he was weak. And as soon as he heard Samuel's words, he got very frightened. He was so weak that he fell to the ground.

21 The woman saw Saul on the ground. He was shaking, and she said, "Look. I listened to you. I was afraid you might kill me, but I did like you asked. 22 Now you have to listen to me. Let me give you some food to make you strong again, so you can go back home."

23 But he said, "No. I can't eat."

Then his 2 men said the same thing, "Boss, you have to eat some food." He listened to them and got up and sat on a chair.

24 There was a fat young cow at that place. It belonged to the woman, and she quickly killed it. While the meat was cooking, she got some flour and cooked a flat damper. 25 She gave food to Saul and the other 2 men. After they ate it, they went back to their camp, while it was still dark.

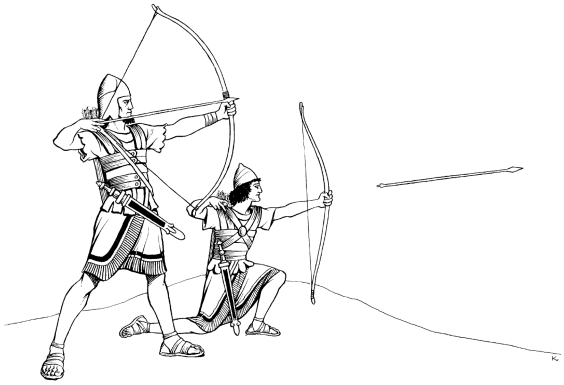
(We have not yet translated chapters 29 and 30.)

Chapter 31

Saul and his 3 sons died

1 After that, the Philistia mob fought with the Israel mob. They fought on the hill called

* **28:17** 1 Samuel 15:28 * **28:18** 1 Samuel 15:3-9



Soldiers used bows to shoot arrows like this

Gilboa. Lots of Israel soldiers died there, and the other soldiers got frightened and ran away. 2 The Philistia mob chased Saul and his sons, and they got closer and closer. Then they killed dead Saul's sons, Jonathan, Abinadab and Malkishua. 3 The soldiers that were close to Saul fought hard. The Philistia mob shot Saul lots of times with bows and arrows, and they hurt him very badly. 4 Saul talked to one of the soldiers there, the one that carried his shield for him. He said, "Get your long knife and stab me. I don't want that mob to kill me dead. They don't know God. They might make fun of me as they kill me."

The soldier was frightened and did not want to stab him. So Saul got the knife and stabbed himself in his belly and killed himself. 5 Then that soldier saw that his boss was dead, so he stabbed himself and died too. 6 That's how Saul died, and his sons, and the man that carried his shield, and his soldiers. They all died on that day.

7 The people that saw what happened told this bad news to everybody along the Jezreel Valley and across the Jordan River. The Israel mob in all those places heard it, and they ran away frightened. They left their towns empty, and the Philistia mob went and lived in those towns.

8 The next day, the Philistia mob went back up the hill at Gilboa to get stuff from the dead bodies. They saw the dead bodies of Saul and his 3 sons there. 9 They cut off Saul's head and took off his heavy iron plates. Then they sent messengers to every place in Philistia, to tell the story to the people and in the houses of their gods. 10 They put Saul's iron plates in one of those houses, the house of the female god called Astarti. At Beth-Shan they hung Saul's dead body on the wall that was around the town.

11 The people from another place called Jabesh, in the Gilead country, they heard the bad news too. They remembered that Saul helped them before. They were very upset about the bad things the Philistia mob did to Saul. 12 So that night lots of brave men from Jabesh walked all night to Beth-Shan. They took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall, and they carried them back to Jabesh. They burned the bodies 13 and buried the bones under the big tree there. For the next 7 days they ate no food. They just sat sadly together and felt sorry for Saul. *

* **31:13** 1 Samuel 11:1-11

The Story about the big boss called David

*(From the book in the Holy Bible called **2 Samuel**)*

About this story

These stories are about things that happened about 3,000 years ago, in the country called Israel.

Somebody wrote these stories in a big book called Samuel *with lots of other stories, but it was too big, so they split it into 2 books, called* 1 Samuel*, and* 2 Samuel*. They were in God's book, that the Jewish people had before Jesus came to this earth. They are now in the 1st part of the Holy Bible, called the* Old Testament.

We have not yet translated all of the stories from 2 Samuel.

The stories in this book are mostly about God's man called David. In 1 Samuel we can read that God picked David to be the big boss of his people, but David did not become the big boss straight away. Saul was the first big boss. After he died, David became the big boss, but it was not always easy for him. He often had problems.

These stories are important, and we can learn a lot from them. They help us know what God is like and what he planned for his people. They show us that God is always with his people, and that he helps them when they have problems.

Chapter 1

David heard the bad news about Saul

1 The Philistia mob and the Israel mob fought each other on the hill called Gilboa. Saul died at that place.

At the same time, David and his men fought the Amalek mob at another place. After they beat the Amalek mob, David and his men went back to the place called Ziklag.
2 Then, 2 days later, a young man arrived at David's camp. He came from the place where Saul's mob had that big fight. Along the road he tore his clothes and put dirt on his head, to show that he had bad news. Then he came to David, got down on his knees with his face close to the ground, to show respect to him.

3 David asked, "Where did you come from?"

He answered, "I ran away from that hill called Gilboa, from that big fight."

4 David asked him, "What happened in that fight? Tell me."

He answered, "The Philistia mob killed dead lots of our soldiers, and our other soldiers ran away. Saul and his son Jonathan died too."

(We have not yet translated 1:5-10.)

11 David and his mob were really sad for Saul and Jonathan. They tore their clothes to

show they were upset. 12 They cried until the sun went down, and they didn't eat anything. Lots of God's people died, so they were sad for them too, their countrymen, the Israel mob.

(We have not yet translated 1:13-27.)

Chapter 2

The Judah mob made David their boss

1 After that, David asked God, "What do I do now? Maybe I have to go back and stay at some place in Judah country?"

God answered, "Yes, go."

David asked, "Which place?"

God said, "To the town called Hebron."

2 So David went and lived in that place. His 2 wives went with him. Their names were Ahinoam, from Jezreel, and Abigail, from Carmel. Abigail was the widow of that stupid old man, Nabal.* 3 David's workers also went back to Judah, and they took their children with them. Some went to Hebron. Other workers went to other places close by. 4 Then the Judah tribe came together at Hebron to make David their boss. They poured olive oil on his head. That was their way of showing everybody that he was their boss.*

(We have not yet translated 2:5-7.)

The Israel mob made Ishbosheth their boss

8 At that same time Abner got up. He was Ner's son, and he used to be the boss of Saul's soldiers. He got up and went to a man called Ishbosheth. He was one of Saul's sons. Abner took him to a place called Mahanayim, 9 and made him boss of all the other tribes of the Israel nation. So he was boss for the Gilead mob, and for the Asher mob, and for the Jezreel mob, and for the Ephraim mob, and for the Benjamin mob.

10 Ishbosheth was 40 years old at the time he became boss over those Israel tribes, and he was their boss for 2 years. But the Judah tribe made David their boss. 11 David was boss for 7 years and 6 months in Hebron town.

(We have not yet translated 2:12-32. It is about a fight between David's mob and the mob that wanted Saul's son to be their boss.)

Chapter 3

1 Saul's mob and David's mob kept on fighting each other for a long time. More and more men joined David's mob, and only a few men stayed in Saul's mob.

(We have not yet translated 3:2—4:12.)

Chapter 5

David became the boss of all the tribes in Israel

1 At first David was boss only for the Judah tribe. But one day all the other Israel tribes came together at Hebron and said to David, "You are family for us. 2 While Saul was the big boss of all of us in Israel, you were boss of all the soldiers. At that time, God told you, 'One day, you will be the big boss, and you will look after my people, the Israel mob, like a shepherd looks after his sheep.' "

3 So the elders told that story to David in Hebron. Then he said, "Yes, I agree to be the big boss of everybody. I say that while God is listening." Then the elders poured olive oil on his head to show that he was the big boss for all the Israel mob.

4 David was 30 years old when they picked him to be the big boss. And he was boss for a long time, for 40 years. 5 You see, David was boss for the Judah tribe first. That was for

* **2:2** 1 Samuel 25:42-43 * **2:4** 1 Samuel 31:11-13

7½ years, and he lived at that place called Hebron. After that, he became the big boss for the other Israel tribes too, and he lived in the city called Jerusalem.*

(We have not yet translated 5:6—6:23.)

Chapter 7

God told David, "Your family will be bosses for ever"

1 After David became the big boss, God kept his enemies away from Israel. So he sat down happily in his big house in Jerusalem.
2 There was a man called Nathan. He told God's messages to people. One day, David said to him, "Listen, I live here in this big fancy house, but God's special box still lives in a tent. I want to build a proper house for that special box."
3 Nathan said, "God is looking after you. You can do anything you want to do."
4 But that night God gave Nathan a dream and told him a different story. 5 He told him to say this to David,

"David, you are my working man. Listen to me. I want you to leave it. Don't build a house for me. And don't build a house for that special box. 6 I led the Israel mob to walk away from Egypt and to come back to this country. All that time I didn't live in a house. Today I still don't live in a house. I still go from place to place, and I still live in a tent. 7 I picked bosses for the Israel mob, to look after them. I didn't say to any of those bosses, 'Build me a nice house.' I never said that.

8 So, listen carefully to me. At first you just looked after sheep. Then I picked you to look after my mob, the Israel nation. I picked you to be the big boss for them. 9 I was always close to you whenever you did all kinds of important things. I helped you to hunt away the cheeky people that came here from other places. And now I will make you really important. Everybody in every place will hear about you and remember your name, and they will say you are great. 10-11 For a long time I picked judges and other bosses for my people, the Israel mob. Other mobs kept on giving them trouble, and they fought with the Israel mob. But from now on, I will look after my mob here in this country. This country belongs to Israel now. They can sit down here and live quietly, and not be frightened any more. Those other mobs will leave them alone.

Listen, I am telling you this, so you will know. I will make your family important. And I will keep on making your family important. 12 One day you will die, and then I will pick one of your sons to be the big boss, and I will make him strong. He will be a strong boss for his people for a long time.* 13 Nobody can stop him from being the big boss of this country. And then his son will be the big boss, and later his son's son will be the big boss. It will be like that for ever. The big boss will always be a son from your family. Your son is the right one to build a house for me, not you. 14 I will be like his father, and he will be like my son. If he does wrong, I will send somebody to punish him, the way men punish people. But I will keep on looking after him, and I will keep on teaching him, just like a father does.* 15 You see, I loved Saul at first. But after a while I didn't love him any more. So I picked you to be the big boss instead of him. But I will treat you better than Saul. I will keep on loving your

* **5:4-5** 1 Kings 2:11; 1 Chronicles 3:4; 29:27 * **7:12** Psalm 89:3-4; 132:11; John 7:42; Acts 2:30
* **7:14** Psalm 89:26-27; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Hebrews 1:5

son always, for as long as he will be the big
boss. 16 Your family line will stay for ever.
One of them will always be the big boss."*
That's the story God told Nathan in a dream.
17 Then Nathan told David everything that
God said.

(We have not yet translated 7:18—10:19.)

Chapter 11

David stole another man's wife

1 At that time, long ago, the big bosses of those nations used to wait for the end of the cold weather to finish every year, then they used to get their soldiers together, and the big bosses went with their soldiers to fight with other nations. That was their way.*

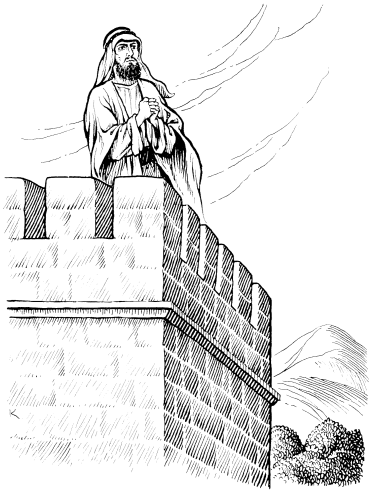
One year, at that time, David told his boss soldier Joab, "Gather the soldiers from Israel together. Go again to fight with the Ammon mob." So they went, and they met up with the soldiers from Ammon, and they beat them properly. Then they went to the town called Rabbah in Ammon country and stood in a circle around it. The Rabbah people couldn't get out of their town, because the Israel soldiers blocked the gates.

But David didn't go with his soldiers to that town. He stayed home, in Jerusalem.

2 One day, in the late afternoon, David woke up from a sleep, and he went up and stood on the flat roof of his house. As he looked down at the other houses, he saw a woman. She was having a bath, and she was very pretty.

3 He sent a messenger to ask, "Who is this woman?"

The messenger came back and told him, "She is Bathsheba, Eliam's daughter. Her husband is Uriah, who belongs to the Heth mob."



David looked down from the roof

4 He was an Israel soldier, and he was fighting at Rabbah. So David sent messengers to get Bathsheba and bring her to him. You see, she just finished her washing ceremony, the one that women used to do to clean themselves every month. So Bathsheba did what David told her to do. She went to him, and he slept with her, as a man does with his wife. Then she went back to her home.

5 Some weeks later, that woman knew that she was going to have a baby. So she sent a message to tell David, "I'm going to have your baby."

6 David heard her message, and then he sent a message to the boss soldier Joab. He was with the army, fighting at Rabbah. David told him, "Send Uriah to me." So Joab sent Uriah back to Jerusalem.

7 Uriah came, and David said, "Hello, Uriah. Tell me, how's Joab? Is he all right? Are the soldiers from Israel all right? Are they fighting hard with the Ammon mob?"

Uriah answered his questions. 8 Then David said to him, "You can go home to your wife. Have a wash and a rest. Go back to Joab tomorrow." You see, David wanted people

* **7:16** Psalm 89:36-37 * **11:1** 1 Chronicles 20:1

to think that the baby was Uriah's. As Uriah left the big house, David sent a working man with some fresh meat for Uriah and his wife to eat. 9 But Uriah didn't go back to sleep at his own house. He went and slept outside, where David's working men used to sleep.

10 The next day, one working man told David, "Uriah did not go and sleep at his own house."

David said, "Go and get him."

Uriah came, and David asked him, "Why didn't you go home and have a rest? You need a break from the fighting."

11 He answered, "I can't go back to my house. There are big mobs of our soldiers still over there, fighting the Ammon mob. The big boss soldier Joab, and the other boss soldiers, and all the other soldiers from Judah and from all of Israel, they are all camped out in the dry country. God's special box is there too. I can't go back to my house. I can't go and eat meat and drink wine. I can't go back and sleep with my wife. I'm telling you straight, with God listening, I can't do that."

12 David said to him, "All right. You can stay with me. I'll send you back tomorrow."

So Uriah stayed 2 nights in Jerusalem. 13 David gave him lots of food and wine to make him confused. He kept on saying, "Drink some more of this." So Uriah got properly drunk.

But still he didn't go home to his wife. He went and slept outside with the working men, like before.

14 The next morning, David heard the same story. So he wrote a letter to Joab. He gave it to Uriah, and he said, "Give this letter to your boss, Joab." So Uriah took the paper with him, but he didn't know what it said. 15 That message said this, "Send Uriah to the really hard fighting, close to the Ammon mob. Tell the other soldiers to stand back away from him and leave him alone. Then the enemy will kill him dead."

16 You see, the Israel soldiers were still at that same place, there at Rabbah. They still stood in a circle around the town. Joab knew that the best Ammon soldiers were in one place, so he sent Uriah and some other soldiers there, to shoot arrows at them from close to the wall of the town. 17 But those Ammon soldiers suddenly came out from behind the wall and killed dead some Israel soldiers. And they killed Uriah dead too.

18 Joab sent a messenger to tell David about the fighting at Rabbah. 19 He told the messenger, "After you tell the big boss all about the fighting, 20 he might think that those soldiers died for nothing. He might get angry. He might ask you, 'Why did you mob go close to the wall? You knew that the Ammon mob will shoot arrows at you from the wall. 21 Maybe you forgot that story about Abimelek, Gideon's son. One time, he fought against the people of the town called Thebez. A woman threw a big stone from the top of the wall, and it hit him, and he died. So why did you mob get so close to that wall?' If the big boss asks you that, you can tell him this, 'Uriah died too.' "*

22 So the messenger went to Jerusalem. After he got there, he told David the story. 23 This is what he said, "The Ammon mob came out from that town, Rabbah, to fight with us. We chased them back into their town. 24 Then their soldiers on the wall of the town shot arrows at us from close up. They killed dead some of your soldiers. One of them was Uriah, he is dead too."

25 David heard it and said, "Go back and say this to Joab, 'Don't be upset about this. Fighting a war is like that. Some die, some stay alive. Keep going. Keep attacking the

* **11:21** Judges 9:53

town. Knock all the houses down.' Tell Joab that message, so he will not get upset."

26 Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, heard the bad news that her husband was dead, and she cried for him. 27 She cried for him for 7 days, as that Israel mob used to do. After she finished crying for him, David sent a messenger to bring her to his house, and David married her. Later she had a little boy.

But God saw everything. He was not happy about what David did.

Chapter 12

Nathan told David he did a bad thing

1 God talked to Nathan, the man that told God's message to people. God said, "Go to David and tell him this story, '2 men lived in the same town. One was very rich and had all kinds of things. But the other one was very poor. He had nothing.* 2 The rich man had big mobs of sheep, goats, cows and bulls, 3 but the poor man had only one little girl sheep. He paid money for it. He grew it up in his own house, just like one of his kids. It ate food from his plate and drank water from his cup. It slept on his lap like it was his own kid.

4 One day, a friend of the rich man came from another place, and he stayed at the rich man's house. The rich man wanted to cook meat for his friend, but he didn't want to kill one of his own animals. He took the little sheep from the poor man instead, and he killed it and cooked its meat for his friend.' " That's the story Nathan told to David.

5 David heard that story and got wild with that rich man. He said to Nathan, "I'm telling you straight, and God hears us. That rich man did wrong. Somebody has to punish him. He has to die. 6 He had no shame, and he did not care about the poor man. He has to give that poor man 4 little sheep, to pay for the one he took."

7 Nathan said to David, "You are that rich man. This is a picture story from God, and it is about you. You took Uriah's wife, just like that rich man took the poor man's little sheep. You know that God picked you to be the big boss for the Israel mob. When Saul tried to kill you, God looked after you and saved you. 8 Then he made you the big boss, instead of Saul. God made you the big boss of all the people of Judah and all Israel. And he gave you Saul's wives too. Maybe you think all that is not enough. All right, God can give you more. 9 But you didn't take notice of God's word. You did something that is really wrong. God says it is really bad. You took Uriah's wife, and you killed him. Yes, you sent Uriah into the middle of the fight. You knew that the Ammon mob would kill him. So really, you murdered him to get his wife for yourself.

10 This bad thing you did will make big trouble for you and your family. You turned against me and didn't listen to me. You took Uriah's wife for yourself. So bad things will keep on happening to your family. People will kill lots of your family dead. That will go on for ever.

11 And now God has another story for you. One day, he will tell a man from your own family to give you big trouble. God will take away your wives and give them to that man. And that man will sleep with them as if they are his wives. Everybody will see him do that. 12 You did wrong in secret, but God will make sure everybody sees that man do wrong to you."*

13 David said to Nathan, "I'm sorry. I did wrong things. I did not listen to God."*

Nathan said, "Yes, that's true. But he will not do payback to you. He will let it go, he will not kill you dead. 14 But you did

* **12:1** Psalm 51 * **12:11-12** 2 Samuel 16:22 * **12:13** Psalm 51:1

something very wrong against God, so your baby boy will die."

David's little boy died

15 After Nathan went home, God made David and Bathsheba's baby boy really sick. 16 So David prayed to God and asked him strongly to make the baby better. David didn't eat any food, and he slept all night on the hard floor. He didn't sleep on a soft bed. 17 Some of his important working men came to see him. They tried to make him get up. They tried to make him eat some food. But nothing. He did not want to eat anything with them.

18 After 7 days the baby died. David's working men were afraid to tell him the bad news. They said to each other, "While the baby was alive, we tried to talk to him, but he didn't listen to us. We can't tell him this bad news, or he might hurt himself."

19 But David saw that his working men talked quietly to each other like that. He worked out that the baby died. So he asked them, "Is the baby dead?"

They answered, "Yes."

20 Then David got up from the floor and washed himself, and he rubbed himself with perfume. Then he put on some clean clothes. He went into God's ceremony house and got down on his knees to show respect to God, and to pray. Then he went back to his own house and told his working men to bring him some food to eat.

21 His working men were confused. They said, "What's going on? While the baby was alive, you lay on the floor. You cried, and you ate nothing. But after he died, you got up and ate. We don't understand. Why didn't you cry after he died?"

22 He answered, "While the baby was alive, I lay on the floor. I cried, and I ate nothing. I thought, 'Maybe God will be sorry for me. Maybe he will make the baby better again.' 23 But now he is dead. Even if I don't eat food now, I can't make him alive again. I know that one day I will die too, and I will go to the place where he is. But he can't come back here to me now."

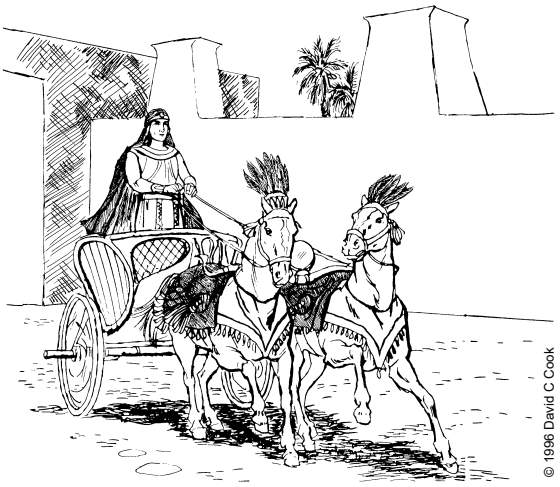
24 David talked gently to his wife, Bathsheba, to make her feel better. And he slept with her, as a man sleeps with his wife. And she had another baby boy, and David named him *Solomon*. God loved that little boy very much. 25 So he told Nathan, "Go and tell them to name him *Jedidiah*." That name means *God loves him very much*. That is why God gave him that name.

(We have not yet translated 12:26—14:33.)

Chapter 15

Absalom wanted to be the big boss instead of his father

1 David had a grown up son. His name was Absalom. Some time after Solomon was born, Absalom reckoned that he had to be the big boss, instead of his father. So he got a special trailer and some horses to pull it, and he sat in that trailer and went around in it. Whenever he went in that trailer, he


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Absalom went around in a special trailer that horses pulled

told 50 men to run along in front of it, so that he looked important. 2 And he used to get up early to go and stand at the town gate. People used to walk through that gate into Jerusalem whenever they went to see the big boss. You see, they used to go and ask David to help them sort out their problems. Absalom used to call out to them, "Hey, where are you from?" That person used to tell him the name of his tribe.

3 Then Absalom used to lie to them and say, "Listen to me. You are right. That other person did wrong to you. My father is the big boss, but he is too busy to listen to everybody. He doesn't have working men to sort out all your problems. 4 I should be the judge in this country. I am fair to everybody. I will treat everybody the same way. If somebody comes to me with a problem, I will sort it out for them." That's what Absalom used to say to the people.

5 Sometimes people really did think Absalom was an important man, so they got down on their knees to show respect to him. Then Absalom shook their hands and hugged them, to get them to like him. 6 Absalom used to do that whenever one of the Israel mob came to talk to David, to ask for help. So that's the way he got the Israel mob to like him. They didn't like his father David any more.

7-8 Absalom did that for 4 years. Then he said to his father, the big boss, "Old man, while I was living at the place called Geshur in Aram country, I said to God, 'If you will let me go to Jerusalem first, I will go to Hebron later. I will get down on my knees and show respect to you there.' God heard me say that. So is it all right for me to go to Hebron now?" But he was lying to his father.

9 David answered, "All right. You can go there." So Absalom went to Hebron.

10 But he sent messengers to go secretly all around their country, to tell all the Israel mob like this, "As soon as you hear the trumpets play out loud, you mob have to call out, 'Absalom is our big boss. They have picked him to be the big boss in Hebron.' "



This man is playing a trumpet

11-12 And he told 200 men to go with him to Hebron, to kill animals there and burn them for God. But they didn't know that Absalom planned to make himself the big boss there. At the same time, he sent a messenger to an old man called Ahithofel, from a place called Giloh, to tell him to come. He was a wise man, and he used to help David.

And so Absalom tricked lots of people and made them turn away from David. More and more people started to follow Absalom.

David ran away

13 After that, a messenger came to David and said, "The Israel mob are following Absalom now, they are not following you."

14 David got a shock. So he talked to all his workers that were with him in Jerusalem city. He said, "Quick. We have to run away from this city, or they will catch us. If we don't hurry, Absalom's mob will attack this city and kill everybody."

15 The workers said, "Yes, boss. We will do whatever you tell us to do." 16 So David went away with his mob. He told 10 of his wives to stay behind to look after his house.

(We have not yet translated 15:17-31.)

32 David and his mob, they went to the top of the hill called Olive Trees Hill. People used to show respect to God at that place. A man called Hushai was there to join up with David's mob. He was from the Arek mob, and he worked for David. You see, he heard about Absalom's plan to attack Jerusalem, and he was sad for his boss. He even tore his clothes and put dirt on his head, to show he was sad. 33 But David said to him, "Don't come with me. You might slow me down. 34 I want you to do something different for me. Go back to Jerusalem and say you want to work for my son, Absalom. Lie to him and say, 'Boss. I want to work for you now. I used to work for your father, but now I want to work only for you.' If you do that, it will really help me. If that old man Ahithofel tells my son something, you can tell him a different story and confuse him."

(We have not yet translated 15:35—16:4.)

Chapter 16

Shimmey swore at David

5 David and his mob came close to a town called Bahurim. A man called Shimmey came out to meet them. He was one of Saul's relatives, and his father's name was Gera. He started to swear at David and talk curses. 6 And he threw stones at them. David's soldiers and guards were standing with David, but Shimmey kept on throwing stones at all of them. 7 And he cursed David like this, "You are a no good trouble maker. You are a cheeky one, a murderer. You are boss for nothing. Go away. 8 You killed lots of Saul's family dead, so God is making trouble for you right now. You made yourself the big boss instead of him. So God picked your son Absalom now to be the big boss instead of you. You are a murderer. Now you are in trouble yourself, and it is your own fault."

9 One of David's boss soldiers was Abishai. He was the son of Zeruiah, David's sister. He said, "Boss. That man is no good. He can't swear at you like that. Let me cut off his head."

10 David said to Abishai, and to Abishai's brother Joab, "Don't do it. It's got nothing to do with you 2. Maybe God himself told him, 'Go and swear at David.' If God told him to do that, nobody can stop him."

(We have not yet translated 16:11-14.)

The Absalom mob arrived in Jerusalem

15 On that same day, David's son, Absalom, came to Jerusalem with a lot of Israel soldiers. Ahithofel, that wise old man, he was with him too. 16 Then David's friend, Hushai, went to meet Absalom. He called out, "Boss Absalom, you are great. You have to be the big boss for ever." But he told a lie. He was still working for David.

17 Absalom said, "You are a friend of David. You used to follow him. So how come you are not with him now?"

18 But Hushai lied again and said, "I can't follow him any more. You are the big boss now. God and the Israel mob, they have picked you to be the big boss. I belong to you. 19 This is the best way for me now. I will work for you, just like I worked for your father." And Absalom believed him.

20 So Absalom said to that wise man, Ahithofel, "All right, tell us, what do we do first?"

21 He answered, "10 of your father's wives stayed behind to look after the house. You have to sleep with them, as if you are married to them. If you do that, you will make your father ashamed, and he will hate you properly. Then everybody will know

that you are the big boss in his house now. Everybody will hear that you were really brave, and that you did it in the open. Then they will follow you." 22 So the workers put up a tent on the flat roof of David's big house. Absalom went into the tent and slept with his father's wives one by one, just like he was married to them. And a lot of people saw him do that, and all the Israel mob heard about it. *

23 So Absalom took notice of that wise man's story, just like his father used to take notice of him. They both thought that he talked straight, just like God does. So they always listened to him carefully.

Chapter 17

1 That wise man, Ahithofel, said to David's son Absalom, "Let me pick 12,000 soldiers. We will chase your father tonight. 2 Right now he's upset and tired. We will suddenly come and attack his mob, and they will get a shock. All his mob will run away. He's the only one I will kill dead. 3 I will gather all the other men together and bring them back here to you. They will see that their boss is dead, and then you will be their boss. We will not hurt any of them. They will all be safe."

4 Absalom and the elders of Israel agreed. They said, "This is a good plan."

Hushai tricked Absalom

5 Then Absalom said, "All right, what about that man Hushai, from the Arek mob? Tell him to come here. We will listen to him too."

6 Hushai came, and Absalom told him the things Ahithofel said. Then he asked Hushai, "So what do you think? Can we listen to his plan? Or maybe not? What do you reckon?"

7 Hushai lied and answered, "That old man usually talks straight. But not today. That plan he just told you, it's no good. 8 You know that your father and his men are strong soldiers. They are good fighters, like cheeky wild animals. And he really knows what he is doing too. He always sleeps a long way from the soldiers, so he will stay safe. 9 Maybe he will go and hide in a cave in the hills. Nobody can find him there. But then he and his soldiers might suddenly come and attack your mob of soldiers. Lots of your men might die. Everybody will hear about it and think, 'Hey, look out. David's mob finished up Absalom's mob.' 10 Everybody knows that David and his men are brave and strong. If your other soldiers think he beat our mob, they will be afraid. Even the brave ones will be afraid.

11 No, this is what I reckon. We have to gather more soldiers together from all over this country, Israel. Gather lots of them together, too many to count. You are their big boss, so you have to lead them yourself. 12 Your father can't hide from us. We will find him, and we will quickly go all around him, and then we will attack him. He and all his men will die. 13 If he is hiding in a town, all the Israel mob will break the wall and the houses of that town. We will get ropes, and we will drag their stones away. There will not even be a small stone left. We will do that until we find him."

14 Absalom and the elders of Israel heard what Hushai said, and they reckoned, "Hushai from the Arek mob has a good idea. It is better than the other plan of that wise man Ahithofel." You see, God himself made them think like that. He wanted them to follow Hushai's plan, and so make big trouble for Absalom. God confused them, so they did not like Ahithofel's good plan.

(We have not yet translated 17:15-29.)

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* **16:22** 2 Samuel 12:11-12

Chapter 18

David's mob beat Absalom's mob

1-2 David gathered his soldiers together, and he split them into 3 big groups. He picked a boss soldier to lead each group. They were Joab, and his brother Abishai, and Ittai, a man that used to live in a town called Gath. David told each big group to split into mobs with 1,000 men in each. And he picked one boss soldier for each mob of 1,000 soldiers. Then he told each of those mobs to do it again. This time each of them split into little groups with 100 men in each. David picked a boss soldier for each group of 100 soldiers.

Then David said to everybody, "Let's go and fight Absalom's mob. I will go with you mob."

3 But the soldiers said to him, "No way. You can't come with us. You are the boss man, but we are just nothing. You are the one they want to kill. If we soldiers all run away, they will not chase us. If we all die, they will not care. They will say, 'All right, leave them.' But if you die, they will be really happy. So it's good for you to stay here in this town. If the fighting gets hard for us, then you can send more soldiers to help us."

4-5 David said, "All right, I will listen to what you mob say." And he called out loud to the 3 boss soldiers, so everybody could hear. He said, "Joab. Abishai. Ittai. Don't hurt that young man, Absalom. Don't forget, he's my son."

And he stood at the gate and watched the soldiers as they left that town.

6 David's mob went away from the town, and they met the Israel mob in the bush at a place called Ephraim. 7-8 They chased each other in the bush, and they attacked each other with spears and bows and arrows. David's mob beat Absalom's mob and killed lots of them dead. But even more soldiers died from things in the bush. 20,000 men died on that day.


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Absalom's head got stuck in a tree

9 While they were fighting, David's son Absalom rode around in the bush on a donkey. He suddenly met some of David's men, and he tried to get away. The donkey ran under a big tree, and Absalom's head got stuck in the branches. The donkey kept on running, so Absalom was left there. He hung from the tree and couldn't get down.

10 One of David's men saw him, and he went to the boss soldier, Joab, and said, "I just saw Absalom hanging from a tree."

11 Joab said, "What? You really saw him like that? Why didn't you kill him dead straight away? I will give lots of money and a boss soldier's belt to a man that does something like that."

12 But the man said, "I can't do that. Yes, I might get lots of money, but I can't kill our big boss's son. No way. We all heard him tell you 3 boss soldiers, 'Keep that young man, Absalom, safe. Don't forget, he's my son.' 13 If I kill him, his father will hear about it straight away. He knows everything, and he will kill me dead too. And I reckon you might not help me either. You might say to him, 'It's nothing to do with me.' "

14 Joab was angry, and he said, "I can't

wait for you all day." And he got 3 spears and went to Absalom. He was still alive and hanging there in that tree.

Joab went and stabbed him 3 times in the chest. 15 10 men went with Joab, and they finished Absalom properly.

16 Straight away, Joab blew the trumpet, to tell David's mob to stop chasing the Israel mob. 17 They got Absalom and threw him into a deep hole in the middle of the bush. Then they covered his body with lots of stones.

At the same time, the Israel mob ran away and went back to their homes.

(We have not yet translated 18:18-31a. It tells how a messenger ran back to tell David the news.)

31 The messenger said, "Boss. Good news. God still wants you to be our big boss. Your enemies are nothing now. He punished them properly."

32 David asked, "What about my son Absalom? Is he all right?"

The messenger answered, "Those trouble makers, your enemies, I hope they all finish up, just like that young man finished up."

33 David got very upset. He went inside and cried. As he went in, he called out, "Absalom. My son Absalom. I want to be dead instead of you. You were my son."

(We have not yet translated 19:1—21:14.)

Chapter 21

David's mob fought with the Philistia mob again

15 Some time later, the Israel mob went to fight with the Philistia mob again. David also went with his soldiers, to fight along with them. But soon, he got very tired. 16 Then a really big Philistia man came close to David. His name was Ishbibenob. He belonged to Rafa's family. Everybody in that family was really big and strong. His spear had a sharp point. It was heavy, 3½ kilograms, and he had a new long knife. He reckoned he was going to kill David dead. 17 But one of David's boss soldiers came to save him from that big man. He attacked the big man and killed him dead. That brave man was Abishai, the son of David's sister called Zeruiah. *

After that, David's men made a promise to him. They said, "We will never let you come with us again to fight. They might kill you dead. You are like the lamp in God's ceremony house. Nobody puts out its fire. You see, your life is like that. We don't want anybody to kill you and finish up Israel's lamp."

(We have not yet translated 21:18—24:25. It is about some of the other things that David did before he died. The last bit of this story is from another book called the 1st book of the Big Bosses. *We call that book* 1 Kings*, and these verses are from 1 Kings 2:10-12.)*

1 Kings chapter 2

10 David died when he was an old man. They buried him in the city called Jerusalem, in that part of the city they call *the city of David*. 11 David was the big boss of Israel for 40 years. First he was the boss in the town called Hebron for 7 years, then he was the boss in Jerusalem for 33 years. 12 Then David's son Solomon became the big boss. He took over from his father and controlled the whole country.

* **21:17** 1 Kings 11:36; Psalm 132:17

Songs and poems

*(From the book in the Holy Bible called **Psalms**)*

Psalm 15

Only people that live in a good way can visit God's ceremony house

This is one of David's songs for God.

1 God, who do you let visit your ceremony house to show you respect?
Who do you let live there on your special hill?

2 I know the sort of people that God lets in his ceremony house.
You can visit God's ceremony house, if you are like this.
You always live in a good way,
and always do the right thing,
and only say true things.
3 You don't tell lies about people,
and you don't do bad things to people,
and you don't say bad things about people to shame them.
4 You never respect really bad people,
but you respect people that properly respect God.
You always keep your promises.
Maybe it will be hard,
maybe it will hurt you to keep those promises,
but you still keep them.
5 And whenever somebody needs help,
you let them borrow your money.
And later on, when they pay you back that money,
you only take that same money that they borrowed from you,
you don't make them pay you any more money on top of that.
And another thing. If somebody says to you,
"I want you to go to court and tell lies about good people.
I will pay you money to tell those lies."
You always say, "No, I can't tell lies about people."

All of those things that I just talked about in this song,
everybody that lives that way will always be really strong for God.

Psalm 23

God looks after me properly

This is one of David's songs for God.

1 God looks after me properly,
he gives me everything that I need.
You know about people that properly look after sheep all the time, called shepherds.
Well, God looks after me like that.
He is a good shepherd for me.
2 God gives me a good place to rest,
just like a shepherd finds a good place for his sheep to rest,
a place where there is green grass for them to eat
and clean water for them to drink.*
3 When I get tired, God makes me feel good and strong again.
He leads me on the right track,
so that people will know that he is good.

4 You know, God is with me when I have trouble too.
Sometimes I have a lot of trouble,
and I feel like I am walking in a really dark valley, and something might kill me,
but even then, God is with me.
I will not be frightened at that time.
I know that God is stopping my enemies from hurting me,
just like a shepherd uses his stick and stops wild dogs from hurting his sheep.
When I remember that he does that,
I feel safe.

5 God does good things for me even when people are giving me trouble,
and he makes my enemies watch him do those good things.
It is like I am a visitor at his house,
and he cooks a big dinner for me,
and I sit down and eat it.
And he makes my enemies watch me eat it.
It is like he fills my cup with good drink,
right to the top.
And it is like he shows everyone that I am his friend,
by putting olive oil on my head.

6 I am sure that God will always love me,
he will be good to me all of my life.
And I will always be in God's house,
and I will respect him properly for ever.

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* **23:2** Revelation 7:17

Psalm 34

Find out for yourself that God is really good

This is one of David's songs for God. It's from the time when David pretended he was crazy in front of big boss Abimelek, so Abimelek sent David away.

1 I will always say, "God is good."
Yes, I will keep on saying good things about God.
2 I will tell people, "God has all the power."
I want everybody that has a hard life to hear that and be happy.
3 Come here everybody. I want us all to say, "God is great."
Let's come together and say, "God is really powerful."

4 You see, I prayed to God, and he listened to me.
He took away everything that frightened me.
5 People that trust God are really happy.
They will never feel shame.
6 I had a lot of trouble, but I prayed to God, and he listened to me.
He saved me from all my troubles.
7 Some people know that God is powerful,
so they have strong respect for him.
God sends his special angel spirit to be with those people,
and that angel keeps those people safe from trouble.

8 Find out for yourself that God is really good.*
Look at all the things he does.
Whenever you get trouble, ask God to look after you.
He will do that, and he will make you really happy.
9 You are God's special people.
You know that he is powerful, so you have to really respect him.
If you really respect God,
he will give you everything that you need.
10 Sometimes even strong young lions can't find food and they go hungry,
but people that trust God, they have all the good things that they need.

11 Come here everyone, and listen to me.
I will teach you to respect God properly.
12 Do you want to live well?*
Do you want a long and happy life?
13 If that's what you want,
don't say bad things about other people,
and don't lie to them.
14 Turn away from doing bad things, and do good things.
Don't fight with people or make trouble.

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* **34:8** 1 Peter 2:3 * **34:12-16** 1 Peter 3:10-12

Try very hard to live happily with other people.

15 God looks after people that live the right way.
And if they ask him for help, he listens to them.
16 But God punishes people that do bad things.
After they die, God doesn't want anybody in the world to remember those bad people.
So God will make everybody forget them.
17 But some people live the right way,
and whenever they ask God for help, he listens to them.
He saves them from all their troubles.
18 Some people are really sad and feel hurt inside.
God stays really close to those people.
And some people think nothing good will happen to them.
God helps those people too.

19 If somebody lives the right way,
that person might still have a lot of troubles.
But God will save that person from all those troubles.
20 God will keep that person safe,
and nobody will break any of that person's bones.*
21 But people that do bad things,
they will get trouble and die.
And if somebody hates people that live the right way,
God will punish that person.
22 But if people work hard for God,
he will keep them safe.
And if people trust God and if they ask him to look after them,
God will not punish them.

Psalm 40

If people trust God, he makes them happy

This song is for the music leader, and it is one of David's songs for God.

1-2 I had really bad trouble.
It's like I was in a deep hole that people die in.
It's like I was stuck in a bad place,
like my legs were stuck in sticky mud.
But I trusted God,
and I waited for him to help me.
I cried out to him,
and he listened to me.

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* **34:20** John 19:36

God helped me.
He saved me from that trouble.
It's like he lifted me out of that mud,
and put my feet on good hard ground.
God kept me safe.
It's like he gave me a safe path to walk on.
3 Then God gave me a new song to sing to him.
That song says that God is great.
Lots of people will hear about everything that God did,
and they will know that he has all the power.
Then they will only trust him.

4 If people trust God properly,
God makes those people happy.
Whenever they have trouble, they trust God to help them.
They don't go to people that think they are great, or people that tell lies.

5 God, my God, you have done lots of powerful things for us.
And you have lots and lots of good plans for us.
Nobody is like you.
You do so many great things that I can't say them all.
If I try to say them all,
I'll talk for ever and never stop talking.

6 Some people kill animals to pay you for the bad things they did.
And they give you animals and food as gifts.
But that does not really make you happy.
You don't need people to burn animals for you.
You don't need people to give you gifts.
You taught me all of this.*
7 So I said to you, "Here I am. I came."
Your book tells me the things that I should do.
8 God, it makes me really happy to do everything that you want.
I always think about your laws and obey them.

9 Whenever your people come together to respect you,
I tell them, "God helps his people."
I always talk like that, I don't keep my mouth shut.
You know that's true, God.
10 I know that you always do what is right.
I don't keep it a secret inside of me.
I tell everyone, "We can trust God. He saves us."
I don't hide the true story from your people.
I tell them, "God always loves us. We can always trust him."

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* **40:6-8** Hebrews 10:5-7

11 Whenever I have troubles, God,
you feel sorry for me, and you are good to me.
You always love me, and I can always trust you.
You keep me safe.
12 And I have lots of troubles now.
It feels like there are troubles all around me,
lots of troubles, so I can't count them all.
It's like all the bad things I did are here with me,
and I don't know the right thing to do.
I did lots of bad things,
more bad things than the number of hairs on my head,
so now I feel weak inside.

13 God, please save me from all this trouble.
God, please come quickly, and help me.
14 Some people want to kill me.
God, please make them feel shame and make them confused.
Those people are happy whenever I get hurt.
God, please make them run away and be sad.
15 Those people make fun of me, and they laugh at me.
God, please make them shamed, so that they feel really sad.

16 But there are some people that always come to you God.
Please make those people really happy.
They say, "God, thank you for saving us."
And I pray that they always say, "God is great."

17 But what about me?
I have lots of trouble and I need help,
so I want God to think about me.

God, you are the one that helps me and saves me.
God, my God, please come and help me now and don't wait.

Psalm 46

God will help us

This is one of the songs of the Korah mob. It's for the leader of music at God's ceremony house.

1 God is strong, and he is always ready to help us when we get trouble.
He is like a safe place for us to hide.
Whenever we get trouble,
he is the one that can help us.
2 So we will never get frightened.

Even if there is a big earthquake,
and the mountains start to break up and fall into the sea,
even then we will not be frightened.
3 Even if the waves in the sea get really big and loud,
and if the mountains shake,
even then we will not be frightened.

4 There is a river in God's city,
and it makes the people there happy.
That place is God's home.
He is the greatest one of all.
5 God lives in that city.
Nothing can ever knock it down.
God will stop anybody from hurting the people in that city.
He will look after them all the time,
right from the start of every day.
6 You see, God is powerful,
and he frightens the nations that don't follow him.
So they go wild and don't think properly,
and they get weak and useless.
It's like God just yells at those people and they finish up,
like ice that melts in the hot sun.

7 God is the boss of everything,
and he is with us and helps us.
He is the God of us Israel people,
and he will stop anyone from hurting us.

8 Come and look at what God does.
He does things on the earth that will shock you.
9 He stops wars all over the world.
It's like he breaks all the things that people use to fight with,
like their spears and bows,
and it's like he burns all the shields with fire.
10 God says, "Stop, you mob. Keep still, and think,
and you will know that I am the only one that really is God.
The people in every nation will respect me.
People all over the world will respect me."

11 God is the boss of everything,
and he is with us and helps us.
He is the God of us Israel people,
and he will stop anyone from hurting us.

Psalm 121

God is the one that helps us

This song is for people to sing as they walk up to God's house to show him respect.

1 I look up at all the hills,
and I ask myself, "Who is the one that helps me?"
2 Then I say, "God is the one that helps me.
He is the one that made the earth and the sky."

3 He will always look after you so that you don't get trouble.
He is watching you all the time, to keep you safe.
He never goes to sleep.
4 That's right. He always watches the Israel people,
and he never sleeps.

5 God is the one that looks after you properly.
When the sun is really hot,
you know how good it is to rest under a shady tree.
Well, when life gets tough for you,
God will be close to you and help you,
like he is a shady tree for you.

6-7 Yes, God will always look after you,
in the day time and in the night time.
He will always keep you safe.
He will stop anything from hurting you.
Not even the hot sun or the moon will hurt you.
He will not let anything finish you.

8 Whenever you go anywhere,
God will go with you all the way,
and he will keep you safe.
He will do that now,
and he will keep doing that all the time, for ever.

The story about Jonah

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **Jonah**)*

About this story

This story is about a man called Jonah. He lived about 800 years before Jesus came to earth.

This story was in God's book that the Israel people had before Jesus came to earth. That book is now the first part of the Holy Bible, called the Old Testament.

Jonah was a man that God picked to tell people his messages. Back then, God normally just told his own Israel people his messages, he didn't normally tell messages to other nations. But the story of Jonah is different. Jonah lived in Israel country, but God sent him to a big city called Nineveh, that was not in Israel country. Nineveh was in a country called Assyria, and the people from Nineveh were enemies of God's Israel people. God sent Jonah to Nineveh to tell the Nineveh people his message.

At first, Jonah didn't listen to God. He tried to run away from God. But God still wanted to use Jonah to tell the Nineveh people his message. So God talked to Jonah again.

This story happened a long time ago, but it is still very important for us today. It shows us that God uses his people to share his messages. And it shows us that God cares about people, and that everyone needs to hear God's message. And it shows us that sometimes bad people listen to God, and they tell him they are sorry, and they stop living the wrong way. And then God feels sorry for them, and he doesn't punish them. He lets go of all the bad things that they did, and he is very good to them.

Chapter 1

Jonah ran away from God

1 There was a man in Israel country called Jonah. His father's name was Amittai. One day, the God of Israel talked to Jonah.* God said to Jonah, 2 "You know the big city called Nineveh that is not in Israel country? The people in that city do really bad things, and I see all the things they do. So you have to go there now, to that big city called Nineveh. You have to tell those people, 'God is angry with you.'"

3 But Jonah didn't listen to God. Instead, he ran away from God. He went down to



Jonah ran away from God and got on a ship

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* **1:1** 2 Kings 14:25

the town called Joppa. He wanted to get on a ship there, and go to the town called Tarshish. Tarshish is a long way away from Nineveh.

In Joppa, Jonah found a ship that was going to Tarshish, so he paid some money to the ship-men so he can go on that ship. Then he got on the ship to go to Tarshish with them. Jonah was running away from God.

4-5 Then Jonah went down inside the ship and lay down, and he fell asleep.

While they were sailing, God sent a big wind over the sea, and there was a big storm. That storm was really strong, and the ship-men thought the ship might break up. All the ship-men were frightened, so they called out to their own gods and asked them to help.



There was a big storm and the ship-men were frightened

That ship was carrying lots of heavy boxes and bags of things, to take them to Tarshish. But that storm was really big, so the ship-men threw all those heavy things into the sea to make the ship lighter.

6 Jonah was still asleep down inside the ship, so the ship's boss went to Jonah and said, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray to your god. Maybe he will feel sorry for us and help us, so that we don't die."



The ship-men threw all the heavy boxes and bags into the sea

7 Then the ship-men talked to each other. They said, "Why do we have this trouble? Who did something wrong to make this trouble come on us? Let's put small stones in a bag, one stone for each of us, and we'll pull out one person's stone. That stone will show us who made this trouble come on us." So they did that, and they pulled out Jonah's stone.

8 So those ship-men asked Jonah, "Did you make this trouble come on us? Did you do something bad? Who are you? What is your job? And where do you come from? What



The sailors pulled out Jonah's stone, so they knew that the storm was Jonah's fault



The ship-men threw Jonah into the sea

country are you from? And who are your people?"

9 Jonah said to them, "I am from the Hebrew people, from Israel country. Our God's name is Yahweh, and we have to respect him. I know he has all the power. He is the big boss in heaven. He made the sea and the land. 10 But right now, I am running away from him."

Then the ship-men got really frightened. They asked Jonah, "Why are you running away from your god? That is a bad thing to do."

11 The sea was getting more and more rough. So the ship-men asked Jonah, "How can we stop this storm and make the sea quiet and still? What do we have to do to you?"

12 Jonah said to them, "You have to pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the storm will stop, and the sea will be quiet and still. This storm is my fault. I did something wrong, and that's the reason why you are in this big storm."

13 But the ship-men didn't want to throw Jonah into the sea, so they tried hard to row back to the land. But the sea was getting more and more rough, so they couldn't do it.

14 Then the ship-men prayed to Jonah's God. They said, "Yahweh, you sent this storm and made all of this happen. If we throw this man into the sea, please don't kill us. Maybe he did nothing wrong, we don't know, but please don't do payback to us."

15 Then they picked up Jonah, and they threw him into the sea, and the storm stopped, and the sea was quiet and still.

16 Then the ship-men knew that Jonah's God is powerful, and they showed him lots of respect. They killed an animal to give to Jonah's God, and they made promises to him.

God sent a big fish to Jonah

17 While the ship-men did that, God sent a big fish to Jonah. Jonah was deep down in the water, and that big fish came and swallowed Jonah alive. Jonah stayed inside that fish for 3 days and 3 nights. *



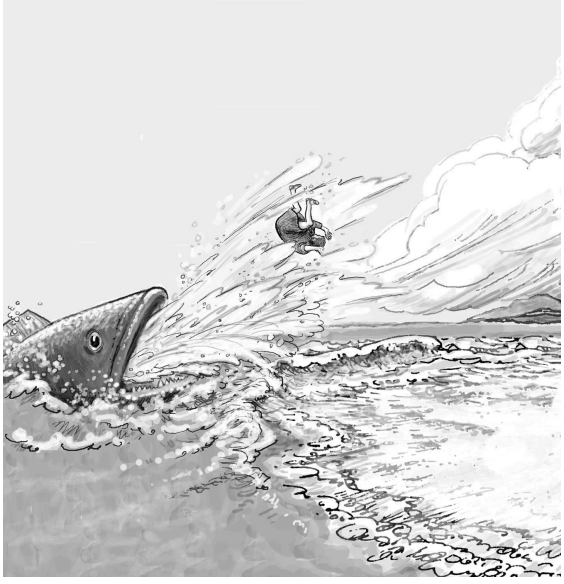
Jonah was deep down in the water, and God sent a big fish

* **1:17** Matthew 12:40

Chapter 2

Jonah prayed to God

1 Then Jonah prayed to God from inside
that fish. He talked about the things that
happened to him in the water before that
fish came.
2 He said,
"Yahweh, when I got trouble, I called
out to you, and you answered me.
I nearly died, but I called out for help,
and you listened to me.
3 This is what happened.
First you made me go down into deep
water, into the middle of the sea.
The water moved all around me. You
sent big waves over me.
4 I knew that you sent me away. You
didn't want to look at me any more.
But I also knew that I will get to go to
your good ceremony house again.
5 That water tried to drown me.
Deep water was all around me.
Seaweed wrapped around my head.
6 I sank down to the bottom of the sea,
deep down in the earth.
It was like gates locked around me, I
thought I was stuck there for ever.
But you, my God, you saved my life.
You pulled me up from that deep
dark place.
7 My life was finishing up, and I called
out to you my God.
My prayer went up to you, to your
special place where you live.
8 God, you are good to your people, and
you keep your promises.
But some people don't respect you, and
they turn away from you.
Those people show respect to things they
think are gods that have no power.
So those people will miss out on the
good things that you do for your
people.
9 But God, I will sing to you to say thank
you.
And I will kill animals to give them to
you, to show respect to you.
I promise I will do that.
You are the only one that saves
people."
10 And then God talked to that fish, and it
spat Jonah on to dry ground.

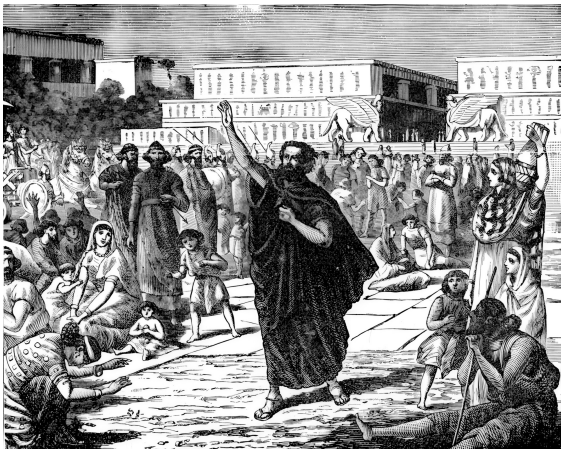


God told that fish to spit Jonah out

Chapter 3

Jonah went to Nineveh

1 Then God talked to Jonah a second time.
God said, 2 "You have to go now to that big
city called Nineveh. You have to tell the
people in Nineveh my message."
3 So Jonah got up and went to Nineveh,
just like God said.
Nineveh was a really big city. It took three
days to walk from one side of that city to
the other side.
4 Jonah started to go into the city. He
walked for one day, and he called out,



Jonah told the Nineveh people God's message

"In 40 days from now, God will finish up Nineveh."

5 The Nineveh people listened to Jonah, and they believed God's message. They knew that God was angry with them for the bad things they did. So all the Nineveh people stopped eating food, to show God that they were sorry for the bad things they did. And they all put on clothes made out of a rough cloth, called sack-cloth. Everybody did that, the important people and the poor people, they all did that to show God that they were sorry for the bad things they did. *

6 The big boss of Nineveh heard about God's message, and he got up from his special seat, and he took off his special coat, and he put on those rough clothes, and he sat down on ashes. He did those things to show God that he was sorry.

7 And that Nineveh boss sent a message to all the people in Nineveh.
That message said,

"The big boss of Nineveh and his important workers are telling you what you have to do. All the people and animals have to stop eating and drinking. None of you, or your sheep or cows, are allowed to eat or drink anything.

8 And all the people and animals have to wear that rough cloth.
And everybody has to pray strongly to God and ask him to help us.
And you all have to stop doing bad things, and stop hurting people.

9 God is really angry with us. He said he will finish us up. So we have to show God that we are sorry, and stop doing bad things. Then maybe God will change his mind. Maybe God will stop being angry with us, and maybe he will not finish us up."

10 Then the Nineveh people did everything the big boss said, and God saw that they stopped doing bad things. So God changed his mind, and he didn't finish up the Nineveh people.

Chapter 4

Jonah got angry with God

1 But Jonah wanted God to punish the Nineveh people. Jonah saw that God changed his mind and that God didn't finish up the Nineveh people. So Jonah got really upset and was very angry.

2 Jonah prayed to God. He said, "God, that first time you talked to me, when I was still at home in Israel country, you told me to go and talk to the Nineveh people. But I knew that if I told the Nineveh people your message, they might stop doing bad things, and you might not finish them up. But God, I want you to finish up those Nineveh people. That is the reason why I didn't want to go to Nineveh and tell them your message, and why I ran away to Tarshish. I knew that you feel sorry for people, and you are always kind. You don't get angry quickly,

* **3:5** Matthew 12:41; Luke 11:32

and you are really good to people. You don't do payback to people that stop doing bad things.* 3So, God, please finish me up. I want to die, I don't want to live and watch you be good to the Nineveh people."*

4Then God said, "You are very angry. Are you thinking the right way?"

5Then Jonah went out of the city, to the east side. And he made a shelter for himself, and he sat under it in the shade. And he waited there to see what will happen to Nineveh.

God used a plant to help Jonah understand

6Then God made a plant grow up near Jonah, to give him shade over his head, so that he will not be so hot. And Jonah was really happy about that plant.

7But early the next day, just before the sun came up, God sent a worm to eat that plant, and that plant died. 8Then the sun came up, and God sent a really hot wind that came from the east. And the sun was really hot on Jonah's head, so he felt sick.

Then Jonah got angry, and he wanted to die. He said, "I don't want to live any more. I want to die."

9Then God said to Jonah, "You are very angry about that plant. Are you thinking the right way?"



Jonah waited to see what will happen to Nineveh

Then Jonah said, "Yes, I am thinking the right way. I am so angry that I want to die."

10Then God said to Jonah, "You really care about that plant. But you didn't look after it or make it grow. It grew in one night, and it died in one night. 11But you think it's wrong that I care about Nineveh. Nineveh is a big city, and it has lots and lots of people. It has more than 120,000 people, and those people don't know what is right and what is wrong. And there are lots of animals there too."

* **4:2** Exodus 34:6 * **4:3** 1 Kings 19:4

New Testament

Some important parts of the good news about Jesus that Matthew wrote

(From the book in the Holy Bible called Matthew)

About this book

The Holy Bible has 4 books about the things that Jesus did, and the messages he told to people when he was here on the earth, about 2,000 years ago. Those books are in the 2nd part of the Holy Bible, called the New Testament. *The men that wrote them were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They wrote their books after Jesus went back to heaven. Most of the things in their books happened in the country we now call Israel.*

In each of those 4 books we can read about some of the things that Jesus did and said. This Bible has everything that Mark and John wrote about Jesus in their books, but we have not yet translated everything that Matthew and Luke wrote. We have only translated the stories and messages that Mark and John didn't write about, but that Matthew and Luke did write about.

This book has those stories and messages that Matthew wrote. They are important for us today because they tell us about the good things that Jesus did, and they tell us God's messages that Jesus taught to people.

Matthew had another name. He was sometimes called Levi. *At first, he was a tax man. He took money from the Jewish people and gave it to the Roman government. But one day, Jesus told him, "Follow me," and Matthew left his money job and followed Jesus (see Mark 2:13-14). Later, Jesus picked Matthew to be one of his 12 special workers (see Mark 3:13-19). Those 12 men went everywhere with Jesus. So Matthew saw and heard most of the things that he wrote about in this book.*

Chapter 1

The family line of Jesus

1 A long time ago, God promised to
send somebody to save us. Jesus is that
person. These names are the fathers and
grand-fathers of Jesus, that lived a long time
before he was born. This list shows that
Jesus was from the family of David. David
was the big boss over the Israel people. It
also shows that David was from the family
of Abraham.

2 This list starts with Abraham, a really
long time ago. He was the father of
Isaac.
Isaac was the father of Jacob.
Jacob was the father of Judah and his
brothers.
3 Judah was the father of Perez and
Zerah. Their mother's name was
Tamar.
Perez was the father of Hezron.
Hezron was the father of Ram.
4 Ram was the father of Amminadab.

Amminadab was the father of
Nahshon.
Nahshon was the father of Salmon.
5 Salmon was the father of Boaz. His
mother's name was Rahab.
Boaz was the father of Obed. His
mother's name was Ruth.
Obed was the father of Jesse.
6 Jesse was the father of David. He was
the big boss over all that mob, the
Israel nation.
So in that family there were 14 fathers from Abraham to David.
David was the father of Solomon. At
first Solomon's mother was the wife
of another man called Uriah.
7 Solomon was the father of Riaboam.
Riaboam was the father of Abijah.
Abijah was the father of Asa.
8 Asa was the father of Jehoshafat.
Jehoshafat was the father of Jehoram.
Jehoram was the father of Uzziah.
9 Uzziah was the father of Jotham.
Jotham was the father of Ahaz.
Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah.
10 Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh.
Manasseh was the father of Amon.
Amon was the father of Josiah.
11 Josiah was the father of Jeconiah
and his brothers. At that time, the
soldiers from Babylon came and
fought the Jewish people. The
Babylon mob won, and they took the
Jewish people as prisoners to their
country. *
So in that family there were 14 fathers from David until the time they all had to go to Babylon.
12 Jeconiah was the father of Shiyaltiel.
Shiyaltiel was the father of Zerubbabel.
13 Zerubbabel was the father of Abihud.
Abihud was the father of Eliakim.
Eliakim was the father of Azor.
14 Azor was the father of Zadok.
Zadok was the father of Akim.
Akim was the father of Eliud.
15 Eliud was the father of Eleazar.
Eleazar was the father of Matthan.
Matthan was the father of Jacob.
16 Jacob was the father of Joseph. Joseph
was the husband of Mary, and Mary
was the mother of Jesus. Jesus is the
Christ, the man that God promised to
send to save us.
17 So in that family there were 14 fathers from Abraham to David, and there were 14 fathers from David until the time they all had to go to Babylon, and there were 14 fathers from that Babylon time until the time God sent Jesus to the world.

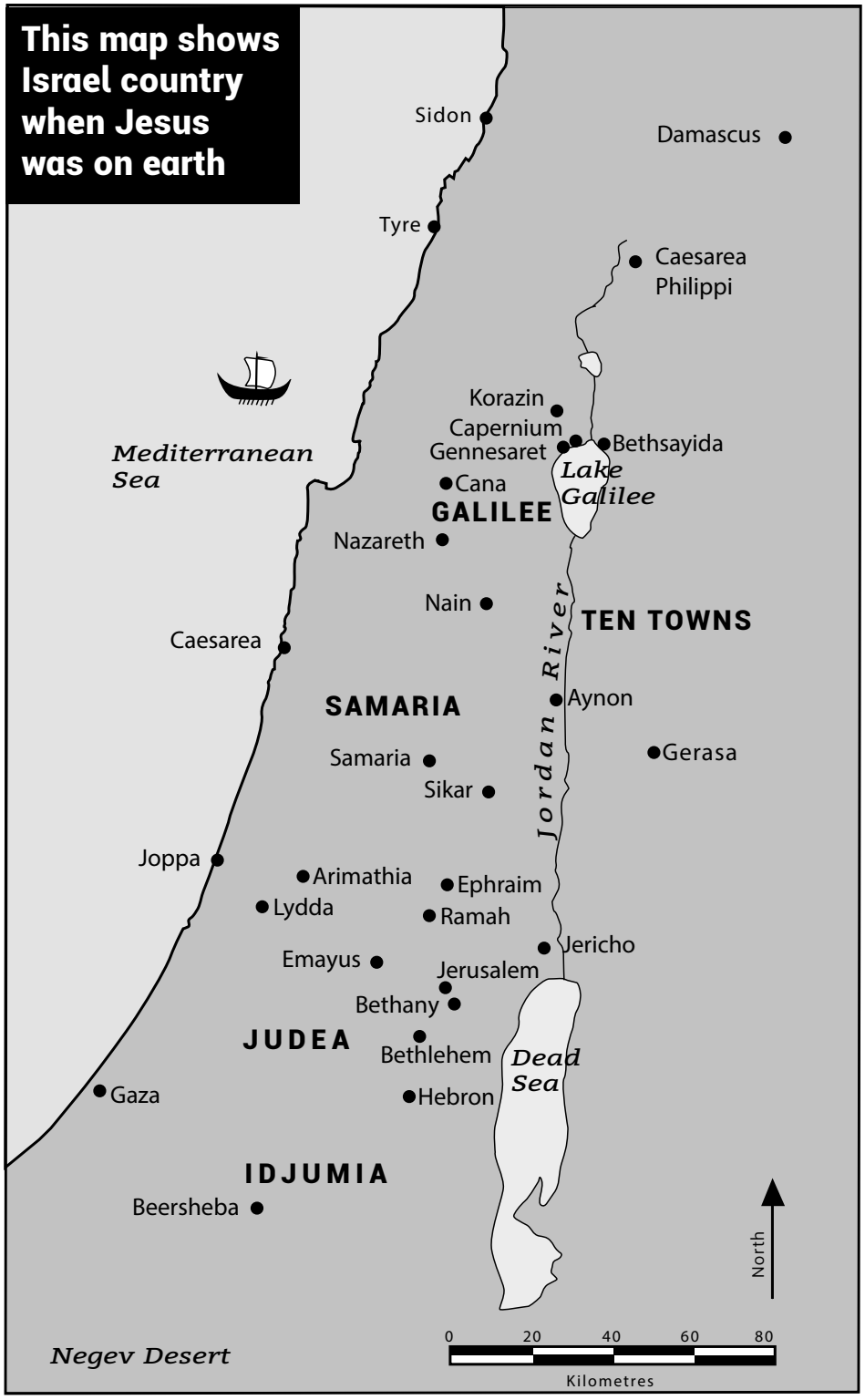
Joseph had a dream

18 This is the story about how Jesus was born. He is the man that God talked about a long time ago. God promised to send him to us. *

Mary was promised to a man called Joseph, but they hadn't slept together yet, like married people do. Then the Holy Spirit made a baby grow inside Mary. 19 Joseph found out that Mary was going to have a baby, and he was not happy. He knew that the baby wasn't his, so he wanted to leave Mary. But he was a good man, and he didn't want to shame her. So he thought, "I will just leave her quietly, without any argument."

20 While Joseph thought about that, he went to sleep and had a dream. He saw an angel messenger from God. The angel said, "Joseph, you are from the family of David. Look, you can go ahead and marry Mary. Don't be too frightened to do that. You see, her baby is from the Holy Spirit, not from another man. 21 She will have a baby boy,

* **1:11** 2 Kings 24:14-15; 2 Chronicles 36:10; Jeremiah 27:20 * **1:18** Luke 1:27


This map shows Israel country when Jesus was on earth
Sidon
Damascus
Tyre
Caesarea Philippi
Korazin
Capernium
Gennesaret
Bethsayida
Lake Galilee
Mediterranean Sea
Cana
GALILEE
Nazareth
Nain
TEN TOWNS
Jordan River
Caesarea
SAMARIA
Aynon
Samaria
Gerasa
Sikar
Joppa
Arimathia
Ephraim
Lydda
Ramah
Jericho
Emayus
Jerusalem
Bethany
JUDEA
Bethlehem
Dead Sea
Gaza
Hebron
IDJUMIA
Beersheba
North
Negev Desert
0 20 40 60 80
Kilometres

and you will name him *Jesus*. (That name *Jesus* means *God saves*.) You see, he will save his people, so that God will not punish them for the bad things they do."*

22 That all happened just like God told one of his men to write in God's book, a long time ago. He wrote,

23 "There will be a young woman that
never slept with a man, like a woman
does with her husband, but she will
have a baby boy.
That boy will have a special name,
Immanuel. That name means *God is
with us*."*

24 Joseph woke up and did what God's angel told him to do. He married Mary. 25 But he did not sleep with her, like a man does with his wife, until after her son was born. And he named the baby *Jesus*.*

Chapter 2

Some wise men came to Jesus

1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judea country. At that time, the big boss over that country was called Herod.

There were some wise men in a country to the east of Judea. They always looked at the stars, and one night they saw a special star in the sky. So they went west to Jerusalem, the city in Judea country. 2 They asked the Jerusalem people, "Where was that baby born that is going to be the big boss over you Jewish people? You see, back in our country, we saw his special star. We saw it come up into the sky, so we came here, to show respect to him. Where will we find him?"

3 Herod was the big boss over that country, and somebody told him that these wise men were talking about another big boss. Herod got very worried. He thought this other person might fight against him and take over his job. A lot of other people in Jerusalem were worried about it too. 4 So Herod had a meeting with the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and the Jewish law teachers, and he asked them, "Where will that baby be born? You know, the Christ, the man that God promised to send?"

5 They said, "He will be born in Bethlehem, in Judea country. You see, a long time ago, God told one of his men to write about it. He wrote this in God's book,

6 'Bethlehem is a little town in Judea
country,
but it is a very important town,
because a big boss will be born there.
He will really look after God's people,
the Israel nation.' "*

That's what those Jewish leaders told Herod.

7 So Herod sent for those wise men to come and meet him, but he didn't tell anyone else about the meeting. He asked them, "When did you first see that star?" 8 So they told him when they first saw it.

Then he said to them, "Go to Bethlehem and look carefully for that boy. After you find him, come and tell me the place where he's living, so that I can go there too and show respect to him."

9-10 The wise men listened to Herod, then they started to go to Bethlehem. Then they saw that same star that they saw before, and they were very happy. That star moved through the sky, and they followed it until it stopped right above the house that Joseph and Mary were living in. 11 The wise men went into that house. They saw Jesus with his mother Mary, and they got down on their knees, to show him respect. Then they opened their bags and gave him some presents. They gave him some gold. And they gave him some powder called *frankincense*, to burn to make a good smell. And they gave

* **1:21** Luke 1:31 * **1:23** Isaiah 7:14; 8:8, 10 * **1:25** Luke 2:21 * **2:6** Micah 5:2



Those wise men gave Jesus presents

him some rubbing medicine called *myrrh*, that smells good, like perfume.

12 After that, the wise men had a dream. In that dream God told them not to go back to Herod, so they went back to their own country along a different road.

The big boss tried to kill Jesus

13 After those wise men went away, Joseph had a dream. He heard God's angel messenger say, "Herod will try to kill the boy, so get up and take Jesus and Mary to Egypt country, and stay there until I tell you to come back." 14 So Joseph got up right then, in the middle of the night, and he got Mary and Jesus, and they left to go to Egypt. 15 They lived in Egypt until Herod died, and then they came out of Egypt and went back to Israel country. So it happened just like God told one of his men to write in God's book, a long time ago. He wrote,

"God called his son to come out of
Egypt."*

16 At the time when Joseph, Mary and Jesus were going to Egypt, Herod waited for those wise men to come back, but they tricked him. They didn't come back to him. Then he got really angry. He remembered their story about when they first saw the star, so he sent his soldiers to Bethlehem, and he told them to kill all the little boys up to 2 years old. So they killed all the little boys around Bethlehem. Herod wanted to make sure that Jesus was dead.

17 That all happened the way God's man, Jeremiah, wrote in God's book, a long time ago. This is what he wrote,

18 "In the town called Ramah,
a lot of women are really sad, and they
are crying out loud.
They are the grand-daughters of
Rachel.
They are crying for their babies.
Nobody can cheer them up,
because their babies are dead."*

19 Some time later, Herod died. Then, in Egypt, Joseph had another dream. He heard God's angel messenger say, 20 "Get up and take Mary and Jesus back to Israel country. The people that wanted to kill him are dead now."

21 So Joseph did what God's angel messenger told him. He got up, and he got Mary and Jesus, and they started to go back to Israel country. 22 But then somebody told him that Herod's son Arkelayus was the new big boss over the part of Israel called Judea, and Joseph was too frightened to go there.

Then he had another dream. God told him, "Go to Galilee country." 23 So he took his family up north to Galilee. He got to the town called Nazareth, and he stayed there. A long time before that, one of God's men wrote about this, and it is in God's book. He wrote,

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* **2:15** Hosea 11:1 * **2:18** Genesis 35:16-19; Jeremiah 31:15

"People will say that God's special man
is from Nazareth."*
And that happened after Joseph took his family to live at Nazareth.

Chapter 3

John the Baptiser got the people ready

1 Many years later, while Jesus was still in Nazareth, John the Baptiser started his work. He went to the bush in Judea country, and he started to tell everybody his message. 2 He said, "Listen. God is going to show everyone how they can be in his family. So you have to stop doing bad things. You have to turn around and live God's way."*

3 John was the man that Isaiah wrote about, a long time ago. Isaiah was one of God's men, and God got him to write this in God's book,

"A man will be out in the bush,
and he will call out to people.
He will say, 'You mob get ready.
God is coming to this country,
so you have to get ready for him.
It is like when a big boss comes,
and you have to make a good road for
him.' "*

4 John wore rough clothes, made of camel's hair, and he wore a leather belt. He ate grasshoppers and bush honey.* 5 A lot of people went out to see John, and to listen to him. They went out from Jerusalem city, and from all of Judea country, and from all the country around the Jordan River. 6 And, after those people said they were sorry for the bad things they did, John took them through a special washing ceremony, that is, he baptised them in the Jordan River.

7 Some men came to that place to watch John baptise people. Some of them were from the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law, and some of them were from the mob called Sadducees. John saw them and said, "You mob are bad, and you are tricky. You are just like a mob of cheeky snakes. Did somebody tell you that God is really angry with you, so you want to do something to stop him from punishing you?* 8 If you really are sorry for the bad things you did, and if you are turning around properly to live God's way, show us. If we see you doing good things, then we will know it is true. 9 But don't just say to yourselves, 'We are in Abraham's family, so we'll be all right.' Listen, God can turn these stones here into Abraham's family.* 10 So you look out. God is going to punish you. He is like a man lifting up an axe to cut the roots of a tree. You are like trees that haven't got good fruit, so men chop them down and throw them into a fire. God will punish you like that. He will throw you into a fire."*

11 John kept on talking to the people. He said, "If you say you are sorry for the bad things you did, and if you turn to God, then I will baptise you with water. But somebody is coming soon, and he is more important than me. I'm not even good enough to carry his shoes. I'm just nothing. He will put the Holy Spirit in you, that is, he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire. 12 You know the way a farmer gets all the seeds from the plants he grows. He hits the seed heads with a stick and throws them in the air, so that the seeds fall off the plants. Then he gathers all the seeds and puts them in his shed. But he burns all the rest. It is rubbish, and he burns it in a fire. Well, God is like that farmer. He's got that stick in his hand right now. If you turn around and live God's way, he will look after you. But if you don't, he will throw you in the fire that never goes out."

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* **2:23** Mark 1:24; Luke 2:39; John 1:45 * **3:2** Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:15 * **3:3** Isaiah 40:3 * **3:4** 2 Kings 1:8
* **3:7** Matthew 12:34; 23:33 * **3:9** John 8:33 * **3:10** Matthew 7:19



This is how farmers got seeds to fall off plants

John baptised Jesus

13 At that time, Jesus left his home in Galilee country, and he went south to the Jordan River. Jesus wanted John to baptise him. 14 But John didn't agree with him. He said, "No. Don't come to me. I can't baptise you. You are better than me, so really, you have to baptise me."

15 But Jesus said, "We have to do it the way God wants. So now, while you are baptising people, you can baptise me too." Then John agreed with him.

16 So John baptised Jesus. And as Jesus came up out of the water, the sky opened up, and Jesus saw the spirit of God coming down like a pigeon, and landing on him. 17 And God talked from heaven. He said, "This is my son. I love him very much, and I'm very happy with him."*



John baptised Jesus

Chapter 4

The devil tried to trick Jesus

1 Then the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the bush, and the devil, the boss over the bad spirits, tested him there, trying to trick him.*
2 Jesus was there for 40 days, and he didn't eat anything, so he got very hungry.

3 At that time the devil came to him and said, "If you are the son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves of bread."

4 But Jesus told him, "No. I will not do that. You know what God says. These words are in his book,

> 'People don't live just by eating bread,
> but they live by every word that God says.' "*

5 Then the devil took Jesus to God's special city, called Jerusalem, and he took him up to the top of the big ceremony house there. 6 The devil said, "If you are the son of God, jump off. You know, these words are in God's book too,

> 'God will tell his angel messengers to look after you,
> and they will hold you up with their hands,
> so you will not even hurt your foot on a stone.' "*

7 Jesus said, "No. I will not do that. You see, God says this too. These words are in his book,

> 'Don't do something stupid just to test God.' "*

* **3:17** Genesis 22:2; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 12:18; 17:5; Luke 9:35 * **4:1** Hebrews 2:18; 4:15
* **4:4** Deuteronomy 8:3 * **4:6** Psalm 91:11-12 * **4:7** Deuteronomy 6:16

8 Then the devil took Jesus up to the top of
a very high mountain. From there the devil
showed him all the people of the world, in
all their countries, with all their great things.
9 And the devil said, "If you will get down on
your knees and show respect to me, then I
will give you all of this, all of these people
and all of these things."
10 Jesus said to the devil, "No. I will not do
that either. Satan, you go away from me now.
This is what God says in his book,

'You have to show respect to God.
He is the only God, so just do what he
says.' "*

11 Then the devil went away, and God's
angel messengers came and took care of
Jesus.

Jesus started his work

12 After that, Jesus heard that some soldiers
grabbed John and put him in jail. So Jesus
left Judea country and went back to Galilee
country.* 13 He went to the town called
Nazareth, and then he left that town and
went to live in the town called Capernium.
It was beside the big lake called Lake Galilee.
It was in the country where the Zebulun
tribe and the Naphtali tribe used to live.*
14 All that happened just like God says in his
book. Isaiah was a man that told everyone
God's words, and a long time ago, he wrote
this in God's book,

15 "It will happen in the country that
belongs to the Zebulun tribe and the
Naphtali tribe.
It is beside the sea, past the Jordan
River,
in Galilee country, where there are a
lot of people that are not Jews.
16 The people there don't know much
about God.
It is like they are in the dark,
but they will see a big bright light.
They thought they were going to die,
but a light will start to shine for
them."*

17 Then Jesus started to tell everybody,
"Listen. God is going to show everyone how
they can be in his family. So you have to stop
doing bad things. You have to turn around
and live God's way."*

The first followers of Jesus

18 One day, Jesus walked along next to Lake
Galilee, and he saw 2 men throwing a net
into the water to catch fish. That was their
job. One man was called Simon. He was
also called Peter. And the other man was
his brother Andrew.
19 Jesus said, "I want you 2 to come and
follow me. I want you to stop catching fish.
I'll give you another job. You will catch
people for me." 20 And straight away, they
left their nets and followed him.
21 Then Jesus kept walking along next to
the water, and he saw an old man called
Zebedee and his 2 sons, James and John.
They were getting their nets ready to catch
fish. Like before, Jesus called out to James
and John to stop their work and follow



Jesus told Peter and Andrew to follow him

* **4:10** Deuteronomy 6:13 * **4:12** Matthew 14:3; Mark 6:17; Luk 3:19-20 * **4:13** John 2:12 * **4:15-16** Isaiah 9:1-2
* **4:17** Matthew 3:2

him. 22 They got up straight away. They left their father, and the boat, and they followed Jesus.

A lot of people followed Jesus

23 After that, Jesus went through all of Galilee country. He taught people in the Jewish meeting houses, and he told them the good news about God's family. And he made a lot of sick people better. They had all sorts of sickness. * 24 Then people started to tell other people about Jesus, so that people as far away as Syria country heard about the things he did, and they all started to bring lots of sick people to Jesus. And Jesus made them all better, no matter what sort of sickness they had. Some of them used to fall down and shake a lot, and some of them couldn't move their arms or legs, and some of them had bad spirits in them. But Jesus made them all better.

25 A big mob of people followed him everywhere he went. These people were from Galilee country, and from the country called *Ten Towns*, and from Jerusalem city, and from all over Judea country, and from the country east of the Jordan River.

Chapter 5

If you do what God wants, you will be really happy later

1 Jesus saw big mobs of people coming to him. So he went up a big hill, and he sat down there to teach them. His followers, the people that wanted to learn about God, they all went close to him, to listen to him.
2 Then he started to teach them.

3 Jesus said, "Some people know that they need God very much. All right, God will take those people into his family, and they will be really happy.


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Big mobs of people came to Jesus

4 Some people are very sad now, and they cry, but God will make them feel better, and they will be really happy. *

5 Some people know that they are weak, and they don't try to be important. But later God will give them everything in the world, and they will be really happy.

6 Some people really want to live the right way, and they want other people to live the right way too. They think about that more than anything else, like they are really hungry and thirsty for it to happen. All right, God will give them what they want, and they will be really happy.

7 Some people feel sorry for other people, and they don't do payback for the bad things those other people did. All right, God will do the same. He will feel sorry for those people that feel sorry for other people. He will not do payback to them for the bad things they did, and they will be really happy.

* **4:23** Matthew 9:35; Mark 1:39 * **5:4** Isaiah 61:2

8 Some people never want to do bad things.
These people will see God, and they will be
really happy. *
9 Some people help other people to settle
down, stop arguing, and agree with each
other. God will tell those people, 'You are
my own kids.' And they will be really happy.
10 Some people do what is right, but some
other people don't like it, and they make
trouble for those good people. But God takes
those good people into his family, and they
will be really happy.
11 And you too. Some people will not like
you following me, and they will say bad
things about you, and they will make trouble
for you. Sometimes people will tell lies about
you. But don't worry. Be really happy when
they do that. * 12 You see, if they do these
bad things to you now, God will give you
lots of good things later, in heaven. So you
can be really happy, no matter what they
do. Remember the stories from a long time
ago, about the men that told everyone God's
message. Some people did bad things to
those men too." *

Christians are like salt

13 Jesus said, "You people that follow me are
like salt for everybody on the earth. You
know, salt helps food taste good and stops it
from rotting. Well, if you follow me properly,
you will live in a way that helps people to be
good. Yes, salt is good, but if it stops tasting
like salt, then it is no good any more. Nobody
can use it for anything. They chuck it away,
and everyone walks on it. So don't be like
that sort of salt. Don't stop following me."

Christians have to be like a light for people

14 And Jesus said, "You people that follow me
have to live the right way and show people
the way to God. It is like you are a light for
everybody in the world. You know, if people
build houses up on a hill, then everyone can
see them clearly. You are like those houses
on a hill. Everyone can see you clearly. They
can know if you are good, or if you are bad. *
15 Nobody ever lights a candle and then puts
a bowl over it. No way. They put that candle
up in a high place, so that its light shines
out everywhere. * 16 You have to be like that
candle. You have to let everyone see that you
are following me. They will see all the good
things you do, and they will say good things
about God, your father in heaven. They will
say, 'God is really great.' " *

The law and the messages in God's book are really important

17 Jesus kept on teaching them. He said,
"You know the law that Moses wrote. Well,
I didn't come here to take away that law.
And you know all the messages that God
gave to his men, the messages that they
wrote in his book for us. I didn't come here
to take away those messages either. But I
came here to show that the law and those
messages are right, and to make those things
happen, just like those men wrote. 18 Listen.
God's book is really important. Everything
in it will happen. You know, the earth and
sky are always here. They don't change. Well,
just like that, God's word and his laws will
not change, not even a little bit. They will
stay the same until everything in God's book
happens. * 19 So if you think to yourself, 'I can
break just one little rule,' and if you teach
other people to think like that too, then
later on, in God's family in heaven, nobody
will respect you. They will say, 'You are no
good.' But if you don't break any of God's
rules, and if you teach other people to follow

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* **5:8** Psalm 24:3-4 * **5:11** 1 Peter 4:14 * **5:12** 2 Chronicles 36:16; Acts 7:52 * **5:14** John 8:12; 9:5
* **5:15** Mark 4:21; Luke 8:16; 11:33 * **5:16** 1 Peter 2:12 * **5:18** Luke 16:17

them too, then later on, in God's family in heaven, everyone will respect you. And they will say, 'You are really good.' 20 I'm telling you this, if you don't do everything that God says, then you can't come into his family. You know that mob called Pharisees. They are really strong for our Jewish law. And you know the mob that teach our Jewish law. Well, you have to follow God's law better than all of that Pharisee mob and that law teacher mob."

Don't get angry

21 Jesus said, "You know, the teachers of God's law tell you what God told the people, a long time ago. They say, 'Don't murder anybody. If you murder somebody, then you have to go to court, and the judge will punish you.'* 22 But now I'm telling you this. Don't even get angry with anybody. That is bad too. If you are angry with somebody, God will be your judge, and he will punish you. Or if you call somebody bad names, you will end up in God's court. And if you get really angry with somebody, and if you tell them, 'You are a stupid fool,' God will judge you for that, and he can send you into the big fire called hell."

Fix up problems with other people

23 Jesus said to the people, "Suppose you go to give a gift to God, and you take it to God's ceremony house, but then you remember that somebody is upset with you about something. 24 You have to leave your gift there at God's house, and you have to go and find that other person straight away. You have to tell them that you are sorry, and you have to fix up that problem with them, so that you can both be friends again. After that, you can go back and give your gift to God.

25 If somebody blames you and says that you have done something wrong, and if they start to take you to court about it, then you have to talk to that person straight away, and fix up that problem. Both of you have to agree about what is right. Do that even while you are going along the road to the court. If you don't do that, then that person will blame you in the court, and the judge might agree with them and tell the police to grab you and put you in jail. 26 And you will stay in jail until you give that other person all the money that you owe them. That's for sure."

Don't even think about doing bad things

27 Jesus said, "You know, the teachers of God's law tell you this, 'Don't sleep with a woman that is not your wife, as if you are married to her.'* 28 But now I'm telling you this. If you look at a woman that is not your wife, and you think about sleeping with her, that is bad too. If you think about doing that, you are going wrong. Thinking about it is just as bad as doing it. 29 You see, if things in your life push you to go wrong, then you have to get rid of them, even if it is hard to do. Be careful about how you use your eyes. If you see something that gets you to go wrong, then stop looking. That might be hard to do, like you are pulling out your eye and throwing it away. But it is better to lose one eye here on the earth now, than to keep 2 eyes and go to the bad place called hell.* 30 And think about how you use your hand. If you do something with your hand that gets you to go wrong, then pull your hand away. That might be hard to do, like you are cutting off your hand and throwing it away. But it is better to lose one hand here on the earth now, than to keep 2 hands and go to hell."*

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* **5:21** Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17 * **5:27** Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18 * **5:29** Matthew 18:9; Mark 9:47
* **5:30** Matthew 18:8; Mark 9:43

Husbands and wives have to stay together

31 Then Jesus said, "And God's law says, 'If
a man wants to leave his wife, then he can
write a divorce letter and give it to her. Then
they aren't married any more.'* 32 But now
I'm telling you this, husbands and wives
have to stay married to each other. Only
if a man's wife sleeps with another man,
as if he is her husband, only then can her
husband divorce her. But if a wife never does
that, then her husband can't divorce her. If
he divorces her, he is forcing her to marry
another man and sleep with him, and that
is wrong. And the man that marries her is
doing wrong too."*

Don't use God's name to get people to believe you

33 Jesus said to the people, "You know,
sometimes people promise something to
somebody, and to get people to believe them,
they say, 'by God'. That shows that they want
God to punish them if they don't do it. And
the law teachers tell you that God said, 'If you
say, "by God", then you have to do what you
promised.'* 34 But now I'm telling you this. If
you promise something, don't say, 'by God', to
get people to believe you. And don't say, 'by
heaven', when you promise something. God is
the boss in heaven, so that is just like saying,
'by God'.* 35 And don't say, 'by the earth', when
you promise something. God controls the
earth too. And don't say, 'by Jerusalem', when
you promise something. Jerusalem is God's
special city. He is the big boss there.* 36 And
don't say, 'by my head', when you promise
something. You can't change the colour of
even one hair on your head, to turn it black or
turn it white. 37 Look, just say what is properly
true. When *yes* is the true answer, just say,
'Yes.' And when *no* is the true answer, just say,
'No.' The devil, the boss over the bad spirits,
he tries to get you to say more than that, but
don't do it. Don't say anything more to try to
get people to believe you."

Don't do payback

38 Jesus kept on talking to them. He said,
"You know, the teachers of God's law tell you
this, 'If somebody hits your eye and blinds
it, then this is the payback, you have to hit
one of that person's eyes and blind it.' And
the teachers of God's law say, 'If somebody
knocks out your tooth, then this is the
payback, you have to knock out one of that
person's teeth.' That's what they say.* 39 But
now I'm telling you this, don't do payback
at all. If somebody does something bad to
you, don't do payback to them. Somebody
might hit you on one side of your face. All
right, let them hit you on the other side of
your face too. 40 Or if somebody takes you
to court to get your shirt, all right, give that
person your shirt, and give them your coat
too. 41 Or a soldier might tell you, 'Carry my
bag for a kilometre.' All right, help him more
than that. Carry it for 2 kilometres. 42 Or if
somebody asks you for something, give it to
them. Or if they want to borrow something
from you, let them have it."

You have to love everyone

43 Jesus said, "You know, those teachers tell
you this, 'Love your friends and hate your
enemies.'* 44 But I'm telling you to do more
than that. You have to love your enemies
too. And if anyone makes trouble for you,
pray to God and ask him to be good to
them. 45 If you do that, you will be just like
your father in heaven. He gets the sun to

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* **5:31** Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Matthew 19:7; Mark 10:4 * **5:32** Matthew 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 * **5:33** Leviticus 19:12; Numbers 30:2; Deuteronomy 23:21 * **5:34** James 5:12; Isaiah 66:1; Matthew 23:22
* **5:35** Isaiah 66:1; Psalm 48:2 * **5:38** Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21 * **5:43** Leviticus 19:18

shine on everybody, bad people as well as good people. And he gets the rain to fall on everybody, good people and bad people too.
46 You see, if you only love the people that love you, that is nothing. Even bad people do that. God will not give you anything for only loving people that love you. 47 And if you only talk to your friends, that is nothing. Everybody talks to their friends, even people that don't believe in God do that. So if you only talk to your friends, you are no better than those people.
48 So this is what I say. You have to be properly good, just like your father in heaven is properly good."*

Chapter 6

Don't do things just to get people to think you are good

1 Jesus kept on teaching the people. He said, "If you only do good things so that people will see you and think you are good, God will not do good to you. Instead, you have to do good things and keep them secret. Then your father in heaven will do good things for you.*



Jesus said, "Don't be like people that just do good things so that other people will see them."

2 You know, there are some people that want everyone to think they are good, even though they are not good. So whenever they give something to help a poor person, they do it in front of the meeting house or on a busy street, so that people will see it and say that they are good. But listen, that is all those people will get. God will not give them anything good for doing that. Don't be like them. 3 Whenever you give something to help somebody, don't tell anyone else about it, not even your best friend. 4 Keep it a secret. You know, God, your father, always sees what you do in secret, and he will be properly good to you for doing that."

Pray the right way

5 Jesus said, "Don't pray like those people that want everyone to think they are good, even though they are not good. They like to stand up and pray in the meeting houses and on the busy street corners, so that lots of people can see them praying. They want to hear people say, 'That's a good person.' But listen, that is all those people will get. God will not give them anything good for doing that."*
6 And Jesus said, "I'll tell you the right way to pray. Go away from other people to a place where you can be alone, like go into a little room in your house and close the door. There you can pray to God, your father. He is in that secret place. And he sees what you do. He will listen to you, and he will be properly good to you for respecting him.
7 And when you pray, don't keep on talking on and on, with lots of words that don't mean anything. People that don't know God, they do that. They think that if they talk a lot, God will hear them. But they are wrong.
8 Don't be like them. God, your father, knows what you need already, even before you ask him.

* **5:48** Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 18:13 * **6:1** Matthew 23:5 * **6:5** Luke 18:10-14

9 So pray like this,
'God, our father, you live in heaven.
We want everyone to respect you.
10 We want you to be everyone's boss.
We want everyone in the world to do what you want,
just like everyone in heaven does what you want.
11 Please give us the food that we need each day.
12 Please don't punish us for the bad things that we did,
just like we don't do payback to the people that did bad things to us.
13 Don't let anything push us to do bad things.
And keep us safe from the devil, the boss over the bad spirits.' "
14 Then Jesus said, "If you don't do payback to other people for the bad things they do to you, God, your father in heaven, will not do payback to you for the bad things you do. 15 But if you do payback to other people, your father will do payback to you. He will punish you for the bad things you do."*

Don't stop eating just to get people to think you are good

16 Jesus kept on teaching the people. Some of those people used to stop eating for a while, so they can think about God and respect him. Jesus said, "Whenever you stop eating for a while, make sure you look the same as you always look. You know, there are some people that want everyone to think they are good, even though they are not good. Whenever they stop eating food to respect God, they want everyone to know what they are doing, so they let their faces get dirty, and they try to look sad. They want people to say, 'That's a good person.' But listen, that is all those people will get. God will not give them anything good for doing that. Don't be like them. 17 When you stop eating for God, just be normal and look the same as you always look. Wash your face and comb your hair. 18 Then nobody will know that you have stopped eating. But God your father knows. Nobody can see him, but he sees everything you do. He will see what you do in a secret way, and he will be properly good to you for it."

Keep your good things in heaven

19-20 Jesus said, "If you have a lot of money and other good things here in this world, don't try to keep them all for yourself. No. But give them away to people that need them. When you do that, it's like you give them to God, and he will keep them for you in heaven. You see, here in this world you might lose them. There are things here that might eat them, like grubs or white ants. Or your good things might go rusty. Or somebody might steal them. But nothing will eat them in heaven, and they will not go rusty in heaven, and nobody there will steal them.* 21 You see, you will always think about the place where you keep your money and your good things. If they are here in this world, you will only live for the things of this world. But if you give them to God in heaven, then you will live for God."

God can shine his light for you

22 Then Jesus told them this picture story. He said, "Your eyes are like lights for your body. They show you where to go. If you always want to look at good things, then you will think about good things, and you will live God's way. It will be like God is shining his light for you, to help you live his way. 23 But if you always want to look at bad things, then you will think about bad

* **6:14-15** Mark 11:25-26 * **6:19-20** James 5:2-3

things, and you will be spiritually blind, and you will not live God's way. It will be like you are living in the dark. And if you are spiritually blind, with no light from God, it will be really bad for you."

You can't work for both God and money

24 And Jesus told them another picture story. He said, "You can't work for 2 bosses at the same time. If you try to do that, then you will only like one boss, and you will always work properly for him. But you will not like the other boss, and you will never work properly for him. You see, you can't have God as your boss, and money as your boss, both at the same time."

Trust God, and don't worry about the things you need

25 Jesus said, "So I'm telling you, even though you need some things to stay alive, don't worry about them. Don't worry about what you will eat or drink. Don't worry about the clothes you will wear. Your life is more important than food, and your body is more important than clothes. 26 Think about the birds. They don't put seeds into the ground to grow a garden, to get their food from it. And they don't build sheds to keep their food in. But God, your father, gives them food anyway. And you are much more special to God than birds, so you can trust him to give you the food you need.

27 And don't worry about how long you will live, or when you will die. No matter how much you worry about it, you will not live any longer, not even one day longer.

28-29 And don't worry about your clothes. Listen. You know the story about Solomon. He was a very rich man, and he lived a long time ago. He wore very pretty clothes. Well, think about the wild flowers in the bush. They don't work hard to get clothes for themselves. But those wild flowers are more pretty than Solomon's clothes. * 30 You see, we might think the grass and the wild flowers are rubbish, and anybody might burn them up at any time. But God makes them very pretty anyway. So God will give you the clothes you need. You have to trust God properly, and he will take care of you.

31 So don't keep on asking yourself, 'Where will I get my food? And where will I get my drink? And where will I get clothes to wear?' 32 Listen, God is your father in heaven, and he knows that you need these things. People that don't know God are always worrying about those things, but you shouldn't worry about them. 33 Think, instead, about the things that are good for God's family, and try to do the good things that God wants you to do. Then God will give you all those other things that you need. 34 So don't worry about how to get what you will need tomorrow. Each day has enough problems of its own. When tomorrow comes, then you can think about those things."

Chapter 7

Don't tell other people they are bad

1 Jesus said to the people, "Don't say to anybody, 'You are bad,' and then God will not say to you, 'You are bad.' 2 God will judge you the same way as you judge other people. If you are easy on other people, God will be easy on you. But if you are hard on other people, God will be hard on you. *

3-5 You shouldn't always try to tell other people they are doing bad things. First, you have to think about all the bad things that you do, and you have to stop doing those bad things. Then maybe you can help other people to stop doing bad things too.

* **6:28-29** 1 Kings 10:4-7; 2 Chronicles 9:3-6 * **7:2** Mark 4:24

Maybe you are doing lots of bad things, and your friend is just doing one little bad thing. If you are still doing lots of bad things, you can't help them stop doing that little bad thing. It's like this. All those bad things you do are making you blind, like you have a big bit of wood in your eye. And maybe your friend is just doing one little thing wrong, like they just have a little splinter of wood in their eye. You have to take that big bit of wood out of your eye, so that you can see properly, then maybe you can help your friend get that little splinter out of their eye."

6 Jesus kept on talking to them. He said, "There are some things that belong to God. Don't give those things to people that don't like God. Those people are like dogs. If you give them God's things, they will rubbish them, and then they will turn around and bite you, just like dogs. And some of God's things are really special. Don't give them to people that don't know that those things are special. They will rubbish those things. They will be just like pigs that don't know good things. They will walk on them and push them into the mud."

Keep asking God, and he will give you what you need

7 Jesus kept on teaching the people. He said, "Whenever you need something, you have to keep asking God for it, and he will give it to you. Keep looking for whatever you need, and God will let you find it. Maybe something will block you, so you can't get what you need, like there is a door that is shut and you can't get through it. Well, then keep on knocking at that door, and God will open it for you. 8 Everyone that asks God for something will get it. Everyone that looks for something will find it. God will open the door for everyone that knocks on it.

9 It's like this. If your son asks you for some bread, will you give him a stone? No way. 10 Or if your son asks you for a fish, will you give him a cheeky snake? No way. 11 You see, you might be bad, but you give good things to your kids. Well, your father in heaven is a lot better than you. He is always good, so he will always give good things to people that ask him."

This is what God's law is all about

12 Jesus said, "You know the way you want other people to treat you. Well, you have to treat other people that same way. You have to live like that all the time. That is a short way of saying the message that is in God's book. It is what God's law is all about, and it is what God got his men to write about in his book. You have to always treat other people the same way that you want people to treat you."*

You have to follow the right track

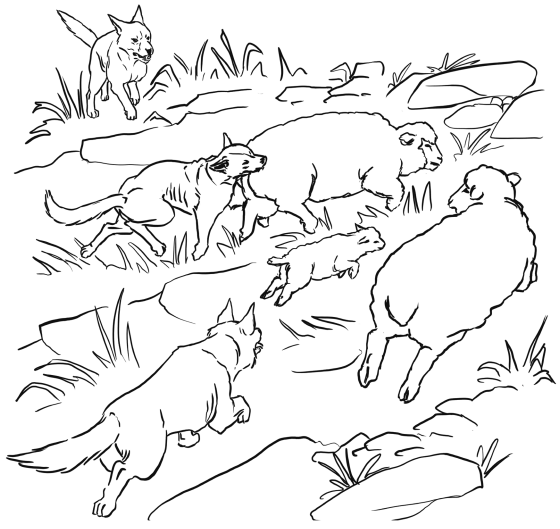
13-14 Then Jesus told them this picture story about how to live. He said, "It is like there are 2 tracks in life, and each track has its own gate. One gate is big and wide, but the other gate is a narrow little gate. It is hard to get through that little gate, and only a few people get through it. Listen, you have to go through that little gate. If you want to live with God for ever, you have to pick that little gate and go through it, and you have to follow its track. Its track is a narrow little track, and it is hard to walk on. But if you go that way, you will live with God for ever. The other gate is wide and easy to go through, and its track is wide and easy to walk on. A lot of people go that way. They go through that wide gate and walk along that easy track. But that track goes to the wrong place, and God will finish up those people."

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* **7:12** Luke 6:31

Be careful of people that say they have a message from God

15 Then Jesus told them, "Always be careful. Don't believe everybody. There are some people that reckon they are telling you a message from God, but they are liars. They try to get you to think they are like sheep, like they are soft and will not give you any trouble. But really, they are like wild dingoes. They will give you trouble, like dingoes hurt sheep. If you believe their words, then you will get lots of trouble. 16 If you look at the things these people do, you can find out if they are talking true words, or if they are liars."



Some people will give you trouble, like wild dingoes hurt sheep

Then Jesus told a picture story. He said, "Think about the trees that give us fruit to eat. We can't get good fruit from rubbish trees. We can't get grapes from rubbish plants. 17 Good fruit grows on a good tree. Rubbish fruit grows on a rubbish tree. 18 A good tree can't make bad fruit. A bad tree can't make good fruit. 19 If a farmer has a tree that only makes rubbish fruit, he will cut down that tree and burn it in a fire.* 20 So, to find out if a person is good or bad, look at what they do. A good person does good things. And a bad person does bad things."*

God will only have the people that do what he wants

21 And Jesus said, "Lots of people call me, 'My leader and my boss,' but some of them will never be in God's family. God will only have people that do what he wants them to do. God will have those people in his family, but not the other people. God is my father in heaven. 22 One day, God will get me to judge everybody, and some people will say to me, 'You are my leader and my boss. We used your power to tell people your messages, and to force bad spirits out of people, and to do a lot of other great things.' 23 Then I will tell them, 'I don't know you mob. You are bad. You don't do what God wants. So get away from me.' "*

Be wise and do what Jesus says

24 Then Jesus told them 2 more picture stories. He said, "If you listen to my message, and if you do what I say, you are like a wise man that built his house on hard rock. 25 Then a lot of rain came and made big flood waters that flowed along really fast, and that water hit that house, and strong winds blew hard against that house. But that house didn't fall down. He built it on hard rock, so it stayed strong. You see, if you do what I say, you will be like the wise man in that picture story.

26 But if you hear my message and you don't do what I say, you are like a stupid man that built his house on soft sand. 27 Then a lot of rain came and made big flood waters that flowed along really fast, and that water hit

* **7:19** Matthew 3:10; Luke 3:9 * **7:20** Matthew 12:33 * **7:23** Psalm 6:8

that house, and strong winds blew hard against that house. Then that house fell down, and it broke up into little bits. You see, if you don't do what I say, you will be like the stupid man in that picture story."

28 Then Jesus finished talking to that big mob of people. They were really surprised as they listened to what he told them. 29 You see, they knew he told them God's word properly. He knew what he was talking about. Their law teachers never talked like that. *

Chapter 8

(We have not yet translated 8:1-4. You can read that story in Mark 1:40-44.)

A Roman army boss trusted Jesus properly

5 Jesus went to a town called Capernium. There was a Roman army boss there. He was the boss over 100 soldiers. He went to Jesus and strongly asked him for help. 6 He said, "Sir, my young work-man is lying in bed at home. He can't move, and he is hurting a lot."

7 Jesus said, "I will go with you and make him better."

8 But the army boss said to Jesus, "Sir, I'm not good enough for you, so it will not be right for you to go into my house. But you can make him better from right here. You can tell that sickness to stop, and leave my work-man, and then he will get better straight away. 9 I know it will happen. You see, I know about bosses. I have a boss over me, and I'm the boss over a lot of soldiers. If I tell a soldier to go somewhere, he goes there. And if I tell one of them to come to me, he comes to me. And if I tell my work-men to do something, they do it. Well, I believe that you are a powerful boss. If you just tell that sickness to go, then my work-man will get better straight away."

10 Jesus heard what that Roman army boss said, and he was very surprised. He said to the people that were following him, "Listen. This man is not one of you Israel mob, but he trusts me more than any of you Israel people."

11 Then Jesus told them about something that will happen one day. He said, "Listen. You know that God picked you Israel mob to be his special people. But one day, a lot of other people will come from everywhere in the world, and they will join God's family in heaven. God will put on a big dinner there for his family, and these other people will sit down and eat it with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. They are your grand-fathers that lived a long time ago. * 12 But a lot of Israel people will not eat any of it. God will grab them and chuck them out. They will be very upset and angry. They will cry a lot, and they will be so angry that they will bite their teeth together." *

13 Then Jesus said to the army boss, "You can go back home now. You are trusting me to make your work-man better, so I am doing it." And right then, at that same time, that army boss's work-man got better.

(We have not yet translated 8:14-17. You can read that story in Mark 1:29-34.)

If we follow Jesus, it might be hard for us

18 At another time Jesus saw a big mob of people coming around him, so he told his followers to take him in a boat to the other side of the lake.

19 After they got there, a Jewish law teacher went to Jesus and said, "Teacher, I want to be one of your followers. I will go everywhere with you."

20 Jesus said to him, "Wild dogs have places where they can sleep, and wild birds have nests they can sleep in. But I haven't got a

* **7:28-29** Mark 1:22; Luke 4:32 * **8:11** Luke 13:29 * **8:12** Matthew 22:13; 25:30; Luke 13:28

home to lie down and sleep in, even though I'm God's special man from heaven."

21 There was another man that was already a follower of Jesus. He said to Jesus, "Sir, I will come with you. But my father has died, so let me go home to bury him. After that, I will come with you."

22 Jesus said to him, "No. You come and follow me now. You see, some people are spiritually dead, so they can bury the dead bodies of their own people. But you come and follow me."

(We have not yet translated 8:23—9:26. You can read those stories in Mark 2:1-22; 4:35-41; 5:1-43.)

Chapter 9

Jesus made 2 blind men see again

27 Jesus was walking along, and 2 blind men followed him. They kept on shouting to him, "You belong to David's family, and you are the special man that God promised to send. Please, feel sorry for us, and help us."

28 Jesus went into a house, and the blind men went to him. He asked them, "Do you believe that I can make your eyes good, so you will see again?"

The men said, "Yes, sir, we believe that you can do that."

29 Then Jesus touched the men's eyes and said, "You believed in me, so you will see again." 30 Then straight away, those men could see again.

Jesus told them strongly, "Don't tell anybody about this." 31 But they went away and told everybody in that country that Jesus made their eyes better.

Jesus forced the bad spirit out of a man that couldn't talk

32 Jesus and his followers started to walk along the road away from that place. Then some people brought a man to Jesus that had a bad spirit living inside him, so he couldn't talk. 33 Jesus said to that bad spirit, "Get out of this man." Then the bad spirit went out of that man, and he started to talk.

Everybody there was very surprised. They said, "Nothing like that ever happened before in our country, called Israel."

(We have not yet translated 9:34-36. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 1:14-15; 1:39; 3:22; 6:34.)

Jesus needs workers

37 Jesus said to his followers, "Lots of people need to hear about me. They are ready to listen, but nobody is telling them. They are like a big crop of food plants on a farm that are ready for the workers to get their seeds for food. But there are only a few workers. The farmer needs a lot of workers to bring all those seeds into the shed, and in the same way I need a lot of workers to tell people about me, and bring them to God. 38 So you have to ask God to send more workers out to tell everyone about me, just like the farmer has to ask for more workers for his crop."*



Farmers needed lots of workers to get the seed food

* **9:37-38** Luke 10:2

Chapter 10

(We have not yet translated 10:1-23. You can read those stories and most of those messages in Mark 3:13-19; 6:7-13; 13:9-13.)

Don't be frightened of people that will hurt you because you follow Jesus

24-25 Jesus told his followers, "You know about students and teachers. The teacher is more important than any of the students. The students have to learn to be like their teacher. And I am your teacher, so you have to learn to be like me. *

And you know about workers and their boss. The boss is more important than any of the workers. The workers have to learn to be like their boss. And I am your boss, so you have to learn to be like me.

People will treat you the same way as they treat me. I am your leader, and they lie about me. They call me the boss over the bad spirits. And you are my followers, so they will say bad things about you too, more than they say about me. 26 But don't be frightened of them. You see, people might do things secretly now, but later God will let everyone know what they do. People hide things now, but later God will show them to everybody. *

27 And think about the message I tell you now. Sometimes I tell you something when nobody else is here. I might even just say it quietly in your ear. But later on, I want you to tell my message to everyone in the world. If you can, get up on a high place, and shout my words out loud, for lots of people to hear.

28 Don't be frightened of those people that can only kill your body. They can't kill your soul. But you have to listen to God. If you don't do what he says, you have to be frightened. He can finish up your body, and then he can also finish up your soul too, in that bad place called hell.

29 Think about those little birds called sparrows. They don't cost very much. You can buy them for a few dollars. But God remembers each one of them anyway. And if one of them falls down to the ground, God knows about it. 30-31 Well, you are more important to God than a big mob of those birds, so don't be frightened. He knows you properly. He even knows how many hairs you have on your head. So he will only let things happen to you that will be good for you."

Follow Jesus properly

32 Jesus said, "If you tell everyone that you are one of my followers, I will tell God, my father in heaven, that you are one of my followers. 33 But if you tell everyone that you are not one of my followers, I will tell God, my father in heaven, that I don't know you, and I will tell him that you are not one of my followers. *

34 Don't think that I came into the world to get everyone to agree with each other. No. People will not agree about me, and some people will fight the people that they don't agree with. It will be like this,

35-36 Maybe your own family will not want
me, and they will turn against you
and be your enemies.
A man will be the enemy of his father.
A daughter will be the enemy of her
mother.
A woman will be the enemy of her
mother-in-law. *

37 You see, you have to love me more than you love your own father and mother. Then it is all right for you to be my follower.

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* **10:24-25** Matthew 9:34; 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 6:40; 11:15; John 13:16; 15:20 * **10:26** Mark 4:22; Luke 8:17
* **10:33** 2 Timothy 2:12 * **10:35-36** Micah 7:6

And you have to love me more than you love your own son or daughter. Then it is all right for you to be my follower. If you don't love me like that, you are not the right person to be my follower. 38 If you want to follow me properly, you have to stop thinking only about yourself. You have to live like me. You have to be ready to die, yes, to die like a criminal on a cross, just like me.* 39 If you only want to look after your own life here on earth, you will lose it. You will not live with me for ever. But if you are ready to give up your life here, then you will find real life, and you will live with me for ever."*

(We have not yet translated 10:40-42. You can read some of those messages in Mark 8:34-35; 9:37, 41.)

Chapter 11

Jesus talked about John the Baptiser

1 Jesus finished talking to his 12 special workers, then he went around the towns in Galilee country. He talked to people and taught them more about God.

2 At that time, John the Baptiser was in jail. But people told him about all the things that Jesus was doing. So John sent some of his own followers to ask Jesus some questions. 3 They went to Jesus and said to him, "John the Baptiser has sent us to you. He wants us to ask you, 'Are you the special man that God has sent to us? Or do we have to start looking around for somebody else?' "

4 Jesus said, "Go back and tell John what you see here. 5 Some people were blind, but now they can see. Some people were crippled, but now they can walk. Some people had a bad skin sickness, but now their skin is good again. Some people were deaf, but now they can hear. Some people were dead, but now they are alive again. And tell John that you heard us telling the good news to poor people.* 6 Maybe I'm not the sort of person you thought God would send, but just trust me anyway, and God will make you happy."

7 Then the followers of John went away, and Jesus started to talk to all the people. He talked to them about John. He said, "You know, you went out into the bush to see John. What sort of man did you think you would see? You didn't go out there to see a man that is weak, like grass that goes any way the wind pushes it. 8 And you didn't go out there to see a man wearing pretty clothes. No, men that wear pretty clothes live in the town, in good big houses. 9 Did you go out there to see a man that tells people God's messages? Yes, John the Baptiser told you God's message, and he did something even more important than that. 10 You see, a long time ago, God got one of his men to write about somebody that will get everything ready. God's man wrote about John the Baptiser. We can read it in God's book. This is what it says,

> 'God will send a man to get everything ready for God's special person.
> That man will talk about God's special person, and he will make a way for people to listen to him.' "*

11 Then Jesus said, "Listen. John the Baptiser is a very important man. He is greater than any other man that ever lived. But everyone in God's family is more important than John the Baptiser. 12 You know, John started to teach some time ago, and from that time until now, God's family has been getting bigger. There are people that really want to be friends with God, and they have been trying hard to get into his family. 13 You see, before John

* **10:38** Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23 * **10:39** Matthew 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33; John 12:25
* **11:5** Isaiah 35:5-6; 61:1 * **11:10** Malachi 3:1

came, God told his words and his laws to his men, and they wrote them in God's book. And you know, that was a long time ago, but they wrote about the things that will happen now, at this time.* 14 Look. Try to believe this. They wrote about John, but they didn't use that name for him. They called him *Elijah*."*

15 And Jesus said, "You've got ears, so you have to listen to me properly, and take notice of my words."

16 Then Jesus said, "Now I'll talk about you people that are alive today and I'll tell you what you are like. You are like kids that are playing in the street. Some kids say to the other kids, 17 'We played happy music for you, but you didn't dance. So we sang a sad song, but you didn't cry. No matter what we do, you say we are wrong.' 18 Those kids are a picture of you mob. You are just like those kids. You rubbish God's people no matter what they do. You see, John the Baptiser didn't go to parties and eat lots of good food, and he didn't drink wine. But you rubbished him and said, 'He's got a bad spirit living inside him.' 19 But sometimes I go to parties and eat good food, and sometimes I drink wine, and even though I'm God's special man from heaven, you rubbish me too. You say, 'He eats too much, and he drinks too much. He's a friend of those bad men that get tax money from people and give it to the Roman government, and he's a friend of other bad people that don't follow the law properly.' But really, John and me, we are both wise. And you can know if somebody is wise or not. Just look at what they do, and see if they do good things or not."

(We have not yet translated 11:20-24. You can read that message in Luke 10:13-15.)

God shows things to people that know they are not smart

25 At that time, Jesus prayed to God. He said, "Father, you are the biggest boss. You are the boss over everything in the sky and everything on the earth. There are some people here that reckon they are smart, and they reckon they understand everything. And there are other people that are just like little kids. They know that they are not smart. Thank you for showing what your message means to those people that are like kids. And thank you for not showing it to those people that reckon they are smart. 26 Yes, Father, that is how you wanted to do it."

27 Then Jesus told the people, "God, my father, gave me everything, so I can teach people all about him. You see, I am God's son, and my father knows me properly. Nobody else knows me properly. And I know my father properly. I pick some people, and I show them what my father is like, but nobody else knows God properly."*

Jesus is good to his workers

28 Then Jesus said to the people, "Come to me, all of you mob that are tired. You did a lot of ceremony things to get God to save you, but that is not the right way. It's like you worked hard, and you carried a lot of heavy things, and then you got too tired. Look, instead of that, just come and work for me, and I will let you rest really good. 29 Be my follower and work for me. Listen to the things I teach you, and you will feel good inside yourselves, like your spirit is resting. You see, I am not a big tough boss. I will be easy on you.* 30 I will never ask you to do things that are too hard for you."

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* **11:12-13** Luke 16:16 * **11:14** Malachi 4:5; Matthew 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13 * **11:27** John 3:35; 1:18; 10:15
* **11:29** Jeremiah 6:16

Chapter 12

(We have not yet translated 12:1-15a. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 2:23—3:6.)

One of God's men wrote about Jesus

15 Big mobs of people followed Jesus. Some
of them were sick, and he made them
better. 16 But he told them straight, "Don't
go and tell other people about me." 17 A long
time ago, God got his man called Isaiah to
write about this, and it is in God's book. It
happened just like Isaiah said. This is what
he wrote,

18 "This is the man that God picked to
work for himself.
God loves him, and he makes God very
happy.
God will put his spirit in him,
and he will tell the people in other
nations that God is right and fair.
19 He will not fight with anyone or shout
at people.
Nobody will hear him shouting in the
streets.
20 Some people are weak, like a bit of
grass that is almost broken,
and some people can't help themselves,
like a candle wick that has almost
gone out.
He will not forget those people, but he
will help them to get strong.
He will keep on being right and fair to
everyone,
until people are fair to each other too.
21 And people everywhere will believe
that he can save them."*

(We have not yet translated 12:22-37. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 3:20-30 and Luke 6:43-45.)

The Pharisee mob asked Jesus to do something powerful

38 One day, some Jewish law teachers, and
some of the Pharisee mob, that were strong
for the Jewish law, they went to Jesus
and said, "Teacher, we want to see you do
something powerful. That will show us that
God sent you."*

39 Jesus said, "You mob that are alive today
are really bad. You turned away from God.
But now you want me to show you something
powerful, right? No. I will not do that. The
only powerful thing you will see is the same
thing that God did to Jonah. He was one of
God's men.* 40 Think about that story from
a long time ago. A big fish swallowed Jonah,
and he stayed inside that fish for 3 days. And
just like that, I will stay in the ground for 3
days. I am God's special man from heaven.*

41 Jonah went to the people that lived in the
city called Nineveh, and he told them God's
message. Those people listened to him, and
they stopped doing bad things and turned
to God. Well, later, on the day when God
will judge everyone, that Nineveh mob will
get up and tell you mob here that you are
wrong. You see, that Nineveh mob listened
to Jonah. And I am greater than Jonah, but
you mob don't listen properly to me. You
don't turn to God, and you don't stop doing
bad things.*

42 And think about the story about the
woman from Sheba. She was the big boss
over that country. One day, she heard about
Solomon. He was the big boss over our
country. She heard that he was a very wise
man, so she came here to listen to the good
things he said. Well, later, on the day when
God will judge everyone, that woman will
get up and tell you mob here that you are
stupid. You see, she came a long way from

* **12:18-21** Isaiah 42:1-4 * **12:38** Matthew 16:1; Luke 11:16 * **12:39** Matthew 16:4 * **12:40** Jonah 1:17
* **12:41** Jonah 3:5

her country just to listen to Solomon. And I am more wise than Solomon, but you mob don't want to listen to me."*

Bad spirits come back

43 And Jesus said, "When a bad spirit goes out of a person, it goes around in dry country looking for a new place to live. But it doesn't find a good place. 44 So it says to itself, 'I will go back to the place where I lived before.' Then it goes back to that person, and it finds the place is good, empty, and clean. 45 Then the bad spirit goes out and gets 7 other bad spirits that are worse than itself. And they all go into the person, and they live there. Then that person has more bad spirits than before, so that person is worse than before. Listen, I'm talking about you mob here today. You don't listen to me, so you are worse now than you were before I came."

(We have not yet translated 12:46—13:23. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 3:31-35; 4:1-20.)

Chapter 13

Jesus told a story about some rubbish plants

24 Then Jesus told the people another picture story. He said, "This story shows you something about God's family.

A farmer planted some good food seeds in his garden. 25 But there was a bad man that didn't like that farmer. One night, when everyone was asleep, that bad man went to the farmer's garden and planted some rubbish plant seeds in it, beside the good seeds. Then that bad man went away.

26 The good seeds grew into good plants, but at the same time the rubbish plants started to grow there too. Those rubbish plants look like the good plants when they



This picture shows 6 good seed plants and 4 rubbish plants growing together

are young, but when they get big we can't eat their seeds. They are too cheeky.

27 So the farmer's workers went to him and said, 'Boss, you planted good food seeds in that ground. How come a lot of rubbish plants are growing there too?'

28 The farmer said, 'I reckon there is a bad man that doesn't like me, and he planted those rubbish plants.'

The workers said, 'Do you want us to go and pull up those rubbish plants?'

29 The farmer said, 'No, don't do that. Those plants are all mixed together, so if you pull up the rubbish plants, then you will pull up some of the good food plants with them. 30 No. Just let them all grow up, the good plants and the rubbish plants together. Later, when the right time comes, I will get some men to get the good seed food. But I will talk to them before they do that job. I will tell them to cut down the rubbish plants first, and take them away, and burn them. After that, they will get all the good seed food and bring it into my shed.' "

(We have not yet translated 13:31-35. You can read some of those stories and messages in Mark 4:30-32.)

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* **12:42** 1 Kings 10:1-10; 2 Chronicles 9:1-12

Jesus told his followers what the story about the rubbish plants means

36 Then Jesus went into a house, away from all the people. And his followers went to him and said, "Please tell us what that story means, that picture story about the rubbish plants and the garden."

37 Jesus said to them, "I'm God's special man from heaven, and I'm like the farmer in that story. I'm like the man that planted good food seeds in a garden. 38 That garden is like the world. The good food seeds are like the people that belong to God. The rubbish plant seeds are like the people that belong to the devil, the boss over the bad spirits. 39 The bad man that planted those rubbish seeds in the garden is like the devil. The time to get all the good seed food is like the time for the end of the world. The workers that cut down the plants are like God's angel messengers.

40 And in the story the workers cut down the rubbish plants and burned them in the fire. That is a picture of what will happen at the end of the world. 41 You see, I'm God's special man from heaven, and at the end of the world, I will send out God's angel messengers. They will get the people that belong to the devil. They will get all the people that don't belong in God's family. Those people are the ones that break God's law, and they make other people do bad things. 42 The angels will chuck all those bad people into a big fire. Those people will cry, and they will be so angry that they will bite their teeth together. 43 But at that time God will show everyone that the good people are really great. It will be like they are shiny, like the sun. And they will be in the family of God, their father."

Then Jesus said, "You've got ears, so you have to listen to me properly, and take notice of my words."

Jesus told 2 stories to show us that God's family is very good

44 Jesus told his followers another picture story. He said, "This story shows you more about God's family.

A man buried a lot of gold in the ground, to hide it. Some time later, another man found that gold, but he didn't own the land, so he couldn't get it for himself. So he buried it again. Then he went away, and he sold everything that he owned, to get some money. Then he bought that land. After that, he got all that gold for himself, and he was really happy. Well, if you find out how to get into God's family, it is like you find a lot of gold."



A man found a lot of gold

45 Jesus talked some more. He said, "This is another picture story that shows you about God's family. There was a man that used to buy things, and then take them to another place and sell them again at a higher price. That was his job. One day, he was looking for beautiful pearls to buy. 46 He found a really good and beautiful pearl, but its price was very high. So he sold everything that he owned, to get enough money for it. Then he bought that very good pearl. Well, if you

find out how to get into God's family, it is like you find a very good pearl."



A man found a really good pearl

Jesus told a story about a fishing net, to show more about God's family

47 Then Jesus said, "This is another picture story that shows you about God's family. Some fishermen threw their fishing net into the water and caught a lot of fish in it. There were all sorts of fish in that net. 48 Then they dragged it up on to the land, and sat down, and sorted out the fish. They put the good fish into baskets to keep them, and they chucked the bad fish away. 49-50 That's what it will be like when God will finish up this world. His angel workers will come and sort everybody out. They will save good people, and they will chuck the bad people into a big fire. Those people will cry a lot, and they will be so angry that they will bite their teeth together."



Fishermen sorted out their fish

Teachers in God's family use both new and old messages from God

51 Then Jesus asked his followers, "Do you understand all these things?"

They said, "Yes, we do."

52 Then Jesus said, "Every teacher of our Jewish law that joins God's family will teach new messages from God as well as old messages. Every teacher of God's word is like a man that owns a big house. That man has a store-room in that house, where he keeps his very special things. Sometimes he brings those things out to show to his friends. He shows them new things, as well as old things."

(We have not yet translated 13:53—17:23. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 6:1—9:32.)

Chapter 17

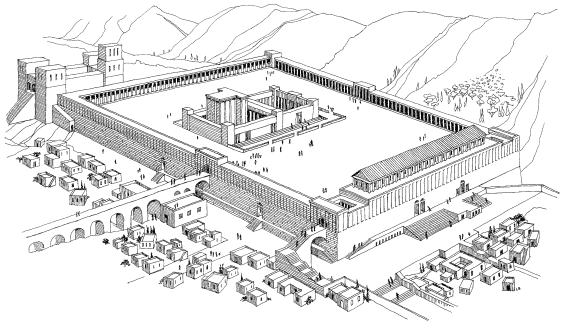
Jesus paid tax money for God's ceremony house

24 Jesus and his followers went and stayed in the town called Capernium. There were some men that worked in God's ceremony house. Every year, all the Jewish people had to pay tax money to those men. They used that money to look after God's ceremony house. Those men went to Peter and asked him, "Is your teacher going to pay the tax money for God's ceremony house?"*

25 Peter said, "Yes."

Then Peter went into the house where they were staying, to talk to Jesus about it. But Jesus talked first. He said, "Peter, think

* **17:24** Exodus 30:13; 38:26



God's ceremony house looked like this

about the big bosses in this world. They take money from people, but what do you reckon? Do they take it from their own mob, or do they take it from other people?"

26 Peter said, "They take money from other people, not from their own mob."

Then Jesus said, "All right, that means their own families don't have to pay anything. And we are God's family, so we don't have to pay money for God's house. 27 But we don't want to make those tax men angry. So get a fishing line, and go down to the lake, and throw in the line to catch a fish. Get the first fish that you catch, open its mouth, and you will find a gold coin inside it. Take that coin, and give it to those tax men. It will be enough money for both my tax and your tax."

Chapter 18

(We have not yet translated 18:1-14. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 9:34-47; Luke 15:3-7; 17:1-2.)

What if a Christian does something wrong to you?

15 Jesus told his followers, "If another one of my followers does something wrong to you, then you have to go to them and talk about it. Just the 2 of you can talk about it together, while you are alone. If they listen to you, and if they agree with you, then you can call them your friend again. *

16 But if they don't want to listen to you, then take one or 2 other people with you, and go to that person. These other people will hear you talk about the wrong things that person did, and they will hear what that person says, and they will find out what is true. * 17 If that person will not listen to all of you, then go to the church, and tell the people in the church what happened. Let them sort it out and talk to that person. If that person doesn't want to listen to them, then you can treat them like somebody that doesn't follow me. They are like somebody that doesn't know God, or like somebody that doesn't do what God says."

18 Then Jesus told his followers, "Listen. You are the people that will know what God wants. If you all agree that something here on this earth is wrong, it will be something that God in heaven already said is wrong. And if you all agree that something here on this earth is all right, it will be something that God in heaven already said is all right. *

19 I'm telling you this again. If you agree together about something, even if it is only 2 of you, and then you ask my father in heaven to do that thing, then he will do it for you. 20 You see, if you get together to respect me, I will be right there with you, even if it is only 2 or 3 of you at that time."

The story about the work-man that was hard on another man

21 Then Peter went up to Jesus and said, "Teacher, if somebody is always doing wrong things to me, how many times do I have to forget it and not do payback to that person? If I forget it 7 times, is that enough? Then if they do another wrong thing, I can do payback, right?"

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* **18:15** Luke 17:3 * **18:16** Deuteronomy 19:15 * **18:18** Matthew 16:19; John 20:23

22 Jesus said, "No, not 7 times, but I say
lots of times, like 77 times."*
23-24 Then Jesus told them a story. He said,
"I will tell you a picture story to show you
what it's like in God's family. There was a big
boss that loaned some money to his workers.
After a while he wanted them to give it back.
So he started to check up on them, and he
got his soldiers to bring those workers to him.
They brought a work-man that borrowed a
real lot of money, like millions of dollars,
and the boss said, 'Give me that money now.'
25 The work-man said, 'No, not yet. I haven't
got any money right now.' The big boss was
angry. He wanted to get some money back,
so he told his soldiers, 'Grab this man, and
his wife, and his kids, and all his things,
and sell them to another man. He will make
them work for no pay.'
26 Then the work-man got down on his
knees in front of the big boss and said to
him, 'Please, please give me more time, then
I will give you back all your money.'
27 Then the big boss felt sorry for his
work-man, and he changed his mind, and
he said, 'All right, you don't have to give
that money back to me. I'll forget it. You
can go free now.'
28 But after that, his work-man went away,
and he met another man. Before this time,
that other man borrowed a little bit of money
from the work-man, just 100 dollars. So the
work-man grabbed that other man's neck
and said, 'Give me back that money right
now. It's my money.'
29 That other man went down on his knees
and said, 'Please, please give me more time.
Then I will give you back your money.'
30 But the work-man said, 'No way. I will
not forget what you owe me.' And he put
that man in jail, and he told the boss over
the jail to keep him there until he gives back
all of that money.
31 Some of the other workers saw what
happened, and they were not happy about
it. So they went to the big boss and told
him all about it. 32 Then the big boss got the
work-man to come in, and said to him, 'You
are really bad. You asked me to forget about
all my money that you borrowed. It was
millions of dollars. And I was good to you.
I said that you didn't have to give it back to
me. 33 So now you have to feel sorry for that
other man and be good to him, just like I
felt sorry for you.' 34 The big boss was really
angry, and he told the soldiers to grab that
work-man, to beat him up, and to put him
in jail. He will stay there until he can give
all that money back to the big boss."
35 Then Jesus said, "It's like that with you
too. You have to be good to all my other
followers. If they do something bad to you,
don't do payback to them. Just forget it.
Then, in the same way, my father in heaven
will not do payback to you."



The work-man said, "Please give me more time, then I will give you back all your money."

(We have not yet translated chapter 19. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 10:1-31.)

* **18:22** Luke 17:3-4; Genesis 4:24

Chapter 20

Jesus told a story about work-men in a garden

1 Jesus said to his followers, "This picture
story is about the people that will be in
God's family. There was a man that owned
a garden, and he wanted some work-men
to get a job finished in one day. So he went
out early in the morning, to the place in the
town where men waited around looking for
a job. 2 He talked to the men there, and they
agreed to work for him. He agreed to give
them the right pay, the pay that men always
get for a day's work. Then he sent them to
work in his garden.

3 At 9 o'clock in the morning he went again
to that place in the town, and he saw some
other men standing around doing nothing.
4 So he gave each of them a job too. He told
them, 'Come and work in my garden today,
and I will pay you the right money at the
end of the day.' 5 So they went to work in
his garden.

Then, in the middle of the day, the boss
went to that place in the town again. And
he found some more men there, and he did
the same for them. He gave them jobs. At
3 o'clock in the afternoon, he did the same
thing. He found some more men and gave
them jobs too.

6 Then, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, he
went into town again, and he saw some more
men standing around. He asked them, 'Why
haven't you been working today?'

7 They said, 'Because nobody gave us a job.'

The boss said to them, 'All right, I'll give
each of you a job. Go and work in my garden.'

8 At the end of the day, he told his manager,
'Tell all the work-men to come here, and
we will pay them their money. Tell the last
work-men to come first.'* 9 So he paid the
men that started their job at 5 o'clock, and
he gave each of them a full day's pay. Then
he kept on paying the other men, and he
gave each man a full day's pay. 10 Last of
all, he paid the men that started their job
early in the morning. They thought they
were going to get more money, but they
didn't. Each of them got a full day's pay, just
like the other men. 11 When they got their
money, they complained to the boss. They
said, 12 'Those men only worked for one hour,
and you paid them just as much money as
you paid us. That's not fair. We worked all
day in the hot sun.'

13 The boss said to one of them, 'My friend,
I'm not cheating you. You agreed to work
all day for one day's pay, right? 14 Well, take
your money and go home. You see, I wanted
to pay these last work-men the same as
you. 15 It's all right for me to do what I want
with my own money, right? If I'm good to
somebody, don't get upset with me.' "

16 Then Jesus told them what that story
means. He said, "One day, those people that
are the last ones now, they will be the first
ones. And those people that are the first ones
now, they will be the last ones."*

(We have not yet translated 20:17—21:27. You can read that story and those messages in Mark 10:32—11:33.)

Chapter 21

Jesus told a story about 2 sons

28 Jesus talked to the Jewish leaders. He said,
"Tell me what you think about this picture
story. A man had 2 sons. He went to the
oldest son and said, 'Son, go and work on
our farm today.'

29 The oldest son said, 'No. I don't want to.'
But later, he changed his mind, and he went
and worked on their farm.

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* **20:8** Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:15 * **20:16** Matthew 19:30; Mark 10:31; Luke 13:30

30 The father also went to his youngest son
and said the same thing to him. He said, 'Son,
go and work on our farm today.'
The youngest son said, 'Yes, Dad, I will go.'
But he didn't go and work on their farm."
31 Then Jesus asked those Jewish leaders,
"Which one of that man's sons did what their
father wanted?"
They said, "The oldest son did what their
father wanted."
Then Jesus said, "Listen. There are people
that did bad things, but they will go into
God's family before you mob do. You know,
there are some men that get tax money from
people and give it to the Roman government.
And sometimes a woman does bad things,
so if men pay her money she sleeps with
them, like a woman sleeps with her husband.
But some of those bad people will go into
God's family before you mob do. 32 You see,
John the Baptiser came and told everyone
the right way to live, and you mob didn't
believe him. But some of those bad people
did believe him, and they stopped doing
bad things. And even when you saw them
do that, you still didn't change your minds.
You didn't say you were sorry for the bad
things you did, and you didn't turn around
and follow God's way."*

(We have not yet translated 21:33—24:44. You can read most of those stories and messages in Mark chapters 12 and 13; Luke 11:37-51; 13:34-35; 14:15-24; 17:24-35.)

Chapter 24

Jesus told a picture story about 2 work-men

45 Then Jesus said to the people, "Think
about a good work-man. He will always
do what his boss says. He thinks about it
and does it properly. So, if the boss has to
go away for a while, he will pick that good
work-man to be in charge of all his other
workers, to look after them and give them
food every day. 46 Later, the boss will come
home. And if he sees that work-man doing
everything properly, then the boss will be
good to that work-man. 47 Yes, the boss will
put him in charge of everything he owns.
48 But now think about a bad work-man.
If the boss goes away for a while, then that
bad work-man will say to himself, 'My boss
will be away for a long time.' 49 Then he will
do bad things. He will hit the other workers,
and he will eat too much food, and get drunk
with other people that drink too much grog.
50 Then the boss will come home at a time
when the bad work-man doesn't think he
will. So the boss will catch him doing bad
things. 51 And the boss will punish that bad
work-man a lot. He will put him in a bad
place with people that say they are good,
but really, they do bad things. Everyone in
that place will cry, and they will be so angry
they will bite their teeth together."

Chapter 25

Jesus told a story about 10 young women at a wedding ceremony

1 Jesus said to his followers, "This picture
story is about what will happen in God's
family, at the time when I come back from
heaven.*

There were some young women that had
a special job at a wedding ceremony. When
the man getting married came to the house,
they had to meet him, and they had to bring
him into the house. Then they were all going
to eat a big dinner with that man and his
new wife. That wedding was at night time,
so the young women had their oil lamps
with them. 2-4 There were 10 of these young

* **21:32** Luke 3:12; 7:29-30 * **25:1** Luke 12:35

women. And 5 of them used their brains. They took jars of extra oil with them for their lamps. But the other 5 women were stupid. They didn't take any extra oil with them.

5 That man getting married didn't come for a long time, so all the young women got tired and went to sleep.

6 In the middle of the night, somebody shouted, 'He is coming now. Come out to meet him.'

7 The 10 young women woke up. Then they got up quickly, and they tried to make their lamps burn bright. 8 The 5 stupid women that didn't have any extra oil said to the other 5 women, 'Give us some of your oil. Our lamps are going out.'



The stupid women asked the other women for more oil

9 The other women said, 'Sorry, we can't do that. There is not enough oil for all of us. You have to go and buy some oil for yourselves.'

10 So those 5 stupid women went to buy some oil. While they were away, that man came to the house to get married. The 5 other women were ready, and they went with him into the house, and somebody locked the door. Then they all started to eat the wedding dinner.

11 Later, the 5 stupid women came back. They called to that man. They said, 'Sir, please open the door for us.'

12 But he said, 'Who are you? I don't know you.' "*

13 Then Jesus said, "It will be like that for you too. You don't know when I will come back. You don't know the day or the time. So you have to keep on waiting for me properly. You have to be ready for me when I come."

(We have not yet translated 25:14-30. You can read a story like that story in Luke 19:11-27.)

After Jesus comes back, he will judge everybody

31 Jesus said, "I am God's special man, and one day, I will come back from heaven, and all God's angel messengers will come with me. At that time, I will be really great and powerful. I will be the biggest boss, and I will sit down on the big boss's seat.* 32 All the people in the world, from every country, they will all come together in front of me. Then I will split all those people into 2 mobs. 33 I will put one mob on one side of me, and the other mob on the other side of me.

34 Then I will say to the people on my right-hand side, 'Come on, you mob. My father is happy with you, so you can be in his family. A long time ago, at the time when he made the world, he made a good place for you. It is ready for you now. 35 You see, at one time I was hungry, and you gave me some food to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me some water to drink. I was a stranger with no-where to live, so you took me into your home. 36 In the cold weather time I didn't have enough clothes to keep me warm, so you gave me some more clothes. I was sick,

* **25:11-12** Luke 13:25 * **25:31** Matthew 16:27; 19:28

and you looked after me. I was in prison, and you visited me there.'

37 Then these good people will say, 'Sir, when did we ever see you hungry, and give you food? Or thirsty, and give you water to drink? 38 When did we ever see you as a stranger, and take you into our homes? When did we ever see you without enough clothes, and give you some more clothes? 39 When did we ever see you sick, or in prison, and visit you?'

40 I will say to them, 'Listen. You did all these things to help my followers. They were not important people, but they were mine, so every time you helped them, you helped me at the same time.'

41 Then I will turn to the people on my left-hand side, and I will say to them, 'Get away from me, you mob that God will punish. Go into that big fire that burns for ever. God made that fire for all the bad spirits and for their boss, the devil. And you have to go there too. 42 You see, I was hungry, but you didn't give me anything to eat. I was thirsty, but you didn't give me a drink. 43 I was a stranger with nowhere to live, but you didn't take me into your home. I didn't have enough clothes to keep me warm, but you didn't give me any more clothes. I was sick, and in prison, but you didn't visit me.'

44 Then they will say, 'But, sir, when did we ever see you with those problems and not help you? We never saw you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or without enough clothes, or sick, or in prison.'

45 And I will say to them, 'Listen. You didn't do anything to help my friends. They were not important people, but they were my people. Every time you said *no* to helping them, at that same time you were saying *no* to helping me.'

46 Then that bad mob will go to the bad place, and God will punish them for ever. But the good mob will go to live in the good place for ever."*

(We have not yet translated 26:1—27:62a. You can read those stories and messages in Mark chapters 14 and 15, and Luke chapters 22 and 23. They are about the way people killed Jesus, and put his body in a cave, and blocked that cave with a big stone.)

Chapter 27

Soldiers guarded the cave that had Jesus's body

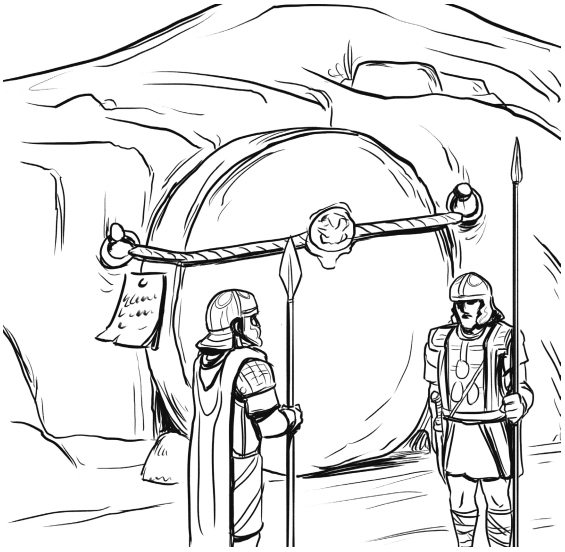
62 The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies got together with the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law, and they went to Pilate. He was the Roman boss at that time. 63 They said, "Sir, we can remember the things Jesus said while he was still alive. That man tried to get people to believe things that are not true. He said, 'I will die, and then after 2 nights, on the 3rd day, I will come alive again.'* 64 Maybe his followers will come and steal his body, and then tell everyone that he came alive again. If they do that, then we'll be worse off than before. So we want to stop them from doing that. We want somebody to guard the cave that has Jesus's body, and keep people away from it for 3 days."

65 Pilate said, "All right. You can take a mob of soldiers to guard that cave. Do whatever you can to stop anybody from moving that stone."

66 So they tied a rope around that stone and put wax on the knot, and they made Pilate's mark in that wax. Then they would know if somebody tried to move that stone. And they told the soldiers, "Guard this cave. Don't let anyone touch it."

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* **25:46** Daniel 12:2 * **27:63** Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; Luke 9:22; 18:31-33



Soldiers guarded the cave that had Jesus's body inside

Chapter 28

Jesus came alive again

1 On Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene, and another woman that was called Mary, they got up really early and went to look at the cave that had Jesus's body in it. 2 Suddenly there was a big earthquake. One of God's angel messengers came down from heaven, and he rolled the big stone away from the cave, and he sat on top of it. 3 His face was bright and shiny, like lightning. His clothes were really white, like snow. 4 The soldiers that were guarding the cave were really frightened. They fell down on the ground like dead men, and they couldn't move.

5 Then the angel said to the women, "Don't be frightened. I know that you are looking for Jesus, the man they killed on a cross. 6 But he is not here. God made him alive again. Remember, Jesus told you that this was going to happen. Come over here and see the place where he was lying. 7 Now you have to go quickly to his followers. Tell them, 'Jesus is alive again, and he is going to Galilee country ahead of you mob. You have to go and see him there.' So go quickly now, and tell them."

8 Then the women ran quickly away from that cave. They were really frightened, but they were really happy too. They got up to run to Jesus's other followers, to tell them the angel's message. 9 But Jesus met them half-way and called out, "Hello." They went up to Jesus and showed him strong respect. They even got down and held on to his feet. 10 Then Jesus said, "Don't be frightened. Go and tell my other followers to go back to Galilee country, and they will see me there."

The guards told the Jewish leaders what happened

11 While the women were going away, some of the soldier guards went into the city and told the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies everything that happened at the cave. 12 Then the ceremony bosses called a meeting with the Jewish elders. They all agreed to give the soldiers a lot of money to get them to tell a lie. 13 They told the soldiers, "You have to tell everyone, 'Jesus's followers came in the night, while we were asleep, and they stole his body.' 14 If anyone tells the boss, Pilate, about this, then we'll talk to him and tell him that you didn't do anything wrong, so he will not give you any trouble." 15 The soldiers took the money, and they told everyone that lie, like the leaders told them to say. So a lot of Jewish people heard that story, and some of them still tell that lie to other people.

Jesus's followers have to tell everyone in the world about him

16 The women told Jesus's message to his 11 special workers. Then those men remembered that Jesus told them to meet him on a mountain in Galilee, so they went

there.* [17]They saw Jesus there, and they felt really happy, and they showed him strong respect. But some of them were thinking, "Is this really Jesus? I don't know."

[18]Then Jesus said to them, "God, my father, has made me boss over everything now. I'm boss over everything up in heaven. And I'm boss over everything down here on the earth. [19]So go out to all the people in the world, and tell them about me. Teach those people to follow my way, and baptise them with water to show that they belong to the father, and the son, and the Holy Spirit. [20]You have to teach them to do everything that I told you to do. And remember this, I will be with you all the time. I will be with you to help you, right up until the time when this world will finish."

* **28:16** Matthew 26:32; Mark 14:28

Mark wrote this good news about Jesus

(The book in the Holy Bible called Mark)

About this book

The Holy Bible has 4 books about the things that Jesus did, and the messages he told to people when he was here on the earth, about 2,000 years ago. Those books are in the 2nd part of the Holy Bible, called the New Testament. *The men that wrote them were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They wrote their books after Jesus went back to heaven. Most of the things in their books happened in the country we now call Israel.*

This book has everything that Mark wrote about Jesus. It is important for us today because it tells us about the good things that Jesus did, and the messages that he brought to us from God.

Mark was a young man when Jesus was here on the earth. He probably knew Jesus and Jesus's special workers very well. Some of the things he wrote about are things he probably saw happen, and the rest he probably heard about from Peter and other people that saw them happen. Mark wrote this book about 20 or 30 years after those things happened.

Mark was sometimes called John Mark. His mother had a house in Jerusalem city, and after Jesus went back to heaven, his followers sometimes met together in Mark's mother's house (see Acts 12:12). Some time later, Paul and Barnabas went to lots of different places to tell people about Jesus, and they took Mark with them to help them (see Acts 13:5; 15:36-39; 2 Timothy 4:11). He was a friend of Peter and a cousin of Barnabas (see Colossians 4:10).

Chapter 1

John baptised people

1 This story is good news. It is all about Jesus Christ, God's son. The story starts like this.

2-3 A long time before Jesus was born, God told a man called Isaiah to write in God's book about something God was going to do for Jesus. And it happened the way Isaiah wrote. He wrote this,

"God will send a man to get everything ready for him.
That man will talk about him and make a way for people to listen to him.
That man will be out in the bush, and he will call out to people, and he will say, 'You mob get ready.
God is coming to this country, so you have to get ready for him.
It is like when a big boss comes, and you have to make a good road for him.' "*

4-6 Isaiah was talking about a man called John. God sent him to get things ready for

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* **1:2-3** Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1

Jesus, so he started to tell people God's message. He lived out in the bush and wore rough clothes made out of camel's hair, and a leather belt. He ate grasshoppers and bush honey.*

John talked to people out there in the bush. He said, "You mob have to be really sorry for the wrong way you are living. You have to turn right around and live God's way." He also told them, "If you do that, I will baptise you. That means, I will take you through a special washing ceremony. And God will not do payback for the bad things you did."

A lot of people went out into the bush to listen to John. They came from the city called Jerusalem and from other towns in that country called Judea. Some people told John that they were sorry for the wrong things they did, so he baptised them in the Jordan River.

7 John told them, "A man will come to this country later. He is more important than me, and he is stronger than me. I'm not good enough to untie his shoes. I'm just nothing. 8 You see, I baptised you just with water, but this new man will put the Holy Spirit in you. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit."

John baptised Jesus

9 At that time, Jesus was living in a town called Nazareth, in Galilee country. Then Jesus left his home, and he walked all the way south to a place on the Jordan River. John was baptising people there. 10 After he got to that place, Jesus went down into the water and John baptised him. As he came up out of the water, Jesus looked up, and he saw the sky split open, and he saw the Holy Spirit. It looked just like a pigeon, and it flew down to Jesus. 11 And God said to Jesus, "You are my son. I love you very much, and I'm very happy with you."*

Satan tested Jesus

12 Straight away, the Holy Spirit sent Jesus out into the bush. 13 Jesus stayed out there for 40 days. And Satan went to him and tried to trick him. Satan is the boss over all the bad spirits. He tried to make Jesus do something bad. But Jesus didn't do it. There were wild animals in that place, but angel messengers went and looked after Jesus.

Jesus went back to Galilee

14 One day, that country's government boss was angry with John the Baptiser, so he sent some soldiers to grab John and put him in jail. After that, Jesus went back to Galilee country, and he told everyone God's good news. 15 He said, "Now is the right time for God to take people into his family. You mob have to take notice and turn right around and live God's way. You have to believe this good news."*

Jesus told some fishermen to leave their job and follow him

16 One day, Jesus walked next to a big lake, called Lake Galilee, and he saw 2 men throwing a net into the water to catch fish. That was their job. One man was called Simon, and the other man was his young brother Andrew.



Jesus told Simon and Andrew to come with him

* **1:4-6** 2 Kings 1:8 * **1:11** Genesis 22:2; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 12:18; Mark 9:7 * **1:15** Matthew 3:2

17 Jesus said, "I want you 2 to come with
me. I want you to stop catching fish and start
catching people for me." 18 Straight away,
Simon and Andrew dropped their nets and
followed Jesus.

19 Jesus kept walking along next to the
water, and he saw James and John getting
their nets ready to catch fish. And their
father Zebedee was with them too. 20 Like
before, Jesus called out to James and John
to stop their work and follow him. Straight
away, they left their father and the other
work-men in the boat, and they followed
Jesus.

Jesus forced a bad spirit to leave a man

21 Jesus and his followers went to a town
called Capernium. On Saturday they went to
the Jewish meeting house, and Jesus taught
God's word to the people. You see, Saturday
was their day to rest and show respect to
God. 22 Jesus talked with clear and strong
words, and the people listened to him, and
they were really surprised. They knew that
he was teaching God's words really straight.
The Jewish law teachers didn't talk like
that.*

23 Then, in the middle of the meeting, a
man with a bad spirit in him called out,
24 "Leave us, Jesus from Nazareth. Why do
you trouble us bad spirits? Are you going to
finish us up? We know you. You are God's
special man."

25 Jesus talked to the bad spirit strongly.
He said, "Be quiet. Come out of him."

26 The bad spirit knocked the man down
and made him shake and scream out loud
as it came out of him, and then it went away.

27 All the people were watching, and they
were really surprised. They asked each other,
"What's going on? This man is teaching us
something new, and he has so much power.
He tells bad spirits to get out of people, and
they do what he tells them to do. They just
go away."

28 Then all those people went out and told
everyone about Jesus. Everyone in Galilee
country heard that story about him.

Jesus made a lot of sick people better

29 After that, Jesus left the meeting house
and went with Simon and Andrew to their
house. James and John went with them.
30 Simon's mother-in-law was sick. She was
lying in her bed, really hot and sweating a
lot. They told Jesus, "She is very sick." 31 So
he held her hand and started to lift her up.
Straight away, she got better. Then she got
up, and she gave them some food to eat.



Jesus made Simon's mother-in-law better

32 Late that afternoon, just after the sun
went down, all the people from that town
got all the sick people, and the people with
bad spirits in them, and they brought them
all to Simon's house. 33 A big mob of people
were there outside that house. 34 Jesus made
lots of sick people better, and he forced lots
of bad spirits to go out of people. The bad
spirits knew that Jesus was God's son, but
Jesus wouldn't let them tell everyone. He
forced those bad spirits to be quiet.

* **1:22** Matthew 7:28-29

Jesus prayed

35 The next day, Jesus got up very early, before the sun came up, and he walked out from the town to pray by himself. 36 Then Simon and the others went and looked everywhere for Jesus. 37 After they found him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you."

38 But Jesus said to them, "Come on, let's go. I have to go to the other towns around here too, and tell everyone the good news. That's the job I came to do."

39 So Jesus went all around Galilee country, talking to people in their meeting houses, and telling them God's story. And he forced bad spirits to go out of lots of people. *

A man had a bad skin sickness, but Jesus made him better

40 A man walked up to Jesus. He had a really bad skin sickness. He got down on his knees in front of Jesus to show him respect, and he kept on asking Jesus to make him better. That man said, "I know that if you want to, you can make me better."

41 Jesus felt really sorry for the sick man, and said, "I do want to make you better."



A man had a bad skin sickness, but Jesus made him better

Then Jesus touched him with his hand, and said, "You are better now." 42 And straight away, that man was better.

43-44 Then Jesus told him strongly, "I don't want you to tell anyone about this. But I want you to go to God's ceremony house and show your skin to the leader of the Jewish ceremonies there, so that he can see that you are better. And you have to do the right ceremony that Moses gave us, to say thank you to God. When you do that ceremony, everyone will know that you are better." *

45 But the man didn't do what Jesus said. He went away and told everyone, "Jesus made me better." After people heard the man's story they went to Jesus from everywhere. Lots of people went to him and stood around him. So he couldn't go into the towns any more, because there were too many people. So he had to stay out in the bush. But people still came from everywhere and found him, even in the bush.

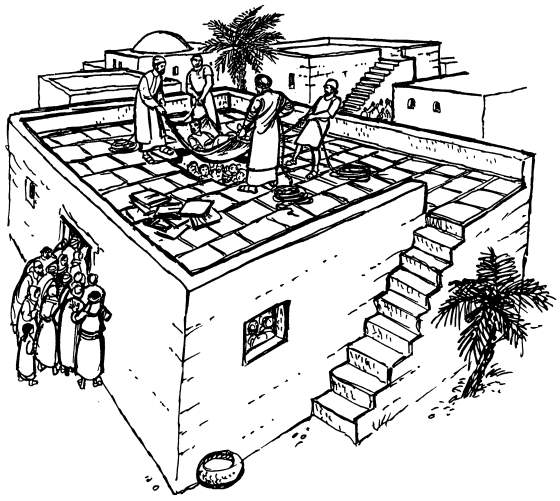
Chapter 2

Some men carried their sick friend to Jesus

1 Some time later, Jesus went back to the town called Capernium. The people heard that Jesus was at a house there, 2 so they all went to see him. Soon the house was too full and there was a big mob outside too.

3 Jesus was inside the house, teaching the people God's story. Then 4 men brought a crippled man to that house. He couldn't walk so they carried him on a swag. They wanted to get that man close to Jesus, so that Jesus could make him better. 4 But those men found a lot of people blocking the house. So they carried the sick man up on to the flat roof of the house and made a hole in it. Then they picked up the sick man on his

* **1:39** Matthew 4:23; 9:35 * **1:43-44** Leviticus 14:1-32



The crippled man's friends put him down through a hole in the roof to see Jesus

swag and put him down through the hole into the house where Jesus was.

5 Jesus saw them do that, and so he knew that they really trusted him. Then Jesus said to the crippled man, "You know all the bad things you did? I say you are not guilty of those things, and God will not punish you."

6 But some of the Jewish law teachers didn't like Jesus saying that. Those law teachers were thinking, 7 "He can't say that. Only God can talk like that. This man is talking like he is God. He can't talk like that. He is shaming God."

8-9 Straight away, Jesus knew what the Jewish law teachers were thinking, so he said to them, "You are thinking the wrong way. I might say to this man, 'You did bad things, but I say you are not guilty of them.' Or I might say to him, 'Get up, pick up your swag and go home.' I can do both of those things. 10 I will show you that God made me the boss over both of those things, so I can say that people are not guilty, and God will not punish them. I'm God's special man from heaven, and I have the power to say those things, and I have the power to do those things."

Then Jesus looked at the crippled man and said, 11 "Come on, get up, pick up your swag and go home."

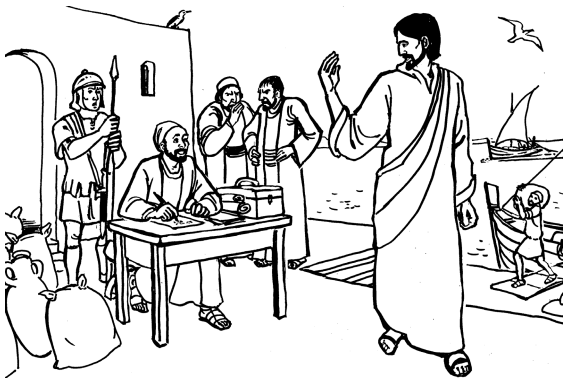
12 Straight away, that man got up, and he picked up his swag in front of all the people, and he walked out of the house and went home. Everybody there saw him do it, and they were really surprised. They started talking about it. They praised God, telling him that he is really good. They said, "We've never seen anything like this before."

13 After that, Jesus left the house and walked along next to the lake. The people from the town kept coming to him, so he kept on teaching them.

Jesus told a tax man to join his followers

14 At that time, the Roman people were the bosses over all that country, and they got some Jewish people to take tax money from the other Jewish people and give it to the Roman government. One of those tax men was called Levi, and his father's name was Alfius. Jesus walked along, and he saw Levi and said to him, "I want you to be one of my followers. Come on, follow me." And straight away, Levi stood up and went with Jesus.

15 Later that day, Jesus and his followers were eating some food at Levi's house.



Jesus told Levi to follow him

There were lots of people there. Some of them were men that used to get tax money from people and give it to the Roman government, and some other people there didn't live God's way. 16 Some of the Jewish law teachers saw Jesus eating with all those people. Those law teachers also belonged to the Pharisee mob. They were really strong for the law, so they asked Jesus's followers, "Why does Jesus eat with those people that don't live God's way?"

17 Jesus heard them, and said to them, "Listen, sick people need a doctor, but healthy people don't need a doctor. I'm telling you, I'm like a doctor. You mob reckon these people do bad things, so I'm here to help them turn around and do good things. But you mob think you never do anything wrong yourselves, so I can't help you."

Jesus talked about not eating food

18 The mob called Pharisees, that were strong for the Jewish law, they sometimes stopped eating food for a while to show God that they respected him. The followers of John the Baptiser did the same. Some people went to Jesus and asked him, "How come your followers don't stop eating food to show God that you respect him, you know, just like the Pharisee mob and John's followers do?"

19 Jesus said to them, "At a wedding ceremony everybody is happy, and they all eat food together with the man that is getting married. It's the same way for my followers. I'm still here, so they are happy and don't need to stop eating food. Not yet. 20 One day, my enemies will take me away, then my followers will be sad, and they will stop eating food."

21 Then Jesus told them 2 picture stories about the things he was teaching, to get them to start thinking a new way. He said, "If you have an old coat with a hole in it, you can't fix that hole with a new bit of cloth. If you try to do that, and then if you wash it, the new cloth will tear away from the old cloth, and the coat will still be useless.

22 And this is another story. You don't put new drink into an old cracked bottle. That drink will all leak out and you will lose it. You have to put new drink into new bottles."

Jesus talked about the Jewish rest day

23 One day, on the Jewish rest day, Jesus and his followers walked through a garden that had seed food growing in it. They walked along and they got a bit hungry, so his followers grabbed some of the seeds to eat. * 24 Some of the Pharisee mob saw Jesus's followers doing that. That mob were strong for the Jewish law, so they got angry. They said to Jesus, "Your mob are doing the wrong thing. Our Jewish law says that today is the rest day. But your mob are getting seeds off those plants. That is work. They are breaking our law."

25-26 Jesus said to them, "Remember the story about David and his men. You know, it was when Abiathar was the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies. David and his men



Some Pharisees got angry because Jesus's followers grabbed seeds on the Jewish rest day

* **2:23** Deuteronomy 23:25

were really hungry, and they didn't have any food. So David went into God's ceremony place and got the special bread. Only the men that look after the Jewish ceremonies can eat that bread. But David and his men ate that special bread, and so they broke our Jewish law, but God didn't punish them."*

27 Then Jesus said to them, "Listen to me now. God gave us the rest day to help us, not just to give us another law to follow. 28 Listen, I am God's special man from heaven, and I'm boss over everything. I am even the boss of our Jewish rest day. So I'm not worried about my followers grabbing some seeds to eat."

Chapter 3

Jesus made a man's hand better on the Jewish rest day

1 Jesus went to the Jewish meeting house again on another rest day, and he saw a man with one hand that was no good. It was all dried up and useless. 2 Some of the Pharisee mob were there. They were strong for the Jewish law. They wanted to make trouble for Jesus, so they watched him there. They wanted to see if he was going to help the man with the dried up hand, and make it better on their Jewish rest day. If he did that, they were going to say, "He worked on the rest day, so he broke the law."

3 Jesus knew they were thinking like that, and so he said to the man, "Come here and stand in front of everybody, so they can see you."

4 Then Jesus said to the Pharisee mob, "What does our law say about our rest day? Is it right to do good things on our rest day, or is it right to do bad things? Can I make this man better? Or can I hurt him?" The Pharisee mob said nothing.

5 Jesus looked at them. They didn't care about people, they only worried about their law, and that made Jesus really angry. And it made him really sad too. Then Jesus said to the man with the useless hand, "Hold out your hand." The man put his hand out, and straight away it was better. It wasn't dried up any more.

6 Then the Pharisee mob went away and had a meeting with another mob of Jewish leaders. That other mob were good friends with the big boss called Herod. At that meeting they tried to work out a way to kill Jesus.

A big mob followed Jesus to the big lake

7 Jesus and his followers went away to the big lake, called Lake Galilee, and a big mob of people followed them. 8 Those people came from a lot of places. They came from Galilee country, and from Judea country, and from Idjumia country, and some people came from Jerusalem city, and other people came from the country near the towns called Tyre and Sidon, and some people came from the other side of the Jordan River. All those people heard about the things that Jesus did, so they wanted to see him themselves.

9-10 Jesus made lots of people better that day, and a lot more people wanted to touch him to get better too. A lot of people pushed up close to him, so he said to his followers, "Get a boat ready for me. I might need more room. If they push me too much, I will get up on that boat."*

11 Some of the people had bad spirits living inside them. Every time those people saw Jesus, the bad spirits pushed them down to the ground and they shouted out, "You are God's son."

12 And every time they shouted out, Jesus told them strongly to stay quiet. He said, "Don't tell anyone that I'm really God's son."

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* **2:25-26** 1 Samuel 21:1-6; Leviticus 24:9 * **3:9-10** Mark 4:1; Luke 5:1-3

Jesus picked out 12 men to be his special workers

13 One day, Jesus walked up a hill and called
out to some of the people to follow him.
14-15 Then Jesus picked out 12 of them. He
wanted them to be his special workers. Jesus
told them, "You mob will walk around with
me and live with me, and after that, I will
send you to other places to tell people God's
good news, and God will give you the power
to force bad spirits out of people."

16-19 These are the names of those 12 men
that Jesus picked out,

- Simon. Jesus gave him another name. He called him *Peter*.
- James and John. They were Zebedee's sons, and they were loud men, so Jesus gave them another name. He called them *Thunder men*.
- Andrew
- Philip
- Bartholomew
- Matthew
- Thomas
- James. He was the son of Alfius.
- Thadius
- Simon. He used to be one of the mob that wanted to fight the Roman government bosses.
- Judas Iscariot. Some time later he turned against Jesus.

Jesus is stronger than Satan

20 Jesus went into a house, and a big mob of
people came there to see him. They were a
really big mob of people, so Jesus and his
followers were really busy, and they couldn't
even stop and eat some food. 21 Somebody
went and told Jesus's family about him. So
his family said, "He is crazy in his head,"
and they went to get him. They wanted to
take him home to look after him.

22 Some teachers of the Jewish law that
were from Jerusalem were there in that
place. They said, "The boss over all the bad
spirits is living inside Jesus. That bad spirit
boss is called Beelzebul, and he is also called
Satan. He is the one that gives Jesus the
power to force bad spirits out of people."*

23 Jesus knew the law teachers were
rubbishing him like that, so he called out
to them and said, "Come here and listen
to me." Then he told them stories to teach
them. He said, "Think about Satan, the boss
over the bad spirits. Do you reckon he fights
against his own mob of bad spirits? That
doesn't make sense. 24 Listen to me. If a tribe
splits up into 2 mobs that fight against each
other, that tribe will get weak and finish
up. 25 In the same way, people in a family, if
they fight each other all the time, they will
split up and will stop being a family. 26 So,
if Satan is fighting against his own mob of
bad spirits, he will get weak and will not
have any power. So Satan never does that.
You have got it all wrong.

27 Listen to this picture story. A man wanted
to take some things from a strong man's
house. First he tied up that strong man. After
that, he took all the strong man's things. Well,
in that story Satan is like that strong man,
and I'm like the man that tied him up, and
now I'm taking my people away from him.

28 Listen, people might do bad things, and
they might say bad things against God, but
later, if they are sorry for those bad things,
God can say they are not guilty. 29 But if
somebody says bad things about the Holy
Spirit, they are always guilty. God will
blame them and punish them for ever."*

30 That's what Jesus said to those Jewish
law teachers. You see, they reckoned that
Jesus had a bad spirit in him. That is the
reason why Jesus talked so straight to them.

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* **3:22** Matthew 9:34; 10:25 * **3:29** Luke 12:10

Jesus talked about his true family

31 Jesus's mother and his young brothers
came to the house where Jesus was teaching,
and they sent somebody in to tell him to
come out and talk to them. 32 There was a big
mob of people sitting around Jesus, listening
to him at that time. The people said to him,
"Your mother and your younger brothers are
outside looking for you."
33-34 Jesus looked around at the people
sitting there and said, "Do you want to know
my real family? You just have to look around.
These people here are my real family. 35 My
real family are the people that listen to God,
and that do what he says. Those people
are my brothers, and my sisters, and my
mothers."

Chapter 4

Jesus told a story about seeds and ground

1 Jesus went down to the lake again, and he
started to teach people. A big mob of people
went to listen to him, so he got into a boat
and sat in it. He was a little bit away from
the dry ground. All the people stayed on
the dry ground and listened to his words. *
2 He told them picture stories to teach them
lots of things.
Jesus told them this story. He said, 3 "You
mob listen to me now. A man wanted to
grow some seed food in a garden. 4 He threw
the seeds all over the garden.
Some seeds went too far and fell on the
road. The road was hard, so the seeds
couldn't grow there. Some birds saw those
seeds lying there, so they ate them and
finished them up.
5-6 And some seeds went another way. They
fell on ground that had too much rock in
it. Those seeds grew up really fast, but they
had too much rock and only a little bit of
ground, so when the sun got hot, they dried
up and died.
7 Some other seeds fell into the rubbish
grass that was growing right next to the
garden. Those seeds tried to grow, but the
rubbish grass blocked them, so they couldn't



Jesus sat in a boat to teach the big mob of people

* **4:1** Luke 5:1-3

grow properly. They didn't grow any new seeds on them.

8 But some of those seeds fell on really good ground, and those seeds grew properly and became seed food plants. When they were ready, they had really big mobs of new seeds on them."

9 Then Jesus said, "You've got ears, so you have to listen to me properly, and take notice of my words."



Jesus told a story about the seeds that a man threw all over his garden

Jesus told stories to teach people

10 Some time later, Jesus came away from that big mob of people. Then just his 12 special workers and a few other people sat around him. They said to him, "You tell us picture stories, but we can't understand them. What are your stories all about?"

11 Jesus said, "You mob follow me, so God wants you to know what my stories are all about, so I will tell you what they mean. Those stories are about how God gets people into his family. But other people don't follow me, so they only get the picture stories. I will not tell them what they mean. 12 You know, God got one of his men to write these words, and they are in God's book. He wrote,

> 'People will look with their eyes at
> what I do, but they will not try to
> understand what it means.
> They will hear my words with their
> ears, but they will not try to
> understand them properly.
> If they do understand me properly,
> then they will turn around and come
> back to God, and then God will not
> blame them for the bad things they
> did. But they don't want to know
> about that.'

And those things are happening now."*

This is what the story about seeds and ground means

13 Jesus kept on talking. He said, "Why can't you understand this picture story? If you can't understand this easy story, you will not understand the other stories that I'm going to tell you.

14 Listen to me again. In my story, a man threw the seeds into his garden, to grow some food. He is a picture of somebody that tells God's word to people.

15 I said that some seeds fell on the road, and birds ate them up. Those seeds are a picture for God's word, and the birds are a picture of Satan, the boss over the bad spirits. When some people hear God's word, Satan makes them forget it, so they take no notice of its message.

16 In my story there was ground with too much rock in it. That is a picture of people that listen to God's word and they are happy about it, and they start to take notice of it.

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* **4:12** Isaiah 6:9-10

17 But other people see them believing that
word, and those other people make trouble
for them, so they stop taking notice of God's
word. They soon turn their back and walk
away from it.
18 In my story the man threw some seeds
into rubbish grass, and that grass blocked
them, so they couldn't grow. That is a picture
of people that hear God's word, 19 but after
that, they let other things stop them, so they
don't live properly for God. They worry too
much about the things they want in this life.
They start to think too much about money,
and they trick themselves. They want a lot of
different things all the time, and they worry
too much about all those things. They just
think about what they want for themselves,
and that stops them listening properly to
God's word, so they can't live properly for
God.
20 In my story, the seeds that fell on the
good ground grew properly, and after those
plants grew up big, they made lots of new
seeds. That is a picture of people that are
ready to listen to God's word, and do what
he says. When they believe God's word, they
grow stronger and stronger for God, and
they live God's way."

Jesus told a picture story about a light

21 Then Jesus said, "When somebody lights
a candle, they don't put it under a bowl.
And they don't put that candle under their
bed. No way. People put candles up high, so
everyone can see clearly.* 22 Well, just like
that, God wants people to understand the
things that are true. He will not hide them
away. You see, there are some things that
God hasn't told anyone yet, but people will
know them soon. It will be like a light will
shine on them.* 23 You've all got ears, so
you have to listen to me properly, and take
notice of my words."
24-25 Then Jesus said, "Make sure you listen
to the right message and think about it
properly. When you really take notice of a
true message, God will help you understand
it, and he will help you to know more and
more of his word. But if you don't want to
listen to that message, God will stop you
from understanding the little bit you did
hear."*

God's family grows like plants

26-29 Jesus kept on teaching. He said, "I want
you to know how God's family grows. This
is another picture story. A man wanted to
grow some seed food, so he threw some
seeds on the ground in his garden. Then
that man walked away and left the seeds
there. Those seeds grew all by themselves
in that ground, and that man didn't know
what made those seeds grow. He just left
them there for a few months, and they grew.
At first the long stick part grew, and after
that, the head part grew with all the seeds
inside it. Then, when the seeds were ready,
that man cut those plants down and picked
up the seed food. God is boss for everyone,
and his family will grow just like the plants
in that story."*

Jesus talked more about God's family

30 Jesus talked some more. He said, "Do you
know what God's family is like? I will tell you
another picture story to help you understand
it. 31 God's family is like a little seed, like the
seed of the plant we call *mustard*. Its seeds
are very little. 32 When somebody puts one
of those little seeds into the ground, it grows
and grows. Later it gets really big with lots
of branches. It gets bigger than all the other

* **4:21** Matthew 5:15; Luke 11:33 * **4:22** Matthew 10:26; Luke 12:2
* **4:24-25** Matthew 7:2; 13:12; 25:29; Luke 6:38; 19:26 * **4:26-29** Joel 3:13

plants in a vegetable garden, and birds can sit down in the shade of its branches, and they can make their nests there too. Well, that is a picture of how God's family will grow."

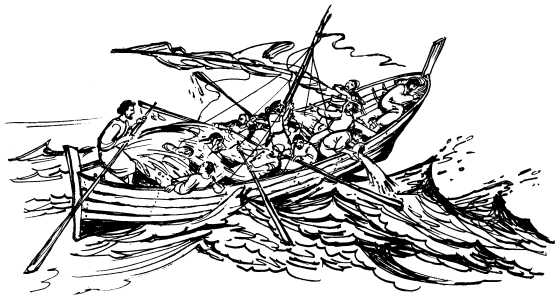
33 Jesus taught the people this way whenever they were ready to listen. 34 Whenever he talked to all the people, he used picture stories. But later, when Jesus was sitting down with only his followers, he told them what those stories really mean.

Jesus told the storm to stop and be quiet

35 On that same day, while Jesus was teaching, the sun started to go down. He was still sitting in the boat, so he stopped teaching and told his followers to take him across the lake. 36 So they left all the other people behind, and his followers started to take him across the lake in their boat. Some other people got into their boats and followed them.

37 A little bit later a really strong storm came. The wind got very strong, and the waves started to fill the boat with water, so it was starting to sink. 38 Jesus was asleep in the back of the boat with his head on a pillow. His followers were frightened, so they woke him up, and they shouted at him, "Teacher, we will all drown, and you don't care. Why don't you do something?"

39 Jesus opened his eyes, then he stood up, and he talked strongly to the wind and the water. He said, "Stop. Be quiet." Straight away, the wind stopped and the water lay down flat. Everything was quiet and still.



Jesus and his followers were in a boat when a strong storm came

40 Then Jesus said to his followers, "Why are you so frightened? You should know by now that you can trust me."

41 They said to each other, "Look. The wind and the water listen to this man, and they do what he says. He is really powerful." So they were really surprised and frightened.

Chapter 5

Jesus forced bad spirits out of a man

1 Then Jesus and his followers went to the other side of the lake, to the country called Gerasene.

2-5 There was a man there that had a bad spirit in him. He was like a crazy man. He camped in the cemetery there.

Before Jesus came to that place, that man walked around in the cemetery, and all over the hills there, and he yelled out and screamed all the time. He did that in the day time and also at night time. And he cut himself with stones. People couldn't tie him up, not even with chains. They tried to do that lots of times. They tied up his hands and his feet, but it was no good. He was too strong. He just broke those chains every time. Nobody was strong enough to hold him or make him sit down quiet.

When Jesus got out of the boat, 6 that crazy man saw him from a long way off. He ran right up to Jesus. The spirit in him knew that Jesus was stronger than him, so he got down on his knees in front of Jesus.

7-8 Jesus said to the bad spirit, "Come out of this man."

But the spirit in him made him yell at Jesus, "Why did you come here? I know you. You are Jesus. You are the son of God. He is the big boss over everything. Promise me truly that you will not hurt me."

9 Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"
He said, "Our name is *Big Mob*. You see, we are a mob of bad spirits inside this man. 10 Please don't send us away from this country."
11 There were about 2,000 pigs feeding themselves on the hill nearby. 12 The bad spirits asked Jesus, "Can we go into that big mob of pigs over there?"
13 So Jesus sent those bad spirits out of the man and let them go into the pigs. Then those pigs went crazy, and they ran down the steep hill into the lake, and they drowned themselves in the water.
14 The men that looked after the pigs were frightened, and they ran back to their town, and they told everyone what happened. They told that story to the people in the town, and they told it to the people that lived outside of the town too. A lot of people wanted to see what happened, 15 so they ran out to that place where Jesus was. They saw that man sitting down quiet and wearing clothes. He wasn't crazy any more. Then those people got frightened. 16 The men that looked after the pigs told them the story about the man and the pigs. 17 Then all that mob started to ask Jesus strongly to go away from their country and leave them alone.
18 Jesus listened to them, and he started to get into the boat. Then the man that used to have the bad spirits in him, asked Jesus, "Please, can I come with you?"
19 Jesus said, "No, I want you to go back to your family, and to your own mob. I want you to tell everybody about the good things God did for you. Tell them that God felt sorry for you, and he was really good to you."
20 Then that man went all over that country called *Ten Towns*, and he told everybody that story. He told them all about the good things Jesus did for him. Everybody that heard him was really surprised.

Jesus made a woman better

21 Jesus and his followers got back into the boat and went to the other side of the lake. A really big mob of people were waiting for them there, beside the water.
22 There was a Jewish meeting house near there. One of the bosses of that meeting house saw Jesus and went up to him, and he got down on his knees in front of Jesus, to show him respect. That man's name was Jairus. 23 He strongly asked Jesus to help his daughter. He said, "My little girl is really sick, and I think she will die. Please come and put your hands on her. I know that you can make her better, so that she will not die."
24 Jesus listened to the man and started to go with him. The big mob of people followed them. They went up really close and pushed up against Jesus, all around him.
25 While they were walking along, a sick woman was there. A long time before this, she started bleeding, and that bleeding didn't stop. 26 She went to every doctor, but none of them could help her. She spent all her money trying to get better, but it was no good, she only got worse. She kept on bleeding for 12 years. 27-28 Then somebody told her about Jesus, and she thought to herself, "If I can just touch his coat, I will get better." So she came up behind Jesus, and she touched his coat. 29 And straight away, her bleeding stopped. She knew she was better.
30 Jesus knew straight away that power went out from him, so he stopped walking, turned around, and asked the people, "Who touched my clothes?"
31 Jesus's followers said, "There are big mobs of people here pushing up against you. Why do you ask, 'Who touched me?' Lots of people touched you."
32 Jesus kept on looking around to see the person that used his power. 33 That woman

knew that she was the person that got better, so she was very frightened, and she was shaking. She came to Jesus, and she got down on her knees in front of him, to show him respect, and she told him her story. She told him that she touched him. 34 Jesus said to her, "My friend, you really believed in me, so now you are better. You can go home, and you will not have any more trouble. You are not sick any more."

Jesus made a dead girl alive again

35 While Jesus was talking to the woman, a man from Jairus's house came to him with bad news. He said, "I'm sorry, it's too late. Your little girl is dead. Don't bother Jesus now."

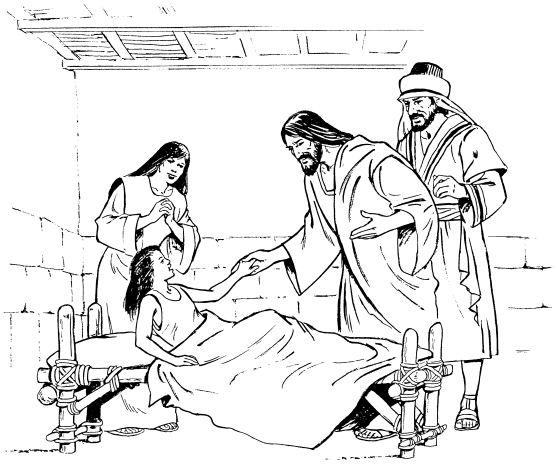
36 Jesus heard the man's words, but he took no notice of them. He said to Jairus, "Don't be frightened. Just trust me." 37 Then Jesus told the people, "Don't come with me to this man's house." He only let a few people go with him. They were the girl's mother and father, and 3 of his special workers, Peter, James and John. They were the only people that went with him.

38 They got close to the house, and Jesus heard other people inside it making a big noise. They were crying for that dead girl and shouting out loud. 39 Jesus went into the house, and he asked them, "Why are you making all this noise? That little girl isn't dead. She is just sleeping."

40 But they just laughed at Jesus. So he told them all to get out of the house. Then Jesus said to the girl's mother and father, and to his 3 followers, "You come with me." Then they went together into the room where the girl lay.

41 Jesus held the girl's hand and talked to her in their language. He said, "*Talitha koum*." That means, *Get up, little girl*. 42 Straight away, that girl got up and walked around the room. Her mother and father were really surprised. Their little girl was alive again. She was 12 years old at that time.

43 Jesus told them strongly, "Don't tell anyone that I made this little girl alive again." Then he said to them, "Now give her some food to eat."



Jesus made a dead girl alive again

Chapter 6

Jesus's own countrymen rubbished him

1 Jesus and his followers left that country and went back to his own town, called Nazareth.

2-3 On the Jewish people's rest day, Jesus went to the Jewish meeting house, and he started to teach the people God's message. A lot of the people heard his words, and they were really shocked. They said, "How does he know so much? How come he can do powerful things? He's nobody special. We know him. He grew up here, in this town. His mother, Mary, lives here, with his brothers, James, Joses, Judas and Simon, as well as his sisters. His job here is to make things with wood." So those Nazareth people got angry, and they wouldn't take any notice of him.

4 Jesus then said to them, "If God gives a
man a message, lots of people know he is
God's man, and they respect him. But not
his own people. They lived with that man
and knew him from the time he was a little
boy. They don't respect him. Even his close
family and relatives don't listen to him."*
5-6 You see, the people of Jesus's own town
didn't believe in him, and he was really
shocked. He couldn't do anything really
powerful there, because they didn't believe
in him. He only touched a few sick people
and made them better. Then he left Nazareth,
and went to other towns, and taught God's
word to the people there.

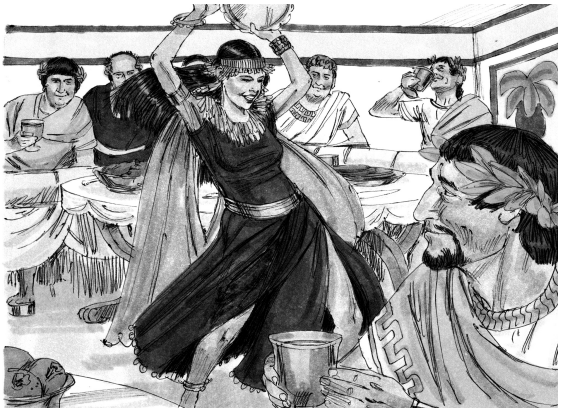
Jesus sent out his 12 special workers

7-11 Jesus called together his 12 special
workers. He told them, "You have to go
to every town and tell my message to the
people. Let them take care of you when
you go there. Don't take a bag, or food, or
money, or spare clothes with you. Just take
your shoes and a walking stick. After you
get to a town, if the people in that town
are happy for you to stay there, just stay in
one house. Don't move around to different
houses. But if the people in that town don't
want you to be there, and if they will not
listen to you, then you have to go away from
that town. As you leave it, shake the dirt off
your feet. That will show those people that
they will get trouble. It will be like you are
telling them, 'You didn't take any notice
of my message, so God will judge you and
punish you.'"*
And Jesus told his special workers, "I'm
giving you my power to force bad spirits
out from people." Then Jesus split them up
into 6 teams with 2 men in each team, and
he sent them out to do God's work. 12 So his
special workers went to other towns, and
they told everyone to turn around, to change
their lives, and to come back to God's way.
13 Those men forced a lot of bad spirits out
of people. And they put olive oil on a lot
of sick people, like medicine for them, and
those sick people got better.*

Herod killed John the Baptiser

14-29 This is the story about what happened
to John, the man that baptised people. The
big boss over that country was Herod, and
his brother was Philip. Philip's wife's name
was Herodias. But Herodias left Philip, and
Herod married her.
John kept on telling Herod, "You are
breaking God's law. You shouldn't have
your brother's wife." Herodias hated John
for saying that, and she wanted to kill him,
but Herod sent some soldiers to grab John
and keep him in jail, so Herodias couldn't
do anything to him. John was a good man,
one of God's own men, so Herod respected
John, and he was a bit frightened of him
too. Herod used to talk with John. He didn't
really understand John's message, but he
liked to listen to him.
Some time later, Herod had a birthday
party. All the leaders of Herod's army, and
the government bosses from Galilee country,
they were all there at Herod's party.
Herodias's daughter danced for them
at that party. Herod and everybody else
really liked to watch her dance. She made
them really happy, so Herod made a strong
promise to her. He told her, "I want to give
you something really good. You can ask for
anything. I will give you anything you ask
for, even as much as half of this country.
This is true. I'm not lying."
That young girl went outside and asked
her mother, "What will I ask for?"
Her mother said, "Go back in and ask the

* **6:4** John 4:44 * **6:7-11** Luke 10:4-11; Acts 13:51 * **6:13** James 5:14



The daughter of Herodias danced for Herod and his friends

big boss to send a soldier to cut off John the Baptiser's head and give it to you."

The girl ran back into the party and said to Herod, "I want you to give me John the Baptiser's head on a big plate, and I want it right now."

When Herod heard her say that, he was really sad. But he didn't want to break his promise. He didn't want to feel shame in front of his friends, so he sent a soldier to cut off John's head, and to bring it back to the girl on a big plate.

The soldier went to the jail, and he cut off John's head, and he brought it back to the party, and he gave it to the young girl, and then she gave it to her mother.

John's friends heard the bad news, so they came and got his body, then they took it away and buried it.

Herod was worried about Jesus

Later lots of people heard about what Jesus was doing, and they talked about him all the time. Some people said, "Jesus is really Elijah, that old man that told God's messages a long time ago. God made him alive again."

Some other people said, "Jesus is a man talking for God, just like those other men that told God's messages a long time ago."

But some people reckoned, "Jesus is really John the Baptiser. God made John alive again, and God gave him power to do great things."

Herod heard those stories, and he said, "I got my soldiers to cut John's head off, but this man, Jesus, he has to be John the Baptiser. I reckon God made him alive again."*

Jesus fed more than 5,000 people

30 Some time later, Jesus's 12 special workers came back from telling his message to all the towns. They stood around Jesus and told him everything they did, and everything they taught the people in the towns.

31 While they were talking, lots of other people kept on coming up to Jesus, and Jesus and his followers didn't have time to eat any food. So Jesus said to his followers, "Let's go to a quiet place out bush, so that we can rest for a while."

32 Then Jesus and his followers got into a boat and started to go across the lake, to a quiet place away from all the people. But lots of people saw them leave. 33 Those people were from a lot of different towns, but they knew the place that Jesus and his special workers were going to, so they ran around the side of the lake, and they got there first, before the boat.

34 Then Jesus and his special workers got to that place, and they got out of the boat. Jesus looked at the mob of people waiting for him, and he felt sad for them. They didn't have anyone looking after them. They were like a mob of sheep that had nobody to take care of them. So Jesus started to teach them lots of things.*

* **6:14-29** Matthew 16:14; Mark 8:28; Luke 3:19-20; 9:19
* **6:34** Numbers 27:17; 1 Kings 22:17; 2 Chronicles 18:16; Ezekiel 34:5; Matthew 9:36

35 At the end of the day, Jesus's followers went to him and said, "It's nearly time for the sun to go down, and we are way out here in the bush. 36 You have to send the people away from here so that they can find some food. They can go to a nearby farm or to a town, to buy some food to eat."

37 Jesus said to them, "No. You mob give them some food to eat."

But they said, "What? We haven't got that much food. Do you want us to go and buy a lot of bread for them? That will cost thousands of dollars."

38 Jesus said to his followers, "How much food have you got? Go and see what there is."

They came back to him and said, "We've got 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish."

39-40 Jesus told his followers to get the people to sit on the green grass in groups, maybe about 50 people in each group, or maybe 100 people.

41 Then Jesus picked up the bread and the fish, then he looked up to the sky, and he said, "Thank you God for this bread and this fish." Then Jesus broke the bread and the fish into bits, and he gave them to his followers to give to the people.

42 All of the people got some bread and some fish, and they ate until they were full. 43 After that, Jesus's followers picked up the bits of food that nobody ate. They filled up 12 big baskets with that left-over food. 44 A really big mob of people ate that food. There were 5,000 men in that mob, as well as women and kids.

45 As soon as they finished eating, Jesus told his followers, "Get into the boat and row across the lake, to the place called Bethsayida. I will follow you mob some time later."

Then he started telling all the people, "You mob can all go home now. Goodbye." 46 After he said *goodbye* to them, Jesus went up into the hills to pray.

Jesus walked on top of water

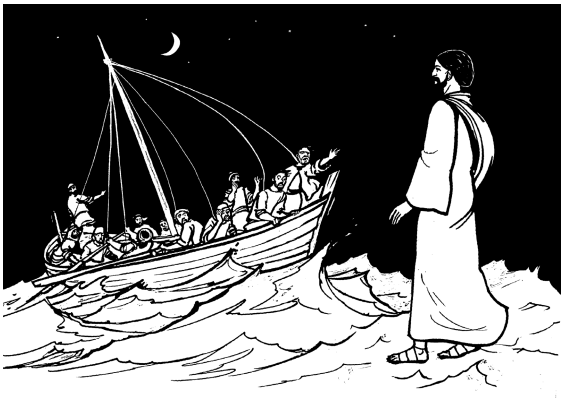
47 Then night time came, and Jesus was still alone on the land, and the boat was half-way across the lake.

48 Later that night, Jesus looked out and saw that his followers were having a hard time rowing the boat. The wind was stopping them. Just before day-light, Jesus walked to them on top of the water, and it looked like he was going to keep going past them.



Everyone in that big mob ate until they were full

49-50 His followers saw him walking on the water, and they thought he was a ghost. They got really frightened, and they screamed. Straight away, Jesus said to them, "It's all right. It's me, I'm Jesus. Don't be frightened."
51 Then Jesus got into the boat with his followers, and straight away the wind stopped blowing. The men in the boat were surprised. 52 They still couldn't understand about Jesus. They saw what he did with the bread and the fish the day before, but they couldn't work it out. It was like their brains were no good.



Jesus walked on top of water

Jesus made a lot of sick people better

53 Then they got to the dry land again, in the country called Gennesaret, and they tied up the boat. 54 A lot of people saw Jesus getting out of the boat, and they knew who he was, 55 so they ran around everywhere in that country, and they put the sick people on swags, and they carried them to Jesus, to wherever people said that Jesus was. 56 Jesus went to little towns, and to big towns in that country. Wherever he went, the people carried their sick friends and family to the middle of the town, and they put them on the ground. Those sick people asked Jesus if they could touch his clothes, and everyone that touched his clothes got better.

Chapter 7

Some people teach rules that don't come from God

1-4 There were some Jewish law teachers, and some of the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law, they went from Jerusalem to see Jesus and his followers. A long time before that, those mobs made up a lot of rules that are not in God's book. One of those rules that they made up was this. Before they could eat anything, they had to wash their hands in a special way, and after people came home from the shops, they had to wash that same way. There were other rules too, that those leaders made up, a long time ago. They had rules about the way to wash cups, and billycans, and cooking pots, and the chairs they sat on to eat their food. Those rules didn't come from God.

After they got there from Jerusalem, they saw that some of Jesus's followers didn't wash their hands that special way before they ate food. 5 So they said to Jesus, "Your followers are going wrong. They are not following the rules that our old leaders gave us a long time ago. They didn't wash their hands the right way before they started to eat their food. You have to make them follow the rules properly."

6 Jesus said to them, "You mob tell everyone you are good, but really, you are not good. You know the man that was called Isaiah. He lived a long time ago, and he told God's messages. He wrote true words about you, and they are in God's book. He wrote,

'These people show respect to me with
their mouths,
but really, they think another way.
7 They have ceremonies for me,
but, really, they rubbish me.
You see, they teach rules that men
made up themselves,

and they tell everybody that those
rules come from God.'*
8 You mob are just like that. You turn your
back on God's law, but you are strong on
the rules that men made up."
9 And Jesus kept on talking to them. He
said, "You mob are tricky in the way you
turn your back on God's law, and follow
your own rules. 10 You see, God told Moses
to tell everyone to look after their old people.
Moses wrote this law,
'You have to respect your father and
mother.'
And he also wrote,
'You have to punish anyone that
rubbishes their father or mother. You
have to kill that person.'*
11 But you mob reckon that somebody can tell
their father or mother, 'I want to help you
old people, but I'm sorry. I know that you
need that thing, but I promised to give it to
God, so I can't give it to you.' 12 You reckon
that if a person says that to their father or
mother, they don't have to help their father
or mother. 13 When you tell people that, you
take God's word away from them, so they
will just follow the rules that you made up.
You do all sorts of wrong things like that
all the time."
14 Then Jesus called out to all the people to
come and listen to him. He said, "Listen to
me, everyone, and try to understand what
I'm saying. 15-16 It's not the things you eat
that make you no good. Don't worry about
what goes into you, but worry about what
comes out of you. It's the things that come
out of you that make you no good."
17 After that, Jesus stopped talking to all
the people, and he went into the house, to
take a break. His followers went in with
him, and they asked him what he meant by
the words he just told the people. 18-19 Jesus
said, "What's wrong with you? You still don't
understand what I'm saying. Listen. If you
eat something, it goes into your belly, then,
some time later, it goes out of your body into
the toilet. It doesn't go into your brain. So
God will not say, 'You ate the wrong food
and made yourself no good.' No, he will not
say that." (Jesus said that about food, and
he made it clear for us that every sort of
food is all right.)
20-23 Then Jesus kept on teaching his
followers. He said, "People think inside their
heads about bad things, and then they go
wrong. They do those bad things, and that
makes them no good. These are the things
they might do.

- They might think about all sorts of bad things.
- They might sleep with somebody that is not their own husband or wife, and do what married people do together.
- They might steal things.
- They might murder somebody.
- They might sleep with somebody else's husband or wife, as if they are married to them.
- They might be greedy, and try to get lots of money and things.
- They might do really bad things.
- They might trick people.
- They might do the first bad thing that they think about.
- They might want to get something that other people have.
- They might rubbish people.
- They might think that they themselves are great.
- They might only think about what they want for themselves, and do really stupid things.

All those bad things come from people

* **7:6-7** Isaiah 29:13 * **7:10** Exodus 20:12; 21:17; Leviticus 20:9; Deuteronomy 5:16

thinking the wrong way inside their heads, and those things make people no good."

A woman that was not Jewish trusted Jesus

24 After that, Jesus left Galilee country and went north to a town called Tyre. The people that lived in Tyre were not Jewish people. Jesus and his followers stayed at somebody's house there. He didn't want other people to know that he was in that house. But a lot of people heard that he was there.

25-26 There was a woman in that town that was not a Jewish woman. She was from a place called Fonisha, in Syria country. Her daughter had a bad spirit inside her, so that woman went to Jesus to get help. She got down on her knees in front of Jesus, to show him respect, and she asked him to force the bad spirit out of her daughter.

27 Jesus said to her, "You know, a man gives food to his own kids first. He will not take their food and throw it to the dogs. Well, that is a picture of me. I belong to the Jewish nation. I have to look after my own people first, not you people that are not Jewish."

28 The woman said, "Yes, teacher, you are right about that, but while the kids in that picture story are eating, they drop a few little bits of food, and the dogs under the table can eat those little bits of food. So you can still do a little thing to help me, even though I'm not Jewish."

29 Jesus said, "That's a good answer. It shows me that you trust me. You can go home now. I just made that bad spirit go out from your daughter."

30 Then the woman went home and found her daughter lying down quietly on a bed. The bad spirit was not in her any more.

Jesus made a deaf man better

31 Then Jesus left Tyre and walked back through another town called Sidon. Then he went around the north of Lake Galilee to the country everyone called *Ten Towns*.

32 Some people brought a man to Jesus. That man was deaf, and he couldn't talk properly. His friends asked Jesus strongly to put his hand on their friend and make him better.

33 Jesus took the man away from all the other people there and put his fingers in the man's ears. He spat and touched the man's tongue. 34 Then Jesus looked up into the sky and prayed for the man. He talked in their language. He said, "*Efatha*." That means, *Open up*. 35 And straight away, that man could hear properly, and his tongue was better so he could talk properly.

36 Jesus went back and told the people strongly, "Don't tell anyone about the great thing I just did."

But they didn't listen to Jesus. Jesus kept on telling them not to talk about it, but they just kept on telling other people, "Jesus made that man better."

37 Everyone was really surprised, and they said to each other, "Jesus does everything properly. He does really good things for people. He makes deaf people better, so they can hear again. And people that can't talk, he makes them better too, so they can talk."



Jesus made the deaf man's ears and tongue better

Chapter 8

Jesus fed 4,000 men

1 Jesus kept on teaching the people in that country. A big mob of people stayed there and listened to him for 3 days. And in that time, they finished up all their food. 2 Jesus called to his followers to come to him, and he said, "I feel really sorry for this mob. They are hungry, and they haven't got anything to eat. 3 I can't send them home like this. Some of them have walked a long way to get here, and if they start walking home now, they will get weak and fall down. We have to give them some food."

4 His followers said, "But they are a really big mob of people. We can't get enough food out here in the bush to feed them all."

5 Jesus said, "How much bread have you got?"

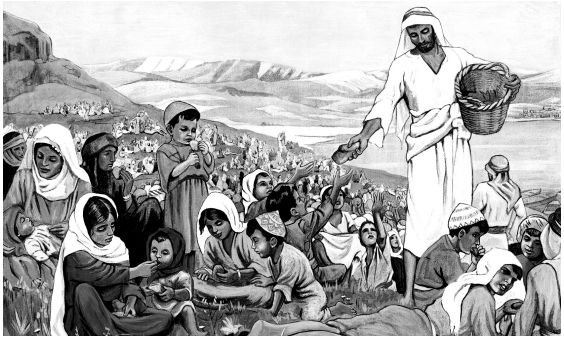
The men said, "7 loaves of bread."

6 Then Jesus told the people to sit down on the ground. Then he picked up the 7 loaves of bread and said, "Thank you God for this bread." Then Jesus broke it into bits and gave it to his followers, and they gave it out to all the people.

7 Somebody had some little fish there, and they gave them to Jesus, and he said, "Thank you God for these fish." Then Jesus also gave the fish to his followers, to give out to the people.

8 They all ate and ate until they were full, and there was a lot of food that they didn't eat. Then they picked up all those left-over bits of food, and they filled up 7 baskets with it. 9 There were 4,000 men in that big mob. After they finished eating that food, Jesus told them to go home.

10 Straight away, Jesus and his followers got into a boat and went across the lake to a place called Dalmanutha.



Jesus's followers gave food to all the people

Some of the Pharisee mob asked Jesus to show everyone his power

11 There were some of the Pharisee mob at that place. They were strong for the Jewish law. They heard people say that Jesus was there, so they came to talk to him. They wanted to trick him, so they started to argue with him. They said, "Hey, show us that God sent you here. Do something powerful so we can see that you have special power from God."*

12 Jesus was a little bit upset. He breathed deeply and said, "You mob that are alive today always want to see something powerful, and if I don't do something powerful, you will not believe that I came from God. Listen, I will not do anything powerful for you mob here now."* 13 Then Jesus and his followers walked away from that Pharisee mob, and they got into a boat and went across to the other side of the lake.

Jesus told his followers to be careful

14 But, before they got into the boat to go across the lake, Jesus's followers forgot to buy more food. So they only had one loaf of bread with them.

15 Jesus talked straight to his followers. He said, "You know how we make damper.

* **8:11** Luke 11:16 * **8:12** Luke 11:29

We put some baking powder into the flour to make it swell up. Well, I'm telling you this, stay away from the baking powder that comes from the Pharisee mob, that are strong for our law, and stay away from the baking powder that comes from Herod, the big boss."*

16 Jesus's followers didn't understand what Jesus meant, and they started to argue with each other. They said, "We didn't get enough food for the trip. That is what he is talking about."

17 Jesus knew what they said to each other, and he said, "Why are you mob arguing about food? You still haven't learned about me. You don't understand me. Maybe your minds are closed. 18-19 You've got eyes, but you don't look. You've got ears, but you don't listen. Do you remember the time we had 5 loaves of bread, and I gave food to 5,000 men? How many baskets of left-over bits did you pick up?"*

They said, "12 baskets full."

20 Then Jesus said, "Do you remember the time we had 7 loaves of bread, and I gave food to 4,000 men? How many baskets of left-over bits did you pick up?"

They said, "7 baskets full."

21 Then Jesus asked them, "So how come you still don't understand about me?"

Jesus made a blind man see again

22 Jesus and his followers got to a place called Bethsayida, on the west side of Lake Galilee, and they got out of the boat. Some people brought a blind man to him, and they asked Jesus to touch him and make him better. 23 Jesus held the man's hand and took him outside the town. Then Jesus spat on the man's eyes, and then put his hands on him and said, "Can you see anything now?"

24 The man looked around and said, "Yes,



Jesus took the blind man outside the town to make him better

I can see a little bit. I can see people, but they look like trees walking around." 25 So Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes again. Then the man carefully looked around again, and his eyes were properly better, and he saw everything clearly.

26 Jesus told the man to go straight home. He said, "As you walk home, don't go into that town. Don't let anyone see that I made you better."

Peter told Jesus, "You are the special man that God promised to send"

27 Then Jesus and his followers left Galilee country, and they went north to some towns in the country called Caesarea-Philippi. As they walked along the track, Jesus asked his followers, "When people talk about me, who do they reckon I really am?"

28 They said, "They reckon you are one of God's men that died, but then God made you come alive again. Some people reckon you are John the Baptiser. Other people reckon you are Elijah, that man that lived a long time ago. And other people reckon you

* **8:15** Luke 12:1 * **8:18-19** Jeremiah 5:21; Ezekiel 12:2; Mark 4:12

are one of those other men that told God's messages a long time ago."*

29 Then Jesus asked them, "Who do you reckon I really am?"

Peter said straight out, "You are the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us."*

30 Jesus told them strongly, "Don't say that to anyone else. Don't tell anyone about me."

Jesus told his followers, "They will kill me"

31 Then Jesus told his followers about the bad things that were going to happen to him. He said, "I am God's special man from heaven, but our Jewish elders, and our ceremony bosses, and our law teachers, they will all reckon I'm no good. They will hurt me badly in lots of ways, and they will kill me. I will be dead for 2 nights, then on the 3rd day I will come alive again."

32 Jesus talked straight to them, but Peter couldn't believe it. He took Jesus away from the others and told him not to talk like that.
33 Jesus turned around and looked at his other followers there, then he said strongly to Peter, "Go away from me. You are like Satan, the boss over the bad spirits. You are not thinking God's way. You are just thinking like a man."

34 Then Jesus called out to all the people that were there. He called them to come up close, with his followers, and he said to them all, "If any of you wants to follow me properly, you have to stop thinking only about yourself. You have to live like me. You have to be ready to die, yes, die like a criminal on a cross, just like I will die.*
35 If you only want to look after your own life here on earth, you will lose it. You will not live for ever with me. But if you are ready to give up your life here, and live my way, and tell other people the good news about me, then you will find real life, and you will live with me for ever.* 36 You see, you might get lots of money and things for yourself, and you might even get everything in the world. But if you miss out on real life, and you don't live for ever with me, all that stuff is useless to you. 37 You can't use it to get that real life.

38 You know that some people are really bad, and they don't take any notice of God. If you are frightened of them, so that you don't tell them about me, and you don't say that you belong to me, then later, I will not say that you belong to me. I'm God's special man from heaven, and one day my father, God, will make me really great, and I will come back here to the earth, with all God's angel messengers. But if you don't tell people now that you belong to me, then when I come back here, I will not say that you belong to me."

Chapter 9

1 Then Jesus said, "Listen, some of you people will see a very special thing. God will show you that he is boss over everything, and you will see that he is really powerful. You will see that happen before you die."

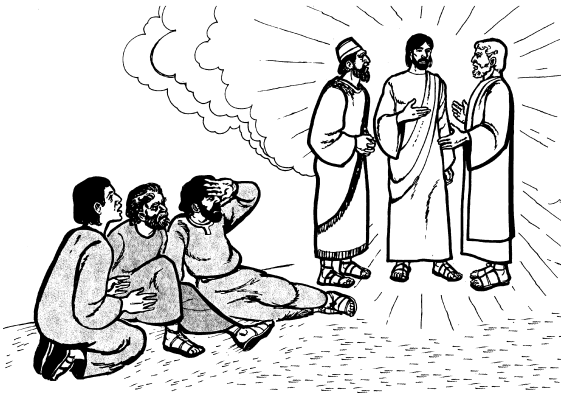
3 men saw Jesus become bright and shiny

2 After 6 days, Jesus got Peter, and James, and John, and they went by themselves up to the top of a big hill. While they were there, Jesus started to look different. 3 His clothes got really white and shiny. Nobody can wash clothes good enough to make them properly white like that. 4 And Peter, James and John saw 2 men that lived a long time ago. They were Elijah and Moses. Elijah was a man that told God's messages to people,

* **8:28** Mark 6:14-15; Luke 9:7-8 * **8:29** John 6:68-69 * **8:34** Matthew 10:38; Luke 14:27
* **8:35** Matthew 10:39; Luke 17:33; John 12:25

and Moses was a leader of the Israel nation. They were there, and they talked to Jesus.

5-6 Peter, James and John were very surprised and frightened, and they didn't know what to say. But Peter talked anyway. He said to Jesus, "Teacher, it is good that we are here. We can put up 3 special bush shades here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."



Peter, James and John saw Elijah and Moses talking to Jesus

7 Then a cloud covered them all, and God talked to them from the cloud. He said, "This is my son. I love him very much. You have to listen properly to him."* 8 Then Peter, James and John looked around for those 2 old men, but they couldn't see them any more. Only Jesus was there with them.

9 Then they all started to come down from the hill. And as they walked along, Jesus told them really straight, "Don't tell anyone what you just saw. You have to wait until after I die. I'm God's special man, and I will die, and then I will come back alive again. After that, you can talk about what you saw."

10 So Peter, James and John kept quiet about it. They didn't tell anyone, but they talked to each other about the words Jesus said, "I will die, and then I will come back alive again." They didn't know what Jesus meant.

11 Then they asked Jesus about the Jewish law teachers. They said, "Those law teachers say that first of all Elijah has to come back, God's man that lived a long time ago. He has to come back, and after that, God will send his special man."*

12-13 Jesus said, "Those law teachers are right. That man did come, and he told them God's message, just like Elijah did a long time ago. That man got things ready for me, but bad people killed him. And they will do the same to me, God's special man from heaven. They will turn against me and not listen to me, and they will hurt me a lot. A long time ago God got his men to write about that, and it is in God's book."

Jesus forced a bad spirit out of a boy

14 They came back down the hill, and they found Jesus's other followers arguing with the Jewish law teachers. There were lots of people standing around. 15 That mob looked up and saw Jesus, and they were surprised, and they all ran to him, and they said *hello* to him.

16 Jesus asked them, "What are you mob all arguing about?"

17 One of them said, "Teacher, my son has a bad spirit inside him, and it stops him from talking. 18 It pushes the boy down on to the ground, and his body goes stiff, and he rubs his teeth together, and spit comes out of his mouth. I asked your followers, 'Please force that bad spirit out of him.' But they can't do it."

19 Jesus said, "Look, you mob, I've been here with you a long time, but still you don't trust God properly. I can't stay here and

* **9:7** Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; 2 Peter 1:17-18 * **9:11** Malachi 4:5; Matthew 11:14

wait for you for ever. All right, bring the boy here to me."

20 The people brought the boy to Jesus. As soon as that bad spirit saw Jesus, it shook the boy and pushed him down, so that he wriggled around on the ground, and a lot of spit came out of his mouth.

21 Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has your boy been like this?"

The man said, "For a long time, from when he was a little kid. 22 Lots of times the bad spirit pushed him into fires and into water. That bad spirit is trying to kill him. Please feel sorry for us, and help him if you can."

23 Jesus said, "You said to me, 'If you can.' But you know that God is strong enough to do anything if you trust him to do it, right?"

24 The boy's father yelled out, "I believe God can do it. But please help me believe properly."

25 Jesus looked around, and he saw a big mob of people coming to watch, so he talked strongly to the bad spirit. He said, "Listen, you bad spirit. You stop people from talking and hearing. I'm telling you now, come out of this little boy, and stay out of him. You can never go back into him."

26 Then the bad spirit screamed, and it forced the boy to have another bad fit and fall down on the ground, then it went out of the boy. The boy looked like he was dead, and a lot of people said, "Poor boy, he's finished." 27 But Jesus grabbed the boy's hand and helped him stand up. Then the boy's father took him home.

28 After that, Jesus and his followers went into a house, and his followers asked him quietly, "Why couldn't we force the bad spirit out of that boy?"

29 Jesus told them, "The only way you can force that sort of bad spirit out of somebody is to pray to God, and get him to force it out."


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Jesus forced the bad spirit out of the boy and helped him stand up

Jesus said, "They will kill me, and after that, I will come alive again"

30-31 Later Jesus and his followers left that place and went through Galilee country. He didn't want everyone to know where he was going, so they went along secretly and quietly, and he was teaching his followers as they walked along. He told them about what was going to happen to him. He said, "I'm God's special man from heaven, but bad men will grab me, and they will kill me. I will be dead for 2 nights, then on the 3rd day I will come alive again." 32 His followers couldn't understand what he was talking about. But they felt shame, so they didn't ask him about it.

Jesus's followers argued about who was the most important

33-34 While they walked along the road, Jesus's followers argued with each other about which one of them was the most important. Then, after they got to Capernium,

they all went into a house, and Jesus asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" His followers didn't answer him. They felt too much shame.*

35 Then Jesus sat down to teach them, and he called to his 12 special workers to come close to him, and he said, "If any one of you wants to be the leader, you have to think to yourself, 'I'm not important at all.' And you have to be a worker for everyone else."*

36-37 There was a young kid in that house, and Jesus picked him up and said, "Look at this little kid. If you follow me, and if you are friendly to little kids like this one, and if you help them, well, really you are friendly to me too. And if you are friendly to me, well, really you are friendly to my father in heaven too. He is the one that sent me here."*

A man used Jesus's power to force bad spirits out of people

38 John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw a man forcing bad spirits out of people, and he was using your power by saying your name. But he's not one of our mob. So we told him to stop."

39 But Jesus said, "No. Don't stop him. If somebody uses my power by saying my name to do good and powerful things for people, that person can't soon turn around and say bad things about me. 40 You see, if somebody is not trying to stop us, well, that person is really on our side.* 41 And listen, if somebody knows that you are my follower, and so they try to help you, even if they just give you a drink of water, God will be sure to pay that person with something good for that good thing they did."*

The right way to live

42 Jesus kept on teaching his followers. He said, "If a little kid trusts me, and if somebody gets that little kid to do something bad, God will properly punish that person. Suppose somebody gets a big stone and ties it to that person's neck and throws them into the sea and drowns them, that is bad for that person, but it is not as bad as the trouble God will give them for getting that little kid to go wrong.

43-44 Look, if there is something that gets you to go wrong, you have to stop yourself. If you want to do something bad with your hand, you have to stop yourself from doing it. It is like you have to cut off your hand. It is better for you to live with God for ever with only one hand, than for God to send you to hell with 2 hands. That fire in hell never goes out.* 45-46 In the same way, if you want to do something bad with your foot, you have to stop yourself from doing it. It is like you have to cut off your foot. It is better for you to live with God for ever with only one foot, than for God to send you to hell with 2 feet. 47 It is the same for your eye. If you want to look with your eye at something, and if it gets you to do something bad, you have to look away. It is like you have to dig your eye out. It is better for you to be in God's family with only one eye, than for God to send you to hell with 2 eyes.* 48 Hell is a really bad place and people that go there will have bad pain all the time. It will be like maggots are eating them all the time, and like a fire is burning them all the time. Their pain will never stop."*

49 Jesus also said to them, "God is going to let you have some trouble. He wants to test you to see if you are following him properly.

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* **9:33-34** Luke 22:24 * **9:35** Matthew 20:26-27; 23:11; Mark 10:43-44; Luke 22:26
* **9:36-37** Matthew 10:40; Luke 10:16; John 13:20 * **9:40** Matthew 12:30; Luke 11:23 * **9:41** Matthew 10:42
* **9:43-44** Matthew 5:30 * **9:47** Matthew 5:29 * **9:48** Isaiah 66:24

You know how people shake salt on to food to make it good? Well, this trouble will be like God is shaking fire on to you, and it will make you good.

50 You know that salt is good. It makes food better. But if that salt loses its salty taste, it is no good any more, and you can't fix it up. That is a picture of you mob. You have to be like good salt for people. You have to try to make their lives better, and don't fight with anyone, but live happy and quiet together."*

Chapter 10

Don't split up married people

1 Jesus left Capernium in Galilee and went south, through Judea to the country on the east side of the Jordan River. A lot of people went to him there, and he taught them God's word, the same as he always did.

2 Some of the Pharisee mob also went to Jesus. They were strong for the Jewish law, and they tried to trick Jesus with a hard question. They said, "Is it all right for a man to break up his marriage, and send his wife away?"

3 Jesus said, "What did Moses write in the law part of God's book?"

4 The Pharisee mob said, "Moses wrote a law like this, 'A man can split up from his wife. That man has to write a divorce letter to say she is not his wife any more. He has to give that letter to his wife, and then he can force her to go away.' "*

5 Jesus said to them, "You people have closed ears, and you will not listen to God, so Moses had to write those words for you like that. 6 But God tells us in his book that he made people and everything else. His book says,

'He made them man and woman.'*

7 And he tells us,

'A man will leave his mother and father
and marry a woman. The man and
his wife will join with each other,
and their bodies will be like one
body again.'

8 So they are not 2 people any more. They are like just one body.* 9 You see, God joined them together like that, so don't let anyone split them up."

10 After that, Jesus went back to the house with just his followers, and they asked him more about the things he said. 11 Jesus said to them, "If a man splits up from his wife, and then if he marries another woman, he is sleeping with the wrong woman as if she is his proper wife. But she is not, and he is breaking God's law, and he is doing wrong to his proper wife. 12 And if a woman splits up from her husband, and then if she marries another man, she is sleeping with the wrong man as if he is her proper husband. But he is not, and she is breaking God's law, and she is doing wrong to her proper husband."*

Jesus held kids in his arms

13 Some time later, some people took their kids to Jesus. They wanted him to put his hands on them, and ask God to be good to them. But Jesus's followers got angry with those people and told them to take their kids away.

14 Jesus saw his followers stopping the kids from coming to him, and he got upset. He said, "Don't stop those kids. Let them come to me. They are the sort of people God wants. You see, if you are like these little kids, God will let you join his family. 15 You know, little kids know they are weak and not important, so they trust their mothers and fathers and do what they say. Well, I'm

* **9:50** Matthew 5:13; Luke 14:34-35 * **10:4** Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Matthew 5:31 * **10:6** Genesis 1:27; 5:2
* **10:7-8** Genesis 2:24 * **10:11-12** Matthew 5:32; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11

telling you straight, you have to be like those kids. You have to trust God and let him be your boss. If you can't do that, you can't be in God's family."*

16 Then Jesus held those kids in his arms, and he prayed for God to be good to them.



Jesus let the kids come to him

A rich man asked Jesus how to live for ever

17 After that, Jesus started to leave that place. Then a man ran up to him and got down on his knees to show Jesus respect. The man said, "Teacher, you are a good man. Tell me, what can I do so that I will live with God for ever?"

18 Jesus said, "You call me good, but think about it. Only God is properly good. 19 You know God's laws,

– Don't murder anyone.
– Don't sleep with a woman that is not your wife, as if you are married to her.
– Don't steal things that belong to other people.



A rich man asked Jesus, "What can I do so that I will live for ever?"

– Don't tell lies about anybody.
– Don't trick people to get something from them.
– You always have to respect your father and your mother."*

20 That man said, "Teacher, I always do all those things. I always lived like that, from when I was a boy."

21 Jesus looked at him, and he loved him. And Jesus said, "There is still one more thing you have to do. Go and sell all your things to get some money, and give all that money to people that haven't got anything. After you do that, God will be really happy with you. And later, in heaven, he will give you lots of other good things. So go and do what I told you, then come with me, and follow me."

22 That man heard what Jesus said, and he got really sad. He was a rich man, but Jesus told him to give all his things away. That made him very sad, and he just walked away with his eyes looking down.

23 After that man left, Jesus looked around at his followers, and he said, "It's really hard for rich people to join God's family and to let him be their boss."

24-25 This shocked Jesus's followers. So

* **10:15** Matthew 18:3 * **10:19** Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20

he told them more. He said, "It is hard for anyone to let God be their boss. Think about a big camel. Do you reckon it can go through the little hole in a needle? No, it can't. But I'm telling you, it's more easy for a big camel to get through that little hole, than for a rich person to get into God's family. Rich people find it really hard to let God be the boss over their lives."



A camel is a big animal

26 This shocked Jesus's followers, and they said to each other, "Is there anyone that God will save and take into his family? Maybe nobody."

27 Jesus looked straight at them and said, "Nobody is good enough to get into God's family. But God can make people good enough. God can do anything."

28 Peter said to Jesus, "We have left everything to follow you. What about us?"

29-30 Jesus said, "Listen, if anyone leaves anything, so that they can tell people God's good news, they will get back more than they leave. If somebody leaves their home, or their brothers, or their sisters, or their mother, or their father, or their kids, or their land, so that they can follow me and tell people God's good news, they will get a much better life. They will get a lot more homes, a lot more brothers and sisters, a lot more mothers, a lot more kids, and a lot more land. But I have to tell you this too. If they do this work for me, they will get trouble from other people. But later they will live with God for ever.

31 People that are important leaders today will find out later that they are nothing. God will make them workers for everybody. And people that are just workers today will be the important leaders later."*

Jesus told his followers, "They will kill me"

32 Then Jesus and his followers walked along the road towards Jerusalem, and Jesus went ahead of his followers. Jesus's special workers were shocked because there were people in Jerusalem that wanted to make big trouble for Jesus, but he wanted to go there anyway. And his other followers were frightened too.

Then Jesus stopped walking, and he took his 12 special workers away from the other people, and he told them what was going to happen to him later. 33 Jesus said, "We are all going to Jerusalem, and after we get there, somebody will change sides, and he will help the other mob catch me. That other mob are the bosses of our Jewish ceremonies and our law teachers. I'm God's special man from heaven, but those Jewish leaders will grab me and take me to the Roman bosses. The Jewish leaders will say that I'm guilty, and they will tell the Romans to kill me. 34 Then the Romans will make fun of me, and spit on me. They will hit me with whips, and then they will kill me. I will be dead for 2 nights, then on the 3rd day I will come alive again."

* **10:31** Matthew 20:16; Luke 13:30

James and John asked Jesus to make them important

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee,
went up to Jesus and said, "Teacher, we want
you to do something good for us. Will you
do what we ask you?"
36 Jesus asked them, "What do you want
me to do?"
37 They said, "Later you will be the most
important leader. Can you make us the next
most important? Can you let one of us sit
on one side of you, and the other one sit on
the other side of you?"
38 Jesus said, "You 2 don't understand what
you are asking me. People will give me a
really hard time. Do you reckon you can stay
strong for God even when people give you a
really hard time? I will have really bad pain.
It's like I will have to drink really bad drink,
like poison. I will even die."*
39 James and John said, "Yes. We can do
that."

So Jesus said, "You are right. You will get
the same hard time as me, and you will get
bad pain like I will get. 40 But I can't give
you what you want. God is the one that
picks the people that will be the important
leaders, and he picks the people that will sit
beside me later on."
41 Jesus's other 10 special workers heard
what James and John asked for, and they got
angry. 42 So Jesus called them all together
and said, "You know what government
people are like here in this world. They
like to be bosses over everybody. It is like
that everywhere in this world, the leaders
boss everyone around, and the big bosses
like to show everyone that they are strong.
43-44 But I don't want you to be like that. If
you want to be a leader of my people, you
have to really want to help them, so you
have to work hard for them, and don't think
about pay. And if you want to be the most
important person, you have to be a worker
for everyone.* 45 You see, all the leaders of
my people have to be like that. They have to
be just like me. I'm God's special man from
heaven, but I didn't come here to be bossy
and get people to work for me. I came here
to work for other people. And I came here to
die for a lot of people. I will let God punish
me instead of them. He will punish me for
the bad things that they did."

Jesus made a blind man see again

46 Jesus and his followers kept going towards
Jerusalem, and they walked through a town
called Jericho. As they left Jericho, a big
mob of people walked with them along the
road.

A blind man was sitting at the side of that
road, asking people to give him money so
that he could buy some food. He was called
Bartimayus. His father's name was Timayus.
47 Bartimayus heard that Jesus from
Nazareth was coming along the road, so
he started to yell out, "Jesus, you belong to



A blind man was sitting at the side of the road, asking people for money

* **10:38** Luke 12:50 * **10:42-44** Matthew 23:11; Mark 9:35; Luke 22:25-26

David's family, and you are the man that God promised to send to us. Please feel sorry for me, and help me."

48 A lot of the people there told him to be quiet, but he kept on yelling out even louder, "You belong to David's family, and you are the man that God promised to send to us. Please feel sorry for me, and help me."

49 Jesus stopped and said, "Tell him to come to me."

So they called out to the blind man, and they said, "Listen, Jesus is calling out for you. So you can be happy now. Get up and go to him."

50 That blind man jumped up. He didn't worry about his coat. He left it behind on the ground. He just got up and walked to Jesus. 51 Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

That blind man said, "Teacher, I just want to see again."

52 Jesus said to him, "You believe in me, so now you can see again. You can go home now." Straight away, Bartimayus could see again, and he joined in with the other people and followed Jesus along that road.

Chapter 11

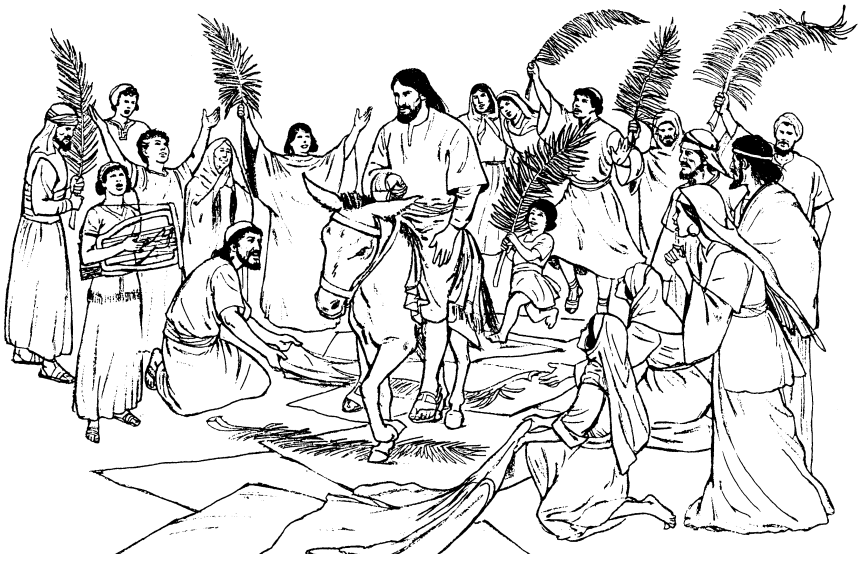
Jesus went into Jerusalem on a donkey

1 Jesus and his followers kept going, and they got near to Jerusalem. They came to the 2 towns called Bethany and Bethfage, on the hill called Olive Trees Hill.

Then Jesus told 2 of his followers to go to a town nearby. 2 He said, "As soon as you get there you will see a donkey tied to a post. Nobody ever rode that young donkey yet. I want you to untie that donkey and bring it to me. 3 If anyone asks you why you are taking that donkey, you can say, 'Our leader needs it for a while, but don't worry, he will send it back to you later.'"

4 The 2 men went into the town, and they found the donkey near the door of a house, then they started to untie him. 5 Some people standing there said to them, "What are you doing? Why are you untying that young donkey?" 6 Jesus's followers told them what Jesus said, and then those people let them take the donkey and go.

7 They took the donkey back to Jesus. Then they put their coats on top of the donkey,



Jesus went into Jerusalem on a donkey

and Jesus sat on their coats on the donkey, and he started to ride it into Jerusalem. 8 A lot of people laid their coats down on to the track in front of the donkey, and other people cut leafy branches from trees, and they put them on the track for the donkey to walk on. 9 Some of the people walked in front of Jesus, and some of them walked behind him. They all kept on yelling out,

"God, you are really great and
powerful. God, we want you to look
after the man you have sent. Make
him strong and happy.
10 God, please make this man our big
boss, just like David was our big
boss. David was our grand-father
that lived a long time ago.
God in heaven, you are very great and
powerful."*

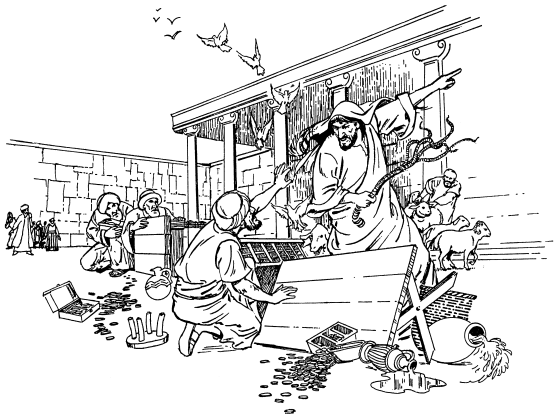
11 Then Jesus got to Jerusalem, and he went into God's ceremony house. He looked around at everything that was going on there. The sun was starting to go down, so Jesus left God's ceremony house, and he and his 12 special workers went back to Bethany.

Jesus cursed a fruit tree

12-13 The next morning, Jesus and his followers started to walk from Bethany back to Jerusalem. Jesus saw a tree not far away. It was the sort of tree that gets fruit, called figs. Jesus was hungry, so he went to look for some figs on that tree, but there was nothing. It had lots of leaves, but no fruit. You see, it was not yet the right time of the year for that sort of fruit. 14 His followers heard Jesus say to that tree, "Nobody will ever eat any fruit from you again."

Jesus stopped people selling things in God's ceremony house

15 Then Jesus and his followers went into



Jesus stopped people selling things in God's ceremony house

Jerusalem, and they went to God's ceremony house. Inside that house people were buying and selling animals and pigeons, to use in their ceremonies. And other people were taking people's Roman money and giving them Jewish money, to give to the bosses of God's ceremony house. But they did those things inside that house. They didn't respect God's house, so they were wrong. So Jesus hunted all those people out of God's ceremony house. He hunted out all the men that sold things, and the people that bought things, and those people that changed money. He knocked over their tables with their money on them, and he knocked over the chairs of the men that sold pigeons. 16 He wouldn't let anyone carry those things through God's ceremony house.

17 Then Jesus taught everyone. He said, "Do you know what God says? These words are in his book,

'God wants his special house to be a
place for people from every tribe to
come and pray in.'
But you mob turned God's house into a
place where criminals steal money from
people."*

* **11:9-10** Psalm 118:25-26 * **11:17** Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11

18 The Jewish law teachers and the bosses
of the Jewish ceremonies heard about what
Jesus did at God's house, and they were
angry. But all the other people were really
happy with Jesus. Whenever he taught
them, they listened to him, and they were
really surprised by the things he said. So the
Jewish leaders were frightened of him. They
thought that maybe everyone was going to
listen to Jesus and stop listening to them.
So those leaders started to work out a way
to kill Jesus.
19 Later that day, when the sun started to go
down, Jesus and his followers left Jerusalem
and went back to Bethany.

The fruit tree died

20 In the morning, Jesus and his followers
walked past that fruit tree that he talked to
the day before. They looked at it. It was dead
and dry, right down to the ground. 21 Peter
remembered the words Jesus said to it, and
Peter said, "Teacher, that tree you cursed is
already dead and dry."
22 Jesus said, "If you trust God properly,
you can do things like that too. 23 Listen, if
you ask God to do something, and if you
really trust him to do it, then he will do it for
you. If you trust him properly, you can even
say to a big hill, 'God will pick you up and
throw you into the sea,' and God will do it.*
24 So I'm telling you, if you ask God for
something, and if you trust him properly,
that is, if you believe that he will give you
that thing, then God will make it happen
for you.
25-26 And whenever you pray, first think
about this. If somebody did a wrong thing to
you, you have to let it go. Don't think about
payback. If you let it go, then God will let go
of all the wrong things you have done too.
He will say you are not guilty, and he will
not do payback. So before you pray to God,
you have to let go of all the wrong things
that people did to you."*

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus a question

27 Then Jesus and his followers went into
Jerusalem, and they walked into the yard
of God's ceremony house. As Jesus walked
along, some Jewish leaders went up to
him. They were some bosses of the Jewish
ceremonies, and some law teachers, and
some elders. 28 They asked Jesus straight,
"Who told you to hunt all those people out of
God's ceremony house? What big boss said
that you can do that?"
29 Jesus said to them, "You answer my
question first. If you answer me, then I will
tell you which big boss said that I can hunt
those men out of God's ceremony house.
30 My question is about John the Baptiser.
Who told him to do that washing ceremony
for people? Did people tell John to do that,
or did God tell him to do it?"
31 Those Jewish leaders talked together to
work out their answer. They said to each
other, "If we say that God told John to do
it, then we will be in trouble. He will say
to us, 'So why didn't you mob listen to
him?' 32 But we can't say that people told
him to do it." You see, those leaders were
frightened of the people there. They knew
that the people believed that John was
God's man. So if those leaders said that
John wasn't God's man, then the people
might hit them.
33 So the Jewish leaders said, "We don't
know who told John to do that washing
ceremony for people."
Then Jesus said, "You did not answer me,
so I will not answer you. I will not tell you
which big boss said that I can do those
things."

* **11:23** Matthew 17:20; 1 Corinthians 13:2 * **11:25-26** Matthew 6:14-15

Chapter 12

The story about men that looked after a garden

1 After that, Jesus told them all a picture
story. He said, "A man planted some fruit
trees in his garden. Then he built a strong
fence around it, and he made all the things
he needed to look after those trees properly.
Then he got some men to look after those
trees for him. They agreed to give him some
of the fruit from that garden, instead of
paying rent money for it. After that, the
owner went away to another country. *
2 The time came for the men to pick the
fruit, and the owner sent one of his work-
men to get some of his fruit from the garden.
3 But the men in the garden grabbed that
work-man, and they beat him up, and they
sent him back with nothing.
4 Then the owner sent another work-man
to the garden, but those men hit him on the
head and said bad things to him. 5 After that,
the owner sent another work-man to the
garden, and this time the men killed him.
Again and again the owner sent work-men
to get some of his fruit, but the men in the
garden killed some of them, and they beat
up the others.
6 The owner of the garden had one more
person to send to get the fruit from the
garden. The owner said to himself, 'I will try
one more time. I will send my son. I love him,
and those men in the garden will respect
him too.' So he sent his son to that garden.
7 But the men in the garden saw the owner's
son, and they said to themselves, 'After that
old man dies this young man will get this
garden for himself. Let's kill this man now so
that we can get the garden for ourselves.' 8 So
they grabbed the young man, and they killed
him and chucked his body out of the garden."



The owner of the garden sent his son to get some fruit from the men in the garden

9 Then Jesus asked the people, "What do
you reckon the owner of that garden will
do? I'm telling you, he will go to the garden
and kill all those men there. Then he will
get other people to look after the garden
for him."
10 Then Jesus said, "You mob can read this
picture story in God's book, so think about
its message. God said,

> 'Some workers built a house out of big
> stones, but those workers thought
> one of those stones was rubbish, so
> they chucked it away.
> They were wrong. That stone was
> properly good, and now God made it
> the most important stone of all.
> 11 Yes, God did that, and we are really
> happy about it. We reckon he did
> something great.' " *

12 The Jewish leaders heard that story,
and they knew that it was a picture of
themselves, that they were the bad workers
in the story. They got angry, and they
wanted to grab Jesus and take him to jail.
But they were frightened of the big mob
of people there, so they just walked away
and left him alone.

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* **12:1** Isaiah 5:1-2 * **12:10-11** Psalm 118:22-23

Some people tried to trick Jesus

13 Then the Jewish leaders sent some other men to try to trick Jesus. They sent some of the law men that were called Pharisees, and they sent some men that were good friends of Herod. Herod was the big government boss at that time. Those men tried to get Jesus to say something wrong, so they could make trouble for him.

14 They said to Jesus, "Teacher, we know that you always want to do the right thing, and you always say true words. You talk to everyone the same way, people that are important and people that are not important. You always teach God's words the right way. Well, we have a question about the Roman government bosses over our country. Is it right or wrong for us Jews to pay tax money to them?"

15 Jesus knew that if he said, "Don't pay that tax money," then he will be in trouble with the Roman bosses, and if he said, "Pay that tax money," then he will be in trouble with the Jewish people. They wanted to be free from the Roman bosses. So Jesus said, "Don't try to trick me. Have you got some money? I want to look at a coin."

16 The men gave Jesus a coin. He looked at it and said, "Who is this on this money? Whose picture is this? And whose name is this?"

They said, "That is Caesar, the Roman government's big boss."



The coin that they gave Jesus looked like this

17 Jesus said, "Well, you have to give Caesar and the Roman government whatever belongs to them, and you have to give God whatever belongs to him."

When they heard him say that they were all really surprised.

Other people asked Jesus a tricky question

18 There were some Jewish people that believed that after somebody dies they will stay dead, and they will never come alive again. They were called *Sadducees*. They tried to trick Jesus too.* 19 They said to him, "Teacher, Moses wrote down God's law like this, he said, 'If a married man has no kids, and if he dies, then his brother has to marry his widow. Then they have to have kids, and everyone will call those kids that dead brother's kids.'*

20 But what about this. There were 7 brothers. The oldest brother got married, but he died before his wife could have a baby. 21 So the next brother married that woman to follow God's law, but he died too, before they could have a baby. Then the next brother did the same, but he died too, before they could have a baby. 22 The same happened to all of those brothers. They all followed God's law and married the woman, but each of them died before they could have any kids. And then last of all, that woman died too.

23 Well, you reckon that one day all the dead people will come alive again. So here is our question. If all those brothers and that woman come alive again, which brother will have that woman as his wife? All 7 brothers had her as their wife before they died."

24 Jesus said, "You mob have a problem. You don't know God's word properly, and you don't know about God's power. 25 You see, after all the dead people come alive again, they will be like God's angel messengers

* **12:18** Acts 23:8 * **12:19** Deuteronomy 25:5

in heaven. Those angels never marry each other. And people that come alive again will be the same. Nobody will promise a wife to anyone, and nobody will marry anyone.

26-27 You mob reckon that dead people will never come alive again, but think about this story about Moses. You can read it in God's book. Moses saw a little tree on fire, and then God said to him,

> 'I am the God of Abraham, and I am the God of Isaac, and I am the God of Jacob.'

He didn't say, 'At one time, I used to be the God of those men.' He said that he is their God now. That means those men are alive, not dead. They are living right now, with God. You see, you mob are really wrong."*

The most important laws

28 One of the Jewish law teachers listened to Jesus and thought that Jesus answered them well. Then he asked Jesus, "Which one of God's laws is the most important one?"

29 Jesus said to him, "The most important law is this one,

> 'Listen to me, you Israel people, our God is the only God.
> He is the number one boss over everybody.
> 30 You have to love God properly, not just a little bit. You have to love God from right inside yourself.
> You have to love God in the way you feel, and in the way you think.
> And you have to love God in the way you do things.'*

31 The 2nd most important law is this one,

> 'You have to love other people just as much as you love yourself.'*

Those 2 laws are the strongest and most important laws."

32 The Jewish law teacher said, "That is a good answer, teacher. God is the number one boss over everybody. There is no other god, just him.* 33 We have to love God properly, not just a little bit. We have to love God from right inside ourselves. We have to love God in the way we feel, and in the way we think. And we have to love God in the way we do things. That is really important for us. It is not so important for us to do ceremonies, like we do when we burn meat to give it to God."*

34 Jesus heard the man's words and knew this man was thinking the right way, so Jesus said, "You are right. You are nearly ready for God to take you into his family."

After that, nobody was brave enough to ask Jesus any more questions to try to trick him.

Jesus taught people in God's special house

35 Then Jesus taught people in the yard of God's ceremony house. He said, "You know that David lived a long time ago, and now our Jewish law teachers say that one of his grand-sons will be the special man that God promised to send, called the Christ. What do they mean by that? 36 Think about this. God's Holy Spirit told David to write these words, and they are in God's book. He wrote,

> 'God said to my boss, "Come here and sit down beside me until I make you boss over all your enemies."'*

37 You know, David was talking about that special man that God was going to send, and David called him *boss*, so how can that man be David's grand-son?"

A lot of people listened to his words, and they were really happy with him.

38 Jesus kept on teaching the people. He said, "Look out for those Jewish law teachers. They think they are great. They wear real

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* **12:26-27** Exodus 3:6, 15 * **12:29-30** Deuteronomy 6:4-5 * **12:31** Leviticus 19:18 * **12:32** Deuteronomy 4:35; 6:4; Isaiah 45:21 * **12:33** 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 40:6-8; Isaiah 1:11-15; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8 * **12:36** Psalm 110:1

good clothes so that people will think they are important. They like people to say *hello* to them whenever they go shopping. 39 Those law teachers want everyone to respect them, so they want to have special chairs at the meeting houses, and if they go to parties, they want to have special places to sit. 40 But they do bad things. They trick old women that haven't got anybody to look after them. They take everything off those women. They take their houses and all their things, and then those law teachers go to the meeting house and say long prayers, so that people will think they are good. They just pretend to live God's way. You know, God will punish them more than he will punish the other people that do bad things."

A poor widow gave money to God

41 Then Jesus sat down near the money box at God's ceremony house, and he watched the people put money in the box to give it to God. Some rich people put in a lot of money. 42 But then a poor widow woman came in, and she didn't put much money into the money box. She just put in 2 very little coins.

43-44 Jesus called his followers to him and said, "Listen, this poor woman gave more money than those rich people. You see, those rich people gave some of their money, but they still have lots more back at their homes. But that poor woman gave all the money she had. She kept nothing for herself, not even money to buy some food for herself."



A poor widow put all her money into the money box at God's ceremony house

Chapter 13

Jesus talked about the way everything will finish up

1 Jesus and his followers started to leave God's ceremony house, and as they walked along, one of them said, "Teacher, look at these lovely buildings. And look at these big stones. This is a really good house that they made for God."

2 Jesus said, "You see these lovely big buildings? One day, these buildings will not be here. Somebody will knock them all down. They will just be a big pile of rubbish."

3 Then Jesus and his followers went out of Jerusalem, and they sat down on the hill called Olive Trees Hill. They could see God's ceremony house from there. Peter, James, John and Andrew talked quietly to Jesus. They asked him, 4 "When will somebody knock that building down? Will there be something to show us that it will soon happen?"

5 Jesus said, "Listen, you have to be careful. Don't let anybody trick you. 6 A lot of people will come and say, 'I'm Jesus Christ, the man that God sent,' and they will trick a lot of people. 7 You will hear stories about big fights, and somebody might tell you stories about big fights that will happen later. Don't let those stories frighten you. Those fights will happen, but the world will not finish up yet. 8 There will be a lot more fights. People from some tribes will get up and fight against people from other tribes, and people from some nations will get up and fight against people from other nations. And in lots of different places the ground will shake in earthquakes. And sometimes there will

not be any food, and people will be really hungry. These bad things will happen, and after that, more big trouble will come. You know about women, when they have babies. At first a woman has some pain, then later her pain gets really bad. Well, the trouble I just told you about is like the first pain for a mother, and after that, the trouble will get really bad.

9 You have to watch out. You see, you follow me, but some people don't like me, so they will not like you. They will grab you and take you to their leaders, and they will punish you. And people will beat you up in their meeting houses. They will take you to court, so that you will stand up in front of big leaders and big government bosses. Then you can tell everyone about me. 10 You see, people everywhere will hear about me. The people in every nation will hear the good news about me, and some time after that, the world will finish up.

11 Yes, people will grab you to take you to court. But before you get there, don't worry about what you will say to the judge. The Holy Spirit will give you the right words to say, so just talk the way the Holy Spirit tells you to. *

12 You see, there is going to be so much trouble that people will fight their own families. Some men will turn against their own brothers, and they will get people to kill them. And some fathers will do that to their own kids. And some kids will turn against their mothers and fathers and get people to kill them. 13 And everybody will know that you follow me, so they will hate you. But if you stay strong and don't give up, God will save you." *

14 Then Jesus said, "Somebody will put a really bad thing inside God's ceremony house. That bad thing ruins everything around it, so it shouldn't be in God's house. It will bring a lot of trouble." (Everyone that reads this story has to try hard to understand what it means.) And Jesus said, "When you see that happen, you mob that live in Judea country, you have to quickly run away to the hill country. * 15 If you are outside your house, don't go back into it to get anything. 16 Or if you are out working somewhere, don't go back to your house to get something, not even your coat. Just run away quick. * 17 It will be hard for women that are carrying babies inside them, and for mothers with little kids at that time. 18 You have to ask God to stop this trouble from coming at the time when the weather is bad and it's hard to go anywhere. 19 This trouble will give people really bad pain. People never had bad pain like that before, not in all the time since God made everything. And nothing that bad will ever happen again. * 20 You see, if God lets that trouble keep on going, everybody will die. But God has picked out some people, and he doesn't want them to die, so after a short time he will stop that trouble so that they will not die. 21 Don't believe people that say, 'We have found the Christ, the special man from God. Here he is.' Or if they say, 'There he is over there,' don't believe them.

22 There will be a lot of people that will tell lies and try to trick you. Some people will say that they are the Christ, the special man from God. Other people will say that they are telling people God's words, and they might do all sorts of clever things. Those people will be thinking, 'Maybe we can trick the people that God picked out for himself.' But really, they can't do that. 23 So keep on being careful. You see, I'm telling you about it now, so that later, when it happens,

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* **13:9-11** Matthew 10:17-20; Luke 12:11-12 * **13:13** Matthew 10:22 * **13:14** Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11
* **13:15-16** Luke 17:31 * **13:19** Daniel 12:1; Revelation 7:14

you can be ready for it. 24 After that time of
trouble, things will happen that God tells
us about in his book. He says,
'The sun will go dark, and the moon
will stop shining.
25 The stars and the other powerful
things in the sky will all shake about
and fall out of the sky.'*
26 Then everybody will see God's special
man come back from heaven in the clouds.
People will see that he is really strong, and
powerful, and shining really bright.* 27 Then
he will send God's angel messengers out to
every place in the world. They will not miss
any place, anywhere. They will get all the
people that belong to God. He picked out
those people for himself. The angels will
bring all those people to God.
28 Think about this. Whenever you see new
leaves on a bush tucker tree, you know that
the weather's going to change soon. Those
new leaves show you that. 29 It's the same
with all these things that I'm telling you
about now, they will show you something
too. You will see these things happen, and
you will know that I will come really soon.
30 Listen, there are some people alive now
that will still be alive when these things
happen. 31 One day, everything will finish
up. The sky, and the ground, and everything,
it will all finish up, but not my words. My
words stay true for ever. They will never
finish up."

Stay awake and keep on looking out

32 Then Jesus said, "I'm telling you straight.
Nobody knows the time when God will do
these things. Nobody knows what day it
will be, or what the time will be on the
clock. God's angel messengers in heaven
don't know. Even I don't know. My father
in heaven is the only one that knows. 33 You
don't know what time God will do these
things, so you have to always be ready and
keep on remembering everything I told you,
like you have to stay awake and keep on
looking out for me.
34 Listen to this picture story. A man
wanted to go to stay in another place for
a while, so he told his workers to look
after everything at his house while he was
away. He told each one of them to do their
own jobs. He said to the guard at the gate,
'Keep looking out to see me coming back.'*
35-36 Those workers didn't know what time
that boss was going to come home. He might
come after the sun goes down, or he might
come in the middle of the night, or he might
come as the birds call out in the morning,
or he might come back after the sun comes
up. So those workers have to be ready all
the time. You are like those workers in that
picture story, and I am like that boss. You
don't know what time I will come back here,
and you have to be ready for me all the time.
So you have to keep on looking out for me,
like that guard at the gate has to keep on
looking out. Don't get lazy.
37 I'm telling you mob to be careful, like I
tell everybody else. You've got to always be
ready for me to come."

Chapter 14

The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus

1-2 Every year Jewish people went to
Jerusalem for a special ceremony where
they ate flat damper for a week. On the
first day of that ceremony, they always ate
a special dinner called *Passover*.
It was 2 days before that ceremony was
going to start, and the bosses of the Jewish

* **13:24-25** Isaiah 13:10; 34:4; Ezekiel 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Revelation 6:12-13 * **13:26** Daniel 7:13; Revelation 1:7
* **13:34** Luke 12:36-38

ceremonies and the law teachers met together to work out a way to grab Jesus and kill him. But they wanted to grab him when nobody was looking. So those leaders said to each other, "Everybody likes Jesus, so we have to wait a bit. We can't grab him while there are lots of people here for the ceremony. They will get angry with us, and we will have a very big fight."*

A woman put special perfume on Jesus's head

3 At the time, Jesus was at the town called Bethany. A man lived there that used to have a skin sickness, but then he got better. His name was Simon. Jesus went to Simon's house, and he was eating dinner there.

A woman came into the house with some special perfume in a pretty bottle. That perfume smelled really good and it cost a lot of money. She opened the bottle and poured the perfume on Jesus's head.* 4 Some of the people there said to each other, "Why did she waste that perfume? 5 Why didn't she sell it and get a lot of money, and give that money to poor people?" And they said angry words to her too.

6 But Jesus said to them, "Leave her alone. Don't make trouble for her. She did something really good to me. 7 You will always have poor people with you, and you can give them money whenever you want to. But I will not be here with you much longer.* 8 I will die soon, and people will bury my body. This woman poured the perfume on me to get my body ready. She did a good thing. 9 Listen. People will go everywhere in the world to tell people God's story, and they will remember this woman and they will tell people about her too, and about the good thing she did today."



A woman poured special perfume on Jesus's head

Judas Iscariot turned against Jesus

10 Judas Iscariot was one of the 12 men that Jesus picked out to be his special workers. But at this time he turned against Jesus, and he went to the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies, and he said, "I can help you catch Jesus."



Judas told the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies that he would help them catch Jesus

11 They heard him say that, and they were very happy. They promised to pay him money. So he waited for a good time to help them catch Jesus.

* **14:1-2** Exodus 12:1-27 * **14:3** Luke 7:37-38 * **14:7** Deuteronomy 15:11

Jesus and his followers ate the Passover dinner

12 The day came for people to kill a young sheep to cook it and eat it. That was the start of the ceremony time called Passover. They ate flat damper at that time too, and they remembered the time, long ago, when their grand-fathers were in Egypt, and God's angel messenger passed over them, and didn't kill any of them.

On that day, some of Jesus's followers went up to him, and they asked him, "Where do you want us all to eat this dinner? We can go and get it ready."

13 Jesus said, "All right, you 2 go over there into Jerusalem city, and after you get there you will meet a man. He will be carrying a big jug of water. Follow him, and he will go into a house. 14 You talk to the boss over that house. You tell him, 'Our teacher wants you to show us the room you have for visitors. He wants to eat the Passover dinner there with his followers.' 15 Then that boss will take you upstairs to a big room that he's got set up and ready. You can get the dinner ready for us there."

16 Those 2 men left him and went into Jerusalem. Everything happened just like Jesus told them. So they got the food ready for that special Passover dinner.

17 When the sun went down, Jesus and his special workers went to that house to eat the Passover dinner. 18 While they were eating, Jesus said to them, "Listen, one of you men, that is eating with me here right now, will turn against me and help the people that want to kill me."*

19 His 12 special workers were sad, and each of them said to him, "Were you talking about me? No, not me. I will not do that."

20 Jesus said, "It is one of you that is eating food with me right now. 21 I'm God's special man from heaven, and I have to die, just like God says in his book. But the man that helps my enemies to catch me, he will get really bad trouble from God. He will wish he was never born."

22 After that, while they were still eating their dinner, Jesus picked up some damper and thanked God for it, then he broke it into bits and gave it to his special workers. He said, "This damper is my body. Take a bit and eat it."

23 Then he picked up the cup of wine and said thank you to God for it, and he gave it to them, and they passed it around, and



Jesus ate the Passover dinner with his special workers

* **14:18** Psalm 41:9

each of them drank a little bit of wine. 24 He told them, "This wine is my blood. I will die and pour out my blood for a lot of people. It's like this, God has agreed to save people, and I will die so he can do that. My blood will come out, and it is like I'm using my blood to sign God's new agreement with people, to say that they are not guilty of the bad things they did.* 25 Listen, I will not drink any wine again until the day that I sit down with God and all his family, and he will show everyone that he is the biggest boss. Then I will drink a new sort of wine with you."

26 After Jesus said that, they all sang a song to God, and then they went out of that house to go to the hill called Olive Trees Hill.

Jesus talked straight to Peter

27 They walked along the road, and Jesus talked to his followers. He said, "All you mob will run away and leave me. A long time ago, God got one of his men to write about this in his book. He wrote,

'God will knock down the man that
looks after the sheep,
and all his sheep will run away.'*

He wrote those words about me. I will die, like he wrote about that man, and you will all run away. 28 But after that, God will make me alive again. Then I will go ahead of you to Galilee country, and I will wait for you there."*

29 Peter said, "Maybe all the others will run away, but not me. No way."

30 But Jesus said to him, "Listen to me, Peter. Tonight you will tell people that you don't know me. You will say that 3 times, and then a chook will yell out 2 times, just like it always does before the sun comes up."

31 But Peter talked really strong to Jesus. He said, "No. People might try to force me to say that. They might even tell me that they will kill me, but I will never say that I don't know you."

All the other followers said the same thing.

Jesus prayed in the place called Gethsemane

32 Jesus and his followers got to the place called Gethsemane. He said to them, "I want you to sit here and wait for me. I'm going to pray to God."

33 He asked Peter, James and John to go with him, and they walked away from the others. Then Jesus started to get really sad and upset. 34 And he said to them, "I feel really sad right now. I feel so sad, it's like I'm dying. Stay here and keep on looking out for trouble."

35 Then Jesus walked away from them a little bit and lay down on the ground. 36 He said to God, "Father, you can do anything. You can take this trouble away from me. It's too hard for me. But you do what you want to do, not what I want."

37 Jesus went back to his 3 followers and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Wake up, Simon. Can't you stay awake with me for just one hour? 38 Stay awake and pray to God so that nothing will get you to go wrong. I know that you want to do the right thing, but your body is weak and wants to sleep."

39 Jesus left them again, and he prayed again. He kept on asking God the same thing. 40 Jesus's 3 followers were very tired, and they just couldn't stay awake. Then Jesus came back to them again, and they were asleep again. After they woke up, they felt shame, and they didn't know what to say to him.

41 Jesus went away and prayed to God again. Then he came back to his 3 followers and said, "Are you still resting? You can't sleep any more now. Look. I'm God's special man

* **14:24** Exodus 24:8; Jeremiah 31:31-34 * **14:27** Zechariah 13:7 * **14:28** Matthew 28:16

from heaven, but those bad men will soon come and get me. 42 So get up, we have to go now. See, here is the man that is helping them catch me."

A mob of men grabbed Jesus

43 Just before that time, the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and the law teachers and the Jewish elders, they told a big mob of men to go with Judas to grab Jesus. Those men all had long knives and fighting sticks. Judas was one of Jesus's 12 special workers, but he changed sides, and he took that mob of men to Gethsemane to grab Jesus. They got there while Jesus was talking to his followers. 44-45 Judas walked up to Jesus and said, "Hello teacher," and kissed him on the cheek. He did that to show those men which man they had to grab. 46 So they grabbed Jesus.

47 One of Jesus's followers was standing right there, and he pulled out his long knife. He cut off the ear of a man that worked for the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies.

48 Jesus said to the mob, "Why have you got all these long knives and fighting sticks? I'm not a criminal. No way. 49 I was always in God's ceremony house, and I taught the people there every day, but you didn't grab me then. But a long time ago, God said that you will grab me. It is in his book. So you will grab me now."*

50 Then Jesus's followers got frightened, and they ran away and left him there.

51 There was a young man there that followed along a little bit behind Jesus. He was just wearing a sheet wrapped around him. 52 That mob of men tried to grab him, but they only grabbed the sheet. He wriggled out of it and ran away naked.



A mob of men went to grab Jesus

They took Jesus to court

53-54 That mob took Jesus to court at the house of the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies. All the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies, and the elders, and the law teachers, they all went to that court too.

That house had a yard with a wall around it. Peter followed a little bit behind the mob, and he followed that mob into the yard of that house, and he sat down with them near their fire.

55 All the Jewish leaders there tried to get somebody to say, "We saw Jesus do bad things," so that they could kill him, but nobody told a strong story against him. 56 Lots of people stood up and told lies about Jesus, but they didn't agree with each other. Their stories were all mixed up.

57 Some men stood up and told this lie. 58 They said, "We heard this man say, 'I will knock down God's ceremony house and build another one in 3 days. Lots of men built this one, but I will build a new one just by myself.' "* 59 But even those men had their stories mixed up. They didn't agree with each other.

* **14:49** Luke 19:47; 21:37 * **14:58** John 2:19

60 The big boss of the Jewish ceremonies stood up in the meeting and said to Jesus, "All those people said that you did bad things. You heard them. What do you say?" 61 But Jesus didn't answer him. He just kept his mouth shut.

Then that boss said, "All right, tell us this. Are you the Christ, that special man that God promised to send to save us? Are you the son of God?"



The Jewish leaders blamed Jesus in their court

62 Jesus said, "Yes, I am. I'm God's special man from heaven. And one day, you mob will all see me sitting there in heaven on the right-hand side of God, the powerful one. And you will also see me come back here in the clouds."*

63-64 Then that big boss of the Jewish ceremonies got so angry that he tore his clothes and said to the Jewish leaders, "Did you hear that? This man said that he is the same as God. We don't need anyone to say anything more. We heard it ourselves. So what do you reckon, did he break our law?"

They all said, "He did. He broke our law. He's got to die."*

65 Some of the people in that meeting spat on Jesus. They tied a rag across his eyes so that he couldn't see, then they hit him with their hands and said, "Hey. You reckon that God gives you power to know things, so tell us, who hit you?" Then the guards grabbed Jesus and hit him.

Peter said, "I don't know Jesus"

66-67 All this time, Peter sat next to the fire in the yard of the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies. One of the girls that worked in that house came along and saw Peter there. She looked at him and said, "I think you were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth."

68 But Peter said, "No. I don't know what you are talking about." Then Peter went back to the gate of that yard. Just then a chook yelled out.

69 That girl saw Peter at the gate and started to tell the people, "This man is one of Jesus's mob."

70 But again Peter said, "No, I'm not."

A little bit later those people there at that gate said to Peter, "You talk like the Galilee people talk, and Jesus is from Galilee, so you have to be one of his followers."

71 Peter got really wild, and he said, "I'm telling you, I don't know that man. I don't know what you are talking about. God knows that this is true, or if not, he can kill me."



Peter said that he wasn't one of Jesus's mob

* **14:62** Psalm 110:1; Daniel 7:13 * **14:63-64** Leviticus 24:16

72 Straight away, that chook yelled out again. Then Peter remembered the words Jesus said to him before, "Tonight you will tell people that you don't know me. You will say that 3 times, and then a chook will yell out 2 times." When Peter remembered these words, he was very sad, and he cried a lot.

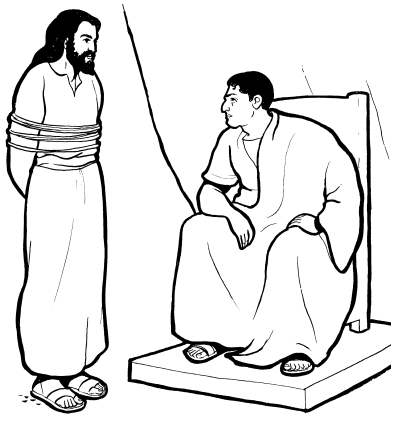
Chapter 15

The men of the Jewish Leaders Council took Jesus to the judge

1 Early in the morning, the men of the Jewish Leaders Council talked with each other about what they will do with Jesus. That council mob were the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies, and the law teachers, and the elders. They tied Jesus's hands together, and they took him over to the big government boss. His name was Pilate. They asked him to judge Jesus. 2 So Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the big boss over the Jewish nation?"

Jesus said, "Those are your words."

3 The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies blamed Jesus, and they told Pilate he did a lot of bad things, but Jesus didn't say anything. 4 Then Pilate said to him, "They are saying lots of bad things about you. Why don't you say something for yourself?"



Pilate asked Jesus questions, but Jesus said nothing

5 But Jesus said nothing, and Pilate was really shocked.

6 Every year, at the ceremony time called Passover, Pilate always did something special for the people in Jerusalem. He let one prisoner go free from the jail.

7-8 At this Passover time, some of the Jerusalem people came to Pilate and asked him to let a prisoner go free, like he always did. They came up to Pilate while Jesus was still there. At the same time, there was a murderer in jail there. His name was Barabbas. Before that time, Barabbas and his mob fought against the government and killed some of the government people, so the soldiers grabbed him and put him in jail.

9-11 Pilate knew that the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies were jealous of Jesus, and that was the only reason why they brought him to Pilate. They wanted Pilate to kill him. So when those Jerusalem people asked Pilate to let a prisoner go free, Pilate said, "All right, how about I let Jesus go? You reckon he says that he is your big boss. What do you reckon, will I let him go?"

But the ceremony bosses got all those people to be angry with Jesus, and those people told Pilate, "No. Not him. We want you to let Barabbas go free."

12 Pilate said, "So what do you want me to do with this man that you Jewish people call your big boss?"

13 They all yelled, "Kill him. Nail him to a cross and let him die there."

14 Pilate said, "Why? What did he do that was so bad?"

But they didn't listen. They yelled even louder, "Kill him. Nail him to a cross."

15 Pilate didn't want that mob to get wild, so he did what they wanted. He let Barabbas go out of jail, and he told his Roman soldiers to hit Jesus a lot with whips. After they finished whipping him, Pilate told them to nail Jesus to a cross and leave him to die.

The soldiers made fun of Jesus

16 The soldiers took Jesus outside into the yard of the big house where Pilate lived. They called out to the rest of the soldiers there to come out into that yard. 17 They put a purple coat on Jesus. Then they made some prickly branches into a headband that looked like a crown, like a big boss wears, and they put it on Jesus's head. 18 And they made fun of him. They got down on their knees in front of Jesus and said, "Hey, you reckon that you are great. And you reckon that you are the big boss over the Jewish people. But you are not." 19 And they kept on hitting him on the head with a stick, and they spat on him.



The soldiers made fun of Jesus

20 When they finished making fun of him, they took off the long purple coat and put his own clothes back on him. Then they took him out to another place to kill him.

21 There was a man walking past them on the road at that time. He was coming into the city from the bush. His name was Simon, and he was from the country called Cyrene. (He was the father of our friends Alexander and Rufus.) The soldiers forced Simon to carry the cross for Jesus.* 22 Then they got to the place called *Golgotha* in their language. That name means *Skull Place*.

23 Then the soldiers tried to give Jesus some wine to drink. That wine had some medicine called myrrh mixed in it. But Jesus wouldn't drink it.

24-26 Then the soldiers nailed Jesus's hands and feet to the cross. Then they stood it up, and they left him to die like that. And they made a sign and put it above his head, to say why they killed him. It said, "The big boss over the Jews." It was 9 o'clock in the morning when they nailed Jesus to that cross. After that, the soldiers gambled with each other to get his clothes.*

27-28 The soldiers also nailed 2 criminals to crosses next to Jesus. One criminal was on his left-hand side, and the other criminal was on his right-hand side. 29 Some other people walked past Jesus and rubbished him too. They stood there and shook their heads to shame him, and they said, "You reckon you can knock down God's ceremony house, and then build it again in 3 days, do you?* 30 All right, if you are so smart, save yourself. Get off the cross and come down."

31 The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and the law teachers joined in and laughed at Jesus. They said to each other, "He saved other people, but he can't save himself. 32 He thinks he is the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us. He reckons he is the big boss over us Israel nation. No way. We will not believe him unless we see him come down off that cross."

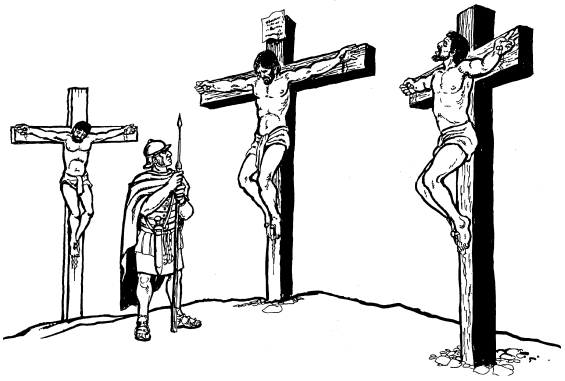
The men on the other crosses joined in too and rubbished Jesus.

Jesus died

33 In the middle of the day, at about 12 o'clock, all of the country got dark, like

* **15:21** Romans 16:13 * **15:24-26** Psalm 22:18 * **15:29** Psalm 22:7; 109:25; Mark 14:58; John 2:19

it was night time. It stayed dark for about 3 hours, until 3 o'clock in the afternoon.
34 Then Jesus yelled out in his language. He said, "*Eloy, Eloy, lama sabakthani?*" That means, *My God, my God, why did you go away and leave me all by myself?* *
35 Some of the people standing around heard Jesus say that. They thought that he called out for Elijah to come to him from heaven. 36 One man got up quickly and got a sponge, and he filled it with sour wine, and he put it on a stick and held it up to Jesus's mouth, so he could suck a bit of it. And that man said, "All right, just leave him. Let us wait and see if Elijah will come and get him down." *
37 Jesus yelled out again, and then he died.
38 Over in Jerusalem, in God's ceremony house, there was a big curtain that blocked off God's special place. At the same time that Jesus died, that curtain just ripped right down the middle from the top to the bottom, into 2 bits. *
39 And at the cross, the boss over those Roman soldiers stood near Jesus, and he saw the way Jesus died. Then that boss soldier said, "I reckon this man really was the son of God."



The boss soldier said, "I reckon this man really was the son of God."

Some women saw everything that happened

40-41 There were some women there at the cross too. Before this time, those women went everywhere with Jesus in Galilee country. They looked after him there, and after that, they came with him to Jerusalem. While Jesus was dying, they stood looking from a long way off. They were Mary Magdalene, and Salomi, and the other Mary that was the mother of young James and Joses, and some other women with them. *

Joseph buried Jesus

42 That day that Jesus died was the day when the Jewish people got everything ready for their rest day. That rest day was going to start when it got dark. 43 There was a man there that was called Joseph, and he was from a place called Arimathia. Everyone said that he was a good man, and he was one of the Jewish Leaders Council men too. He was waiting for the time when God will get all his family together and show everyone that he is the biggest boss. So when it was nearly night time, before that rest day started, he went to Pilate. He was a little bit frightened, but he went to Pilate anyway, and he asked him, "Can I get Jesus's body to take care of it our way?"
44-45 Pilate was shocked. He said, "Is that man dead already?"
He sent somebody to get the boss over the soldiers, and he asked that boss soldier, "Is it true? Is that man properly dead now?"
That boss soldier told Pilate, "Yes, it is true."
Then Pilate told Joseph, "All right, you can take Jesus's body."
46 So Joseph bought a good sheet, and he took Jesus's body down from the cross and wrapped it in that sheet. Then he took Jesus's body and put it in a cave to bury it.

* **15:34** Psalm 22:1 * **15:36** Psalm 69:21 * **15:38** Exodus 26:31-33 * **15:40-41** Luke 8:2-3



Joseph put Jesus's body in a special cave for dead bodies

That cave was a special place to put dead bodies. It was a big hole, like a little room that somebody cut in the rock. Then Joseph rolled a big flat stone in front of that cave to block it.

47 And those women, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses, they saw the place where Joseph put Jesus's body.

Chapter 16

God made Jesus alive again

1 The next day was Saturday. It was their rest day. When the sun went down, that rest day was finished. Then some women went and bought some perfume to put on Jesus's body, so they could bury him the right way. They were Mary Magdalene, and Salomi, and Mary the mother of James. 2 Early on Sunday morning, when the sun was just starting to come up, they went to that cave to find Jesus's body. 3 As they walked along, they said to each other, "Who will roll away that big stone to open up the cave for us? It's way too big for us."

4 But when the women got there they looked up and saw that the big stone was not blocking the cave any more. Somebody already came before them and rolled that big stone away.

5 Then they walked into the cave, and they saw a young man sitting there on the right-hand side, wearing really white clothes. They got a big surprise. 6 He said to them, "Don't be frightened. You are looking for the body of Jesus, the man from Nazareth that they killed on a cross. God made him alive again. He isn't here. Look, see this place just here. They put his body here, but it isn't here now." 7 And he said to them, "Go back to his followers and tell them, 'You mob have to go back to Galilee country. Jesus will go there ahead of you, and when you go back there you will see him. You remember, he told you about that some time ago.' Make sure you tell that message to Peter and the other followers."*

8 The women didn't know what to think. They were so frightened they were shaking. They came out of that cave and ran away. Those women were too frightened to talk to anybody. They just ran away.



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A young man told the women, "God made Jesus alive again"

* **16:7** Matthew 26:32; Mark 14:28

Nobody knows for sure the words that Mark wrote at the end of this story about Jesus. We don't have the book that he wrote, we only have copies of it. Some of those copies end here, and some copies have the next bit from verse 9 to verse 20. Maybe somebody else wrote this ending to Mark's book.

Jesus sent his followers to tell everyone about him

9 Early on Sunday morning, before those women went to the cave, Jesus came alive again. He let Mary Magdalene see him first. (Some time before this, Jesus forced 7 bad spirits out of her.) 10 After Mary saw Jesus, she went to his friends, the people that used to walk around with him. When she got there, they were all very sad and crying. 11 Mary told them, "Jesus is alive again. I just saw him." But they didn't believe her.

12 A little while after that, 2 of Jesus's other followers were walking from Jerusalem to another place out in the bush. Jesus came to them, and he let them see him, but he made himself look like a different man, so they didn't know it was him. 13 Then, after they found out it really was him, they turned around and quickly went back to Jerusalem, and they told Jesus's other followers that they saw Jesus. But those other followers didn't believe them.

14 After that, Jesus's 11 special workers were eating food together, and Jesus came to them, and he let them see him alive. He said to them, "Why didn't you listen to those people that said they saw me? What they said was true, but you didn't believe them."

15 After that, Jesus said to his followers, "You have to go out to everywhere in the world and tell everybody the good news about me. 16 Some people will believe that message, and then you have to take them through that special washing ceremony, called baptism. God will save those people. But God will not save people that don't believe that message. He will blame them and say they are guilty. 17 And the people that believe in me will do great things with the power that I will give them, to show everyone that they are God's people. They will force bad spirits out of people. And they will talk in different languages that they never learned. 18 And if they pick up a cheeky snake, it will not hurt them. And if they drink poison, it will not hurt them. And they will put their hands on sick people, and those sick people will get better."

Jesus went up to heaven

19 After Jesus finished telling his followers all those things, God took him up to heaven. And Jesus sat down at the right-hand side of God, the place where only a really important person can sit.

20 After that, his followers went everywhere and told people the good news about Jesus. And our leader, Jesus himself, worked with them. He gave them power to do great things so that everyone knew that he was with them, and that their message about him was true.

Some important parts of the good news about Jesus that Luke wrote

*(From the book in the Holy Bible called **Luke**)*

About this book

The Holy Bible has 4 books about the things that Jesus did, and the messages he told to people when he was here on the earth, about 2,000 years ago. Those books are in the 2nd part of the Holy Bible, called the New Testament. *The men that wrote them were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They wrote their books after Jesus went back to heaven. Most of the things in their books happened in the country we now call Israel.*

In each of those 4 books we can read about some of the things that Jesus did and said. This Bible has everything that Mark and John wrote about Jesus in their books, but we have not yet translated everything that Matthew and Luke wrote. We have only translated the stories and messages that Mark and John didn't write about, but that Matthew and Luke did write about.

This book has those stories and messages that Luke wrote. They are important for us today because they tell us about the good things that Jesus did, and they tell us God's messages that Jesus taught to people.

Luke was a doctor, and later he became a good friend of Paul and some of Jesus's other followers. Maybe some of the things he wrote about are things he saw happen, but if not, Paul and other followers of Jesus told him about them.

Luke wrote another book that is in the Holy Bible, called Acts. *In this Bible we call it* The followers of Jesus did great things.

Chapter 1

1-3 I'm writing this for you, my good friend Thiofilus.

A lot of great things happened here, and the people that saw those things happen told everyone what they saw, and a lot of people wrote down those stories that they heard. After that, I read those stories, and I talked to the people that saw those things, and I checked up on everything they said, right from the start. So now I am carefully sorting out those stories, and I am writing them in this book for you. 4 You already heard some of this, but I want you to know the right story, and I want you to be sure about it.

An angel messenger told an old man and his wife that they were going to have a baby

5 When Herod was the big boss over Judea country, there was a man there that was called Zekariah. He was one of the men that looked after the Jewish ceremonies. There were different groups that did the Jewish ceremonies for the people at different times. He was in the group called the

Abijah mob. His wife belonged to a family of Jewish ceremony people too. Her name was Elizabeth.* 6 Those 2 people, Zekariah and Elizabeth, they were very good people. They did everything in God's law, and God liked the way they lived. 7 They got very old, but they didn't have any kids. You see, Elizabeth just couldn't have a baby.

8 The time came for Zekariah's mob to do the ceremonies in God's ceremony house, in Jerusalem city. 9 One day, it was Zekariah's turn to go into the special room in that house and burn some special perfume to make a good smell. 10 While he was doing that, a big mob of people were outside, and they were praying.

11 Then God sent one of his angel messengers to that room, and he stood on the right-hand side of the metal table where that special perfume was burning. 12 Zekariah saw the angel there and got a big shock. He was really frightened. 13 But the angel told him, "Don't be frightened, Zekariah. God has heard what you have been asking him, and he will give you what you want. Your wife, Elizabeth, will have a baby boy, and you will name him *John*. 14 You will be really happy, and a lot of other people will be happy with you. 15 God will say that this kid is important, so you have to make sure he never drinks any sort of wine or grog at all. You see, the Holy Spirit will come into this kid before he gets born, while he is still inside his mother.* 16 And then, after he grows up, he will get lots of you Israel people to turn away from bad things and turn back to God. 17 Remember Elijah, God's man that lived a long time ago. He had God's spirit in him, and he did powerful things. Well, in the same way, your son John will have God's spirit in him, and he will do powerful things. He will get people ready for God. John will get people to turn around and live the right way. He will get the men that are fathers to love their kids properly. And he will get people to listen properly to the sensible words of good people. Even those people that don't listen to God now, he will get them to listen to good people."*

18 Zekariah said to the angel, "But that's hard for me to believe. I am an old man, and my wife is old too. We are too old now to have a baby. How can I be sure that your message is true?"

19 The angel said, "Look, I am Gabriel. I am always close to God, and I do special jobs for him. And he sent me to tell you this good message.* 20 And everything I said will happen at the right time. But you didn't believe me, so now God will shut you up. You will not be able to talk until this kid gets born."

21 While they were talking in that room, the people outside were waiting for Zekariah. They were thinking, "Why is he staying a long time in that room?"

22 Then Zekariah came out, and he tried to talk to them, but he couldn't say anything. He had to make signs with his hands, and at



Zechariah couldn't talk, so he made signs with his hands

* **1:5** 1 Chronicles 24:10 * **1:15** Numbers 6:3 * **1:17** Malachi 4:5-6 * **1:19** Daniel 8:16; 9:21

last they understood that he saw something powerful in that room.

23 Then Zekariah finished his days of work in God's ceremony house, and he went home.

24 Soon after that, his wife, Elizabeth, found out she was going to have a baby. She stayed inside her house for 5 months. 25 She said, "Wow. God is properly good to me. He will let me have a baby, and nobody will rubbish me any more."

The story about the mother of Jesus

26 That baby kept on growing inside Elizabeth. After about 6 months, God sent Gabriel, that same angel messenger, to Galilee country, to a town called Nazareth. 27 He went there to a young girl that was not married. Her name was Mary. Before that time, Mary didn't ever sleep with any man, like a woman does with her husband. She was promised to a man that was called Joseph. He belonged to the family of David, the man that was the big boss a long time ago. *

28 Gabriel came to Mary and said, "Hello, Mary. God loves you and is good to you. He is here with you now, and he will do something good for you."

29 This worried Mary. She thought, "What's he talking about?"

30 Gabriel said, "Don't be frightened, Mary. God is really happy with you. 31 Listen. You will soon have a baby boy, and you will call him Jesus. * 32-33 God will make him the biggest boss over you Israel people, like David, his grand-father that lived a long time ago. He will be very important, and he will be the biggest boss for ever. He will never stop being the biggest boss over the Israel people. And people will call him the son of God." *

34 Mary said, "But I'm not married. I've never slept with a man, like a wife sleeps with her husband. How will I get a baby?"



God sent an angel messenger to Mary

35 Gabriel said, "The Holy Spirit will come to you, and God's power will come over you and give you a baby. Your baby will be really special, and people will say he is God's son. 36 And you know your cousin Elizabeth? Everyone reckoned she is too old to have a baby, but now she is carrying a baby inside her. She has been carrying that baby for the last 6 months, and soon she will have a son. 37 You see, God can do anything. Nothing is too hard for him." *

38 Mary said, "All right, I will do whatever God wants. I want everything to happen just like you said."

Then Gabriel left her.

Mary visited Elizabeth

39 Soon after that, Mary got ready, and she went south quickly to a town in the hilly part of the country called Judea. 40 Zekariah and Elizabeth lived in that town. Mary went to their house, and she went in and said to Elizabeth, "Hello cousin."

* **1:27** Matthew 1:18 * **1:31** Matthew 1:21 * **1:32-33** 2 Samuel 7:12-13, 16; Isaiah 9:7 * **1:37** Genesis 18:14

41 As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary say
those words, she felt her baby jump inside
her. And the Holy Spirit came into her,
42 and she talked really loud. She said to
Mary, "God is really good to you, and he is
making you happy. He is being more good
to you than to any other woman. And he is
being really good to your baby too. 43 I'm
not important, but you are the mother of my
leader, the man from God. It is really good of
you to visit me. 44 You see, as soon as I heard
you say 'hello,' my baby inside me was so
happy he jumped. 45 Yes, you believed that
God will do everything he told you, and so
God makes you very happy."

Mary sang this song

46 Mary said, *
"God is really good and really great,
and I want to tell everybody about
him.
47 My spirit is really happy with God. I
know he will save me.
48 God knew that I was not important,
but he picked me,
and now everyone will say that God
was good to me. *
49 Yes, he is the really strong one, and he
did great things for me.
God is properly good, better than
anyone else.
50 He is always good to all the people that
respect him. He was good to people
that respected him before, and he is
good to people that respect him now,
and he will be good to people that
respect him later on.
51 He does great things with his power,
and he shows everyone that he is
really strong.
Some people reckon they are smart
and strong, but God makes them
nothing. They are like soldiers that
get frightened of the enemy and run
away.
52 He chucks out the big bosses and takes
their power away.
But he gets people that are not
important, and he makes them
bosses. *
53 And he gives hungry people good food,
and they eat until they are full.
But he doesn't give anything to the rich
people. They go away with nothing.
54 He feels sorry for his own people, us
Israel mob, and he helps us,
55 just like he promised to Abraham, and
our other grand-fathers that lived a
long time ago.
He said that he will look after us for
ever." *
56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about 3
months, then she went back to her own home.

John the Baptiser was born

57 Then the time came for Elizabeth to have
her baby, and she had a son. 58 All her family,
and the people that lived near her, they all
heard that she had a baby, and they knew
that God felt sorry for Elizabeth, and that he
was very good to her. Elizabeth was happy,
and they were all happy too.
59 When the baby was 8 days old, all those
people went to Zekariah and Elizabeth's
place. The baby boy had to have a young
man operation on that day, and they used
to give a baby his name at that time. The
people wanted to call him Zekariah, the
same name that his father had. * 60 But
Elizabeth said, "No. His name is John."
61 They said, "What? Nobody in your family
has that name." 62 So they made signs with
their hands to his father, to ask him what
name he wanted to give to the boy.

* **1:46** 1 Samuel 2:1-10 * **1:48** 1 Samuel 1:11 * **1:52** Job 5:11; 12:19 * **1:55** Genesis 17:7 * **1:59** Leviticus 12:3

63 Zekariah got them to give him something
to write on, and he wrote, "His name is
John." Everyone was shocked. 64 Then,
straight away, Zekariah started to talk again,
and he told everyone that God is very great.
65 The people there never saw God do
things like that before. They were really
surprised. They told other people about
everything that happened, and soon a lot
of people in the hilly part of Judea country
were talking about it. 66 Everyone that heard
the news thought about it, and they said,
"After this kid grows up, what will he be?"
They knew God was powerfully looking
after that boy.

Zekariah sang this song

67 At that time, when Zekariah started talking
again, the Holy Spirit came into him, and he
told everyone a message from God. He said,
68 "The God of us Israel mob, he is a great
God.
He came now to save us, his people.
69 He sent us a very strong person, to
save us.
You know about David, the big boss
that worked for God a long time ago.
Well, this person is in David's family.
70 God promised this to us a long time
ago, and he got his men to tell us
this message.
71 God promised to save us from our
enemies,
and from everyone that hates us.
72 He did that because he felt sorry for
our grand-fathers that lived a long
time ago, and wanted to be good to
them,
and do everything that he promised.
73 Yes, God will remember the things
he promised to our grand-father
Abraham.
74 He promised to save us from our
enemies,
so we can work for him without being
frightened.
75 We can live God's way and work for
him in the right way,
and we can do that all our lives."
76 Then Zekariah talked to his baby boy.
He said,
"This word is for you, my son.
Everyone will know that you tell
people messages from God.
You will get things ready for God. *
77 You will teach his people how God can
say they are not guilty of the bad
things they did,
and then God will save them.
78 You see, our God feels sorry for us, so
he will do that for us.
It will be like the sun coming up,
bringing light from God.
79 That light will shine for everybody.
Some people are like they are in the
dark. They think they will die soon.
But that light will shine on everybody.
It will show us how to live in a happy
and quiet way." *
80 After that, baby John grew up to be a
man, and God made his spirit strong. He
went and lived out in the bush for years,
until he started to tell the Israel people God's
messages.

Chapter 2

Mary had a baby boy

1-3 About the time that John was born, the
biggest boss over all those countries was
called Augustus. He sent a message to
everyone in every country. He said, "The
government bosses in every town have to
write down everyone's name on a big list,

* **1:76** Malachi 3:1 * **1:79** Isaiah 9:2

and make them pay tax money." So everyone had to go back to their home town and put their names on the list there. (At that time a man called Quirinius was the government boss over Syria country.)

4 Joseph belonged to the family of David, the man that was Israel's big boss a long time ago. David grew up in the town called Bethlehem, in Judea country, but Joseph lived in a town called Nazareth, in Galilee country. So Joseph had to go south to Bethlehem, to put his name on the right list. 5 Joseph took Mary with him. She was his promised wife, and she was carrying a baby inside her at that time.

6-7 At Bethlehem they couldn't find any room to stay in, so they had to sleep in the place where the animals ate their food. Then the time came for Mary to have her baby. She had her baby right there, and she wrapped him up in bits of cloth, just like mothers always did. And she put him down to sleep in an animal's food box.

Men that looked after sheep saw baby Jesus

8 Not far away, on that same night, some men were out in the grass lands looking after their sheep. 9 Suddenly, an angel messenger from God stood there with them, and bright light from God was shining all around them, and they were very frightened. 10 But the angel said, "Don't be frightened. I've got really good news for you, and good news for everyone in the world too. 11-12 Today a young woman had a baby boy over there in Bethlehem, in the place where David grew up. Go there, and you will find him. He is wrapped up in cloth, and lying in an animal's food box. Then you will know that this message is true. He is the one that is going to save you people. He is the Christ, the man that God promised to send to you, to be your leader."



Some men were looking after their sheep not far away from where Jesus was born

13 Then suddenly a big mob of other angel messengers came from heaven, and they all praised God. They said,

14 "God, you are really great there in heaven.
And here on the earth, your people are quiet and happy.
You are really good to your people."

15 Then the angels went back to heaven, and the men said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this baby that God just told us about." 16 Then they went quickly, and they found Mary and Joseph, with the baby boy in an animal's food box, just like the angel said.



The men that looked after sheep went to see baby Jesus

17 After those men saw the baby, they
talked to people about him, and they told
them the message that God's angel gave
them. 18 Everyone was surprised when they
heard what those men said. 19 And Mary
remembered their words, and she thought
about them a lot. 20 As those men walked
back to their sheep, they talked about how
everything happened, just like God's angel
said. They said to God, "You are really great."
And they told everybody that God is great.

They named the baby Jesus

21 You know, the law of Moses said that they
had to do a young man operation on all baby
boys as soon as they were 8 days old. So
Mary's baby had that operation, and they
gave him his name, *Jesus*, at that time. That's
the name that God's angel messenger told
Mary to call him, before she started to carry
that baby inside her.*

Simeon and Anna met Jesus

22-24 The Jewish law is like this, a woman's
first baby boy belongs to God. And after
a baby boy is born, the mother can't go
into God's ceremony house or do any of
their ceremonies for the next 40 days. It is
like she is not clean. Then, after 40 days,
she has to go to God's ceremony house in
Jerusalem. She has to get a leader of the
Jewish ceremonies there to kill 2 pigeons
and burn them, and let the smoke go up
to God. This will make her clean again for
Jewish ceremonies. So Joseph and Mary
went to Jerusalem at the right time to follow
that law. They took baby Jesus with them.*

25 There was an old man in Jerusalem at
that time. His name was Simeon. He was a
good man that lived God's way, and he was
waiting for God to make the Israel people
happy again. And the Holy Spirit used to
tell him things. 26 Before that time, the Holy
Spirit told him, "You will stay alive until
you see the special man that God will send
to save his people. He is called the Christ."
27 Then on the day that Joseph and Mary
took Jesus into God's ceremony house, the
Holy Spirit told Simeon to go there too, so
he was there when Joseph and Mary brought
Jesus in. 28 And Simeon took Jesus from them,
and held him in his arms, and he thanked
God, and said,

29 "Now, God, I can die happy, just like
you promised me,
30-31 because now I can see the one that
you promised to send.
People in every tribe will see him, and
he will save them.
32 He will shine like a light for people
that are not Jews,
showing them new things about you,
God.
And he will get everyone to respect
your people, the Israel nation."*

33 Joseph and Mary heard the things that
Simeon said about Jesus, and they were
surprised.

34 Then Simeon asked God to be good to
them, and he said to Mary, "This kid is going
to ruin a lot of people in Israel, but he will



Simeon thanked God for baby Jesus

* **2:21** Leviticus 12:3; Luke 1:31 * **2:22-24** Exodus 13:2, 12, 15; Leviticus 12:6-8 * **2:32** Isaiah 42:6; 49:6; 52:10

help a lot of others. He will point people to God, but they will not understand, and they will argue against him. 35 When they do that, they will show everyone what they really think. And Mary, later you will be really sad. It will hurt, like somebody is stabbing you with a big knife."

36-38 While Joseph and Mary were talking to Simeon, a very old woman came along. Her name was Anna. She saw Jesus, and she thanked God for him. Some of the people there were waiting for God to send somebody to help the Jewish people. Anna told them about Jesus, that he is that special person.

Anna's father was Fanuel, and he belonged to the tribe called Asher. She was 84 years old. A long time before this, Anna was a young woman and she got married. But then after 7 years her husband died. After that, she stayed in God's ceremony house all the time, telling the people God's words. She prayed all the time, in the day time and at night, and often she didn't eat any food because she was praying.

39 After that, Joseph and Mary finished doing everything that their law said they had to do. Then they went back home, to Nazareth, in Galilee country.* 40 And the baby started to grow big and strong, and he got wise too. And God was good to him.

When Jesus was a boy, he visited God's ceremony house

41 The Jewish people have a ceremony every year called Passover. Every year Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem for that ceremony.* 42 When Jesus was 12 years old, they went to Jerusalem, like they always did, and they took Jesus with them.

43-44 After that ceremony finished, they started to go north, back to their home in Nazareth. They were with a lot of other people going north, and they thought Jesus was somewhere in that mob. They thought, "He will come to us when we stop to camp tonight." But Jesus didn't come to them when they stopped to camp. You see, he was still back in Jerusalem. Mary and Joseph looked for him among their relatives and all that mob that was camping on that road, 45 but they didn't find him. So they went back to Jerusalem and looked for him there.

46 They looked for him for 3 days, then they found him in God's ceremony house. He was sitting with the teachers there. He was listening to what they were saying, and he was asking them questions. 47 The people there listened to Jesus too, and they were very surprised at the things he said. He understood lots of things, and he knew the answers to all of their questions.

48 His mother and father were shocked, and Mary said, "My son, why did you do this to us? Your father and me, we have been worried about you. We have been looking everywhere for you, for 3 days."

49 Jesus said, "Why did you look everywhere for me? I had to be in my father's special house. You should know that." 50 But they didn't understand what he meant by those words.



Jesus talked to the teachers in God's ceremony house

* **2:39** Matthew 2:23 * **2:41** Exodus 12:1-27; Deuteronomy 16:1-8

51 Then Jesus went with them back to Nazareth, and he always did what his mother and father told him to do. And his mother always remembered all those things that happened, and she always thought about them.

52 Jesus grew up to be a man, and as he got bigger, he became very wise too. God was really happy with him, and so was everyone that knew him.*

(We have not yet translated 3:1—4:13. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 1:1-34, 40-45; 2:1—3:6; 3:13-19; Matthew 3:1—5:12; 5:38-48; 7:1-5, 12, 17-20, 24-27; 8:5-13. They are about some things that happened before Jesus started going around telling people God's good news.)

Chapter 4

Jesus talked to the people in his home town, called Nazareth

14 The Holy Spirit made Jesus very powerful, and he went back to Galilee country. The people that saw him kept on telling other people about him, and those people told more people, so that soon everyone there heard the news about him. 15 He went to the Jewish meeting houses every week, and he taught everyone about God. And they were all really happy with him.

16 Then Jesus went to his own town, called Nazareth. That was the town he grew up in. He went to the Jewish meeting house there on Saturday, like he always did, and he stood up to read to the people from God's book. 17 A helper there gave him the part that Isaiah wrote. Isaiah was a man that told everyone God's messages, a long time ago. Jesus opened the book to the right place, and he read these words.

18 "God's spirit came into me.



Books were made from leather rolled up on sticks

He picked me to tell good news to poor people.
He sent me to tell prisoners, 'You will go free.'
And he sent me to tell blind people, 'You will see.'
And he sent me to people that are in big trouble, to take their trouble away.
19 He sent me to tell everybody, 'This is the time now for God to be good to you.' "*

20 Then Jesus closed the book, gave it back to the helper there, and sat down. Everybody kept looking straight at Jesus. 21 And then he started to teach them. He said, "You just heard me read that message that Isaiah wrote, a long time ago. Well, those things are happening right now, today, while you are listening to me."

22 All those people started talking together. They said good things about Jesus, and they said, "Wow. He talked real good. But we know this man, he is Joseph's son."

23 So Jesus said, "I know what you are going to say next. You are going to use the

* **2:52** 1 Samuel 2:26; Proverbs 3:4 * **4:18-19** Isaiah 61:1-2

picture talk that some people use. They say, 'Doctor, make yourself better, to show us that you know how to make people better.' And you mob will say to me, 'Show us that you know how to do powerful things. Do them here, in your own home town, like you did in Capernium.' 24 Listen, whenever God picks a man to tell his messages, the people of his own home town don't want him. They reckon they know him, so they will not listen to him.*

25-26 Think about these 2 stories in God's book. Remember the story about God's man, Elijah, that lived a long time ago. Our people, the Israel nation, did bad things at that time, so God punished them. He stopped the rain. No rain fell for 3½ years, and no food plants grew in the gardens, so nobody had enough food, and they were very hungry. But God looked after Elijah, and sent him to another place called Zarefath, in Sidon country. God got a widow there to look after Elijah, and God gave that widow enough food for herself, and her son, and Elijah too. Listen, there were a lot of widows in Israel at that time, but God did not save a widow that belonged to Israel, he saved a widow that belonged to Sidon country, not one of us Israel people.*

27 And remember the story about Elisha, another one of God's men that lived a long time ago. At that time, there was a man called Nayman, that belonged to Syria country. He had a bad skin sickness. But Elisha used God's power to make him better. Listen, there were a lot of people in Israel that had a bad skin sickness at that time, but God made a Syrian man better, not one of us Israel people."*

28 Those people in the meeting house heard Jesus say those things. They got really angry because they thought they were better than people from other places. 29 They got up and forced him out of the town. That town is on a big hill, and that mob chased Jesus up that hill. They were going to throw him off the top of the cliff there, to kill him. 30 But Jesus turned around, and he just went through the middle of that mob and went away.

(We have not yet translated 4:31—6:42. You can read most of those stories and messages in Mark 1:14-45; 2:1—3:19; Matthew 4:18-22; 5:3-12; 5:38-48; 7:1-5, 12.)

Chapter 6

The things people do show what sort of people they are

43 Jesus was talking to his followers, and he told them a picture story. He said, "Think about different sorts of trees that give us fruit to eat. Good trees don't give us rubbish fruit. And rubbish trees don't give us good fruit. 44 Whenever we look at the fruit of a tree, we know what sort of tree it comes from. Think about it. We don't get bananas or grapes from a rubbish prickly plant. 45 And it's like that with people too. Good people think about good things, so they do good things. But bad people think about bad things, so they do bad things, and they say bad things. You see, the things people say, show what they think about."

(We have not yet translated 6:46—7:10. You can read those stories and messages in Matthew 7:24-27; 8:5-13.)

Chapter 7

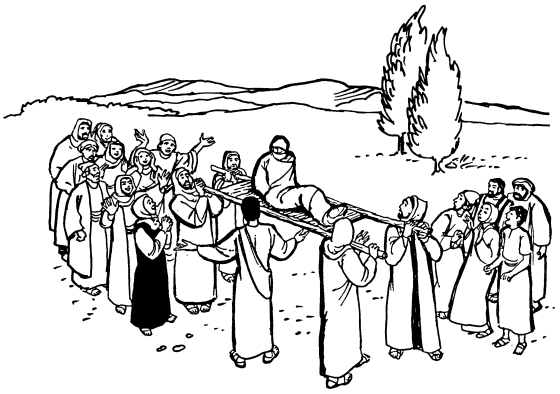
Jesus made a dead man become alive again

11 Jesus and his followers went to a town called Nain. A big mob of other people went

* **4:24** John 4:44 * **4:25-26** 1 Kings 17:1, 8-16 * **4:27** 2 Kings 5:1-14

with him. 12 Just before that, a young man
died in that town. He was the only son of
his mother, and her husband was already
dead, so she had nobody left to look after
her. A big mob of people were with that
mother, and they had the young man's body
on a stretcher. They were taking it along the
road out of the town, to bury it. And at that
same time, Jesus was going into that town
on that same road.

13 Jesus saw the mother, and he felt very
sorry for her. He told her, "Don't cry."



Jesus made a dead man become alive again, and he sat up

14 Then he walked over to the stretcher and
touched it, and the men that were carrying
it stopped. Jesus said, "Young man, listen
to me. Get up." 15 Then the dead man sat up
and started to talk. And Jesus told him to
go back to his mother.

16 Everyone that saw that was frightened.
They said, "God is really great and powerful.
God sent this man to us, to tell us his word
and show us his power. God has come to
help his people." 17 Then they went and
told lots of other people what they saw. So
people in the towns near there, and people
everywhere in Judea country, they heard
that story.

(We have not yet translated 7:18-35. You can read those stories and messages in Matthew 11:1-19.)

A woman poured special oil on Jesus

36 There was a man that was called Simon,
and he was one of the Pharisee mob, that
were strong for the Jewish law. He asked
Jesus to eat dinner with him. So Jesus went to
his house and sat down at the table with him
and some other people. 37 There was a woman
in that town that used to do bad things. She
heard that Jesus was eating dinner with
that man, so she got a pretty jar of oil that
had perfume in it and took it to his house. It
smelled really good, and it cost a lot of money.
38 Then she went inside and was just behind
Jesus, near his feet. She was crying, and her
tears fell on his feet. Then she dried his feet
with her hair, and she kissed them, then she
poured all that special oil on to his feet.*

39 Simon, the Pharisee man, he saw her do
that, and he said to himself, "I knew it. This
man is not one of God's men. He is letting a
bad woman touch him. I reckon he doesn't
know she did a lot of bad things, so I reckon
he doesn't have God's power."



A woman cried, and her tears fell on Jesus's feet, and she dried them with her hair

* **7:37-38** Matthew 26:7; Mark 14:3; John 12:3

40 Jesus said to him, "Simon, I want to tell you something."

Simon said, "All right, teacher, tell me."

41 Then Jesus told him a picture story. He said, "There was a rich man that used to lend money to people. One man borrowed $500 from him, and another man borrowed $50. 42 But both of those men lost all their money. They couldn't pay that money back to the rich man. But the rich man was good to both of them and told them, 'Don't worry, I'll let it go. You don't have to pay me back that money.'

Well, Simon, what do you reckon? Which one of those men will love that rich man the most?"

43 Simon said, "I reckon it is the man that owed him the most money and didn't have to pay it back."

Jesus said, "You are right."

44 Then he turned towards the woman and said, "Simon, look at this woman. When I came into your house, you didn't give me water to wash my feet, but she washed my feet with her tears, and dried them with her hair. 45 You didn't kiss me on the cheek to make me feel good, but this woman keeps on kissing my feet. 46 You didn't put any olive oil on my head, like people do for their friends, but she put oil on my feet that has perfume in it, and it cost a lot of money. 47 Listen, I know she did a lot of bad things, but I'm telling you, I will say that she is not guilty of all those bad things. I will let it all go, and God will not punish her. That is the reason why she loves me a lot. But if somebody only did a few bad things, and I let it go, they will only love me a little bit."

48 Then Jesus said to the woman, "You did bad things, but I am letting it go, and I will say that you are not guilty."

49 The other people there said to each other, "Who does this man think he is? He reckons he can say that somebody is not guilty, and then God will not punish them for the bad things they did."

50 But Jesus said to the woman, "You trusted me, so you will not get trouble for the bad things you did. Don't worry, you can go away happy and quiet now."

Chapter 8

The women that helped Jesus

1 After that, Jesus went around to a lot of different towns. In each town he told the people God's good news. He said, "God wants to have you in his family." He took his 12 special workers with him.

2-3 There were some women too, that went around with them. They used their own money to buy the things that Jesus and his special workers needed. Before that time, some of those women were sick, but Jesus made them better. And some of them had bad spirits in them, but Jesus forced those bad spirits out of them. One of those women was Mary Magdalene. Jesus forced 7 bad spirits out of her. Another one was Joanna, the wife of Chuza. Chuza was the boss over all the people that worked in the house of the big boss, that was called Herod. Another one of those women was Susanna. And there were lots of other women that went around with Jesus and his followers. *

(We have not yet translated 8:4—9:50. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 3:31-35; 4:1-25, 35-41; 5:1-43; 6:7-44; 8:27—9:8; 9:14-27, 30-40.)

Chapter 9

A town in Samaria country didn't want Jesus

51 The time was soon coming for Jesus to go back to heaven, so he started to go

* **8:2-3** Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 23:49

to Jerusalem city. He wasn't going to let anything stop him. 52 So he walked along the road, and soon he was getting close to a town in Samaria country, so he sent some messengers ahead of him to ask the people there for a place to stay that night. 53 But the people in that town said, "No. He is going to Jerusalem. We don't like that Jerusalem mob, so he is not our friend. He can't stay here tonight."

54 James and John, 2 of Jesus's special workers, heard what they said, then those 2 men said to Jesus, "Can we ask God to send fire down from the sky and kill all those people? Do you want us to do that?"*

55 Jesus turned around and said, "No. That is very wrong. Don't do it."

56 Then they all went on to another town.

We have to follow Jesus, even if it is hard for us

57 As they walked along the road, a man said to Jesus, "I want to be one of your followers. I will go everywhere with you."

58 Jesus said to him, "All right, but your life will not be easy. You see, wild dogs have places where they go to sleep, and birds have nests to rest in. But I haven't got a home to lie down and sleep in, even though I'm God's special man from heaven. So if you follow me, you too might not have a home."

59 And Jesus said to another man, "Come and follow me."

That man said, "All right, I will come with you. But my father has died, so let me go home to bury him. After that, I will come with you."

60 Jesus said to him, "Some people don't want me. It is like they are dead to me. So those people can bury the dead bodies of their own people. But you have to go and tell people that God wants them in his family."

61 Another man said to Jesus, "Yes, sir, I will follow you, but first I want to go back home and say *goodbye* to all my family."*

62 Jesus said, "Don't think about going back. I'll use the picture of a man that is driving something. He has to look at what is ahead of him, not look back at what is behind him. Well, it is the same for you. You have to look at me, and think about me. If you think about the people and the things that you left behind, it is like you are looking back, and you are not the right person to join God's family."

Chapter 10

(We have not yet translated 10:1-12. You can read that message and a story like that in Matthew 9:37-38; Mark 6:7-13.)

The people in some towns didn't want Jesus

13 Jesus talked to the people that lived in some towns. He said, "You mob that live in Korazin and Bethsayida, you will be really sorry. You know, I did a lot of powerful things there in your towns, but you didn't listen to me, and you keep on doing bad things. Think about those towns called Tyre and Sidon. A long time ago their people did bad things. At that time, I didn't go to them and do powerful things for them, like I did for you. They didn't get to listen to me, so they couldn't turn around and stop doing bad things. If they got to listen to me, they would be very sorry for the bad things they did, and they would turn to God real quick. But that didn't happen.* 14 You know, one day God will judge everybody, and he will punish those people for the bad things they did, but he will punish you mob a lot more than he will punish that mob. You mob heard my words, but you didn't take any notice, and you didn't turn to God.

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* **9:54** 2 Kings 1:9-16 * **9:61** 1 Kings 19:20
* **10:13** Isaiah 23:1-18; Ezekiel 26:1—28:26; Joel 3:4-8; Amos 1:9-10; Zechariah 9:2-4

15 And it's the same for you mob that live
in Capernium. You reckon you are good, so
you reckon God will take you up into heaven.
But you are wrong. He knows you are no
good, and he will chuck you down into the
bad place called hell."*

(We have not yet translated 10:16-24. You can read some of those stories and messages in Matthew 11:25-27.)

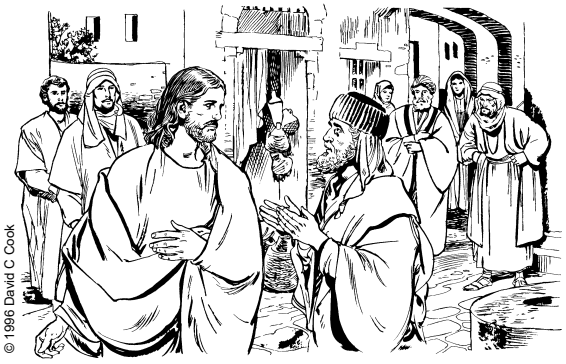
God's most important laws

25 One day, a Jewish law man went to Jesus.
He wanted to test Jesus, to see if he can
answer a hard question. So he asked Jesus,
"Teacher, what can I do so that I will live
with God for ever?"*

26 Jesus said, "You know God's laws, and
you read them all the time. What do you
reckon they say?"

27 The man said, "One law says this,

'You have to love God properly, not just
a little bit.
You have to love God from right inside
yourself.
You have to love God in the way you
feel, and in the way you think.
And you have to love God in the way
you do things.'


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A Jewish law man asked Jesus a hard question

And another law says this,

'You have to love the people around
you just as much as you love
yourself.' "*

28 Jesus said, "You are right. Do what those
laws say, and you will live with God for
ever."*

29 But the man wanted to show that he
asked an important question, so he said,
"What does it mean by *the people around* me?
Who are they?"

The story about the good man that was from Samaria country

30 Jesus answered that question by telling
this picture story. He said, "A Jewish man
was going down the road from Jerusalem
city to the town called Jericho. About
half-way along that road some bad men
grabbed him. They beat him up, and they
took everything he had, even his clothes,
and then they ran away. They left him lying
there, half dead.

31 After that, a leader of the Jewish
ceremonies was walking down that road.
He saw that man lying there, but he didn't
do anything to help him. He went over to
the other side of the road to go past him,
and he kept going down the road.

32 After that, a man that helped in the
Jewish ceremonies went along that road.
He looked at the man lying there, then he
went to the other side of the road and went
past him, and he kept going down the road.

33 Then a man from Samaria country went
along that road. He was riding on a donkey.
You know, Samaria people and Jewish people
don't like each other, but when that Samaria
man saw that Jewish man lying there, he felt
sorry for him. 34 He went to that man and
helped him. He treated the places where he

* **10:15** Isaiah 14:13-15 * **10:25** Matthew 22:35-40; Mark 12:28-34 * **10:27** Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 6:5
* **10:28** Leviticus 18:5

was bleeding. He put wine and oil on them, and bandaged them, to help them get better. Then he lifted him up and put him on his donkey and took him to a hotel, and they both stayed there that night. *



The man from Samaria country helped the Jewish man that was hurt

35 The next day, he paid a lot of money to the hotel boss, and said, 'This is for you to keep this man here and look after him until he gets better. If it costs more than this, I'll pay you the rest next time I come here.' "

36 Then Jesus said to the law man, "There were 3 people that saw that man on the road. Which one of them treated that man like he was one of the people around them?"

37 The law man said, "I reckon it was the person that felt sorry for that man and helped him."

Jesus said, "You are right. So you always have to do that same sort of thing for other people."

Jesus visited Martha and Mary

38 Jesus and his followers kept going along the road to Jerusalem, and they went into a town. A woman called Martha lived in that town, and she asked him to come to her house, so they went with her. 39 Then her sister, Mary, sat down near Jesus. He was teaching the people about God, and Mary just sat there listening to everything he said. * 40 Martha was busy getting a big dinner ready, and she got upset because Mary wasn't helping her. So she said to Jesus, "Sir, my sister isn't helping me with the work. She has left me to do it by myself. Do you think that is all right? Tell her to get up and help me."

41 Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, you worry about a lot of things. 42 But only one thing is really important, and Mary is doing that. She is listening to me, and nobody can stop her."



Martha got upset because her sister wasn't helping get dinner ready

Chapter 11

(We have not yet translated 11:1-4. You can read that story and that message in Matthew 6:9-13.)

Keep asking God, don't give up

5-6 Jesus told his followers a picture story, to teach them how to pray. He said, "Think

* **10:33-34** 2 Chronicles 28:15 * **10:38-39** John 11:1

about this. A man is going on a long trip, and at night he comes to the house where his cousin lives, so he visits him to stay the night with him. But his cousin hasn't got any food to give him. So his cousin goes out in the middle of the night to his friend's house, and he knocks on the door and he calls out, 'My friend, can you give me some food? You see, my cousin has just come, and I haven't got any food to give him. Can you give me some bread?'

7 But his friend says, 'Don't humbug me now. I'm in bed, and my kids are in bed with me. I already locked the door. I can't get up and give you anything.'

8 But if that man keeps on knocking and asking for bread, after a while his friend will get up and give him everything he asks for. He will not do it because they are friends. He will do it because that man keeps on asking him.

9 So I'm telling you this. Keep asking God for what you need, and he will give it to you. Keep looking for what you need, and God will help you find it. Or if something is stopping you, like there is a door that is shut and you can't get in, keep on knocking at that door, and God will open it for you. 10 You see, everyone that asks God for something will get it. Everyone that looks for something will find it. God will open the door for everyone that knocks on it.

11 Some of you are fathers. If your kid asks you for a fish to eat, will you give him a cheeky snake instead? No, of course not. 12 Or if your kid asks you for an egg, will you give him a cheeky scorpion instead? No, of course not. 13 You see, you might be bad, but you always give good things to your kids. Well, your father in heaven is a lot better than you, so you can be sure that he will always give you good things. He will send the Holy Spirit to everyone that asks him."

(We have not yet translated 11:14-36. You can read about that teaching in Mark 3:20-27; 8:12; Matthew 5:15; 6:22-23; 12:41-45.)

Jesus told the Pharisee mob and law men that they were wrong

37 Jesus was talking to the people, and a man that belonged to the Pharisee mob asked him to come to his place for dinner. The Pharisee mob were very strong for the Jewish law. 38 They made a rule, that whenever anyone wanted to eat some food, they first had to wash their hands. But Jesus didn't follow that rule. He didn't wash his hands. The Pharisee man was shocked.

39 So Jesus said to him, "You Pharisee mob are like somebody that cleans the outside of cups and plates, but doesn't clean the inside. You see, you only do good things if people can see you, like you are good on the outside. But you are really dirty on the inside. Yes, inside yourselves you are greedy, and you are always thinking in your heads about doing very bad things. 40 Look, you are really stupid. You forget that God made the inside of you as well as the outside. He can see everything that is inside your heads. 41 The right way is like this. You have to think in your heads about poor people, and you have to feel sorry for them, and you have to give them the things they need. Then God will say that you are clean, on the inside as well as on the outside.

42 You mob follow God's law that says you have to give him a little bit of everything you get. That little bit is one part out of every 10 parts. You do that for everything you get, even the little plants that grow in your garden. But you don't do the important things that God wants everyone to do. So God will make trouble for you Pharisee mob. You see, you have to be fair to other people, and you have to love God. Those are the

important things that you have to do, and you have to do the other things too.*

43 Yes, God will make trouble for you Pharisee mob. You try to get people to think you are important. Whenever you go to a meeting house, you want the good seats that are for important people. And whenever you walk around the shopping places, you want people to respect you and say *hello* to you in a good way. 44 But God will make trouble for you mob. You are like ground that has dead bodies in it that people don't know about. People walk on that ground, and they think it is good. You are like that ground. You get people to think you are good, and they don't know that you are bad on the inside."

45 Then a Jewish law man said to Jesus, "Hey, teacher, you are saying bad things about us too."

46 Jesus said, "That's right, you mob are just as bad, and God will make trouble for you law men too. You make a lot of hard rules, and you make people follow all those rules. You are too hard on people. It is like you are making them carry lots of heavy things, and you don't help them at all. You don't even move one of your fingers to help them.

47 Yes, God will make trouble for you law teacher mob. A long time ago, your grand-fathers killed the men that told everyone God's messages, and they buried them. And now, you mob put pretty little stone buildings there to remember the place where they buried them. 48 When you do that, you show that you agree with the bad things your grand-fathers did. They killed those good men, and now you make those buildings for them.

49 Listen, God is wise, and he said,

'I will pick men to tell everyone my
messages, and I will pick men to be my
special workers, and I will send them
to the people. But you will kill some of
them, and you will hurt some of them.'

50 Yes, you people that are alive today will hurt and kill God's people. And it has been like that for a long time. Your grand-fathers have been killing God's men ever since the world first started. And you agree with those bad things that they did too, so God will punish you too, for all those bad things that they did. 51 Abel was the first one of God's men to die. And Zekariah was the last one to die. They killed him at God's ceremony house, near the place where they kill animals and burn them, to give them to God. Yes, they killed those men, but God will punish you people that are alive today too.*

52 Listen, God will make trouble for you law men, because you don't do the right thing. You know how to help people understand more about God, but you never do it. You yourselves don't want to know God, and you stop everybody else, so they can't know him either."

53-54 Then Jesus got up to go to another place, but the Jewish law teacher mob and the Pharisee mob started to get really angry with him, and they argued against him a lot. They tried to make him say something bad, so they could blame him. So they asked him a lot of hard questions. But he didn't say anything bad.

Chapter 12

(We have not yet translated 12:1-12. You can read those messages in Matthew 10:26-33; Mark 3:28-29; 13:11.)

The story about a man that was rich, but he was stupid

13 A man in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, my brother is cheating me. Our father died,

* **11:42** Leviticus 27:30 * **11:51** Genesis 4:8; 2 Chronicles 24:20-21

and he left his things for my brother and me. But my brother took all those things, and he is keeping them for himself. Please tell my brother to be fair to me and give me my part of our father's things."

14 Jesus said, "It's not my job to say which one of you is right and which one is wrong, or what part of your father's things each of you can have."

15 Then he said to the people, "Think carefully about this. Don't be greedy. Don't try to get more things than you need. You can't get real life from the things you own, even if you are rich."

16 Then Jesus told them a picture story. He said, "A rich man had a big garden. He planted lots of seeds there, and they grew into very big plants, and then those plants grew lots of seed food on them. 17 The man looked at it all and said to himself, 'My sheds are not big enough for all this seed food. Where will I put it all?' 18 He thought about it, and then he said, 'I know what to do. I will pull down my little sheds and build big sheds, and I will keep it all in those big sheds. And I will keep all my other things in those big sheds too. 19 Then I will say, "Ah. I've got lots of stuff now. I've got enough in those sheds to last me for a long time. I don't have to do any work. I can just sit down and eat, and drink, and be happy."'

20 But God said to him, 'You are stupid. You are going to die tonight. Then what will happen to all this stuff in your sheds? Who will get it? Not you.'

21 That is a picture story to tell you people this. If you keep money and things just for yourself, and if you don't use them the way God wants you to, you are stupid."



The rich man had more seed food than he could fit in his sheds

(We have not yet translated 12:22-53. You can read those stories and messages in Matthew 6:19-21, 25-34; 10:34-36; 24:45-51.)

We can work out what God is doing

54 Then Jesus said to all the people, "Sometimes you look at the sky, and you see big clouds coming together, and you say, 'Here comes some rain.' And you are right. 55 And sometimes the north wind blows, and you say, 'Today will be really hot.' And again, you are right. 56 But really, you are fools. Yes, you know how to look at the earth and the sky, and work out what the weather is doing. But you don't know how to look at the things that are happening right now, and work out what God is doing."

(We have not yet translated 12:57-59. You can read that message in Matthew 5:25-26.)

Chapter 13

If you don't turn to God, you will die

1 About that time, some men from Galilee country were killing some animals to give them to God, but then Pilate, the big boss, went with his soldiers and killed those men. Then some people went and told Jesus what happened. 2 Jesus said, "Do you reckon those men that died did more bad things than all the other men from Galilee? Is that why God let Pilate kill them? 3 No. That is not right. Listen, all of you mob do bad things. You have to stop doing bad things and turn to God. If you don't turn to God, you will die, just like those men died.

4 And you know about the high building
in Jerusalem city, at the place called Siloam.
It fell down on top of 18 people and killed
them. Do you think those people did
more bad things than the other people in
Jerusalem, and that is the reason why God
let them die like that? 5 No. That is not right.
Listen, all of you mob do bad things. You
have to stop doing bad things and turn to
God. If you don't turn to God, you will die,
just like those people died."

The story about a fruit tree that didn't have any fruit on it

6 Then Jesus told them this picture story to
show them that they have to turn to God soon.
He said, "A man had a garden with grape
vines growing in it. There was a fruit tree
there too, called a fig tree. That man used
to go to that garden, to see if there was any
fruit on that tree, but he never found any fruit.
7 So he talked to his work-man that looked
after the garden. He said, 'Look, this tree is
no good. I came here looking for fruit on this
tree. I did that for the last 3 years, but I never
found any fruit. So chop it down and get rid
of it. We can't let it go on like this. It is using
up the ground and giving back nothing to us.'
8 But his work-man said, 'Wait, boss. Leave
it for one more year, and I will look after
it properly. I'll dig around it and put some
fertilizer stuff on it to help it grow. 9 And
maybe next year it will get fruit on it. If it
doesn't get any fruit next year, then we can
chop it down.' "

Jesus made a sick woman better on the Jewish rest day

10 One Saturday, Jesus was teaching people
in a Jewish meeting house. Their Jewish law
said that nobody can work on a Saturday. It
was their rest day.



There was a woman at the Jewish meeting house with a crooked back

11 There was a woman there with a bad
spirit inside her. A long time before that, the
bad spirit went into that woman and made
her back crooked. That bad spirit lived in her
for 18 years, and all that time her back was
bent over. She couldn't stand up straight.
12 Jesus saw her in that meeting house, and
he called out to her to come to him. And he
said to her, "Friend, you are better now. You
are free from that sickness." 13 Then he put
his hands on her, and she stood up straight,
right then. And she told everybody that God
is really good.
14 But the boss of that meeting house got
angry, because Jesus made a sick woman
better on their rest day. So he told the people,
"Listen, you mob. There are 6 days for work
each week, so come on any one of those
days and get him to make you better. But
Saturday is our rest day. Don't come on a
Saturday."*
15 Jesus said to him, "You and your mob
are wrong. You say one thing, but you do
something different. You work for yourselves
on our rest day, right? You know, you keep
cows and donkeys tied up in your yards,
and every day you untie them and take
them out to a water-hole, to let them drink.

* **13:14** Exodus 20:9-10; Deuteronomy 5:13-14

You do that on our rest day too. 16 Now look at this woman here. She belongs to Abraham's family. But 18 years ago, Satan, the boss over the bad spirits, he made her back crooked. It's like he has kept her tied up with this problem for 18 years. So why can't I untie her, even on our rest day?"

17 When Jesus said those words, the bosses of that meeting house felt shame, but all the people were happy, because Jesus was doing a lot of really good things there.

(We have not yet translated 13:18-30. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 4:30-32; Matthew 7:13-14, 21-23.)

Jesus felt sorry for the Jerusalem people

31 At that time, some of the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law, they went to Jesus and said, "Herod, that big boss, he wants to kill you, so you have to run away. Get right away from here."

32 Jesus said, "Herod is a bad man, and he is tricky, like a wild dog. Tell him that I'm forcing bad spirits out of people, and I'm making sick people better, and I'll keep on doing these things for a bit longer. Then I'll finish my work. 33 But I have to keep going now, and I'll keep going for a bit longer, until I get to Jerusalem city. I will not die before I get there. You see, the Jerusalem mob are the worst. They kill the people that tell God's messages."

34 Then Jesus gave a message for the people that lived in Jerusalem city. He said, "You Jerusalem mob. You never listen to the men that tell you God's messages, but instead you kill them. Yes, you throw big stones at them to kill them. Listen, I wanted to look after you mob, just like a chook looks after her young chicks and covers them with her wings, so that nothing can hurt them. I often wanted to look after you like that, but you never let me. 35 So now God is leaving you. He will not look after you, or your city, or his ceremony house there. You mob will not see me again until the day comes when you will say, 'God, we want you to look after this man you sent. Make him strong and happy.' "*

Chapter 14

Jesus made a man better on the Jewish rest day

1-2 One day, a man asked Jesus to come to his house to have dinner with him, and with some of his friends. He was a leader of the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law. That day was a Saturday, and the Jewish law says that Saturday is their rest day. Nobody can work on the rest day.

There was a sick man there at that Pharisee man's house. His arms and legs were swollen. That Pharisee mob and the Jewish law men there, they watched Jesus to see if he was going to make that sick man better.

3 Jesus asked them, "Is it all right to make people better on our rest day, or not?"

4 They didn't want to answer him, so they said nothing. Then Jesus touched the sick man and made him better, and then Jesus said that he can go home.

5 And Jesus talked to the Pharisee mob and the law men. He said, "Sometimes you work on our rest day, right? If you ever have to do something straight away, like if your little kid falls into a deep hole on our rest day, you get up quick and pull your kid out. Or if your cow falls into a hole, you pull it out, even on our rest day. You do that, right? So it's all right to do a good thing on our rest day. Is that right?"* 6 That mob didn't answer Jesus. They couldn't say that he was wrong.

* **13:35** Psalm 118:26; Jeremiah 22:5 * **14:5** Matthew 12:11

Don't try to make yourself important

7 There were a lot of people at that dinner, and they all wanted to sit in the seats up near the boss. That's the place where the important people sit. Jesus watched them, and he told them, 8 "You are not doing the right thing. You see, if somebody asks you to come to a big dinner, don't go quickly to the best seat and sit down there. Maybe later on, somebody more important than you will come, 9 and the boss will tell you, 'Get up and give this person that good seat.' Then you will feel shame, and you will have to find yourself an empty seat, and it will be down at the other end of the table, at the place for people that are not important. 10 Instead of that, when you come to the dinner, go and sit at the place for people that are not important. Then later, the boss will see you there, and he will say, 'My friend, you can have a better seat than that.' And he will take you to a good seat, and everybody there will see him do that, and they will respect you. *

11 You see, if you try to make yourself important, God will make you like nothing. But if you make yourself like nothing, God will make you important." *

12 Then Jesus talked to the boss of that house. He said, "Whenever you put on a dinner for other people to come and eat with you, don't ask your family, or your friends, or the rich people that live near you, to come and eat that food. If you ask those people to come, later they will ask you to come and eat some food with them. That will be the only pay you get for giving them food. 13 Instead of that, ask poor people to come and eat with you. Maybe they are crippled, or blind, or they can't walk, so they can't get jobs to get some money, so they are too poor to put on a dinner for you. 14 There's no way they can pay you for that food. But God will make you really happy on the day when he will make everyone alive again. At that time, he will pay you properly for that good thing you did for those poor people."

Jesus told a picture story about a big dinner

15 One of the men sitting there heard the words that Jesus said, and that man said, "It will be really good to be at the dinner that God will put on for all his family."

16 Jesus told him this picture story. He said, "An important man put on a big dinner. He asked a lot of people to come to eat that dinner with him. 17 When all the food was ready, he sent his work-man out to tell them to come. That work-man told each one of them, 'You can come now, the dinner is ready for you.'

18 But each one told him they couldn't come to that dinner. One of them said, 'I have bought a garden, so I have to go and look at it. Please tell your boss I'm sorry, but I can't come to his dinner.'

19 The next man said, 'I have just bought 10 cows, and I have to see if they work well together. Please tell your boss I'm sorry, but I can't come to his dinner.'

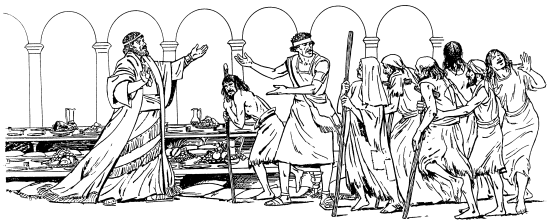
20 Another man said, 'I just got married, so I can't come to that dinner.'

21 The work-man went back to his boss and told him their stories. Then his boss was very angry. He said to his work-man, 'Go quickly now to every street in this town, and get the poor people, and bring them here to eat this dinner. Bring the people that are crippled, and the people that are blind, and the people that can't walk.'

22 So the work-man went out and got those people. Then he told his boss, 'Those people are here now, but there are still some empty seats at the table.'

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* **14:8-10** Proverbs 25:6-7 * **14:11** Matthew 23:12; Luke 18:14



The poor people and the crippled people came to the important man's dinner

23 So the boss said, 'Go out to the roads in the bush. Look for people that are out there. Tell them all to come here, so that my house will be full. They can eat this good food. 24 But those other people that I asked before, and they said they couldn't come, I'm telling you this, none of them will eat any of this good food.' "

(We have not yet translated 14:25-27. You can read those messages in Matthew 10:37; Mark 8:34.)

Before you follow Jesus, you have to think about it

28 Jesus said to the people, "If you want to follow me, first you have to think about it. Your life will be hard, so ask yourself, 'Can I really do it?' You know, it's the same as when you want to build a big high building. At first you have to think about how much it will cost, and you have to find out if you have enough money to do that job, and to finish it. 29 If you don't do that, you might start that job, then you might run out of money, and never finish that building. Then other people will laugh at you 30 and say, 'You stupid fool. You started to build that thing, but you couldn't finish it. Now it is no good for anything, so you wasted your money.' "

31 Then Jesus told them another picture story. He said, "If a country's big boss has to get his army to fight the army of another country, at first he thinks about it, to see if he will win. If the other army has a lot more soldiers, he might say, 'No. My army is too little. We can't win.' 32 Then he will send a message real quick to that other army's big boss. He will say to him, 'Let's not fight each other. Let's talk about the problem and sort it out, without fighting.' " 33 Then Jesus said, "It is the same for you. If you want to be one of my followers, you have to think about it. You see, your life will be hard. You will have to leave everything you own, and then you can follow me."

(We have not yet translated 14:34-35. You can read those messages in Mark 9:50; Matthew 5:13.)

Chapter 15

The story about the sheep that got lost

1 There were some people that everyone reckoned did really bad things. Some of them used to get tax money from the people and give it to the Roman government. Everyone reckoned those tax men were bad men. Lots of those bad people often went up to Jesus and listened to him. 2 That upset the Jewish law teachers and the Pharisee mob, the men that were strong for the Jewish law, so they complained about Jesus. They said, "He is a friend of bad people. He even eats food with them."*

3 So Jesus told the people this picture story. He said, 4 "Suppose there is a man that has 100 sheep, but one of them wanders away and gets lost. What do you think that man will do? He will leave all the other sheep and go out into the bush and look for the one that got lost. He will keep on looking for it until he finds it. 5 Then, after he finds it, he will pick it up and carry it back home on his

* **15:1-2** Luke 5:29-30

shoulders. He will be really happy. 6 After he gets home, he will call out to his family, and to his friends. He will say, 'Look, I've found my lost sheep. We can all be happy together now.' 7 Well, just like that, whenever somebody turns back to God, everyone in heaven is really happy too. Whenever one bad person stops doing bad things, and lives God's way, everyone in heaven is really happy. They are even more happy about that person, than they are about the big mob of other people that never went wrong."



When the man finds his sheep, he will be happy, and he will carry it home

The story about the coin that got lost

8 Jesus told them another picture story. He said, "Suppose a woman has 10 coins, but then she loses one of them in her house. What do you think she will do? She will get a torch and look carefully everywhere in that house. She will even sweep all the floors, and she will keep on looking for her money until she finds it. 9 Then, after she finds it, she will be happy, and she will call out to her family, and to her friends. She will say, 'Look, I've found my lost coin. We can all be happy together now.' 10 Well, just like



When the woman finds her coin, she will be happy

that, whenever somebody turns back to God, God's angel messengers in heaven are really happy too. Whenever one bad person stops doing bad things, and lives God's way, God's angel messengers in heaven are really happy."

The story about the young man that got lost

11 Then Jesus told the people another picture story. He said, "There was a man that had 2 sons. 12 One day, his youngest son said to him, 'Dad, I want you to give me my part of all the things you own. I can't wait until after you die to get it. No, I want it all now.' So his father split up everything he had and gave one part to his youngest son, and he kept the other part for his oldest son.

13 A few days later, that youngest son sold all those things that his father gave him, then he took the money and went away to another country, far away. In that country he soon spent all that money. He just wasted it on all sorts of things that made him feel good. 14 After a while, he had no money left. At that same time, that country had no rain, so all the food plants died. And soon that young man had nothing to eat. 15 So he got a job with a man in that place. He had to look after that man's pigs. 16 That young man was so hungry he wanted to eat the rubbish food that the pigs ate, but nobody gave him anything to eat.



The man's son wasted all his money on things that made him feel good

17 At last he started to think properly. He thought, 'Those men that work for my dad in his garden back home, they always get enough food to eat. But I am getting so hungry that I reckon I will die in this place. 18 So I will get up now and go back home to my dad, and I will say to him, "Dad, I'm sorry, I went wrong. I did the wrong thing to God, and I did the wrong thing to you. 19 So now I'm not good enough for you to call me your son, so just let me have a job in your garden. I will work for you, and you can just call me your work-man." '

20 So he got up and started to go back to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming along the road.



The young man's father ran to meet him

His father felt really sorry for him. He ran to his son and hugged him and kissed him.

21 Then his son said, 'Dad, I'm sorry, I went wrong. I did the wrong thing to God, and I did the wrong thing to you. So now I'm not good enough for you to call me your son.'

22 But his father said to his workers there, 'Go and get some really good clothes and put them on him. And be quick. And get him a ring for his finger, and get some shoes for his feet. 23 And get a fat young cow, and kill it, and cook the meat, so we can all have a big party. 24 You see, my son got himself lost, but now I have found him. I thought he was gone for ever, like he was dead, but now he came back to me, and it is like he came alive again.'

So those workers did what he told them to do, and they had a big party.

25 While all that was happening, the oldest son was working out in the garden, and he didn't know what was going on. Then later, he knocked off work, and he started walking home. He got near to the house, and then he heard a lot of music, and he heard people dancing and having a good time. 26 So he asked one of the work-men, 'What's going on?'

27 The work-man said, 'Your brother just came back home, and your dad is having a party for him. We just killed a young cow and cooked its meat. Your brother is alive and well, so your dad is really happy.'

28 Then the oldest son got angry, and he said, 'I'm not happy. I'm not going into the house to join in that party. No way.'

So his father came out and said, 'Don't be angry. Come on in, and have a good time with us.' And the father kept on asking him to come in.

29 But the oldest son said, 'No. It's not fair. Look, I worked for you for years and years, and I always did everything you told me to do. But you never gave me a party. You didn't

even give me a young goat for me to kill and cook its meat, and have a good time with my friends. 30 But this other son of yours, he took your money away, and he wasted it. He even paid women to sleep with him, like a woman does with her husband. And then he came back here, and now you are good to him. You even killed a young cow and gave him a party. That's not right.'

31 His father said, 'Listen, you are my son. You have always stayed with me, and now you own everything that I have. After I die, you will get all of it. 32 But your brother got himself lost, and now I have found him. I thought he was gone for ever, like he was dead, but he came back to me, and now it is like he came alive again. So we have to have a party and be happy together.' "

Chapter 16

The story about the manager that cheated

1 Then Jesus told his followers another picture story. He said, "There was a rich man that had a big business, and he had another man working in his office. That other man was his manager. He looked after the rich man's money.

Somebody told the rich man, 'Look, your manager is wasting your money.' 2 So that boss said to his manager, 'They tell me you are not doing your job properly. So I'm going to sack you, and you will not have a job any more. Now write down everything you have done with my money, and after that, you have to go.'

3 The manager thought to himself, 'Soon I will not have a job. What will I do to get money for my food? I'm not strong enough to do hard work, like digging the ground. And if I ask people for money all the time, I will feel shame. 4 What can I do? I know what to do. I will do something to get people to like me, so that after I lose my job, they will look after me, and they will let me live in their homes.'

5 There were some people that borrowed things from that rich man, and they didn't give anything back to him yet. So the manager called those people into the office. He asked one man, 'What did you borrow from my boss?'

6 That man said, 'I borrowed 100 drums of oil.'

The manager said, 'We can change that. Here is the paper that has the numbers on it. I'll let you change it right now. Make it 50 drums of oil.'

7 Then the manager asked the next man, 'What did you borrow from my boss?'

That man said, 'I borrowed 100 bags of flour.'

The manager said, 'We can change that. Here is the paper that has the numbers on it. I'll let you change it right now. Make it 80 bags of flour.'

8 That manager was cheating his boss, but his boss thought, 'This man is a liar and a cheat, but he is smart too. He has done something that will help him get his food later.' "

Then Jesus said, "You know, the people that don't care about God, but only care about the things in this world, they are smart with the things of this world. God's people are not so smart with the things of this world.

9 This is what you can learn from that story. Use your money now to help people that need money, and then later, after you die, and you haven't got any money, God will say, 'Good on you. Come and live with me for ever.' "

Jesus talked about money

10 Then Jesus said, "If people can trust you with little things, they can trust you with big things too. If you cheat with little things, you will cheat with big things too. 11 So if

you cheat when you handle money and other things of this world, God will not trust you to look after his very special things. 12 And if you don't look after other people's things properly, God will not give you things for yourself.

13 You see, you can't work for 2 bosses at the same time. If you try to do that, you will like one boss and work properly for him, and you will not like the other boss, and you will not work properly for him. You see, you can't have God as your boss, and money as your boss, both at the same time."*

God knows more than people know, and his word is strong

14 Some of the Pharisee mob were there. They were strong for the Jewish law. And they loved money a lot too, so when they heard Jesus teach those things, they laughed at him. 15 Then Jesus told them, "You mob want everyone to think you are good, but God knows what you are really like, and he knows what you think inside your heads. You see, there are things that people reckon are important, but God thinks those things are rubbish.

16 You know, God gave Moses the law for people to follow, and he sent his other men to tell people God's messages. And God's people had to follow those words, from the time of Moses until the time that John the Baptiser came. Then John told people about the new way. And I'm telling people about that new way too. I'm telling them how to join God's family too, and now lots of people are trying hard to get into God's family. 17 But the laws from Moses will not go away. You know, the sky and the earth will stay here for a long time, and while they stay here, God's words will stay here too. God will not change any little bit of them."*

Don't split up your marriage

18 Then Jesus said, "Some of those words from God are about people that want to break up their marriage. It is wrong. If a man divorces his wife and marries another woman, he is sleeping with the wrong woman. She is not his proper wife. And if another man marries the divorced woman, that man is sleeping with the wrong woman too."*

The story about a rich man and a poor man

19 Jesus told them another picture story. He said, "There was a rich man that always wore really good clothes, and he always had plenty of good food to eat. 20 And there was a very poor man. His name was Lazarus. He had a lot of sores on his body, and he was hungry, but he had nothing to eat. So he used to lie down at the gate of the rich man's house. 21 He wanted to get some of the rubbish food that the rich man chucked away. But that rich man didn't give him anything. And that poor man couldn't stop the dogs there from licking his sores.



The rich man didn't help Lazarus

* **16:13** Matthew 6:24 * **16:17** Matthew 5:18 * **16:18** 1 Corinthians 7:10-11

22 Then one day, the poor man died, and
God sent his angel messengers to get him
and take him to be with Abraham, our
grand-father that died a long time ago.

Then later the rich man died, and his
family buried his body. 23 He went to a place
where dead people go. A big fire there was
hurting him a lot. Then he looked up, and
he saw Abraham, a long way off, and he saw
Lazarus there with Abraham. 24 So he yelled
out loud. He said, 'Grand-father Abraham,
this fire is hurting me a lot. Feel sorry for
me, and send Lazarus to bring some water
to me, and put his finger in it and then put
it on my tongue, to cool it a little bit.'

25 But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that
when you were alive on the earth, you had
everything that you wanted, and Lazarus
had nothing. So now he is here, and we are
making him feel good, but you are there in
that fire. 26 And anyway, he can't go to you.
There is a really big gully in between this
place and that place where you are. Nobody
can cross over from here to that place, and
nobody can come from that place to here.'

27 Then the rich man said, 'Then how about
this, Grand-father Abraham. Send Lazarus
back to the earth, to my family. 28 I've got
5 brothers there. Get Lazarus to tell them
about this bad place, so they will stop doing
bad things. If they turn around and live
God's way, they will not end up in this bad
place.'

29 But Abraham said, 'God told his message
to Moses, and to his other men too. They
wrote God's word in his book. Your brothers
can read that book at any time, and if they
do what God says, they will not end up in
that bad place.'

30 The rich man said, 'But Grand-father
Abraham, my brothers don't take any notice
of God's book. But if a dead man will come
alive again and talk to them, they will take
notice of him. Then they will stop doing bad
things, and turn around, and do good things.'

31 But Abraham said, 'Look, if they take no
notice of Moses, and if they take no notice of
the things that God's men wrote in his book,
they will not take any notice of anyone, not
even a dead person that comes alive again.' "

Chapter 17

Jesus talked about people that go wrong

1 Jesus said to his followers, "You know, there
will always be somebody that will try to
make you go wrong and do bad things, but
God will punish the person that does that.
2 If anyone gets a little kid to do something
bad, God will properly punish that person.
Suppose somebody gets a big stone and ties
it to that person's neck and throws them into
the sea and drowns them, that will be bad
for them, but not as bad as the trouble God
will give them for getting that little kid to
go wrong. 3 So be careful."

Jesus talked to his followers. He said, "If
one of my followers does something bad to
you, tell them that it is wrong. If they change
their way and say they are sorry, then let it
go. Don't think about any payback. * 4 Maybe
they do that a lot, like 7 times in one day,
and then each time they turn around and
say, 'I'm sorry.' If they do that, you have to
let it go every time."

Jesus talked about how to trust him and work for God

5 Jesus's 12 special workers said to him,
"Show us how to trust you properly."

6 Jesus said, "You know that plant called
mustard? It has very little seeds, but they
grow into a big plant. Well, like that, if you
trust me properly, even if it is just a little

* **17:3** Matthew 18:15

bit, you will get stronger and trust me more. Then you will do powerful things, like if you say to a tree, 'Get up and throw yourself into the sea,' then that tree will do what you tell it to do."

7 And Jesus said to his followers, "You know about bosses and their workers. Maybe a work-man digs the ground to plant seeds one day, or maybe he looks after sheep. When the sun starts to go down, the work-man comes back to the house of his boss. That boss doesn't say, 'Sit down with me, and we will have dinner together.' 8 No. The boss says, 'Get my dinner ready for me. Then put on clean clothes and bring me my dinner. Then, after I finish eating, you can get yourself some food to eat.' 9 That boss never says *thank you* to his work-man. You see, his work-man just did what the boss told him to do. He didn't do anything more. 10 Well, it is the same with you. You are God's workers. When you do what God tells you to do, just say to yourselves, 'We are not special people. We are just workers, and we only did what our boss told us to do.' "

Jesus made 10 men better

11 After that, Jesus kept going along the road to the city called Jerusalem, and he went from Galilee country into Samaria country. 12 He got to a town, and he started to go into it, but 10 men met him there. They all had a bad skin sickness, so they didn't come close to Jesus, but they stood a little bit away from him and shouted to him. 13 They said, "Jesus, sir, please feel sorry for us, and help us."

14 Jesus looked at them and said, "All right. Go to the leaders of our Jewish ceremonies and let them look at your skin." So they started to go to those ceremony leaders, and while they were walking along, they all got better. Their skin was good again. *



Jesus made 10 men better, but only one came back to say thank you

15 One of them looked at his skin and saw that it was good again, so he turned around and came back to Jesus. He kept talking really loud, saying, "God is really good and really great." 16 And he got down on his knees in front of Jesus, to show him respect. And he said to Jesus, "Thank you, sir." That man was not Jewish, like the 9 other men, and like Jesus and his followers, but he was from the Samaria nation.

17 Jesus asked the man, "I made 10 men better, right? Where are the other 9 men? 18 None of the Jewish men came back to say *thank you* to God. Only you came back, and you are not Jewish, you belong to another nation." 19 Then Jesus said to the man, "You can stand up now and go home. You believed in me, so now you are better."

God is getting people into his family

20 At one time, some of the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law, they asked Jesus, "When will God come and bring his people together, and be their boss here on earth?"

Jesus said, "You will not see anything different when God starts to bring his people together and be their boss. People can't see

* **17:14** Leviticus 14:1-32

it happen. 21 Nobody will say, 'Look everyone,
God is the boss here,' or, 'Look over there,
and you will see that God is the boss there.'
No, it is not like that. You see, God is already
getting people into his family, and he is
their boss right now. His family is right here
among you mob."

Jesus talked about the time when he will come back

22 Then Jesus said to his followers, "You
know, I am God's special man from heaven,
and the time will come when you will really
want to see me come back, but you will not
see me at that time. 23 People will say to
you, 'Look, there he is, over there,' or they
might say, 'Here he is, over here.' But don't
take any notice of them. Don't try to find
me. 24 You see, I am God's special man from
heaven, and when I come back, I will be like
lightning. You know how it flashes really
bright, and everyone can see it. Well, I will
be like that. Everyone will see me. 25 But
first, before that happens, the people that
are alive today will reckon they don't want
me to be their boss, and they will hurt me
a lot. 26-27 Think about the story about Noah,
the good man that lived a long time ago. He
made a big boat. While he was doing that,
the bad people there kept on living the way
they always lived. They had parties, with
plenty to eat and drink, and they promised
wives to each other, and they got married.
They kept on living like that right up until
the time Noah and his family got into that
big boat. Then a big flood of water came and
finished up all those bad people. You see,
I am God's special man from heaven, and
when I come back here, the people will be
living the way they always live, just like they
were when that big flood of water came. *

28-29 And remember the story about Lot, the
good man that lived in a town called Sodom.
A lot of bad people lived there. Those people
were living the way they always lived. They
had parties, with plenty to eat and drink,
and they bought things and sold things, and
they planted seeds in their gardens, and they
built houses for themselves. They kept on
living like that right up until the day that Lot
and his family ran out of that town. Then
God sent fire and burning stones down from
the sky, and it burned up all of those bad
people, and finished them up. * 30 You know,
before I come back from heaven, the people
will be just like that. They will be living the
same way as they always live.

Yes, I am God's special man from heaven,
and one day, I will show myself to everybody.
31 On that day, it will be like this. It will be
hard for you. You will have to run away. If
you are outside your house, don't go in and
pack up your things to take with you. No.
Just run away. If you are out in the bush,
don't go back to your house to get anything.
No. Just run away. *

32 Think again about that story about Lot
and his family. Remember what his wife
did. While they were running away, she
stopped and looked back at that town, like
she wanted to go back. But she died right
there. * 33 You see, it's like this. If you only
want to look after your own life here on
earth, you will lose it. You will not live with
me for ever. But if you are ready to give up
your life here, then you will find real life,
and you will live with me for ever. *

34 Listen, I'll tell you more about the time
when I will come back. God will take his
people away from the other people. It will
be like this. There will be 2 people asleep
in one bed. God will take one of them and

* **17:26-27** Genesis 6:5-8; 7:6-24 * **17:28-29** Genesis 18:20—19:25 * **17:31** Matthew 24:17-18; Mark 13:15-16
* **17:32** Genesis 19:26 * **17:33** Matthew 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; John 12:25

leave the other one. 35-36 There will be 2 women working together getting food ready to cook. God will take one of them and leave the other one."

37 Jesus's followers asked him, "Where will all this happen, sir?"

Jesus said, "You know what people say, 'If you see a lot of crows in one place, you know that there is a dead body there at that place.' Well, like that, when you see all those things happening, those things that I told you about, you will know that the world will soon finish up."*

Chapter 18

The story about the woman that kept on asking for a fair go

1 Jesus told his followers a picture story to teach them to keep on praying to God, and never give up.

2 He said, "There was a judge in a city, and he was a hard man. He didn't respect God, and he didn't care about people either. 3 A woman lived in that city. Her husband was dead, and she had nobody to look after her. Then a bad man tricked that woman and took her money. So she went to the judge and said, 'Your honour, that man tricked me. Please give me a fair go. Make him give me back my money.'

4-5 The judge didn't answer her. He took no notice of her, and he wouldn't listen to her. But she kept on asking him, and for a while he kept on taking no notice of her. But after a while he said to himself, 'This woman is making me go crazy. Even though I don't respect God, and I don't care about people, I will make sure she gets a fair go. I will give her what she wants. If I don't do that, she will keep on asking me, and I'm getting sick of it.' "

6 Then Jesus said, "That judge was a bad man, but think about what he said to himself. That woman kept on asking him, and in the end, he did the right thing. 7 Well, God is a lot better than that judge, and God picked you to be in his family. So if you keep on calling out to him for help all the time, what do you think he will do? Will he wait a while before he does anything? 8 No. I'm telling you this for sure. God will listen to you, and he will help you quickly. He will make sure you get a fair go."

Then Jesus said, "But when I, God's special man, come back again from heaven to this earth, will I find people trusting me, or not? Maybe only a few people will be trusting me at that time."

The story about 2 men that prayed to God in 2 different ways

9 Some people there thought that they were really good, and they rubbished everyone else. They reckoned, "We are so good that God will always say we are all right."

So Jesus told them this picture story. He said, 10 "I will tell you about 2 men that went to God's ceremony house to pray to him. One of them was a Pharisee man, so he was strong for the law. The other one was a man that got tax money from people and gave it to the Roman government. You know, nobody likes those tax men.

11 The Pharisee man stood in a place where everyone could see him, and he didn't say he was sorry for anything. He just talked about himself. He said, 'Thank you, God, that I am different from everyone else. You see, God, I don't cheat anyone, and I don't do anything bad. I don't sleep with anyone that is not my wife. I'm not a bad man, like that man over there. He takes tax money from people to give it to the government. 12 But I am good.

* **17:37** Matthew 24:28

On 2 days every week I don't eat any food to show that I respect you. And whenever I get some money, I give you some of it, like $1 out of every $10. I do all those things, so you have to say I am all right.'

13 But the tax man was sorry for the bad things he did. He felt shame, so he did not stand close to the other people. He looked down at the ground, and he hit himself on his chest. He said, 'I'm sorry, God. I know I did bad things. Please feel sorry for me and don't punish me.' "



The Pharisee man said, "I am good," but the tax man was sorry for the bad things he did

14 Jesus said, "I'm telling you now, God listened to that bad man because he was sorry for the bad things he did, so God says that he is all right, and he will not punish that man. But God doesn't say that about the other man that already reckoned he was good.

You see, if you try to make yourself important, God will make you like nothing. But if you make yourself like nothing, God will make you important."*

(We have not yet translated 18:15-43. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 10:13-34, 46-52.)

Chapter 19

Zakias met Jesus

1 Jesus went to a town called Jericho. He went into that town and started to go through it. 2 A very rich man lived there. His name was Zakias. His job was to get tax money from the people and give it to the government, and he was the boss over some other tax men too. Sometimes tax men cheated people and kept some money for themselves, so nobody liked them.

3 Zakias wanted to see Jesus, but he was a short man, and there were a lot of people around Jesus, and they got in his way and blocked him, so he couldn't see Jesus. 4 So he ran up the road ahead of Jesus and climbed up into a tree, and he saw Jesus from up high in that tree.

5 When Jesus got to that tree, he looked up and saw Zakias, and he said to him, "Zakias. Come down here. And hurry. I want to go and stay at your house today."



A short man wanted to see Jesus, so he climbed up into a tree

* **18:14** Matthew 23:12; Luke 14:11

6 Then Zakias was very happy, and he came
down quickly, and he took Jesus to his house.
7 But when the other people saw this, they
were angry with Jesus. They said, "Look.
He has gone to stay with a bad man. He
shouldn't do that."
8 But later, at his house, Zakias stood up
and said to Jesus, "Listen, sir, this is what I
am going to do now. I am going to split up
all the things I own into 2 heaps, and I will
give one heap away to poor people. And as
well as that, I'm going to give money back
to those people that I cheated. I am going
to give them back 4 times as much as I took
from them."
9 Then Jesus told everybody there, "Listen.
Today, right now, God saved this man, and
everybody at his place too. You see, this
man is one of God's people now, just like
Abraham, because he believes in me just
like Abraham believed in God. 10 I am God's
special man from heaven, and I came to
earth to look for people that went wrong
and got lost, so that I can save them."

The story about a boss that left some money with his work-men

11 The people there kept on listening to
Jesus, and he kept on teaching them. You
see, those people reckoned that when Jesus
got to Jerusalem, God was going to make
him the biggest boss in the world. And Jesus
was close to Jerusalem, so they reckoned
that soon God was going to make him that
biggest boss. So Jesus told them this picture
story to help them understand what was
really going to happen.
12 He said, "There was an important man
in a country, and one day, he got a message
from the biggest boss over all those countries.
That biggest boss wanted that man to come
and see him, so that he could make him
the new boss over his own country. 13 But
before that man went away, he got 10 of his
work-men to come and talk to him. He gave
each work-man $1,000 to look after for him.
He told them it was not their own money,
but they had to use that money to get more
money for him. Then that man went away
to meet with that biggest boss.
14 But some of the people in that man's
country hated him, so they sent a messenger
to tell the biggest boss that they didn't want
that man to become their boss.
15 But the biggest boss didn't listen to them.
He made that man the new boss over the
country where that man lived.
Some time later, that man went back to his
home. Then he got his work-men to come to
him, and he asked each one of them about
the money that he left with them. He wanted
to know how much more money they got
for him.
16 The first work-man said, 'I used your
money to get a lot more money for you. I
now have 10 times as much as you left with
me.'
17 His boss said, 'Good. You did well. You
are a good work-man. I only left a little bit
of my money with you, but you used it the
way I wanted you to. So now I will give you
a really good job. I will make you the boss
over 10 cities in this country.'
18 The next work-man said, 'I used your
money to get a lot more money for you. I now
have 5 times as much as you left with me.'
19 His boss said, 'Good. You did well too. So
now I will give you a good job. I will make
you the boss over 5 cities in this country.'
20 But another work-man didn't get any
more money for his boss. He just had the
same money that his boss left with him, and
no more. He said, 'Boss, I wrapped your
money in a towel to hide it, and I kept it
safe for you. Here it is. 21 You see, I know
that you are a hard man. I know that you
grab things that don't belong to you, so I
was frightened of you.'

22 His boss got angry and yelled at him,
'You are a bad work-man. Just now you
reckoned that I am a hard man, and you
reckoned that I grab things that don't belong
to me. That is not true. But if you reckon that
I am a hard man, I will be a hard judge for
you. 23 Listen, you didn't even put my money
in the bank. The bank keeps money for me,
and when they give it back to me, they give
me a bit more money with it.'
24 Then the boss said to some of his other
workers, 'Take that money from this man,
and give it to the man that got 10 times as
much as I left with him.'
25 They said, 'But, boss, that work-man
already has a lot of money.'
26 Their boss said, 'Yes, that's right. You see,
if I give people something, and they use it
well, then I will give them more. But if they
don't do anything with it, I will take away
from them that little bit they have.'
27 Then the boss talked about his enemies.
He said, 'Grab my enemies, you know, those
people that hated me and didn't want me to
become their boss. Bring those people to me,
and kill them, right here in front of me.' "

(We have not yet translated 19:28—22:34. You can read most of those stories and messages in Mark 11:1—14:31. Some of them are about the time that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and the other things that happened at that time. And they say that he started to eat a special dinner, called the Passover, with his followers. While they were eating that dinner, Jesus talked to them. This next story here is some of what Jesus said at that time.)

Chapter 22

Jesus told his followers to do something different

35 Jesus said to his followers, "Remember that
time I told you to go to other towns and tell



Jesus talked to his special workers while they ate dinner

people God's story, and I told you not to take
a bag, or money, or extra shoes? Did you go
short of anything at that time, or did you get
everything you needed anyway?"
They said, "We got everything we needed."*
36 Then Jesus said, "But it is different now.
Listen, you are going to get a lot of trouble.
So if you have a bag, take it with you. And
if you have some money, take it with you.
And you will need a long knife to fight with
too, so if you haven't got one, sell your coat
to get some money and buy one. 37 You see,
something is going to happen now that is in
God's book. A long time ago, God got one of
his men to write this,

'The people reckoned God's man was
bad, and they treated him the same
way they treat bad criminals.'

Listen, I'm telling you, they are going to do
that now. They are going to do it to me."*
38 His followers said, "Sir, we've got 2 long
knives here."
Jesus said, "We don't need to talk about
that any more."

(We have not yet translated 22:39—23:4. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 14:32—15:5. They are about what happened after Jesus

* **22:35** Matthew 10:9-10; Mark 6:8-9; Luke 9:3; 10:4 * **22:37** Isaiah 53:12

and his followers finished eating that Passover dinner. They are about how Jesus's enemies grabbed him and took him to court. The name of the judge was Pilate.)

Chapter 23

Pilate sent Jesus to the big boss called Herod

5 The Jewish leaders kept on blaming Jesus. They told Pilate, "He gets people everywhere to go wild. He started to do that in Galilee country, then in Judea country, and now he is doing it here in Jerusalem."

6 When Pilate heard them say that, he asked them, "Is he from Galilee country?"

7 They said, "Yes, he is from Galilee."

The big boss over Galilee was called Herod, and he was visiting Jerusalem right at that time. So Pilate sent Jesus to him, to let Herod be his judge.

8 Herod was very happy to see Jesus. You see, a long time before that day, Herod heard about Jesus, so he always wanted to meet him. He wanted to see Jesus do something powerful. 9 So Herod asked him a lot of questions, but Jesus didn't answer any of them. 10 The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and the Jewish law teachers, they stood there all that time, shouting out and blaming Jesus. 11 Then Herod and his soldiers started laughing at Jesus and rubbishing him. They put a pretty coat on him, the sort that a big boss wears. Then they sent him back to Pilate.

12 You know, before that day Herod and Pilate didn't like each other, but on that day they became friends.

(We have not yet translated 23:13-26. You can read those stories in Mark 15:6-15, 21. They say that Pilate told his soldiers to nail Jesus to a cross to kill him, and those soldiers started to take Jesus to the place to do that.)

Jesus told the Jerusalem women that something bad will happen

27 A big mob of people followed Jesus. There were a lot of women among them. They were really sad. They were crying really loud, and they were hitting themselves. 28 So Jesus turned around and said to them, "You women that live here in Jerusalem, don't cry for me, but cry for yourselves, and for your kids. 29 Listen, soon bad things will happen to everybody. The time will come when people will say, 'Those women that can't have babies, and those women that don't have to feed babies, they are the lucky ones.' 30 Things will be so bad that people will want to die, so they will ask the mountains to fall on top of them and kill them. And they will ask the hills to bury them. *

31 You see, I didn't do anything wrong and people are hurting me. But you mob do bad things, so people will hurt you a lot more."

(We have not yet translated 23:32-38. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 15:21-32. They are about how soldiers nailed Jesus and 2 criminals to crosses.)

One criminal believed in Jesus

39 One of the criminals hanging on a cross beside Jesus was rubbishing him, and said, "You reckon you are the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us. All right, if you are God's man, then save yourself, and save us too. But I reckon you can't do it."

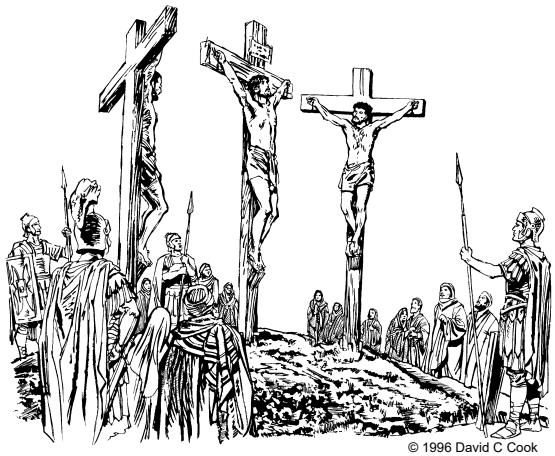
40 But the other criminal hanging on a cross said, "Don't talk like that. Have a bit of respect for God. Listen, they are killing the 3 of us together. 41 They are killing you

* **23:30** Hosea 10:8; Revelation 6:16

and me because we did really bad things, but this man, Jesus, he didn't do anything wrong."

42 Then that criminal talked to Jesus. He said, "Jesus, you are going to get God's people together into one family, and you will be their leader. When you do that, don't forget me. I want to be there with you too."

43 Jesus said, "All right. Listen, you will be with me today, in God's good place called Paradise. That's for sure."



Soldiers nailed Jesus and 2 criminals to crosses

(We have not yet translated 23:44—24:12. You can read those stories and messages in Mark 15:33—16:20. They are about how Jesus died, and then people buried him, but after that, he came alive again.)

Chapter 24

2 of Jesus's followers walked to a place called Emayus

13 Later, on that same day, 2 of Jesus's followers walked from Jerusalem city to a town called Emayus. It was about 11 kilometres away. 14 As they walked along the road, they talked about everything that happened. 15-16 Then suddenly Jesus came and joined up with them, but they didn't know it was Jesus. God stopped them from seeing who he was. Jesus walked along with them and listened to what they said to each other. 17 Then he asked them, "What is this thing you are talking about so much, as you walk along the road?"

When they heard him ask that, they were shocked, and they both stopped walking and stood still. They looked very sad. 18 One of them was Cliopas. He said, "I reckon you are the only visitor to Jerusalem that hasn't heard about the things that happened here in the last few days."

19 Jesus asked them, "What things?"

They said, "The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth. God gave him the power to tell his messages, and to teach people his words, and to do powerful things. All the people reckoned he was great. 20 But our bosses, and the bosses of our ceremonies, they grabbed him and gave him to the Roman soldiers, and told them to kill him. So those soldiers nailed him to a cross, and he died. Then some men put his body in a big hole in the rock, called a *cave*. 21 But, you know, we were hoping he will save us Israel people, but he can't do that now. And all of that happened 2 days ago, and now it is the 3rd day since he died. 22 And today, some of our women gave us a shock. They got up early this morning and went to that cave, 23 but his body was not there. And they came back and told us that they saw some of God's angel messengers there, and those angels said that he is alive. 24 Then some of our men went to that cave, and they saw that everything was just like the women said. His body was not in the cave."

25 Then Jesus said to them, "You 2 are a bit stupid. You don't properly believe the messages that God's men told us a long time ago. 26 You see, they told us about the Christ, the special man that God promised

to send to save his people. They said that he will get this sort of trouble, and he will die, but then God will show everyone that he is really great."

27 Then Jesus told them what God said about him in his book. He made it very clear to them. He started with the words that Moses wrote, and he also talked about the words that God's other men wrote, and he told them what those words mean.

28 They kept walking along as Jesus talked to them, and they got to Emayus, the place where those 2 men were going to stay. Jesus was starting to keep going on that road, 29 but those 2 men said, "You can't keep going to another place. It's too late. The sun is going down. Please stay here with us tonight." So he went with them to their house.

30 The 3 of them sat down to eat at the table, and Jesus picked up some bread and said *thank you* to God for it, and then he broke it into bits and gave it to them. 31 Then suddenly, God let them see that it was Jesus talking to them. Then, as soon as they knew who he was, they couldn't see him any more. He was not there any more. He was gone. 32 They said to each other, "Wow. That's the reason why we felt really happy inside this afternoon. We felt really excited when he talked to us on the road, and he made God's book really clear for us."

33 Then they got up straight away, and they went back to Jerusalem. They went to see Jesus's 11 special workers. There were other followers of Jesus at that place too. 34 They were all talking together and saying, "Yes, Jesus really is alive again. He showed himself to Peter."

35 Then the 2 men that came back from Emayus told the other followers their story. They told them what happened on the road, and that they suddenly saw that it was Jesus while he was breaking the bread.

Jesus showed himself to his followers

36 While they were still telling their story, suddenly Jesus was standing right there in the middle of the group. He said to them, "Hello. I want you to feel happy and quiet inside yourselves."

37 They were all shocked and frightened. They thought they were looking at a spirit. 38 But Jesus said to them, "Why are you frightened? Why do you think, 'This can't be Jesus'? Look, it is me. 39 Look at my hands and my feet. See the holes made by the nails. Touch me, to make sure that I'm not a spirit. Spirits haven't got bodies with bones in them, like I have." 40 After he said that, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 They were so surprised that they could hardly believe it really was Jesus, but they were really happy too.



Suddenly Jesus was there with his followers, and he showed them his hands and his feet

Then Jesus asked them, "Have you got anything here for me to eat?" 42 So they gave him a bit of cooked fish. 43 And he ate it there in front of them.

44 Then he said to them, "Remember the words that I told you while I was still with you. I told you that everything that God says about me in his book had to happen. You can

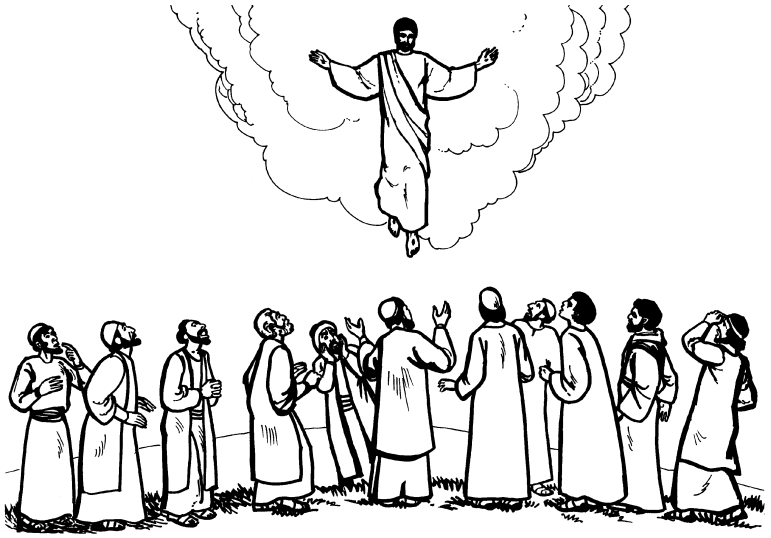
read about those things in the words that Moses wrote, and in the words that God's other men wrote, and in the songs that are in God's book." 45 Then he helped them to understand the words that are in God's book, like he opened their brains, so they could think properly. 46 And he said to them, "God says this in his book,

'The Christ, the special man that God will send, will get a lot of trouble, and he will die. He will be dead for 2 nights, then on the 3rd day, he will come alive again.'

That message, in God's book, is about me. 47 And God says you have to tell everyone about me. Tell them that they have to turn away from the bad things they do and turn to God, so that he will say they are not guilty of the bad things they did. You have to start telling people that message here in Jerusalem, and then go on to other countries, until you tell it to the people in every country. 48 You see, you mob saw everything that happened, and you heard what I taught people, so now you have to tell it to everybody. 49 But listen. My father promised to give you his Holy Spirit from heaven, so wait here in this city until I send him to you. Then you will have God's power."*

Jesus went up to heaven

50 Then Jesus took his followers just outside the city, to the town called Bethany. When they got there, he lifted up his hands and asked God to be good to them, and to make them strong. 51 While he was still talking, God lifted him up and took him away from them, up into heaven. 52 Then his followers showed strong respect for Jesus. They were very happy, and they went back to Jerusalem. 53 Every day, they went to God's ceremony house, and they said, "Thank you God. You are really good."



God lifted Jesus up and took him into heaven

* **24:49** Acts 1:4

John wrote this good news about Jesus

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **John**)*

About this book

The Holy Bible has 4 books about the things that Jesus did, and the messages he told to people when he was here on the earth, about 2,000 years ago. Those books are in the 2nd part of the Holy Bible, called the New Testament. *The men that wrote them were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They wrote their books after Jesus went back to heaven. Most of the things in their books happened in the country we now call Israel.*

We have translated everything that John wrote in his book about Jesus. It is important for us today because it tells us about the things Jesus did, and the messages that he brought us from God.

John was the young brother of James. Their father's name was Zebedee. They were fishermen on a lake called Lake Galilee, and it was also called Lake Tiberias. One day, Jesus walked along beside that lake, and he called to James and John, and he told them to follow him (see Mark 1:19-20).

Later, Jesus picked 12 men to be his special workers, and 2 of them were James and John (see Mark 3:13-19). Those 12 men went everywhere with Jesus for the next 3 years. So John saw and heard most of the things that he wrote about in this book.

John wrote this book about 50 years after those things happened. That was a long time after Matthew, Mark and Luke wrote their books about Jesus.

Chapter 1

The one called the Word gave life to everything

1 This is the story about somebody called *the Word*. Before God made anything,
the Word was with God, and he was just
the same as God. You see, the Word was
God. 2 Yes, the Word was with God before
anything happened. 3 God used the Word
to make everything. God and the Word
worked together, and they made everything,
everywhere. 4 The Word had the power to
give life to everything, and he showed people
what is true about God. You see, the Word
was a light for everyone. 5 That light shines
out into the darkness and makes everything
clear, and the darkness can't put it out.

John the Baptiser told people about God's special man

6 One day, God sent a man called John to
talk to people.* 7 His job was to tell everyone
about the person that is that light, so
everyone could hear his message and believe
it. 8-9 John was not that real light, but he
came to tell people about that light. The
real light was coming into the world. That
light was going to shine in the darkness so
that everyone could see God.

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* **1:6** Matthew 3:1; Mark 1:4; Luke 3:1-2

The one called the Word became a human being

10 The one called the Word came to the world.
You know, God used that one called the
Word to make everything in the world, but
people in the world didn't know who he
was. 11 He came to his own countrymen, but
most of them didn't want him. 12 But some
people did want him. They believed in him,
so God said they can join his family, and
be his own kids. 13 Yes, those people are in
God's family, but they were not born into it
the way kids are born into human families.
And they did not come from what a human
mother or father wanted. God himself gave
them new life and made them his kids.

14 You see, the Word became a human being.
He came and lived in a body, with us here
on the earth. We saw that he was really
powerful, just like God. Then we knew that
he was God's only special son, and he showed
us what his father is like. He was a really
good man, and everything he said was true.

15 But before we saw the Word, this is what
John told everybody about him. He said, "I
am telling you about a man that will come
later. He is a lot greater than I am. You see,
he was alive even before I was born."

16 That man is really good. And when he
came, he was really good to us. He is like
that. He is good to us all the time, even
when we do nothing good for him. 17 You
know, God gave Moses the law a long time
ago, so that our people could live God's way,
but Jesus Christ gave us God's true message.
He showed us that God loves us, even though
we did nothing good for him. 18 Nobody has
ever seen God. But the special man, the one
that is God, he is always with his father. He
is the one that showed us what God is like.

John the Baptiser answered questions about himself

19 The Jewish leaders in Jerusalem city sent
some of the bosses of their ceremonies, and



John the Baptiser talked to some men from Jerusalem

other men that helped in the Jewish
ceremonies, to ask John some questions.
They said to him, "Who are you?"

20 John told them straight. He said, "I am
not the Christ, the special man that God
promised to send to save his people."

21 Those men from Jerusalem asked him
again, "Who are you then? Are you Elijah,
the man that told God's message a long time
ago?"

John said, "No, I am not Elijah."

Again, the men asked, "What about the
messenger that God promised, a long time
ago. He promised to send a special man,
like Moses, to tell his message. Are you that
man?"

And again, John said, "No, I am not that
man."

22 Then the men asked him, "Well, who
are you? And why are you here? We have
to tell our leaders."

23 John talked to them with the words that
Isaiah wrote, a long time ago. Isaiah told
people God's words, and they are in God's
book. John said,

"I am a man that is out in the bush,
calling out to people. I'm saying,

'You mob get ready. Later on, God will
come to this country.
It is like when a big boss comes,
you have to make a good road for
him.' "*

24-25 Some of those men from Jerusalem were from the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the law. They said to John, "You say that you are not the special man that God promised to send, called the Christ. And you say that you are not Elijah, or the messenger that God promised. So why do you baptise people? Why do you take them through that special washing ceremony?"

26-27 John said to them, "I baptise people with water. But I am telling you, there is somebody coming after me that you don't know yet. He is the most important one. I am not good enough to untie his shoes."

28 That all happened at a place called Bethany, on the east side of the Jordan River. John was baptising people there.



John baptised people in the Jordan River

John the Baptiser told people about Jesus

29 The next day, John saw Jesus coming to him. John said to the people there, "Look at that man. He is the special one that God sent. You know how people kill a young sheep to pay for the bad things they did. Well, God sent this man to die, like those young sheep. He is going to let people kill him, to pay for all the bad things that everybody in the world does.

30 He is the man I told you about. I said, 'He is a lot greater than I am. You see, he was always alive, even before I was born.' 31-34 At first I didn't know that this was the special man that God promised to send. You see, God sent me to you Israel people to baptise you with water and get you ready, so that God can show that man to you.

I didn't know which man was the right one, but God told me this, 'You will see the Holy Spirit coming down on to one man, and the spirit will stay on that man. Then you will know that he is the special man that I sent. He is the one that will put the Holy Spirit into people, that is, he will baptise them with the Holy Spirit.'

And I saw it happen like God said. I saw the Holy Spirit come down from heaven. It looked like a pigeon. It came down and sat on him. So I'm telling you, this man is God's son."

Some men started to follow Jesus

35 The next day, John was standing near the Jordan River again. 36 He saw Jesus walking by, and John said to 2 of his followers, "Look at that man. He is the special one that God sent to die for us. You know that God told people to kill young sheep, to pay for the wrong things they did. Well, this man will die for us, just like those young sheep died for people." 37 John's 2 followers heard him say that about Jesus, so they left John and followed Jesus.

38 Jesus turned around and saw them, and he asked them, "What are you looking for? Why are you following me?"

The men said, "Rabbi, where is your camp?"

* **1:23** Isaiah 40:3

(In their language, that word *Rabbi* means *Teacher*.)

39 Jesus said, "Come and see." So the men followed Jesus to his camp, and they stayed with him that day. It was about 4 o'clock in the afternoon.



The 2 followers of John stayed with Jesus that day

40-41 Andrew was one of the 2 men that left John and followed Jesus. Andrew went quickly and found his brother, Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah." (In their language that word *Messiah* means *Christ*. Both of those words mean *the special man that God promised to send*.) 42 So Andrew took Simon to meet Jesus.

Jesus looked at Simon and said, "You are Simon and your father's name is John. I will call you Kefas." (In their language, that word *Kefas* means *stone*, and *Peter* is another name that means *stone*, so we usually call him Peter.)

Jesus told Philip and Nathaniel to follow him

43 The next day, Jesus wanted to go north, to Galilee country. But first he found a man called Philip and said to him, "Follow me."

44 Philip was from a town called Bethsayida, the same town that Andrew and Peter were from.

45 Philip went to his friend Nathaniel and said to him, "We have found the special man that Moses wrote about in our Jewish law books. And God's other messengers talked about this man too. His name is Jesus. He is from the town called Nazareth, and he is the son of Joseph."

46 Nathaniel didn't believe the words he heard, and he said, "No, Nazareth is a rubbish place. Nothing good ever comes from there."

But Philip said, "Come and meet him."

47 Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to meet him. Jesus said to the other people there, "Here is a proper Israel man. He doesn't try to trick anyone."

48 Nathaniel asked Jesus, "How do you know me?"

Jesus said, "I knew you even before Philip found you. I saw you while you were under that fruit tree."

49 Nathaniel said, "Teacher. You are the one we have been waiting for. You are the son of God, and you will be the big boss for all of us Israel people."

50 Jesus asked him, "Do you believe in me because I said that I saw you under a fruit tree? Well, later on, you will see me do even greater things." 51 Then Jesus said to everyone there, "Listen, I am telling you straight, one day you will see heaven open up, and you will see God's angel messengers going up into heaven, and you will see them coming down on to me. I am God's special man from heaven."*

Chapter 2

Jesus changed water into wine at a wedding party

1-2 Later on, after 2 days, Jesus went to a wedding party, where a man and a woman

* **1:51** Genesis 28:12

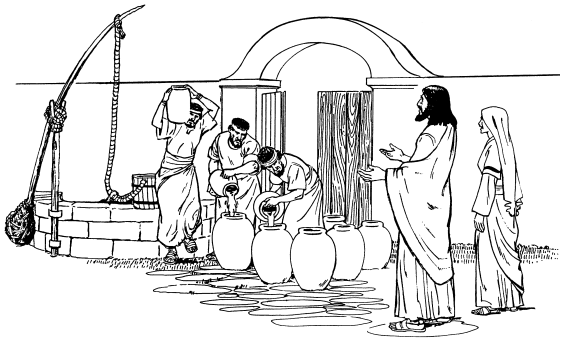
got married. It was in a town called Cana, in Galilee country. And Jesus's mother and his followers went with him. 3There was always weak wine to drink at a wedding party, but they used up all that wine. So Jesus's mother said to him, "They have run out of wine. Can you help them?"

4Jesus said to her, "Why are you asking me to do that? It is not the right time yet for me to show everyone who I am."

5But his mother went to the workers there and said, "Do whatever he tells you to do."

6In that place there were 6 stone pots for water. The Jewish people used those pots for their washing ceremonies. Each pot held about 100 litres of water.

7Jesus said to the workers, "See those pots. Go and fill them up with water." So they filled them right up to the top with water.



The workers filled up the pots with water

8Then Jesus told them, "Now put some of it in a cup, and give it to the boss of the party." So they did what Jesus said.

9The boss man drank some of it, but it was not water, it was very good wine. He didn't know where that wine came from, but the workers knew.

Then the boss of the party talked to the man getting married. 10The boss man said, "At wedding parties, the family usually gives people the best wine first. Then, after they get a bit drunk, the family gives them cheap wine. But you are different. You are giving out the best wine now, at the end of the party."

11This was the first powerful thing Jesus did. He did it in Cana, in Galilee country. He did it to show that his power came from God, and his followers believed in him. They believed that he came from God.

12Then Jesus, and his mother, and his brothers, and his followers, they all left Cana and went down to a town called Capernium, and they stayed there for a few days.*

Jesus stopped people selling things in God's ceremony house

13Later on, it was nearly time for the Jewish ceremony called Passover, so Jesus and his followers went to Jerusalem city for that ceremony.*

14God's ceremony house was in Jerusalem, and people had to kill animals there and burn them to show respect to God, and they had to pay tax money to the men that look after God's house. Jesus went into the yard of God's ceremony house, and he found men there selling cows, and bulls, and sheep, and pigeons. And there were men there that changed the money of other countries into Jewish money so that people could pay that tax. You see, those men that sold things and changed money, they did that to get some money for themselves.

15Jesus saw them doing that. So he made a whip out of some rope, and he used it to hunt those men and animals out of the yard. He went to the men that changed the money, and he pushed their tables over. All their money went everywhere on the ground. 16And Jesus went to the men that sold pigeons, and he shouted, "Get those birds

* **2:12** Matthew 4:13 * **2:13** Exodus 12:1-27

out of here. This is my father's house. Stop turning it into a shop." 17 Jesus's followers saw him do that, and they remembered that a long time ago God told one of his men to write this in God's book,

"I really love God's house. I love it so much that I will do anything to look after it."

Then they knew that God's man wrote that about Jesus. *



Jesus stopped people selling things in God's ceremony house

18 But the Jewish leaders got angry. They said to Jesus, "Hey, you can't do that. If you think you can, then do something powerful, to show us that God told you to hunt those men out of God's ceremony house."

19 Jesus said to them, "If you knock down this house of God, I will build it again in 3 days." *

20 The Jewish leaders said, "What? It took a lot of people 46 years to build this ceremony house. Do you think you can build it again in 3 days?"

21 But Jesus wasn't talking about God's ceremony house. He was talking about his own body. 22 Later on, Jesus died, and he was dead for 2 nights, then on the 3rd day he came alive again. Then his followers remembered those words that Jesus said. And they believed his words and the messages in God's book about him.

Jesus knows what people are like

23 While Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Passover ceremony, the people there saw him do powerful things, and lots of them believed in him. 24-25 But Jesus knew everything about all people. He didn't need anyone to tell him what people are like. And he knew that those people only believed in him after they saw him do powerful things, and that they might stop believing in him soon. So Jesus didn't trust them.

Chapter 3

Nicodemus talked with Jesus

1-2 One night, a man went to talk to Jesus. His name was Nicodemus. He was a leader of the Jewish people, and he was one of the mob called Pharisees, that were strong for the Jewish law. He said to Jesus, "Teacher, we've been watching you do powerful things, so now we know that God has sent you to teach us. Only somebody with God's power can do those things."

3 Jesus said to him, "Listen, I am telling you straight, people have to get born again, and then they can be in God's family."

4 Nicodemus said, "How can a big man like me get back into his mother's body and get born again?"

5 Jesus said, "Listen, I am telling you straight, if anyone wants to be in God's family, they have to get born again God's way. God has to make them clean, and he has to put his spirit in them. 6 You see, everybody is born from a human mother, that's how our bodies get life. But if people get born again from God's Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit gives new life to their spirits too.

* **2:17** Psalm 69:9 * **2:19** Matthew 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29

7 I said, 'You have to get born again.' Don't
get shocked by that. 8 You know that the
wind goes wherever it wants to go. You
hear the sound it makes, but you don't know
where it came from, and you don't know
where it's going. Just like that, we don't
know how God's spirit makes people get
born again."
9 Nicodemus said, "What? How can
somebody get born again from God's spirit?"
10 Jesus said, "I am shocked. You are an
important teacher here in Israel, and you
don't understand what I'm saying. 11 Listen,
I am telling you straight, I talk about the
things I know, and about the things I have
seen, but you don't take any notice of what
I tell you. 12 I told you about things that
happen here on earth, and you don't believe
me. So if I tell you about things that happen
in heaven, I reckon you will still not believe
me.
13 I am the only person here that has been
in heaven. I am the special man from God.
I came down from heaven. So you have to
believe what I say.



A man called Nicodemus talked to Jesus one night

14 Think about the story about our
grand-fathers that lived a long time ago.
They walked through the desert, and they
started to complain to God, so he sent snakes
to bite them and kill them. Then God told
Moses to make a metal snake and put it
up on a pole. Then, whenever a snake bit
somebody, if that person looked at that metal
snake up on the pole, they didn't die. Well,
I am God's special man from heaven. Just
like Moses lifted up that metal snake on a
pole, people will lift me up on a cross, * 15 so
that if anyone believes in me, then they will
live with God for ever."
16 You see, God loved all of the people
in the world. He loved everyone so much
that he sent them his only son, his special
son. God sent him to die instead of them,
so that if anyone trusts him, God will not
finish them up, but they will live with him
for ever.
17 You see, God sent his son into the world
so that he can save the people of the world.
He didn't send him to judge people and do
payback to them.
18 If anyone believes in God's son, then God
will not say they are guilty. But if anyone
does not believe in him, God has already
said they are guilty. You see, they do not
believe in God's only son, his special son.
19 So God will judge them. You see, the light
has come into the world, but people don't
want the light. They love the darkness too
much. They love doing bad things in the
dark, and they want to keep on doing them.
20 If anyone does bad things, they hate the
light. They will not come into the light. They
know that if they come into the light, then
everyone will see the bad things they are
doing. 21 But anyone that lives the right way,
comes into the light, so that everyone can
see them living God's way.

* **3:14** Numbers 21:9

John the Baptiser told his followers about Jesus

22 After that, Jesus went with his followers
to Judea country, and he spent some time
with them there. People went to Jesus there,
and his followers baptised them.
23 At that time some people kept going to
John too, and he baptised them. John was at
a place called Aynon, near the place called
Salim. There was a lot of water there. 24 John
was not in jail at that time, but later the
soldiers grabbed him and put him in jail. *
25 At that time, the Jewish people had laws
about making themselves clean for their
ceremonies, and some of John's followers
argued with a Jewish leader about the right
way to get clean. 26 Then they went to John
and said, "Teacher, remember that man you
talked about, the man that was with you on
the other side of the Jordan River. Lots of
people are going to him, and he is baptising
them."
27 John said, "A person can only get what
God gives them. Some people come to me,
and some people go to Jesus, but don't worry.
Don't be jealous. 28 Jesus is the special man
that God sent to the world. Remember, I
told you, 'I am not the Christ, the special
man that God promised to send to save his
people. But God sent me to get people ready,
so that they will listen to that special man.'
You heard me say that. *
29 Listen to this picture story about wedding
parties. The man that marries the woman is
the important man. The man's good friend
waits for him, and the friend is really happy
when the man comes. Well, in the same way,
I am like the good friend of Jesus. He came,
so I am really happy. And people are going
to him, and I am happy about that too. 30 He
has to get more and more important. But I am
not important, and later I will be like nothing.
31 Yes, Jesus is the most important one, he
is the man that came from heaven. But we
belong to the earth, so we can only talk
about things we see and hear on earth. But
Jesus came from heaven, so he knows about
everything. 32 He talks about the things
he saw and heard in heaven. But nobody
believes him. 33 But if anyone does believe
what he says, they clearly show that God's
words are true.
34 You see, Jesus only says God's words.
God sent him and gave him the full power
of his Holy Spirit. 35 God, the father, loves
his son very much and gave him power over
everything. * 36 Anyone that believes in God's
son will live with him for ever. But anyone
that does not do what God's son says, will
not live with God, and God will be angry
with that person for ever."

Chapter 4

Jesus left Judea country and went to Galilee country

1-3 More and more people were following
Jesus, and his special workers were baptising
all those people. Jesus himself didn't baptise
anybody, just his special workers did that.
Then Jesus's enemies, the Pharisee mob, they
heard that Jesus had more followers than
John had, so they started to watch Jesus.
Jesus heard that they were watching him,
so he left Judea country, and he went north
to Galilee country.

Jesus talked to a woman from the country called Samaria

4 On their way to Galilee country, Jesus
and his followers had to go through the
country called Samaria. 5-8 They walked a
long way, then they got to a water-hole. A
long time ago, their grand-father, Jacob, dug

* **3:24** Matthew 14:3; Mark 6:17; Luke 3:19-20 * **3:28** John 1:20 * **3:35** Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22

that water-hole. It was near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.* There was a little town called Sikar near that water-hole, so Jesus's followers went into the town to buy some food. But Jesus was tired, so he sat down next to that water-hole, and he waited there.

In the middle of the day, a woman came from the town and got some water from that water-hole. Jesus said to her, "Can you give me a drink?"

9 The woman said, "What? You are a Jew, and I belong to Samaria. So why do you ask me for a drink of water?" You see, the Jews were not friends with the Samaria people.*

10 Jesus said to her, "I asked you for a drink of water, but really, you should ask me for a drink. You don't know who I am, and you don't know about the good thing that God can give you. If you ask me, I will give you the fresh water that makes people live."

11 The woman said, "Sir, this water-hole is really deep, and you haven't got a bucket. How are you going to get that fresh water? 12 Jacob, our grand-father that lived a long time ago, he dug this water-hole for himself, and for his sons, and for all their animals. They all drank this water. Do you think you are greater than Jacob?"

13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone that drinks water from this water-hole will get thirsty again. 14 But if anyone drinks the water that I give them, they will never get thirsty again. That water will keep coming up inside them, like a spring of fresh water, and it will make them live for ever."

15 The woman said, "Sir, give me that water. I don't want to get thirsty. I don't want to have to come here all the time to get water."

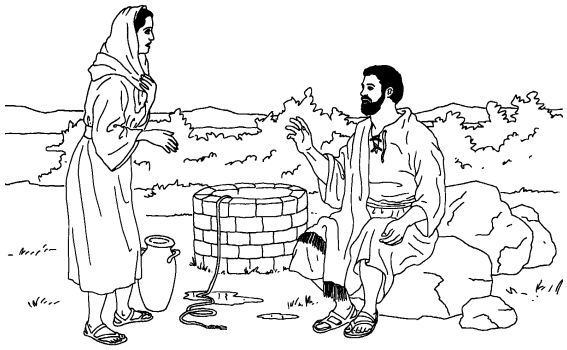
16 Jesus said, "Well, go and get your husband and bring him here."

17 The woman said, "I haven't got a husband."

Jesus said to her, "That's right. You haven't got a husband now. 18 You have had 5 different husbands, and the man you live with now is only your boyfriend. You are not married to him. Yes, it's true, you haven't got a husband."

19 The woman said, "Sir, you know all about me. I reckon you are one of those men that get messages from God. 20 So tell me who is right, you Jewish people or us Samaria people? My people have always shown respect to God by doing ceremonies on this mountain. But you Jews say that we have to go to Jerusalem to do those ceremonies and show respect to God. Who is right?"

21 Jesus said to her, "Believe me, a time is coming when it will not matter if you show respect to God, the father, here on this mountain, or in Jerusalem, or anywhere else. 22 You see, you people try to show respect to God, but you don't really know him. We Jewish people show respect to God, and we know more about him. And God said that he will use a Jewish person to save everybody. 23 Yes, a time is coming when the people that belong to God will show respect to him properly. And that time is happening now.



Jesus talked with a woman at the water-hole

* **4:5-8** Genesis 33:19; Joshua 24:32 * **4:9** Ezra 4:1-5; Nehemiah 4:1-2

They will know the true story about God, and they will respect him with their spirits. They are the sort of people that my father is looking for, to show him respect. 24 You see, God is a spirit, and the people that really respect him have to know the true story about him, and they have to respect him with their spirits."

25 The woman said to Jesus, "I know that a special man is coming. He is the man that God promised to send. He is the one called the *Messiah*, or the *Christ*. After he comes, he will tell us everything we need to know."

26 Jesus said to her, "I am that man. Yes, that's me, the man you are talking to."

Jesus's followers came back

27 Then at that time, Jesus's followers came back from the town. They saw Jesus and the woman, and they got a shock. He was talking to a woman. They wanted to ask her, "What do you want?" And they wanted to ask Jesus, "Why are you talking to that woman?" But they didn't say anything.



The woman went to the town and told people about Jesus

28 The woman left her bucket next to the water-hole and went back into the town, and she said to the people there, 29 "Come and see a man that told me everything I ever did. Maybe he is the Christ, the special man that God promised to send, the one that we have been waiting for." 30 The people heard what she said, and they left the town to go and see Jesus.

31 While the woman was in the town talking to the people there, Jesus's followers said to him, "Teacher, you have to eat something."

32 But Jesus said to them, "I have food to eat that you don't know about."

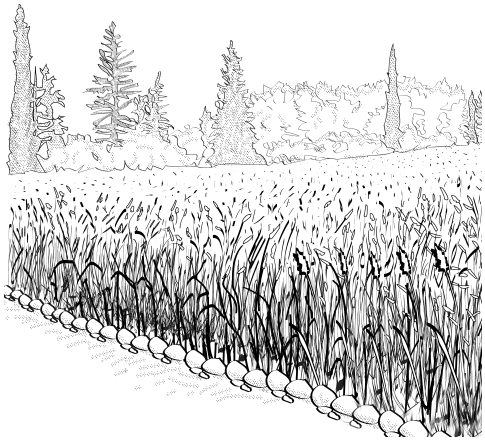
33 So his followers said to each other, "Did somebody give him food while we were away?"

34 Jesus said, "Nobody gave me any food. I do everything my father wants me to do, and that keeps me going. It is like food for me. My father sent me here to do his work, and I want to finish it.

35 Listen. I will tell you this picture story about food plants. You can plant seeds, but then you have to wait about 4 months for them to grow before you can get the food from them. That's how it is with food plants. But you will not have to wait for people to be ready. A lot of people are ready right now to hear the good news and join God's family. So there is already work for you to do. You don't have to wait, like you wait for food plants to grow. 36 Think again about food plants. A worker plants the seeds, and then after they grow up to be big plants, another worker gathers the food from them. And the owner pays both the worker that plants the seeds and the worker that gathers the food. That is a picture of God's workers. One of them tells people God's message, and later on, another worker will help those people to believe that message, so that God will take those people into his family and they will live with him for ever. Both of those



One worker plants the seeds



Then the plants grow



Then another worker gathers the food from those plants

workers will be really happy when they see people in God's family, just like both of the workers in the picture story got paid for their work.

37 Sometimes people say, 'One worker plants the seeds and another worker gathers the food.' That is true. 38 And just like that, some of God's other workers have shared God's story with people, and now I'm sending you to help those people join God's family. Somebody else told them about God, and now you will see them join God's family."

Lots of Samaria people believed in Jesus

39 The people in the town heard the woman say, "He told me everything I ever did," and a lot of them believed in Jesus. 40 And so they came from the town to see Jesus, and they asked him to stay with them for a while. So he stayed there for 2 days. 41 He talked to them and told them his message, and even more people believed in him.

42 The town people said to the woman, "We heard what you said about this man, and we believed you. But now we listened to him ourselves, and we know for sure that he is the man that God sent into the world to save people."

43 Jesus stayed with the people there for 2 days. Then Jesus and his followers left Samaria and went north to Galilee country.

Jesus made a government boss's son better

44-45 Galilee is the country where Jesus grew up. Before Jesus went there, he said to his followers, "If God picks a man to tell his messages, the people of that man's own home town don't respect him." But the Galilee people were in Jerusalem at the Passover time, and they saw Jesus do lots of powerful things there, so they were very happy to see him come to Galilee. *

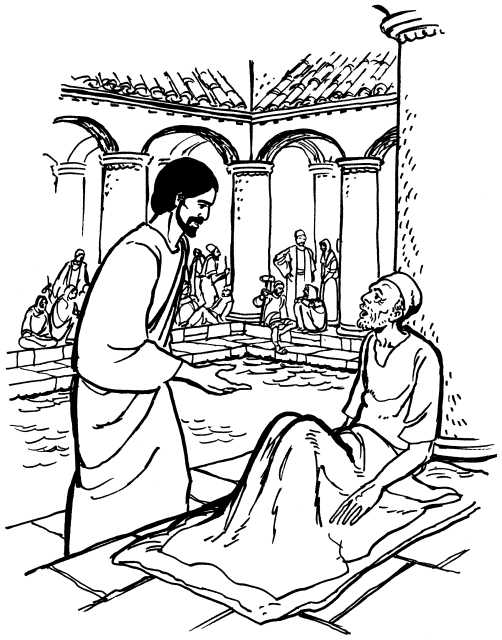
* **4:44-45** Matthew 13:57; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24; John 2:23

46 Jesus and his followers went again
to Cana, the town in Galilee where he
changed water into wine. In another town
in Galilee, called Capernium, there was a
very important man that worked for the
government. But his son was very sick. *
47 This man heard that Jesus came from
Judea country to Galilee, so he went to see
Jesus, and he asked him to come and make
his son better. The boy was so sick that he
was nearly dead.
48 Jesus said to him, "If I just talk to you
people, you don't believe me. You only
believe me if you see me do something
powerful."
49 The man said, "Sir, please come to my
house quickly before my son dies."
50 Jesus said to him, "You can go home.
Your son will get better."
The man believed Jesus's words, so he left
to go home. 51 The next day, as he got close
to his house, his workers met him and told
him, "Your son is better."
52 The man asked his workers, "When did
my son get better?"
They said, "The sickness left him yesterday,
at about one o'clock in the afternoon." 53 The
man worked out that it was at that same time
that Jesus said, "Your son will get better." So
the man, and his family, and everyone that
lived in his house, they all believed in Jesus.
54 That was the 2nd time that Jesus went
from Judea to Galilee and then did a
powerful thing.

Chapter 5

A man couldn't walk, but Jesus made him better

1 After that, Jesus went south from Galilee
country to Jerusalem city for another Jewish
ceremony.
2 There was a gate into the city called the
Sheep Gate, and there was a pool of water
near that gate. The name of the pool was
Bethesda. It had 5 shade shelters around it,
3 and a lot of sick people lay there. Some of
those people were blind, and some of them
were crippled, and some couldn't move at all.
4 You see, those sick people wanted to get
better, and they believed that sometimes
one of God's angel messengers came down
and stirred the water in that pool. And they
believed that after that, the first person
to get into the water got better from any
sickness they had.
5 Jesus came to that pool, and there was a
man lying there that couldn't walk. He
was crippled like that for 38 years. 6 Jesus
saw the man lying there, and he knew that
the man was crippled for a very long time.
So Jesus asked him, "Do you want to get
better?"
7 The man said, "Yes, sir, I do, but I haven't



Jesus talked to the man that couldn't walk

* **4:46** John 2:1-11

got a friend to help me get into the water after it moves. Somebody else always gets in first."

8 Jesus said to him, "Get up, pick up your swag, and walk." 9 Straight away, the man was better. He got up, picked up his swag, and started walking around.

This happened on the Jewish rest day. 10 So the Jewish leaders said to the man that got better, "Hey, you can't carry your swag on our rest day. You are breaking the law."*

11 The man said, "But the man that made me better told me to. He said, 'Pick up your swag, and walk.' So I did."

12 The Jewish leaders asked him, "Who is this man that said, 'Pick up your swag, and walk?' " 13 But the man didn't know who made him better. There were a lot of people in that place, and Jesus had already left.

14 Later on, Jesus found the man at God's ceremony house, and he said to him, "Look, you are better now. So stop doing things that God says are wrong, or something worse might happen to you."

15 Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus that made him better. 16 The leaders were angry with Jesus for making people better on the Jewish rest day, so they started to make trouble for him.

17 Jesus said to them, "God, my father, is always working, and I am always working too."

18 That made the Jewish leaders more angry, and they tried to find a way to kill him. They said to themselves, "This man breaks God's law and works on our rest day. And he calls God his father too. That means he is saying that he is the same as God. He has to die."

19 Jesus knew what they were saying, so he said to them, "Listen, I am telling you straight, God is my father, and I am his son. I can only do what my father does. I can't do anything on my own. I do the same things that I see my father do. Whatever he does, I do the same. 20 Listen, my father loves me. I am his son, and he shows me everything that he is doing. And my father will show me even more powerful things to do. You will see them, and you will be surprised. 21 You see, my father can make dead people alive again. And I am like my father, I can give life to anyone I want to.

22 My father does not judge anyone. I am his son, and he told me to be the judge of everyone. 23 My father did that so that everyone will respect me, just like they respect him. If you don't respect me, you are not respecting my father. He is the one that sent me to you.

24 Listen, I am telling you straight, God is the one that sent me. If anyone listens to what I say and trusts God, they will live with him for ever. He will say they are not guilty, and he will not punish them. You see, they were going to die, and they were going to stay dead for ever. But now it is different for them. They will live with God for ever.

25 Listen, there are people that are spiritually dead, but I am God's son, and I am telling you straight, a time is coming when they will hear my voice, and if they listen to me, they will come alive spiritually. And that time is happening now. 26 You see, my father has the power to make people come alive. And he has given that same power to me.

27 I am God's special man from heaven, and God told me to be the judge. 28 Why are you shocked? A time is coming when all the dead people will hear my voice. 29 They will hear me, then they will come alive again. The people that have done good things and lived the way God wants them to, those people will live with him for ever. But God

* **5:10** Nehemiah 13:19; Jeremiah 17:21

will punish the other people, the people that went against him and did bad things.*
30 You see, I can't do anything on my own. My father sent me to the world, and he tells me the way to judge. I only want to judge the way he wants me to, not my own way. And his way is the right way, so I only judge the right way.
31 Think about this. If I am the only one that tells you who I am, you don't have to believe me. 32 But there is somebody else that talks about me. He is God, and I know that the things he says about me are true.
33 Remember that you sent some men to ask John about me. Well, everything that he told them was true.* 34 I don't really need a human being to talk about me. But I'm telling you that the things John said about me are true. You see, I want you to believe them. Then God will save you.
35 John told you about me. He was like a bright light shining in the darkness, and for a while, you were happy with the things he said.
36 You see, John told you that God sent me, but the things that I do show even more clearly that God sent me. And I have to finish the job he sent me to do.
37 Yes, God is my father, and he sent me. And he told people about me. But you have never seen him or heard his voice.* 38 You see, God sent me to you, but you don't believe me. This shows that you don't really want to hear God's message.
39 I know that you read God's book all the time, and you think that if you do that you will find out how to live with God for ever. I want you to know that those words in God's book, they tell you all about me. 40 And if people come to me, then they can live with God for ever. But you don't want to come to me.
41 I don't need people to say good things about me. 42 But, I know all about you. I know that you don't really love God. 43 My father sent me to tell you his words, but you do not listen to me. But whenever other people come and tell you their own words, you always listen to them. 44 And you like other people saying good things about you, but you don't try to live God's way so that he will say good things about you. He is the only God, but you just care what people think about you, not what God thinks about you. That is the reason why you don't believe in me.
45 I will not stand in front of God and tell him about the wrong things you did. Moses will do that. You hope Moses will say, 'You followed the law that God told me to write, so you will be all right.' But he will not say that. 46 You see, Moses wrote about me. So if you really believe the things that Moses wrote, you will believe in me. 47 But no, you don't really believe the things that Moses wrote, so you don't believe what I say."

Chapter 6

Jesus fed a big mob of people

1 Jesus and his special workers left Jerusalem city, and they went north to Galilee country. They got into a boat and went across the lake that some people call *Lake Galilee*. Other people call it *Lake Tiberias*. 2-4 (It was nearly time for the big Jewish ceremony called Passover.) Jesus and his special workers got to the other side of the lake, then Jesus climbed up a hill and his special workers went with him, and they sat down. Before that time, a lot of people saw Jesus make sick people better, so they followed him up that hill.
5-6 Jesus looked around and saw the big

* **5:29** Daniel 12:2 * **5:33** John 1:19-27; 3:27-30 * **5:37** Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22

mob of people walking towards him. He knew what he was going to do, but he wanted to test Philip, one of his special workers. So he said, "Philip, where can we get food for all these people?"

7 Philip said, "We haven't got much money. If we want to buy enough bread to give all these people just a little bit each, we need thousands of dollars."

8 One of Jesus's followers was Andrew. He was Peter's brother. He said to Jesus, 9 "There is a young boy here with 5 little loaves of bread and 2 fish. But we need a lot more than that to feed all these people."

10 There was a lot of grass there, so Jesus said, "Tell the people to sit down." So they all sat down on the grass. There were about 5,000 men in that big mob of people.

11 Jesus picked up the bread. He prayed and said, "Thank you God for this food." Then he gave the bread to his followers, and they gave it out to all the people. Jesus did the same thing with the fish too. And everyone ate as much as they wanted.

12 They ate so much that they were all full. But there was still food left over. So Jesus said to his followers, "Pick up all the left-over food. Don't waste any of it." 13 So his followers walked around and picked up the left-over bits of food. There was lots of bread left over from those 5 little loaves. Jesus's followers filled up 12 big baskets with left-over bits of food.

14 You see, Jesus fed thousands of people with just a little bit of food. And the people saw Jesus do that really powerful thing, and they said, "He has to be the messenger that God promised to send. A long time ago, God promised to send a special man like Moses, and now he has come." 15 Jesus knew that they wanted to force him to be their big boss, and the big boss for the whole Israel nation. He didn't want them to do that, so he left them, and he went up the hill by himself.



Jesus fed a big mob of people

Jesus walked on top of water

16-17 After that, the sun went down and it got dark, but Jesus didn't come back down the hill, so his followers said to each other, "Let's go across to the other side of the lake, to the town called Capernium." So they went down to the water, and they got into their boat. Then they started to go across that big lake. 18 As they rowed their boat, the wind got very strong, and the waves got really big.

19 They rowed their boat in the dark for about 5 kilometres, then they saw Jesus walking on top of the water. He was walking towards them, and they were really frightened. 20 But he called out to them, "Don't be frightened. It's me, I'm Jesus."

21 As soon as they heard Jesus say that, they stopped being frightened, and they



Jesus walked on top of the water

helped him get into the boat. Then straight away, the boat got to the place that they wanted to go to.

22 Earlier on that day, the people saw Jesus's followers get into a boat and go away without him. They knew that there were no other boats for Jesus to go in, so they thought that Jesus was still there. 23-24 The next day, some of those people were still there. They looked around for Jesus, but they couldn't find him or any of his followers. Some other boats from a town called Tiberias came to the place where Jesus thanked God for the food and fed all the people, so the people got into those boats and went over to Capernium, to look for Jesus there.

Jesus is like bread that gets people to live for ever

25 They found Jesus on the other side of the lake, and they asked him, "Teacher, when did you get here?"

26 Jesus said to them, "Listen carefully. I know why you mob are looking for me. You mob saw me do powerful things, but you didn't understand them. You don't want to know who I am. You just want more food, like you had yesterday. 27 Listen, that food, like you ate yesterday, it doesn't last long. So don't work for food like that. You have to work for food that gets you to live with God for ever. I am God's special man from heaven, and I can give you that special food. And God, my father, told me to do that."

28 The people asked Jesus, "What is the work that God wants us to do, so that we can live for ever?"

29 Jesus said, "This is the work that God wants you to do, he wants you to believe in the man he sent to the world."

30-31 So the people said to him, "Then do something powerful, so that we can see it and believe what you say. A long time ago, Moses gave food from heaven to our grand-fathers. Remember that story. When they walked through the desert country, Moses gave them food called *manna*. We can read these words in God's book,

'He gave people bread that came from heaven.'*

So what will you do for us?"

32 Then Jesus said, "Listen, this is the true story about that bread from heaven. Moses didn't give your people that bread from heaven. God gave it to them. And now God gives you the proper bread from heaven. 33 The proper bread from heaven is the man that God has sent to the world. He gives life to people, so that they will live with God for ever."

34 The people said, "Sir, give us that bread all the time."

35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread that gives life to people, so that they will live with God for ever. If anyone comes to me and believes in me, they will get everything they have been looking for. It's like their spirit will never be hungry and never be thirsty again. 36 But you mob don't believe in me. Like I already said, you saw the things I did, but you still don't believe in me. 37 You see, my father gives me some people. They will all come to me, and I will look after them. I will never send them away.

38 I didn't come down from heaven just to do my own ideas. I came here to do everything my father sent me to do. 39 Listen, this is what my father really wants me to do, he wants me to look after all the people that he gives me. I can't lose any of them. You know, the world will finish up one day, and on that day my father wants me to make all those people alive again. 40 Everyone that takes notice of me and believes in me will

* **6:30-31** Exodus 16:4, 15; Psalm 78:24

live with God for ever. That's what God, my father, wants. On the day when the world will finish up, I will make them alive again."
41 The Jewish leaders heard Jesus say, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." And they got angry, and they complained about him. 42 They said to each other, "We know this man Jesus. He is Joseph's son. We know his mother and father. Why does he say, 'I came down from heaven?' That can't be right."
43 Jesus said to them, "Stop complaining to each other about me. 44 Listen. God is my father, and he is the one that sent me here. He brings people to me, and they are the only people that can come to me. They are the people that I will make alive again on the day when the world will finish up.
45 A long time ago, God told one of his men to write about this, and it is in God's book. He wrote,

'God is the one that will teach all of them.'

And that's how it happens. The people that listen to God and learn from him, those people will come to me.* 46 I am the only one that has seen my father. Nobody else has ever seen him. But I saw him there in heaven, and after that, I came here."
47 Jesus kept on talking to them. He said, "Listen, I am telling you straight, if anyone believes in me, they will live with God for ever. 48 I am like bread that makes people live for ever. 49 A long time ago, your grand-fathers were in the desert, and they ate the bread called manna, that came down from heaven. That bread kept them alive for years, but in the end they all died, like everyone dies. 50 But now there is a special bread that came down from heaven, and if anyone eats it, they will live with God for ever. 51 Yes, I am the bread from heaven that gives life. Anyone that believes in me will live for ever, it's like they are eating special bread that makes people live with God for ever. My body will be that special bread. I will give my body so that people can eat it and live for ever."
52 The Jewish leaders heard what he said, and they started to argue with each other about what Jesus meant. They said, "He reckons he will give people his body to eat. What does he mean? We can't eat his body."
53 Jesus talked to them in picture language. He said, "Listen, this message is true. I am the special man from heaven. You have to come to me and believe in me. It's like I am special bread, and you have to eat my body, and you have to drink my blood. If you don't do that, you can't live with God for ever.
54 But if anybody eats my body, and drinks my blood, I will make them alive again on that day when the world will finish up, and they will live with God for ever.
55 You see, my body is like the best food, and my blood is like the best drink. 56 If anybody believes in me, they will join up with me, and I will join up with them. It's like they eat my body and drink my blood. I will live in them, and we will stay joined together. 57 You see, my father sent me here. He is the one that gives life, and he gives me life. Well, just like that, I give life to people that believe in me. It is like I am special bread, and they are eating me. 58 Yes, I am the bread that came down from heaven. Anyone that eats this bread will live with God for ever. I am not like the bread that your grand-fathers ate a long time ago in the desert. They ate that bread, but later they died. But anyone that eats this bread will live with God for ever."
59 Jesus said all those things while he taught in the Jewish meeting house in Capernium.

* **6:45** Isaiah 54:13

Some of Jesus's followers didn't like what he said

60 Jesus's followers heard him teaching those things and a lot of them said, "This message is too hard. We can't believe it."

61 Jesus knew they were not happy with his message, so he said, "Are you angry with me? Do my words shock you? 62 Then what will you think if you see me going up, back to the place I came from? I am the special man that came down from heaven. 63 It is God's spirit that makes people alive. People can't do that by themselves. And those words that I said to you now, they are from God's spirit, and if people believe those words, they will live with God for ever. 64 But I know that some of you don't believe the words I said."

Jesus always knew that there were some people that didn't believe in him, and he knew who they were. He also knew about the man that was going to turn against him and help his enemies catch him. 65 So Jesus said to them, "Some of you don't believe me. That is the reason why I told you before that my father gets some people to come and believe in me. And they are the only people that can come to me."

66 After Jesus's followers heard him say that, a lot of them turned away and stopped following him.

67 Then Jesus asked his 12 special workers, "Do you want to stop following me too?"

68 Peter said, "No, sir. Who would we go to? Your words will make us live with God for ever. Nobody else has a message like that. 69 We believe your message, and we know that you are God's special man."*

70 Jesus said, "Yes, but listen, I picked all of you 12 men, but one of you is working against me, like a bad spirit." 71 Jesus was talking about Judas Iscariot. He was one of Jesus's 12 special workers. But Jesus knew that later on Judas was going to turn against him. Jesus knew that Judas was going to help Jesus's enemies catch him.

Chapter 7

Jesus's brothers didn't believe in him

1 Some time later, Jesus went around from place to place in Galilee country. He knew that the Jewish leaders in Judea country wanted to kill him, so he didn't want to go south to Judea.

2 The time was coming for the Jewish people to have a week of ceremony, to remember that a long time ago their grand-fathers lived in tents in the desert. They called it the *Tents Ceremony*, and it was in Jerusalem city, in Judea country.*

3-5 Jesus's brothers didn't believe that he was the special man that God sent, so they gave him a hard time. They said to him, "You want people to think you are great, right? Well, show everyone what you can do. Don't hide what you are doing. You have to leave Galilee and come south to Jerusalem city, in Judea, so you can show your followers more of those powerful things you do."

6 Jesus said, "It's not yet the right time for me to go to Jerusalem. But you can go any time. 7 The people of this world don't hate you. But they hate me. I keep on telling them that the things they do are really bad. That is the reason why they hate me. 8 You can go to the ceremony, but I'm not going now. It's not yet the right time for me to go to Jerusalem." 9 After Jesus said that, he stayed behind in Galilee. 10 But his brothers went south to the ceremony in Jerusalem.

Jesus went to Jerusalem and taught people there

Then, later on, Jesus went to that Tents Ceremony in Jerusalem too. But he didn't

* **6:69** Matthew 16:16; Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20 * **7:2** Leviticus 23:33-34

tell anyone he was going, and he didn't let anyone see him on the road.

11 At the Tents Ceremony, the Jewish leaders looked for him. They kept on asking the people there, "Where is that man?"

12-13 The people were all frightened of the Jewish leaders, so they didn't talk loudly about Jesus. But they talked quietly to each other, and they talked about him a lot. Some people said, "He is a good man."

But other people said, "No. He is just tricking the people."

14 Half-way through the Tents Ceremony, Jesus went to God's ceremony house in Jerusalem, and he started to teach the people there. 15 The Jewish leaders got a shock, and said to each other, "How does this man know so much? He has never been to any of our schools."

16 Jesus told them, "God sent me to you, and he told me to teach these things. They are his words, not mine. 17 If anyone really wants to live God's way, they will know that those words came from God, and that I did not make them up. 18 Think about this. If somebody wants to make themselves look important, they make up their own stories. But sometimes a boss sends a work-man to give people a message. If that work-man wants people to respect his boss and know that his boss is important, then that work-man doesn't make up his own story or tell lies. He only tells the true message that he heard. Then the people that listen to him respect the boss that sent him.

19 Listen, Moses gave you God's law, but you mob don't follow God's law. You see, you are trying to kill me."

20 The people standing there said, "What are you talking about? Nobody is trying to kill you. We reckon you've got a bad spirit in you."

21-24 Jesus said to them, "You saw me do one thing, and now you think I have a bad spirit.



The Jewish leaders got angry with Jesus

You shouldn't look quickly at something and then make up your mind about it. You have to look at it properly and think about it the right way. I made a man better on our Jewish rest day, so you are angry with me. But you mob do young man operations on baby boys on our rest day. Moses told you to do it 8 days after the baby is born. (But it wasn't really Moses that gave you that law. It was from our grand-fathers that lived a long time before Moses.) Anyway, if a boy is 8 days old on our rest day, you do that young man operation on that day, even though it is our rest day. So why are you angry with me for making a person better on our rest day?"

People talked with each other about Jesus

25 Some of the people in Jerusalem at that time said, "This is the man that our leaders were trying to kill. 26 But he is teaching out in the open, and they are not trying to stop him. They are not saying anything against him. Maybe he is the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us, and our leaders know that he is. 27 But no, that can't be right. Think about it. Nobody will

know where the Christ will come from, but we know the town that this man comes from, so he can't be the Christ."

28 Jesus was still teaching in God's ceremony house, and he knew what those people were saying. So he said out loud, "You think you know me, and you think you know where I come from. But you don't really know me. Listen. It was not my idea to come here. God is the one that sent me here. He really is the one that sent me. You don't know him. 29 But I do know him. You see, God sent me here. I came from him, so I know him."

30 Some of the people wanted to grab Jesus straight away, and take him to court, so the judge might say he has to die. But it wasn't the right time yet for Jesus to die, so God stopped them, and they didn't touch him.

31 There were also a lot of people that listened to Jesus and believed in him, and they said, "This man does a lot of powerful things. Nobody will ever do more powerful things than him. So he has to be the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us."

32 The Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law, and the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies, they heard what the people were saying, so they told some of their work-men to go and grab Jesus. But after the work-men got there, they listened to him too. 33 Jesus kept on teaching the people. He said, "I will only be with you for a little bit longer. Then I will go back to the one that sent me here. 34 You will look for me, but you will not find me. And you can't come to the place that I am going to."

35 The Jewish leaders asked each other, "Where will he go so that we can't find him? Will he go and live with our Jewish countrymen in the country called Greece? Maybe he will start to teach Greek people his story. 36 Just now he said, 'You will look for me, but you will not find me.' And he said, 'You can't come to the place that I am going to.' What did he mean?"

Jesus talked about the Holy Spirit

37 The last day of the Tents Ceremony was the most important day. Jesus stood up on that day and shouted, "Anyone that is thirsty can come to me and drink. * 38 A long time ago, God told his men to write these words, and they are in God's book. He wrote,

> 'A river of water will flow out from
> inside a person. That water will
> make people really live.'

And it will happen like that to anyone that believes in me."*

39 Jesus said "a river of water," but he was really talking about the Holy Spirit. You see, the Holy Spirit was not there yet. He came after Jesus went back to heaven. That is when God gave the Holy Spirit to everyone that believed in Jesus.

The people there argued about who Jesus is

40 Some of the people in the crowd heard his words and said, "This is God's messenger. He is the one that Moses said will come and tell us God's message."

41 Other people said, "We think he is the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us. He is the one we have been waiting for."

But other people said, "No. He can't be. He comes from Galilee country. But the Christ will not be a Galilee man. 42 God's book says that he will be from David's family, and that he will be born in the town called Bethlehem, where David lived, in Judea country."*

* **7:37** Leviticus 23:36 * **7:38** Isaiah 58:11; Ezekiel 47:1; Zechariah 14:8 * **7:42** 2 Samuel 7:12; Micah 5:2

43 Then the people there argued with each other about Jesus. Some people said, "He is the special man that God promised to send."

But other people said, "No he isn't. You're wrong." 44 Some people wanted to grab Jesus and put him in jail, but nobody did.

The work-men of the Jewish leaders did not want to grab Jesus

45 Earlier, the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and the Pharisee mob sent some of their work-men to grab Jesus and bring him to them. But those work-men listened to Jesus, and then they came back without him. The leaders asked them, "Why didn't you bring him to us?"

46 They said, "That man said really good words. We haven't heard anyone talk like that before. We couldn't grab him."

47 The Pharisee mob said, "What? Has he tricked you too? 48 Think about it. Have any of the Jewish leaders believed in him? No. Or have any of us Pharisee mob believed in him? No. 49 Those people that believe in him, they are just a mob of stupid people. They don't know God's law. God will punish them."

50 One of that Pharisee mob was Nicodemus. Before this time, he was the man that talked to Jesus one night. Nicodemus said to the others, * 51 "God's law says that we can't say a man is guilty until we listen to him and find out more about what he's been doing." *

52 The others got angry and said, "Why are you talking like that? You are not from Galilee country, so you don't have to be friendly with that Galilee man. Go and have a look at God's book. It doesn't say anything about God getting a man from Galilee to tell his message."

53 After that, they all went home.

Chapter 8

(We are not really sure that John wrote the words in the next story. Maybe another person wrote them, and later on, they put them into John's book.)

The Jewish law teachers and the Pharisee mob caught a woman sleeping with a man that was not her husband

1 Jesus went to the hill called Olive Trees Hill.

2 Early in the morning, he went back to God's ceremony house in Jerusalem. All the people there went to him, so he sat down and started to teach them.

3-6 Some Jewish law teachers, and some of the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law, they brought a woman to Jesus, and they told him that she did something really bad. She slept with a man that was not her husband, and she did with him what married people do together. Those men wanted to trick Jesus. They wanted Jesus to say something bad about their law so that they could take Jesus to court and get the judge to punish him. So they made the woman stand in front of everyone, and they asked Jesus a trick question. They said, "Teacher, we caught this woman sleeping with a man that is not her husband, and they were doing what married people do together. In our law, Moses said that we have to throw big stones at her to kill her dead. But what do you reckon we have to do to her?"

But Jesus didn't answer them. He got down and wrote on the ground with his finger.

7 Those men kept on asking the same question. So Jesus stood up and said to them, "Have any of you never done anything wrong? That man can go first. He can throw the first stone at her." 8 Then Jesus got down again and wrote on the ground.

9 Those men heard his words, and then

* **7:50** John 3:1-2 * **7:51** Deuteronomy 1:16

the oldest man turned around and walked away. Then the next oldest man went away too, and the other men followed one by one. Soon they were all gone, and the woman was the only one standing in front of Jesus.

10 Jesus stood up and said to the woman, "Where are the men that blamed you? Did any of them say they have to punish you?"

11 The woman said, "None of them, sir."

Jesus said, "And I will not say that anyone has to punish you either. Go home, and, from now on, stop doing bad things."

Jesus is a light for everybody

12 Jesus talked to the people again. He said, "I am like a light for all the people in the world. Anyone that follows me will not live the wrong way, as if they are in the dark, but I will show them how to live the right way, like a light shows people the way, and they will live with God for ever."*

13 But the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law, they said to Jesus, "You are the only one that is telling this story about yourself. Nobody else is telling the same story, so we can't agree with you. What you say is not true."*

14 Jesus said, "Even if I do tell this story about myself, my story is true. You see, you don't know where I came from, and you don't know where I am going. But I do know where I came from, and I know where I am going. 15 You judge people the way human beings judge people. I am not judging anyone now, 16 but if I do judge somebody, I judge them the right way. You see, I don't judge by myself. My father sent me here, and we judge people together.

17 In your Jewish law, it says that if 2 people tell the same story, then that shows that their story is true.* 18 All right, I am one person, and my father is the other one. He is the one that sent me to the world. We both tell you the same story about me. And you reckon you follow your law, so you have to believe me."

19 So then the Pharisee mob asked Jesus, "Where is your father?"

Jesus said, "You don't know me, and you don't know my father. If somebody knows me, they will know my father too."

20 Jesus said all this while he was teaching in God's ceremony house, near the money box. The people used to put money into that box to give it to God. The Pharisee mob wanted to grab him and kill him, but it was not the right time yet for him to die, so God stopped them, and nobody touched him.

Jesus told the Jewish leaders, "You can't come with me"

21 Jesus talked to them again. He said, "I am going away. You will look for me, but you will not find me. You can't go to the place that I am going to. And after you die, you will still be guilty of all the bad things you did, so God will punish you."

22 The Jewish leaders didn't understand what he said. They asked each other, "Why did he say that we can't go to the place where he is going? Is he going to kill himself?"

23 So Jesus said, "You are from this world, and you belong down here. But I don't belong to this world. I came from heaven, and I belong up there. 24 Listen, I am the special man that God sent. But you don't believe that, so after you die, God will punish you for all the bad things you did. I told you that already."

25 So the Jewish leaders asked Jesus, "Who do you reckon you are?"

Jesus said, "I told you who I am, right from the start. 26 I can say a lot about you, and I can even judge you. But I will not do that

* **8:12** Matthew 5:14; John 9:5 * **8:13** John 5:31 * **8:17** Deuteronomy 19:15

now. You see, right now I am telling people what I heard from the one that sent me to the world. And you can trust his words. They are true."

27 The people listening to Jesus didn't understand that he was talking about his father in heaven.

28 So he said, "I am the special man from heaven, and after you put me on a cross and lift me up, you will know who I am. And you will understand that I am not working alone. I only say what my father taught me. 29 He is the one that sent me, and he is with me. He doesn't leave me, because I always do things that make him happy."

30 A big mob of people were listening to Jesus at that time, and a lot of them believed in him.

Jesus can make people free

31 Jesus talked to the Jewish people that believed in him. He said, "If you keep on following me, and if you do the things I teach you, then you will be my proper followers, 32 and you will know the true message. And if you listen to that true message, you will be free."

33 The Jewish leaders said to Jesus, "We belong to Abraham's family, so we are God's special people. We never had to work for somebody for no pay, like a slave. You know, slaves are workers that belong to their boss. They always have to do what their boss tells them to do, and their boss never pays them. But we are not like that. We belong to Abraham's family, so we are already free. You can't tell us that we will be free."*

34 Jesus said, "Listen, this is the true story. You go against God and do bad things, and everyone that does bad things is like a slave. You can't stop doing those bad things, so they are your boss.

35 You know, slaves don't belong to their boss's family for ever. But the boss's son belongs to the family for ever. 36 And the boss's son can let slaves go free. If he does that, they are not slaves any more. Well, God is the biggest boss, and I am his son. And I can make you properly free, so that you can stop doing bad things.

37 I know that you all reckon you belong to Abraham's family. But you don't like my message, so you want to kill me. 38 I am only telling you the things I saw, and the things I heard, while I was with my father. But you listen to your father, and you do anything he wants you to do."

39 The Jewish leaders said to him, "Look, we belong to Abraham's family. He is our grand-father that lived a long time ago."

Jesus said, "You reckon you are in Abraham's family, but you are not. Everyone that is really in Abraham's family does good things like Abraham did. 40 I am telling you the true message I heard from God, and you are trying to kill me. You are nothing like Abraham. He never did bad things like that. 41 Listen, you are doing the things that your father does."

But they said, "God is our father. He is the only father we have, and we are his proper kids."

42 Jesus said to them, "No. God is not your father. You see, God sent me here. It wasn't my idea to come here, God sent me. But you don't love me. So I know that God is not your father. 43 Why don't you understand what I am saying? It is because you don't want to do what I say. That is the reason why you don't listen to me.

44 So, really, your father is the devil, the boss over the bad spirits, and you do anything he wants you to do. He was always a murderer and a liar, and nothing he says is

* **8:33** Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8

true. Whenever he tells lies, he is just doing what he likes to do. All lies come from him. It is like he is the father of all lies. 45 But I am different. I tell you what is true. But you love lies, so you don't believe me.

46 None of you can show that I did anything wrong. You see, everything I tell you is true. So why don't you believe me? 47 The people in God's family listen properly to his words. But you are not in his family, so you don't listen to him."

48 The Jewish leaders told him, "Hey, you are wrong. We always reckoned that you are a rubbish man from Samaria, and you've got a bad spirit inside you. And we are right."

49 Jesus said, "No. I haven't got a bad spirit in me. I respect my father, but you don't respect me. 50 I'm not trying to get people to say that I am great. But there is somebody else that wants people to say that I am great, and he judges what people say too. Yes, God will show everyone that what I say is right. 51 Listen, I am telling you straight, if anyone does what I say, they will never finish up."

52 Then the Jewish leaders said, "Now we know for sure that you have a bad spirit in you. Think about all of our grand-fathers that lived a long time ago. They all died. Our father Abraham died, and so did all the men that told people God's messages. But you say, 'If anyone does what I say, they will never finish up.' You are wrong. 53 Are you better than our grand-father Abraham? He died. And all the men that told people God's messages, they all died too. So, who do you think you are?"

54 Jesus said, "If I tell people that I am great, my words mean nothing. But my father is the one that tells people that I am great. And you reckon that he is your God. 55 You mob don't know God, but I know him. That's right. I'm not a liar, like you, I'm telling the true story. I know him, and I do what he says. 56 Think about your father, Abraham. He knew I was going to come into the world, and after he saw it happen, he was really happy."

57 The Jewish leaders said, "Stop. You are not even 50 years old. You can't say that you saw Abraham."

58 Jesus said, "Listen to this, it's true. I was alive before Abraham was born. You see, I am always alive."

59 The Jewish leaders didn't like Jesus saying that he is always alive. That's the same as saying he is God. So they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus hid from them, and then he left God's ceremony house, and he went away.

Chapter 9

Jesus made a blind man's eyes better

1 As Jesus walked along with his followers, they saw a blind man that was blind all his life, from the time he was born. 2 Jesus's followers asked him, "Teacher, why did God make this man blind from the time he was born? Did he do something bad, or did his parents?"

3 Jesus said, "No. This man didn't do anything bad to make him blind, and his parents didn't do anything bad to make him blind either. He is blind so that everyone can see God's great power. You see, I am going to make him better. 4-5 We have to keep on doing God's work while we can. He is the one that sent me here and gave me this special work to do. You see, my work shows God's great power, so I am like a light for all the people in the world. I have to do God's work while I am here. It is like I am working in day-light. But I will not always be here to do the work that God gave me. Then it will be like night time, and nobody can work at night time."*

* **9:4-5** Matthew 5:14; John 8:12

6 After he said that, Jesus spat on the ground
and made some mud. Then he put the mud on
the blind man's eyes. 7 Then Jesus said to him,
"Go and wash your eyes in the pool called
Siloam." (That word *Siloam* means *sent*.)

So the man went and washed his eyes,
and he could see. He came back, 8 and some
of the people that lived near him, and the
people that used to see him asking for money,
they were there. And they asked each other,
"Is he the man that sat next to the road and
asked for money all the time?"

9 Some people said, "Yes, that's him."

But other people said, "No, he's another
man. He just looks like the blind man."

But the man kept on saying, "I am the man
that was blind."

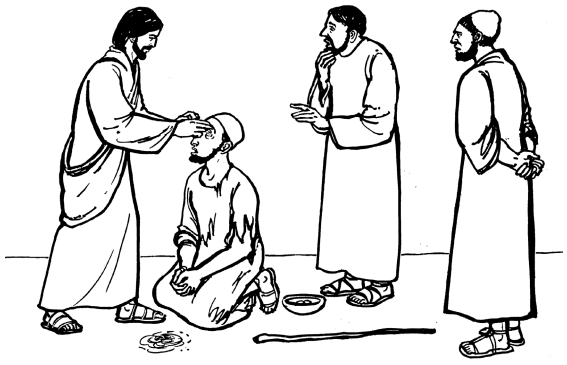
10 So they asked him, "How come you can
see now?"

11 He said, "The man that people call Jesus,
he made mud and put it on my eyes. Then
he told me to go and wash my eyes in the
pool called Siloam. So I did what he said,
and straight away I could see."

12 The people asked him, "Where is that man?"
And he said, "I don't know."

The Pharisee mob argued with the man that used to be blind

13 The people took the man that was born
blind to the Pharisee mob, that were strong
for the Jewish law.



Jesus put mud on the blind man's eyes

14 That day was the Jewish rest day, so
nobody was allowed to work on that day, but
Jesus made mud on that day, and he put it
on the blind man's eyes, to make them better.

15 The Pharisee mob asked the man, "How
come you can see?"

He said, "A man put mud on my eyes, and
told me to go and wash them. So I did that,
and straight away I could see."

16 Some of that Pharisee mob said, "That
man did not come from God. He does not
respect God's law about the rest day."

But some of them said, "But he does
powerful things. A bad man can't do things
like that. So we reckon God sent him here."
And so that Pharisee mob did not agree with
each other about Jesus.

17 Then they asked the man, "What do
you say about the man that made your eyes
better?"

The man said, "I think God sent him here
to tell people God's messages."

18 But the Jewish leaders did not believe
that the man was really born blind, and that
now he can see, so they sent somebody to
get his parents.

19 Then they asked them, "Is this man your
son? Was he born blind? Tell us, how come
he can see now?"

20-23 Before this time, the Jewish leaders
agreed to punish anyone that followed Jesus.
They said, "If anybody says that Jesus is the
Christ, the special man that God promised
to send, we will not let them come to our
meeting houses and pray to God with us." So
the man's parents were frightened, and they
said, "We know he is our son, and we know
that he was born blind. But we don't know
how his eyes are better, or who made them
better. You can ask him. He is old enough
to talk for himself. He is not a little boy."

24 Then the Jewish leaders called the man
that was born blind, and they got him to
come to them again. They said to him, "We

know that the man that made you see goes against God, and he does bad things. So now, show respect to God and tell us straight, what do you say about this man?"

25 The man said, "I don't know anything about this man. I don't know if he goes against God and does wrong things. All I know is this, I was blind, but now I can see."

26 So the Jewish leaders said, "What did he do to you? How did he make you see?"

27 The man said, "I told you already, but you didn't listen to me. Why do you want to hear my story again? Do you want to be his followers too?"

28 The Jewish leaders got angry with the man and said, "You are his follower, not us. We follow Moses. 29 We know that Moses talked with God, but we don't think this man comes from God. We don't know where he comes from."

30 The man said, "How can that be? He just made my eyes better. How come you don't know where he comes from? 31 Everyone knows that God does not listen to people that go against him and do bad things. But he does listen to people that give him the right respect and do what he says. 32 From the time God made everything, nobody has ever heard of anything like this happening to a person that was born blind. Nobody ever made them see. 33 I reckon God sent this man. If he didn't, this man couldn't do anything like this."

34 The Jewish leaders got really angry and said, "Don't try to teach us. You were born blind, so we know that you always went against God and did bad things. You can't teach us anything. Get out of this meeting house, and don't come back."

The man that used to be blind believed in Jesus

35 Jesus heard that the Jewish leaders told that man to get out of the meeting house. So he went and found the man, and Jesus asked him, "Do you believe in the special man that God sent from heaven?"

36 The man said, "Sir, tell me who he is, so that I can believe in him."

37 Jesus said, "You have met him, and right now you are talking to him."

38 Straight away the man said, "Sir, I believe in you." And he got down on his knees in front of Jesus, to show him respect.

39 Then Jesus said, "I came to the world to judge people, and to split them into 2 mobs. One mob know that they don't understand the true things about God. It's like they are blind. But they let me help them understand those things, like I make them see. The other mob think they understand all about God. It's like they think they can already see, so they don't let me help them. But they don't really understand, so it's like they stay blind."

40 Some of the Pharisee mob there heard him say that, and they got angry, and they said, "Are you saying that we are that blind mob?"

41 Jesus said, "If you knew you were blind, you would let me help you, and then God would say that you are not guilty for the bad things you did. But you say you can see, and you don't let me help you, so you are still guilty."

Chapter 10

The good shepherd

1-4 Jesus talked some more and said, "Listen to this picture story about a mob of sheep and some men. This picture story's message is true.

One of the men in this story owns some sheep, and he looks after them properly. He is called their *shepherd*. He keeps those sheep in a yard with a big fence. And there is a man that looks after the gate of that yard. Whenever the shepherd goes there,



A shepherd looks after his sheep, and his sheep follow him

that man always lets him in the gate. Then the shepherd calls each sheep's name, and they know that he is their shepherd, so they come to him. Then he takes all his sheep out of the yard to a place with grass for them to eat. Wherever he walks, they follow him, because they know his voice and they trust him.

But another man in this story doesn't own the sheep. He wants to steal them, so he doesn't go into the yard through the gate, but he climbs over the fence. 5 If the sheep hear that man's voice they run away. They don't know his voice, so they don't trust him. They never follow somebody they don't know."

6 The people listening to Jesus didn't understand this story, 7 so he said, "I will tell you something else. Listen to this, it's true. I am like a gate in a sheep yard. 8-11 You know, the gate is the way for the sheep to go into the yard. Well, I am the way for people to come to God. If anybody comes to me, they will come into God's family, and he will save them. And you know that sheep have to use the gate to go out and get grass to eat. Well just like that, people have to come to me to get whatever they need to live for God.

And remember the shepherd in that picture story. Well, I am like that good shepherd that looks after his sheep properly. Some other men came before me, and they reckoned they were like shepherds, but they were liars. They were bad men, and my people didn't listen to them, just like sheep only listen to their shepherd. Those bad people only want to steal the sheep, and kill them, and finish them up. But I am not like that. I came here to give people real life, so they can live with God for ever. You know, a good shepherd looks after his sheep properly, even if he has to die for them. Well, I am like that, I am ready to die to save my people.

12-13 You know, there are also workers that don't own the sheep. The owner pays them to look after the sheep. But they don't really care about the sheep. If they see a wild dog coming, they get frightened, and they leave the sheep there and run away. Then the wild dog chases the sheep to grab them and eat them, and the sheep run away. 14-15 But I am not like those workers. I am like a good shepherd. I am ready to die to save my people. I know all my people, and all my people know me, just like I know God my father, and he knows me. *

16 And not all of my people are from the same mob. They are not all Jewish people.



A good shepherd looks after his sheep properly

* **10:14-15** Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22

I have other people too, and I have to bring them all together, like one mob of sheep. They will hear my voice, and they will come to me. Yes, I will bring all my people together into one mob, and I will look after them all, like a good shepherd looks after his sheep.

17 I am going to die to save my people, and then I will come back to life again. That is the reason why my father loves me. 18 You see, nobody is forcing me to die, but I'm going to die for my people because I want to do it. My father gives me the power to do it, and he also gives me the power to come back to life again. And he told me to do both of those things."

19 Again, the Jewish leaders didn't agree with each other about Jesus's message. 20 Lots of them said, "He's got a bad spirit in him. He is crazy. Don't listen to him."

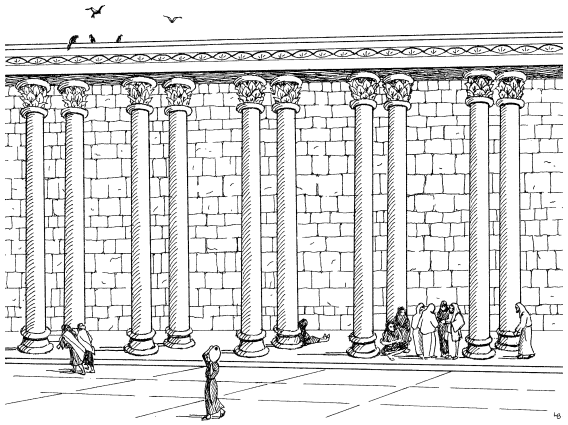
21 But some of them said, "No, he hasn't got a bad spirit. A man with a bad spirit doesn't tell this sort of message, and a bad spirit can't make blind people see again."

The Jewish leaders argued with Jesus

22 At that time there was a ceremony in Jerusalem. You see, every year, in the cold weather time, the Jewish people had a ceremony to remember when their grand-fathers got God's ceremony house back from their enemies. 23 So Jesus went to God's ceremony house and walked in the part called Solomon's veranda.

24 Some of the Jewish leaders stood around Jesus and said, "Don't keep us waiting. Tell us straight. Are you the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us?"

25 Jesus said, "I have already told you who I am, but you don't believe me. My father sent me to do powerful things. Those powerful things show who I am. 26 You mob don't



Solomon's veranda at God's ceremony house looked like this

believe me, because you are not my sheep. 27 I know the people that are my sheep. They listen to my voice, and they believe what I say, and they follow me. 28 I will give them new life, so they will live with me for ever, and they will never finish up. Yes, I will hold them properly, so nobody can ever grab them and steal them from me. 29 My father gave them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone, so nobody can grab them and steal them from my father. 30 My father and me, we are joined together, like we are one."

31 Again, the Jewish leaders didn't like what Jesus said, so they picked up stones to kill him.

32 Jesus said, "Why do you want to kill me? You have seen me do a lot of good things, and they show you that my father sent me. Do you really want to kill me for doing those good things?"

33 The Jewish leaders said, "We don't want to kill you for doing good things. But you are saying things against God. That is the reason why we have to kill you. You are just a man, but you say that you are God."*

34 Jesus said to them, "You have God's book, and you can read these words there,

* **10:33** Leviticus 24:16

'God said that you are gods.'* 35 You see, God gave some people his message, and then he called them *gods*. And remember, nobody can change anything that God says in his book. 36 So if I say I am God's son, I am not saying anything bad against God. I am the one God picked out, and he sent me to this world to do his works. 37-38 God is my father, and I do his works. You have seen me do those powerful things, so why don't you believe me? All right, think about those things you saw me do. They can help you understand who I am. They show that my father is joined to me, so that it's like he's in me. And they show that I am joined to him, so that it's like I am in him."

39 Again the Jewish leaders tried to grab Jesus and put him in jail, but he got away from them.

40 Then Jesus left Jerusalem and went across the Jordan River to the place where John used to baptise people, and Jesus stayed there for a while.* 41 Lots of people went to him there. They said to each other, "John never did powerful things, but everything that John said about this man is true." 42 And so a lot of those people believed in Jesus.

Chapter 11

Jesus's friend Lazarus died

1-2 Jesus had a friend called Lazarus, and he lived in a little town in Judea country called Bethany. He lived there with his sisters, Mary and Martha. (Mary was the woman that, later on, rubbed Jesus's feet with special perfume and wiped them with her hair.*)

One day, Lazarus got very sick, 3 so Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus. They said, "Your good friend Lazarus is very sick."

4 When Jesus got the message, he said, "Yes, Lazarus is very sick, but that sickness will not finish him up. He is sick so that people will see that God is really powerful, and they will respect God. And they will see that God's son is powerful too, and they will also respect him."

5 Jesus was really good friends with Mary, Martha and Lazarus, 6 but after he got the message he stayed in the town where he was for another 2 days. 7 Then Jesus said to his special workers, "Let's go back to Judea country."

8 But his followers said, "What? Teacher, are you going to go back? When we were there a little while ago, the people there wanted to throw stones at you and kill you."

9 Jesus said, "You know, there is day-light every day until the sun goes down. The sun is the light for the world. It lets people see where they are walking, so they will not fall down. 10 It's only at night time that people do not have that light. Then they can't see where they are walking, and they will fall down." When Jesus said that, he was telling them that, just as people can walk until the end of the day, he had to keep on working until the end of his life, and it wasn't time yet for him to die.

11 Then Jesus said to them, "Our friend Lazarus is asleep. I am going to wake him up."

12 His followers said, "Sir, if Lazarus is asleep, he will soon get better."

13 Jesus was really saying that Lazarus was dead, but his followers didn't understand that. 14 So then Jesus told them straight, "Lazarus is dead. 15 But I am happy that I wasn't there before he died. Because now you will see what I am going to do, and you will believe in me properly. Come on. We will go to him now."

16 Thomas said to Jesus's other followers,

* **10:34** Psalm 82:6 * **10:40** John 1:28 * **11:1-2** Luke 10:38-39; John 12:3

"All right, let's all go, and we will die with Jesus." (Thomas's other name was *the Twin*.)

Jesus went to Lazarus's town

17 Then Jesus and his followers went to Bethany. As they were getting near to Bethany, somebody told him that Lazarus died 4 days ago, and his family put his body in a cave, and they put a big stone there to block that cave.

18 Bethany was about 3 kilometres from Jerusalem. 19 Mary and Martha were really sad, so a lot of people from Jerusalem came and sat down with them, to be sad with them and help them feel better.

20 Martha heard that Jesus was coming and that he was getting close, so she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed in the house. 21 Martha said, "Sir, you were not here to stop my brother from dying. 22 But we know that God listens to you, and even now, I know that you can ask God for anything and he will give it to you."

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will come back to life again."

24 Martha said, "Yes, I know he will come back to life, on the day when the world will finish up, when everyone will be alive again."

25-26 Jesus said, "Martha, I am the one that makes dead people come alive again, and I am the one that gives people real life. If people believe in me, I will make them come alive again after they die, then they will live for ever and never die again. Do you believe that?"

27 Martha said, "Yes, sir, I believe that you are the Christ, the special man that God promised to send. You are God's son, and you came to us people in the world."

28 Then she went back to the house to get Mary. She said to Mary quietly, "The teacher is here and wants to talk to you." 29 As soon as Mary heard that, she got up quickly and went to Jesus. 30 He was still outside the town, at the place where Martha met him.

31 There were other people with Mary at the house trying to help her feel better, and they saw her get up quickly and leave the house. They thought that she was going to the cave where they put Lazarus, to cry there. So they followed her.

32 But Mary didn't go to the cave, she went to see Jesus. She got down on her knees in front of him, to show him respect, and she said, "Sir, you were not here to stop my brother from dying."



Mary got down on her knees in front of Jesus to show him respect

33 Jesus saw Mary and everyone else crying out loud, and he felt really upset and sad for them. 34 He asked them, "Where did you put his body?"

And they said, "Sir, come and we'll show you."

35 Then Jesus cried.

36 The people saw Jesus crying, and some of them said, "Look at him. He really loved his friend."

37 But other people there said, "He made a blind man see. Why didn't he stop this man from dying?"

Jesus made Lazarus alive again

38 Again Jesus felt upset and sad. He went and stood in front of the cave. 39 He said,

"Move that big stone away, so that it doesn't block the cave any more."

But Martha, Lazarus's sister, said, "No, sir. Don't get them to move that stone. He has been dead for 4 days, so the body will smell really bad."

40 Jesus said to her, "I told you before that if you believe in me, you will see God's great power."

41 So the people moved the stone away from the cave. Then Jesus looked up to God, and said, "Father, thank you for listening to me. 42 I know that you always listen to me, but I say these words out loud, so that these people will believe that you sent me here."

43 Then Jesus called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out of the cave." 44 And Lazarus came out. There were still long bits of cloth around Lazarus's arms and legs, and some cloth over his face. You see, people used to tie long bits of cloth around dead bodies to cover them up.

Jesus said to the people there, "Take that cloth off him, so he can walk around."



Jesus made Lazarus alive again

The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus

45 A lot of people were with Mary and Martha that day, and they saw what happened. A lot of them believed in Jesus. 46 But some of them went to the Pharisee mob and told them what Jesus did. That Pharisee mob were strong for the Jewish law, so they didn't like Jesus.

47 The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies, and the Pharisee mob, they called a Jewish Leaders Council meeting. They talked about Jesus at that meeting, and said, "This man is doing a lot of powerful things. What can we do to stop him? 48 We have to do something. If we don't stop him, all the people might believe in him, and they might make a lot of trouble. Then the Roman soldiers might come and smash God's ceremony house here, and finish up our nation."

49 The big boss of the Jewish ceremonies that year was Cayafas. He said, "You mob don't know anything. 50 Listen. You have to understand this. It is a lot better for you if this man dies, so that the Romans will not come and kill all of our people. Yes, Jesus has to die instead of the people."

51 Cayafas didn't think up those words by himself. He told them, "Jesus has to die instead of the people," but those were really God's words that he said. You see, he was the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies at that time, so God used him to say that Jesus was going to die for the Jewish nation. 52 And he was also going to die for all God's people, everywhere. He died to join all of God's people everywhere into one mob.

53 From that day, the Jewish leaders talked to each other, saying, "How are we going to kill Jesus?" 54 Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he stopped going to places where there were a lot of people. He left that country and went to a town called Ephraim, that was near the desert, and Jesus and his special workers stayed there.

55 It was nearly the time for the Jewish people to have their ceremony called Passover, to remember that a long time ago God got their grand-fathers out of Egypt. A lot of Jewish people from everywhere

went to Jerusalem to get ready for that ceremony, and they washed themselves in a special way.

56-57 The Jewish ceremony bosses and the Pharisee mob told everyone at that ceremony to look for Jesus. They said, "If you see Jesus, you have to tell us, so that we can grab him."

So a lot of people looked for Jesus at God's ceremony house. They asked each other, "What do you reckon? Do you think Jesus will come to this Passover ceremony?"

Chapter 12

Mary washed Jesus's feet

1 Jesus went to Bethany again 6 days before the Jewish Passover ceremony started. Bethany was the town where he made Lazarus come alive again. 2 After Jesus got to that town, the people there put on a special dinner for him. Lazarus and some other people sat at the table with Jesus, and Lazarus's sister, Martha, gave them the food.

3 Then Mary came into the room with a big bottle of special perfume, that cost a lot of money. It was made from a plant called nard. Mary put that perfume all over Jesus's feet, then she wiped his feet with her hair. The sweet smell of the perfume went right through the house. *



Mary washed Jesus's feet with perfume and wiped them with her hair

4 Judas Iscariot was there with Jesus's other followers. (He was the one that turned against Jesus later.) He said, 5 "Why did she waste that perfume? Why didn't she let us sell it? We can get more money than a man gets for working for a whole year, and then we can give that money to poor people." 6 But, you know, Judas didn't really feel sorry for poor people. He was the one that looked after the money bag, and sometimes he stole some of that money for himself.

7 Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She kept this oil to pour on my feet, like she knows that I am going to die soon. She is getting my body ready for people to bury me. 8 You will always have poor people with you, but you will not always have me with you." *

The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus and Lazarus

9 The people in that country heard that Jesus was in Bethany, and a big mob went to see him. They wanted to see Lazarus too, the man that Jesus made alive again. 10-11 And when they heard about how Jesus made him alive again, a lot of people believed in Jesus. And they stopped following the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies. Those bosses didn't like that, so they started to work out a way to kill Jesus, and to kill Lazarus too.

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey

12 The next day, Jesus left Bethany and went to Jerusalem. A big mob of people were there for the Jewish Passover ceremony, and they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they cut some branches off palm trees, and they went out to meet him. They shouted,

* **12:3** Luke 7:37-38 * **12:8** Deuteronomy 15:11

"God, you are really great and
powerful.
God, we want you to look after this
man you sent. Make him strong and
happy.
God, make the true leader of Israel
strong and happy."*

14-15 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, to ride it into Jerusalem. You know, a long time ago, God got one of his men to write about that. He wrote this in God's book,

"People from Jerusalem, don't be
frightened.
Your leader will come to you, sitting on
a young donkey."*

And it happened just like that man wrote.
16 Jesus's followers didn't understand what was happening. But, later on, after he went back to heaven, they remembered the words that God's man wrote, and they understood that those words are about Jesus, and that it happened that day, while Jesus rode on that young donkey.

17 Before that day, there were a lot of people that kept on telling everyone, "We heard Jesus call to Lazarus and tell him to come out of the cave. We saw Jesus make him alive again." 18 Then the people that heard that story wanted to see Jesus, so a big mob went out to meet him that day when he was on the young donkey.



Jesus went into Jerusalem on a donkey

19 The Pharisee mob were there too. They didn't want Jesus because they were strong for the Jewish law. They said to each other, "Look, we still haven't stopped this man. Everyone is starting to follow him."

Jesus told his followers that he was going to die

20 There were some Greek people in the mob there at Jerusalem. They came to show respect to God at the Passover ceremony. 21 Those Greek people went to see Philip, one of Jesus's special workers. (He was from a town called Bethsayida, in Galilee country.) They said to Philip, "Sir, we want to meet Jesus." 22 Philip went and told Andrew, and then they went together and told Jesus.

23 Jesus said to them, "It is nearly time for God to show everyone that his special man from heaven is really powerful. 24 Listen carefully to this picture story. A wheat seed has to fall into the ground and die, so that it can make a big mob of new seeds. If it never dies, and if it never gets buried, it will never make new seeds. You see, I will die like the seed in that picture story. 25 And it is the same for everybody. If a person loves their life a lot and only cares about their life here in this world, they will not live for ever. But if they don't worry about their life here in this world, they will live with God for ever.* 26 If anyone wants to work for me, they have to follow me. Wherever I go, my workers will go. And if anyone works for me, my father will say they are good.

27 It is nearly time now for my trouble to start. I am very sad and worried. I don't know what to say to my father. I might say,

* **12:13** Psalm 118:25-26 * **12:14-15** Zechariah 9:9 * **12:25** Matthew 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33

'Father, save me. I don't want to go through the trouble that is coming to me.' But I can't say that. No. I came to the world to have this trouble."

28 Then Jesus said, "Father, show people that you are really great."

Straight away, God talked from heaven. He said, "I already showed them that I am great, and I will show them again."

29 Some of the people standing there thought they heard thunder, but other people there said, "No. An angel messenger talked to him."

30 Jesus said to them, "That voice came to help you, not to help me."

31-33 Then Jesus told them how he was going to die. He said, "Soon my enemies are going to lift me up to die on a cross, and then I will call everyone to come to me. And when I die, God will judge everyone in the world. And you know, the boss over the bad spirits is the boss over this world too, but when I die, God will stop his power so he can't be the boss over the world any more."

34 But the people in the crowd said, "God's book says that the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us, he will live for ever. But you say that they will lift up the man from heaven and put him on a cross to die. Are you talking about the same man? Who is this man from heaven?"*

35 Jesus said, "I am like a light shining for you. You see, I am telling you the true message. But I will only be here with you a little bit longer. So while I am here, you have to listen to my message and believe it. It's like the light is shining and people have to walk about while there is light, because people that walk in the dark don't know where they are going. So if you don't listen properly to my message while I am here, then you will not know the right way to live, and it will be like you are always in the dark. 36 You have to listen to my message while I am still here, and you have to believe it, so that you will be my followers. Then it will be like you are living in the light that I'm shining for you."

After Jesus said those things, he left that place and stayed away from those people, so they didn't know where he was.

Some people still didn't believe in Jesus

37 A lot of people saw Jesus do lots of powerful things, but they still did not believe in him. 38 So it happened the way God told Isaiah to write it, a long time ago. And it is in God's book. He wrote these words,

"Only a few believed your message,
God,
and only a few people took notice of
the powerful things you do."*

39 And Isaiah told us why only a few people believed God's message. 40 He also wrote this in God's book,

"God stopped the people from
understanding his message.
It's like he made their eyes blind,
and like he made their minds dead.
You know, if they understand God's
message properly, they will turn
back to God, and he will help them.
But they don't want to do that."*

41 Isaiah wrote those things about Jesus, because a long time ago, God showed Isaiah that his special man is really powerful.

42 But lots of people did believe in Jesus. Even some of the Jewish leaders believed in him. But those leaders didn't tell anybody about it. You see, Jesus's enemies, the Pharisee mob, they said, "If anyone believes in Jesus, we will not let them come to our meeting houses and pray to God with us." So those leaders that believed in him stayed

* **12:34** Psalm 110:4; Isaiah 9:7; Ezekiel 37:25; Daniel 7:14 * **12:38** Isaiah 53:1 * **12:40** Isaiah 6:10

quiet. 43 They just wanted people to say good things about them. They didn't worry about what God will say about them.

44 One day, Jesus shouted out, "Anyone that believes in me, is really believing in God. He is the one that sent me here. 45 And anyone that looks at me, can see God too. 46 I came to the world to tell people the true message, so that they can know the true message and believe in me. It's like people were in the dark, but I came to be a light for them. 47 If somebody hears my words and doesn't take any notice of them, I do not judge that person. I didn't come to judge the people of the world, I came to save them. 48 But this will happen to the people that don't believe in me and don't take notice of my words. On the day when the world will finish up, they will stand in front of the judge, and the words that I said will make them guilty. You see, they didn't believe my words, so they will stay guilty for ever. 49 You see, the words I said to you are not just mine. The father told me what to say, and he sent me here to tell you his message. 50 I know that his words have the power to get people to live with him for ever, so I tell you the words that he told me."

Chapter 13

Jesus washed the feet of his followers

1-2 It was just before the Jewish Passover ceremony, and Jesus and his followers sat down to eat together. Jesus knew that it was nearly time for him to leave this world and go back to his father. While he was in the world, he always showed his followers that he loved them. And he kept on loving them right to the end of his time on earth.

Before this time, the devil, the boss over the bad spirits, gave one of Jesus's followers the idea of turning against Jesus. That follower's name was Judas. He was the son of a man called Simon Iscariot.

Jesus and his followers were sitting at the table, 3 and Jesus knew that God gave him power over everything so that he can do anything. And he knew that he came from God and that he was going back to God again soon. 4 Then he stood up from the table, took off his coat, and tied a towel around himself. 5 Then he put some water in a bowl, and he started to wash the feet of his followers and dry them with the towel.

6 He got to Peter, and Peter said, "Sir, it's not right for you to wash my feet."

7 Jesus said, "You don't yet understand what I am doing, but one day you will."

8 Peter said, "No. I can never let you wash my feet."

Jesus said, "If I don't wash you, you will not be in my family."

9 Then Peter said, "Well, sir, don't just wash my feet. Wash my hands and head too."

10 Jesus said, "After you have a bath, all of your body is clean. You might walk around and get your feet dirty again, so then you just have to wash your feet. Most of you mob are like that, you are clean, but one of you is not clean." 11 You see, Jesus knew that Judas was going to turn against him, so he said, "One of you is not clean."



Jesus washed the feet of his followers

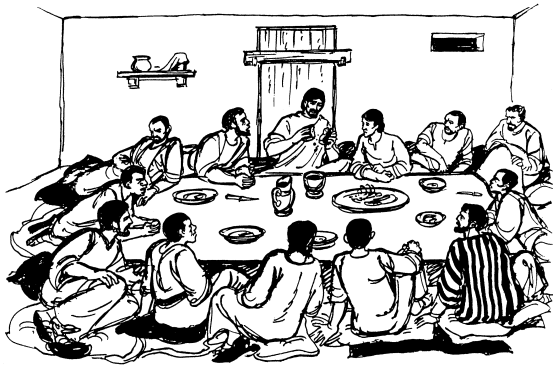
12 After Jesus finished washing everyone's
feet, he put on his coat and sat down again.
Then he said, "Do you understand why I
washed your feet? 13 You all call me your
teacher, and your leader, and you are right.
I am both of those things for you. 14 Yes, I
am your teacher and leader. I am not your
worker, but I washed your feet anyway. In
the same way, you have to wash each other's
feet.* 15 I washed your feet to show you how
you have to treat each other.

16 Listen to this, it's true. A worker is not
more important than their boss, and the
person that takes a message is not more
important than the person that sent them.
Like that, you are not more important than
me.* 17 And I just showed you how to treat
each other. So if you do that, God will make
you happy. 18 But I know that one of you
will not do it. So I am not talking about all
of you. You see, I picked all of you to be my
followers, but I knew that one of you will
turn against me. A long time ago, God got
one of his men to write about this, and it is
in God's book. He wrote,

'A man ate with me, but then he turned
against me.'

And now that will happen, just like that man
wrote.* 19 I am telling you about this now, so
that after it happens you will understand
that I am the special man that God sent.

20 Listen to this, it's true. I am going to
send you out to be my messengers. And
anyone that is happy with my messengers
and listens to them, that person is really
listening to me and is happy with me. And
anyone that is happy with me and listens
to me, that person is really listening to my
father and is happy with him, because he is
the one that sent me here."*



Jesus and his special workers ate food together

Jesus's followers asked him who will turn against him

21 After Jesus said that, he was really upset,
and he said, "Listen, I'm telling you straight,
one of you will turn against me and help my
enemies to catch me."

22 His followers looked at each other.
They thought, "Who is he talking about?"
23 There was one follower that Jesus liked a
lot, and he was sitting next to Jesus. 24 Peter
moved his hand to make a sign to that
follower, to get him to ask Jesus, "Who are
you talking about?"

25 That follower leaned over closer to Jesus
and asked, "Sir, who are you talking about?"

26 Jesus said, "I will put a bit of damper
into the sauce, and then I will give it to the
man that will turn against me." Then Jesus
put the damper into the sauce and gave it
to Judas, the man whose father was called
Simon Iscariot.

27 Judas took the damper, and straight away
Satan, the boss over the bad spirits, went
into him. Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do
what you are going to do. And do it quickly."

28 None of Jesus's followers understood
why he said that to Judas. 29 Some of them
thought that Jesus told Judas to go and buy

* **13:14** Luke 22:27 * **13:16** Matthew 10:24; Luke 6:40; John 15:20 * **13:18** Psalm 41:9
* **13:20** Matthew 10:40; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48; 10:16


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Judas left Jesus and the other followers

more food for the ceremony, because he looked after the money bag. And some of them thought that Jesus told him to go and give money to poor people.

30 As soon as Judas took the damper, he left them and went out into the night.

Jesus told Peter that he will say he doesn't know Jesus

31 After Judas left, Jesus said, "You know that I am God's special man from heaven. Well, now is the time for God to show everyone that I am really great and powerful. People will see me like that, and they will see that God is really great and powerful. 32 And when they see me really great, like that, they will know that God did it, and they will say that he is really great. God is going to do that now.

33 My friends, to me you are like my own little kids, but I will not be with you much longer. You can't come with me to the place I am going. You will look for me, but you will not find me. I said that to the Jewish leaders, and now I'm telling you the same thing. *

34 Listen, you have to love each other, just as much as I loved you. This is a new thing I'm telling you, and you have to do it. * 35 People will see you loving each other, and they will know that you are my followers."

36 Peter asked Jesus, "Sir, where are you going?"

Jesus said to him, "You can't follow me yet to the place where I am going. But you will follow me later."

37 Peter asked, "But, sir, why can't I follow you now? I am ready to die for you."

38 Jesus said, "Are you really ready to die for me, Peter? Listen, I'm telling you straight, tonight you will tell people that you don't know me. You will say that 3 times before a chook yells out tomorrow morning, just like it always does before the sun comes up."

Chapter 14

Only Jesus can take us to God

1 Jesus said to his followers, "Don't let anything upset you. You believe in God, and you have to believe in me too. 2 Listen, I am going home to my father, and I am going to get a place ready for each one of you to come to. It's like my father has a big house with a lot of room in it, and I will get a place ready for each of you. That's what I told you before, and it is true. 3 And after everything is ready, I will come back and get you. Then you will live with me for ever. 4 And you know the track to the place where I am going."

5 Then Thomas said, "But, sir, we don't know where you are going, so we can't know the track. We don't know how to get to that place."

6 Jesus said, "I am like that track for you. I can take you to my father. And I am the

* **13:33** John 7:34 * **13:34** John 15:12, 17; 1 John 3:23; 2 John 5

one that says what is true about God. And I am the one that can give people life so that they live with God for ever. I am the only one that can take people to God. 7If you know me properly, you know my father too. So you do know my father now, and it's like you have seen him too."

8Then Philip said, "Sir, show us the father, that's all we want."

9Jesus said, "Look, Philip, I have been with you for a long time now, so you know me, right? Anyone that looks at me, can see my father. So you have seen the father. So you don't have to ask me to show you the father. 10Do you believe that I am joined to the father, so that it's like I am in him? And do you believe that the father is joined to me, so that it's like he is in me? I don't just say whatever I want to say. The father told me what to say. You see, it's like he lives inside me and uses me to do his work. 11Believe me when I say that I am joined to the father, so that it's like I am in him. And the father is joined to me, so that it's like he is in me. If you don't believe what I'm saying, look at the powerful things I do. Those things will get you to believe me.

12Listen to this, it's true. I am going back to my father. So if anyone believes in me, they will do the same powerful things that I do. Yes, and they will do even greater things than I do. 13You know the things that I say are good. So if you ask me to do that sort of thing, then I will do whatever you ask. I will do that to show you that my father is really great and powerful. 14Yes, if you ask for anything like that, I will do it for you."

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit

15Jesus kept on talking to them. He said, "If you love me, you will do everything I told you to do. 16And I will ask my father to send you another helper. He will come to you and stay with you for ever. 17He is the Holy Spirit, and what he teaches is always true. The people that belong to this world are not in God's family. They don't understand the Holy Spirit. They don't know him. So they don't want him to come to them. But you know him. He is here with you now, and later on, he will live inside you. 18I'm going back to my father, but I will not leave you all alone, like kids without a mother or father. No. I will come back to you. 19The people that belong to this world will not see me any more, but you will see me again soon. Yes, I will be alive, so you will live too. 20Then you will know that I am joined to my father, so that it's like I am in him. And you will know that each one of you is joined to me in the same way, so that it's like you are in me. And I am joined to you, so that it's like I am in you. 21The people that love me are the people that listen to me and do what I tell them to do. And my father will love anyone that loves me. Yes, and I will love them too, and I will show them what I am really like."

22Then one of Jesus's followers talked to Jesus. His name was Judas, but he was not Judas Iscariot. He said, "Sir, why are you now saying that you will not show everyone in the world what you are like? Why are you saying that you will only show us?"

23Jesus said, "If anyone loves me, they will do whatever I tell them. And my father will love them, and we will come and live with them. 24But if somebody doesn't love me, they don't do what I tell them. And these things that I tell you are not my own words, but they come from my father, the one that sent me here.

25You see, I am telling you these things now, while I am still with you. 26Later the father will send the Holy Spirit to help you. He will be your teacher, in my place. He will help you remember all the things I told you, and he will teach you everything you need to know.

27 When I go away, I will give you the
power to always feel happy and quiet inside
yourselves. You see, I have that power, and
I will give you that power too. The people
in the world can't give you that power, but
I can. So don't let anything upset you, and
don't let anything frighten you.
28 Like I told you before, I am going away,
but I will come back to you again. You see,
I am going back to my father, and my father
is much greater than I am. So if you really
love me, you will be happy for me to go
to my father. 29 I'm telling you all about
this now, so that after it happens, you will
trust me. 30 All right, I will not tell you
much more, because the boss over the bad
spirits is getting close now. He is the boss
over this world, but he is not my boss, so
he can't tell me what to do. 31 No, I do what
my father tells me to do. I do that so that
the people of this world can know that I
love my father."

Then Jesus said to his followers, "Come on,
get up, and let's leave this place."

Chapter 15

Jesus is like a good grape vine

1 Jesus told his followers a picture story about
a plant that grapes grow on. It is called a
grape vine.

Jesus said, "I am like a good grape vine,
growing in a garden. And God, my father, is
like the gardener. 2 And people are like the
branches of that grape vine. There are some
people that don't live God's way. They are
like branches on the vine that don't grow
any fruit. They are no good, so the gardener
cuts them off. But some people do live God's
way. They are like branches on the vine that
do grow fruit. My father keeps on working
on those people, to get them to live God's
way even better. He is like the gardener
that cleans up the good branches and trims



*The gardener cuts off branches
that don't grow any grapes*

them back a little bit, so that they will grow
more fruit.
3 You are like those good branches. You
believed my words, so you are already clean.
4 And, you know, a branch has to stay
joined to the main trunk of the vine, so it
can grow fruit. A broken branch lying on
the ground can't grow any fruit. The trunk
and the branch have to stay joined together.
Well, just like that, you have to stay joined to
me, and I will stay joined to you. If you don't
stay joined to me, you can't live God's way.
5 So I tell you, I am like the main trunk
of the grape vine, and you are like the
branches. If you stay joined to me, I will
stay joined to you, and you will keep on
doing what God wants you to do. You see, if
any branches don't stay joined to the trunk
of the vine, they can't grow any fruit. Just
like that, if you are not joined to me, you
can't do anything for God.
6 Some people might not stay joined to me.
They will be like branches that the gardener
cuts off and throws away. They lie on the
ground and dry up, and later on, he will pick
them up and throw them into a fire, and it
will burn them up. 7 But, if you stay joined
to me, and keep on doing what I taught you,
you can ask me for anything, and I will do it.
8 And when you live God's way, other people

will see the good things that you do, and they will know that you are my followers, so they will respect my father. You will be like a branch that grows a lot of fruit.

9 I loved you just as much as my father loves me. So listen, you have to stay joined to me, and I will keep on loving you. 10 I always do what my father wants me to do, and he keeps on loving me. In the same way, if you keep on doing what I told you to do, I will keep on loving you. 11 I told you all these things now, so that you can be properly happy. Yes, you can be as happy as me.

12 Yes, and I am telling you this, you have to love each other, just like I loved you.* 13 If somebody is ready to die to save their friends, that shows that they really love their friends a lot. 14 Well, if you do what I tell you to do, you are my friends. I love my friends a lot, and I am ready to die to save you. 15 I'm not calling you my workers any more, but I'm calling you my friends. Workers don't know what their boss is doing, but I told you everything that my father told me. So now you know what I am doing.

16 You didn't pick me, but I picked you. And I am sending you out to do my work. I want you to be like branches that grow the sort of fruit that stays good for ever. Then you can ask God for anything that I say is good, and he will give it to you. 17 Listen, I'm telling you again what you have to do, you have to love each other."

The world's people hate Jesus's followers

18 Jesus kept on talking to his followers. He said, "Listen. When the people of this world hate you, just remember that they hated me first. 19 The people that belong to this world don't live God's way. And they only love other people that belong to this world. But you are not like them, so they don't love you. You see, I picked you out from the people of this world, and now you are different, so they hate you.

20 Remember that I told you before, 'A worker is not more important than their boss.' Well, I am your boss, and you are my workers. And people made a lot of trouble for me, so people will make a lot of trouble for you. But some people listened properly to me, so some people will listen properly to you too.* 21 You are my followers, that's the reason why some people will make trouble for you. You see, they don't know God. He is the one that sent me here.

22 I came and talked to them, but they didn't listen to me. So they are going against God, and he will say they are guilty. And they can't argue with him. They can't say they didn't hear my message. 23 You see, if anyone hates me, they hate my father too. 24 And that mob saw me do powerful things, but they took no notice of me, so they are guilty of going against God. I did those powerful things that nobody else ever did, and they saw what I did, but they still hate me, and they hate my father too. So they are really guilty.

25 A long time ago, God told one of his men to write about this, and they have it in God's book. He wrote,

> 'I didn't do anything bad to them, but
> they hated me anyway.'*

And that mob are doing that to me now.

26 Listen, I am going back to my father, and then I will send you a helper. He is the Holy Spirit. He will come to you from the father, and everything he says is always true. He will tell you all about me. 27 And you mob will talk about me too. You were with me from the time I started teaching, so you have to tell everyone about me."

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* **15:12** John 13:34; 15:17; 1 John 3:23; 2 John 5 * **15:20** Matthew 10:24; Luke 6:40; John 13:16 * **15:25** Psalm 35:19; 69:4

Chapter 16

1 Jesus kept on talking to his followers. He said, "I told you all this so that you will keep on trusting me. 2 After I go away, the Jewish leaders will not let you into their meeting houses to pray to God with them. And a time is coming when people will kill you, and they will think that God wants them to do that. 3 They will do those bad things, because they never knew me, or my father. 4 I am telling you this now, so that when those bad things happen, you will remember that I told you about them. You didn't need to know about them before, because I was with you. But now I am going away, so I have to tell you about them."

This is what the Holy Spirit does

5 Jesus told his followers, "I am going to leave you and go back to my father. He is the one that sent me here. And none of you asked me, 'Where are you going?' 6 I know my words made you very sad. 7 But listen, this is the true story. After I leave you and go to my father, I will send the Holy Spirit to you, and he will help you. You see, if I don't go, the Holy Spirit will not come to you. But I will go away, and it will be good for you, because the Holy Spirit will come to you.

8 After he comes, he will show people in the world that they go against God and do bad things. And he will show people that they don't live the right way. And he will show people that one day God will judge everyone.

9 You see, the people that belong to this world don't believe in me, so they are going against God.

10 And I am going back to the father, and you will not see me any more. I will not be here, so the Holy Spirit will show people the right way to live.

11 And the Holy Spirit will show people that God will judge everyone. You see, God already judged the devil. He is the boss over the bad spirits, and he is the boss over this world too, but God said that he is guilty.

12 I have a lot more to tell you, but it's too much for you right now. 13 After the Holy Spirit comes, he will tell you what is true. He will teach you everything that is true about God. He will not say his own words, but only the words he heard from God. He will also tell you about things that will happen later on. 14 He will tell you the message that I give him. When he does that, he will show you that I am great and good. 15 You see, everything my father has is mine too. So my father's true message is my message too. That is the reason why I said that I will give my message to the Holy Spirit, and he will tell it to you."

Jesus's followers were going to be sad for a while

16 Jesus said to his followers, "I will go away soon, and you will not see me. But then after a little while, you will see me again."

17-18 Some of his followers didn't understand what Jesus was saying. They asked each other, "Why did he say, 'Soon, you will not see me. But then after a little while, you will see me again'? And why did he say, 'I am going back to the father'? What does he mean?"

19 Jesus knew they wanted to ask him what he was talking about, so he said to them, "Are you asking each other what I mean by saying, 'Soon, you will not see me. But then after a little while, you will see me again'? 20 Listen to this, it's true. Soon the people of this world will be happy about what is happening to me. But you will be very sad, and you will cry. Yes, you will be sad for a while, but later on, you will be really happy.

21 You know, while a baby is being born, the mother has a lot of pain. But when she holds her new baby, she forgets about that

pain, because she's so happy that a new baby was born into the world. 22 And just like that, you are really sad now, and it feels like pain to you, but later I will come back and see you again, and you will be really happy, and nobody can stop you from being happy.

23 At that time, you will not need to ask me for anything. Listen, I'm telling you straight, you can ask the father for anything that I say is good, and he will give it to you. 24 You haven't asked God for that sort of thing before, so ask him, and you will get whatever you ask for. Then you will be really happy."

Stay happy

25 Then Jesus said, "I have been telling you stories that are pictures, to teach you things. But the time is coming when I will not use picture stories. I will tell you clearly about my father. 26 Then you will ask the father for things that I say are good. I will not have to ask my father for you. You can ask him yourself. 27 You see, he loves you too. He loves you because you love me, and because you believe that I came from him. 28 Yes, I came from my father, and I came into the world. But now I am going to leave the world and go back to my father."

29 Jesus's followers said to him, "Now you are telling us clearly. You are not telling us picture stories. 30 Now we understand that you know everything. We don't need to ask you anything, because you already know what we want to know. So we believe that you came from God."

31 Jesus said, "You reckon you believe now, 32 but listen, very soon, all of you will run away and hide in your own homes. Yes, you will leave me alone, but I will not really be alone, because my father is with me.

33 I told you all these things now, so that you can always feel happy and quiet inside yourselves. You are going to get trouble in this world, and you are going to feel sad. But don't be frightened. I am stronger than the world. I finished up the power of this world. So be strong and brave."

Chapter 17

Jesus asked God to look after his followers

1 After Jesus finished telling them all those things, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the time has come for me to finish the job you sent me to do. I want you to show people that I am really great and powerful, so that people will look at me, and they will see that you are really great and powerful too, and then they will respect both you and me.

2 You gave me power over everyone, so that I can give life to the people you gave me, so they will live with you for ever. 3 Yes, if people know you, and if they know that you are the only real God, and if they know me, and if they know that I am the Christ that you sent to them, those people will live with us for ever.

4 I did everything that you sent me here to do, and when people saw me do that, they saw that you are great and powerful. 5 And now, Father, when I come back to you, show people that I am great and powerful, just like I was when I was with you, before we made the world together. 6 You gave me some people from the world, and I showed them what you are like. They were your people, but you gave them to me. I taught them your word, and they did what you said. 7 Now they know that everything that I said came from you. 8 I told them the message that you told me, and they believed it. Now they know for sure that you sent me to the world.

9 Father, I am just asking you to look after the people you gave me. I am not talking about the people that belong to this world.

10 All my people are your people, and all
your people are mine. And they show other
people that I am great and powerful. 11 Very
soon I will leave this world and come back
to you. But my people will still be in this
world, so, Father in heaven, I ask you to
look after them. You can use your power to
do that, the same power that you gave me.
Join them together, and make them one mob,
just like you and me are joined together, like
we are one.
12 While I was here on earth, I took care of
them. I used the power you gave me to look
after them, and I didn't lose any of them.
The only one I lost was the one that has to
die, just like your man wrote in your book,
a long time ago. *
13 Father, I am coming to you soon, but I
am saying these things now, while I am still
here in the world, so that my followers can
be properly happy inside themselves, just
like I am. 14 I told them your message, and
they listened to me, and they believed me.
They don't belong here in this world, just
like I don't belong here. So the people that
belong to this world hate them.
15 I am not asking you to take my followers
away from the people that belong to this
world. I am asking you to keep them safe
from the devil, the boss over the bad spirits.
16 They don't belong in this world, just like I
don't belong in this world.
17 Make them your own special people, that
only listen to your true message. Your word
is that true message. 18 You sent me into the
world to tell people your message, and just
like that, I am sending them into the world
to tell people your message. 19 And I am
giving myself to you to do your work. I will
do that to help my followers, so that they
will give themselves to you to do your work,
and only listen to your true message."

Jesus prayed for the people that will believe later on

20 Jesus kept on talking to God. He said,
"I am not asking that you only help these
followers here with me now. Later they will
tell other people about me, and some of
those people will believe in me. So I am
asking you to help those other people too.
21 Join them all together, Father, and make
them one mob, just like you and me are
joined together. It's like you are in me, and
I am in you. I want you to join them to us
in the same way, so it's like they are in us.
Then people in the world can believe that
you sent me to the world.
22 You made me special, and in the same
way I made them special, so that you can
join them together and make them one mob,
just like you and me are joined together,
like we are one. 23 I want to be joined to
them, so it's like I am in them, just like you
are joined to me, so it's like you are in me.
Then they will be one mob, joined together
properly. Then the people that belong to
this world will know that you sent me to
the world. And they will also know that
you love my followers just as much as you
love me.
24 Father, you gave me these people, and I
want them to be with me. I want them to see
that you gave me the same great power that
you have. You loved me and gave me that
power before we made the world. 25 Father,
you always do what is right. But the people
that belong to this world don't know you.
But I know you, and my followers know
that you sent me to the world. 26 I showed
my followers what you are like, and I will
keep on showing them, so that they will
love each other, just like you love me. And
I will be joined to them, so it's like I am
in them."

* **17:12** Psalm 41:9; 109:6-8; John 13:18

Chapter 18

The soldiers grabbed Jesus

1 After Jesus talked to his father, he and his
special workers left the house. They went
across the creek called Kidron, and they
went to a garden. 2 Judas wasn't with them
because, before this time, he turned against
Jesus, and that night he went to the Jewish
leaders to help them grab him. He knew
that Jesus and his special workers went to
that garden lots of times. 3 So Judas went to
that garden with some soldiers to show them
where Jesus was. He got those soldiers from
the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and the
Pharisee mob. And there were some Roman
soldiers with him too. They had fire sticks,
and spears, and long knives with them.

4 Jesus knew everything that was going to
happen to him, but he went to meet them
anyway. Then Jesus said to that mob, "Who
are you looking for?"

5-6 They said, "We are looking for Jesus,
the man from Nazareth."

Jesus said, "I am Jesus." As soon as Jesus
said that, all the soldiers moved backwards
and fell down to the ground. And Judas, the
man that turned against Jesus, was there
with them.

7 Again, Jesus asked them, "Who are you
looking for?"

And they said, "Jesus, the man from
Nazareth."

8 And Jesus said to them, "I already told
you that I am Jesus. I am the man you are
looking for, so let these other men here go
free."

9 So the soldiers didn't grab any of Jesus's
followers. You know, before that time, Jesus
said to God, "I didn't lose any of the people
that you gave me." And it happened just
like Jesus said.

10 Then Peter got his long knife, and he hit
one of those men with it, and he cut off that
man's ear. That man's name was Malkus, and
he worked for the big boss of the Jewish
ceremonies.

11 But Jesus said to Peter, "Put that knife
away. My father sent me here to go through
this hard time. I can't say to him, 'No, I will
not do it.'" *

They took Jesus to the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies

12 Then that mob of soldiers grabbed Jesus
and tied his hands together. They were the
soldiers of the Jewish leaders, and the Roman
soldiers and their leader. 13 At first, they took
Jesus to Annas. He was a boss of the Jewish
ceremonies. His son-in-law, Cayafas, was the
big boss of the Jewish ceremonies that year.
14 (Before that time, Cayafas told the Jewish
Leaders Council that it is a lot better for this
man to die, instead of the people. *)

Peter said that he was not Jesus's follower

15-16 When the soldiers took Jesus there, Peter
and another follower of Jesus followed along
behind them. Then they all got to the house
that belonged to Annas. He was a boss of the
Jewish ceremonies. That other follower went
into the yard of that house with the rest of
the mob. You see, that other follower knew
that ceremony boss, so the girl that looked
after the gate let him go in, but Peter had to
wait outside. Then that other follower went
back to the gate, and he talked to the girl,
so she let Peter go in too. 17 Then that girl
said to Peter, "Wait, are you also a follower
of that man Jesus?"

Peter said, "No, I am not."

18 It was a cold night, and the soldiers and
workers stood around a fire to keep warm.
So Peter went and stood with them.

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* **18:11** Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42 * **18:14** John 11:49-50

Annas asked Jesus a lot of questions

19 Inside the house, the boss of the Jewish ceremonies asked Jesus a lot of questions about his followers, and about the things he taught people.

20 Jesus said, "I always talked to people in places where everybody can hear me. I talked in our meeting houses, and in God's ceremony house in Jerusalem, the places where all of us Jewish people meet. I didn't keep my message secret. 21 So why are you asking me all these questions? You should ask the people that listened to me. They know the things I said."

22 Then one of the soldiers hit Jesus and said, "You can't talk to the boss of our ceremonies like that."

23 Jesus said, "Tell me if I said something wrong. But if I told the true story, why did you hit me?"

24 Then Annas sent him to Cayafas, the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies. Jesus still had his hands tied up.

Peter kept on saying that he was not Jesus's follower

25 Outside, in the yard, Peter stood next to the fire to keep warm. And somebody said to him, "Are you one of Jesus's followers too?"

Peter said, "No, I am not."

26 One of the other people near the fire was a work-man for the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies, and he was a relative of the man whose ear Peter cut off. He looked at Peter and said, "Hey, you are one of Jesus's followers. I saw you in the garden with him, right?"

27 Again, Peter said, "No, that wasn't me. I am not his follower." Then straight away, a chook yelled out.

They took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman boss

28 It was early in the morning, and they took Jesus from Cayafas's house to the house of the government boss in Jerusalem. His name was Pilate.

It was the time of the Passover ceremony, so the Jewish leaders wouldn't go into that house. You see, in their Jewish culture, if they went into a house that belonged to somebody that wasn't Jewish, it was like they became dirty, and then they couldn't eat the Passover food. 29 So the Jewish leaders stayed outside, and Pilate went out to talk to them. He said, "Why did you bring this man here? What bad thing did he do?"

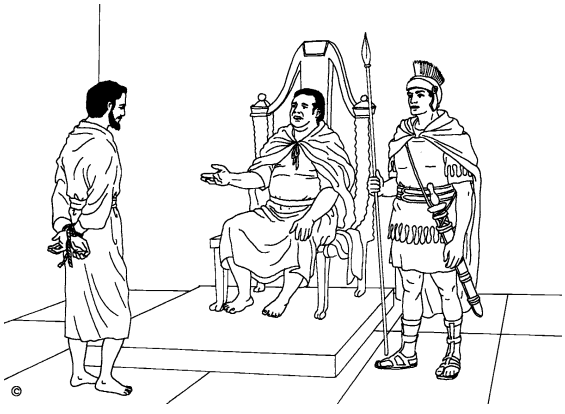
30 The Jewish leaders said, "He did really bad things. That's the reason why we brought him to you."

31 Pilate said to them, "Take him away and judge him by your own laws."

The Jewish leaders said, "Your Roman laws will not let us kill anyone to punish them." 32 You see, they had to say that because Jesus said that he was going to die on a cross, and that's how the Romans punished people. *

33 Pilate went back into his house, and he called Jesus to come to him. Then he asked Jesus, "Are you the big boss over the Jewish nation?"

34 Jesus said, "Did you think of that question yourself, or did somebody else tell you about me?"



Pilate asked Jesus a lot of questions

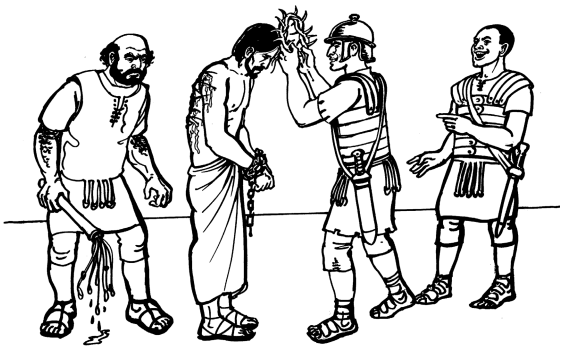
* **18:32** John 3:14; 12:32

35 Pilate said, "I am not a Jew, so I don't
know anything about you mob. But your own
people, and the bosses of your ceremonies,
they brought you here. What did you do?"
36 Jesus said, "I am a big boss, but I am
not the big boss over a nation here in this
world. That is the reason why my followers
didn't fight to stop the Jewish leaders from
grabbing me."
37 Then Pilate said, "So it is true that you
are a big boss?"
Jesus said, "Yes, you said that I am a big
boss, and you are right. And I was born
into this world so that I can tell everyone
God's true message. If anyone really wants
to know the true message, they take notice
of the things I say."
38 Pilate said, "Do you think you know the
true message? Nobody knows that."
Then Pilate went outside again, to talk to
the Jewish leaders. He said, "I asked this
man a lot of questions, and I don't think he
did anything wrong. 39 You know, every year
at your Passover time, I let one prisoner go
free for you Jewish people. Do you want
me to let this man, your big boss, go free?"
40 All the Jewish leaders shouted back, "No,
not him. Let Barabbas go free." Barabbas
was a man that was in jail because he used
to fight against the Romans.

Chapter 19

Pilate tried to let Jesus go free

1 Pilate told the soldiers to take Jesus away
and hit him a lot with whips. 2 The soldiers
also made some prickly branches into a
headband that looked like a crown, like a
big boss wears. And they put it on his head.
They also put a long purple coat on him, the
sort of coat that a big boss wears, 3 and they
walked around him and made fun of him.
They kept on saying, "Hey, you reckon that
you are great. And you reckon that you are



The soldiers hit Jesus with whips and put a prickly headband on him

the big boss over the Jewish people. But
you are not." And they kept on hitting him.
4 After that, Pilate went out of his house
and said to the Jewish leaders, "Look, I'm
bringing Jesus out to you now, and I say he
is not guilty. He has done nothing wrong."
5 Then the soldiers brought Jesus out. He was
wearing the prickly headband and the long
purple coat. And Pilate said, "Look, here he is."
6 The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and
their soldiers saw Jesus, and they shouted,
"Kill him. Kill him. Nail him to a cross and
let him die there."
But Pilate said, "No. You take him and
kill him on a cross yourselves. I reckon he
is not guilty."
7 The Jewish leaders said, "But this man
said that he is God's son. Our law says that
if somebody says that, they have to die."
8 Pilate heard them say that, and he was
even more frightened. 9 He went back inside
and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But
Jesus didn't answer him.
10 Pilate asked Jesus, "Why don't you
answer me? I have the power to let you go
free, and I have the power to kill you."
11 Jesus said, "Yes, but you only have power
over me because God gave it to you. So the
man that sent me here is more guilty than
you are."

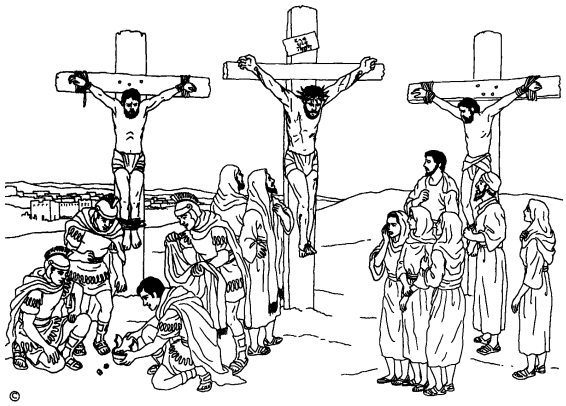
12 After Pilate heard this, he tried again
to let Jesus go free, but the Jewish leaders
shouted, "But he is trying to be our big boss.
And anyone that tries to be the big boss over
a nation is going against Caesar, the big boss
in Rome. So if you let this man go free, you
are not Caesar's friend."
13 When they said that, Pilate went into his
house and got Jesus, and he took him to the
place outside called the Stone Floor. (In the
Jewish language it was called *Gabbatha*.)
And Pilate sat down there on the judge's seat.
14 It was the time of the Passover ceremony,
and it was the day when Jewish people got
ready for their rest day, and it was about the
middle of the day. Then Pilate said to the
Jewish leaders, "Look, here is your big boss."
15 They shouted, "Kill him. Kill him. Take
him away and nail him to a cross."
Pilate asked, "Do you really want me to
kill your big boss?"
The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies
shouted back, "He is not our big boss. Caesar
is our only big boss." 16 Then Pilate did what
they wanted, and he told the soldiers to take
Jesus away and nail him to a cross to kill him.

They put Jesus on a cross to kill him

17 Then the soldiers got a big wooden cross,
and they forced Jesus to carry it out of the
city to a place called *Skull Place*. In the
Jewish language, the name of that place is
Golgotha. 18 Then the soldiers nailed Jesus's
hands and feet to the cross, and they stood
the cross up so that Jesus was high up off
the ground. And they also did that to 2
other men. They put one of them on each
side of Jesus.
19 Pilate told one of his men to write
some words on a flat bit of wood, to say
why they were killing Jesus, and to nail
it to the cross. He told that man to write,
"Jesus, from Nazareth, the big boss over the
Jews." 20 Pilate wanted everyone there to
understand it, so he told that man to write
it in the languages of the Jewish people,
the Roman people, and the Greek people.
And those crosses were near the Jewish city
called Jerusalem, so a lot of Jewish people
read that sign.
21 The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies told
Pilate to change the sign. They said, "Don't
write, 'The big boss over the Jews.' You have
to write, 'This man said that he is the big
boss over the Jews.' "
22 But Pilate said, "No, I will not change
what I wrote."
23 After the soldiers nailed Jesus to the
cross, they split up his clothes into 4 parts,
and each soldier got one part. There was
also a long shirt that didn't have any joins
in it, 24 and they said, "If we cut this up into
bits, then it will be no good any more." So
they didn't cut it up, but they gambled for
it. A long time ago, one of God's men wrote
about this, and it is in God's book. He wrote,

"They split my clothes up among each
other, and they gambled for my shirt."

When the soldiers did that, it happened just
like that man wrote in God's book. *


©

The soldiers gambled to get Jesus's long shirt

* **19:24** Psalm 22:18

25 There were 4 women standing near
Jesus's cross. They were his mother, and
her sister, and Mary Magdalene, and another
Mary that was the wife of Clopas.
26 Jesus saw his mother standing there, and
also the follower that he liked a lot. So he
said to his mother, "Look at that man near
you. He is your son now." 27 And he said to
his follower, "Look at that woman near you.
She is your mother now." So that follower
took Jesus's mother back to his house, and
from that time he looked after her, like she
was his own mother.

Jesus died

28-29 After that, Jesus knew that he finished
everything that his father asked him to do.
Then he said, "I'm thirsty." So one of the
soldiers got a long stick, and he tied a sponge
to it. He put it into a pot of sour wine, and
then he lifted it up to Jesus's mouth, for
him to drink. When that happened, they
did what God's men wrote in God's book a
long time ago. *
30 Jesus tasted the sour wine, then he said,
"I've finished my work here on earth." Then
he put his head down, and he let his spirit
go, and he died.
31 All this happened on the day before the
Jewish people's rest day. And it was going
to be a really special rest day, because it
was the time of the Passover ceremony. The
Jewish leaders didn't want the bodies to be
on those crosses on their rest day, and in
their culture a new day started when the sun
went down. It was already afternoon, so they
asked Pilate to get the soldiers to break the
legs of the men on the crosses, so those men
can die more quickly, and then they can take
their bodies down before the sun went down.
32 Pilate agreed, and he told the soldiers to
break the men's legs. They broke the legs of
the men on each side of Jesus. 33 Then they
came to Jesus, and they saw that he was
already dead, so they didn't break his legs.
34 But one of the soldiers poked a spear into
Jesus's side, to make sure that he was dead,
and straight away blood and water came
out. 35 There was a man there that saw all
this happen, and he told everyone about it.
He knows what really happened, and what
he says is true. He tells everyone about it so
that you can believe in Jesus too.
36-37 And, you know, a long time ago, one of
God's men wrote in God's book about what
those soldiers were going to do to Jesus.
He wrote,

"They will not break any of his bones." *

And another one of God's men wrote,

"They will look at the man they
stabbed with a spear." *

And those things happened when Jesus died.

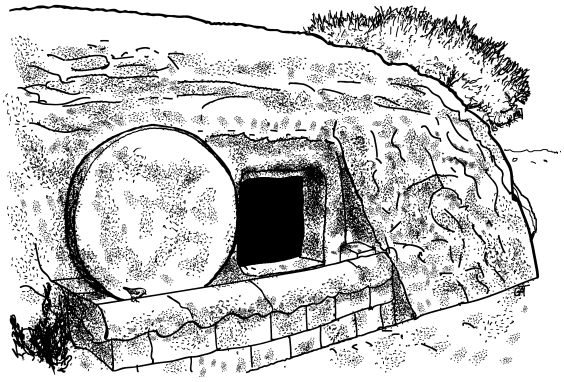
They put Jesus's body into a cave

38 There was a man there that was called
Joseph. He was from a place called Arimathia.
He believed in Jesus, but he didn't want the
Jewish leaders to give him any trouble, so
he didn't tell anyone about it. When Jesus
died, Joseph went to see Pilate and asked
him, "Can I get Jesus's body to take care of
it our way?"

Pilate said, "All right." So Joseph went and
got Jesus's body.

39 Nicodemus was with Joseph too. He was
the man that visited Jesus one night a long
time before. * He got about 30 kilograms
of special cream to put on Jesus's body. It
was made from plants called myrrh and
aloes, and it smelled really good. 40 Together
Joseph and Nicodemus put that cream all
over Jesus's body, then they wrapped it in

* **19:28-29** Psalm 22:15; 69:21 * **19:36-37** Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12; Psalm 34:20
* **19:36-37** Zechariah 12:10; Revelation 1:7 * **19:39** John 3:1-2



Caves for dead bodies looked like this

long bits of cloth. That's how the Jews buried their dead people.

41 There was a garden near the place where Jesus died, and in that garden there was a special cave to put dead bodies. It was a big hole, like a little room that somebody cut in the rock. It was a new cave, so there were no bodies in it yet. 42 Joseph and Nicodemus put Jesus's body in that cave, and they blocked that cave with a big stone. You see, the sun was starting to go down, and soon the Jewish rest day was going to start, so they had to be quick, and that cave was close to the place where Jesus died.

Chapter 20

Jesus came alive again

1 After the Jewish rest day finished, Mary Magdalene went to the cave where the men put Jesus's body. It was early on Sunday morning, and it was still dark. She got a shock when she saw the cave. It was open. The stone didn't block that cave any more. 2 So she ran to Peter, and the follower that Jesus liked a lot, to tell them what she saw in the cave. She told them, "Somebody took our leader's body out of the cave, and we don't know where they put him."

3-4 So Peter and the other follower ran to the cave. The other follower ran faster than Peter, and he got there first. 5 He bent down and looked into the cave, but he didn't go inside. He only saw the long bits of cloth that Joseph and Nicodemus put around Jesus's body.

6 Then Peter got there, and he went inside the cave, and he also saw the bits of cloth. 7 The cloth that covered Jesus's head was folded up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other follower, that got to the cave first, he went inside too, and he saw the bits of cloth there, but no body, and so he believed that Jesus was alive again. 9 You see, a long time ago, God's men wrote about this in God's book. They said that Jesus had to come alive again. But those 2 followers of Jesus didn't understand it yet. 10 So they came out of the cave, and they went back to their homes.

Jesus talked to Mary Magdalene

11 But Mary stood outside the cave, and she was crying. Then she bent down and looked into it, 12 and she saw 2 angel messengers with white clothes sitting at the place where Jesus's body used to be. One angel sat in the place where the head used to be, and the other angel sat at the other end.

13 They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

Mary said, "Somebody took my leader's body away, and I don't know where they put it." 14 After she said that, she turned around and saw a man standing behind her. It was Jesus, but she didn't know it was him.

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

Mary thought he was the gardener, so she asked him, "Sir, did you take his body away? If you did, please show me where you put it, so that I can get it and take care of it."

16 Jesus said, "Mary."

Mary turned around, and straight away she knew that he was Jesus, and she said in her language, "*Rabboni*." (That word means *teacher*.)

17 Jesus said, "Don't hold on to me. I haven't gone up to my father yet. I want you to go to my followers and tell them that I am going back up to my father, and he is the father of all of you too. He is my God, and he is your God too."

18 Then Mary went to Jesus's followers and told them, "I saw our leader Jesus." Then she told them everything he said.

Jesus showed himself to his followers

19 It was Sunday, and that night Jesus's followers were inside a house. They were frightened. They didn't know what the Jewish leaders might do to them, so they locked the doors. Suddenly Jesus came and stood in the middle of the group. He said, "Hello. I want you to feel happy and quiet inside yourselves." 20 Then he showed them the holes in his hands and his side. His followers saw that he really was their leader Jesus, and they were very happy.

21 Jesus said to them, "I want you to feel happy and quiet inside yourselves. And, you know, my father sent me here to the world to give people his message. Well, just like that, I'm sending you out to the people in the world, to give them that same message."



Suddenly Jesus was there with his followers, inside the locked house

22 Then Jesus breathed on them and said, "Take the Holy Spirit that I'm giving to you. 23 When you tell people my message, some people will listen properly, and God will say that they are not guilty for the bad things they did, and he will not do payback to them. So you can also say that they are not guilty. But some people will not listen to that message, and then God will say that they are guilty of the bad things they did. So you can also say that they are guilty."*

Jesus showed himself to Thomas

24 Thomas, whose other name was *the Twin*, was one of Jesus's special workers, but he wasn't there at that time when Jesus came to them.

25 The other followers told him, "We saw our leader Jesus."

But Thomas didn't believe them. He said, "I will never believe that Jesus is alive, unless I see the nail holes in his hands, so I can put my finger in them, and unless I can put my hand into the hole in his side."

26 One week later, Thomas and Jesus's other followers were inside a house, and again they locked all the doors. But Jesus came and stood in the middle of them. He said, "Hello. I want you to feel happy and quiet inside yourselves." 27 Then he said, "Thomas, look at the holes in my hands, and put your finger in them. And put your hand into the hole in my side. Believe that I am alive. Stop saying that you can't believe it."

28 Straight away, Thomas believed that Jesus was alive, and he said, "You are my leader, and you are my God."

29 Jesus said to him, "Now you believe that

* **20:23** Matthew 16:19; 18:18



Jesus said, "Thomas, put your hand into the hole in my side."

I am alive, because you can see me. Listen. There are people that will not see me, but they will believe in me, and God will make them really happy."

John wrote this book so that we can believe in Jesus

30 You know, Jesus did a lot of other powerful things, and his followers saw him do them, but I didn't write about all of those things in this book. 31 But I wrote about some of the things he did so that you can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save us, and so that you can believe that he is God's son. And if you believe in him, you will live with God for ever.

Chapter 21

Jesus's followers saw him at the lake

1 Later on, Jesus showed himself to his followers at Lake Tiberias. And this is what happened. 2 Some of Jesus's followers were together. They were Peter, and Thomas (whose other name was *the Twin*), and Nathaniel (a man from Cana in Galilee), and James and John (the 2 sons of Zebedee), and 2 other followers. 3 And Peter said to the others, "I'm going to go fishing."

And they said, "We'll come with you." So they went down to the water with their net, and they went out on a boat to catch some fish. They worked all night, but they didn't catch anything. *

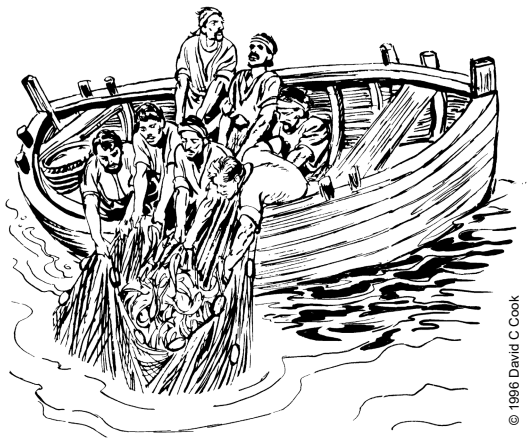
4 Early in the morning, just before the sun came up, they saw a man standing on the land. It was Jesus, but they didn't know that it was him.

5 He called out to them, "Friends, have you got any fish?"

They said, "No. Nothing."

6 Jesus said, "Throw your net over the other side of the boat, the right-hand side. You will get fish there."

So they did what he said. They threw their net over the right-hand side of the boat, and it caught lots of fish. They tried to pull the net back into the boat, but they couldn't do it, because all the fish in it made it too



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Jesus's followers caught lots of fish in their net

* **21:3** Luke 5:5

heavy.* 7Then the follower that Jesus liked a lot, said to Peter, "That man on the land is our leader Jesus."

As soon as Peter heard that the man was Jesus, he put his coat back on. (You see, he took it off before, so that he could work better.) Then he jumped into the water to go to Jesus. 8The boat wasn't far from the land, only about 100 metres, so the other followers stayed in the boat, and took it to the land. They dragged the net full of fish behind them. 9After they got out of the boat, they saw a fire with fish cooking in the coals. And there was bread too.

10Jesus said to them, "Bring some of those fish that you just caught."

11So Peter went back to the boat, and he pulled the net full of fish up to the land. There were 153 big fish in the net, but it didn't break.

12Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."



Jesus cooked fish on a fire

They all knew that he was their leader Jesus, but none of them were brave enough to ask, "Are you really Jesus?"

13Then Jesus picked up some bread and gave it to them to eat. And he gave them some fish too.

14This was the 3rd time, after Jesus came alive again, that he showed himself to his followers.

Jesus told Peter to look after his people

15After they finished eating, Jesus talked to Peter, whose other name was Simon. He said, "Simon, son of John, do you love me, more than these other followers love me?"

Peter said, "Yes, sir, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "All right, you have to take care of my people properly, just like a shepherd takes his young sheep to good grass for them to eat."

16Then Jesus asked him again, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

Peter said, "Yes, sir, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "All right, you have to take care of my people properly, just like a shepherd looks after his sheep."

17After that, Jesus asked him again, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

Then Peter got a bit upset because Jesus asked him 3 times, "Do you love me?" So Peter said, "Sir, you know everything, and you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "All right, you have to look after my people properly, just like a shepherd takes his sheep to good grass for them to eat. 18Listen Peter, I'm telling you straight. When you were a young man, you tied your own rope belt around you, and you went wherever you wanted to go. But after you get old, you will hold out your hands, and

* **21:6** Luke 5:6

somebody else will tie a rope around you, and he will take you to a place where you don't want to go." 19 Jesus said that to tell Peter how Peter will die, and when Peter dies like that, he will show that God is really great.

Then Jesus told Peter, "Keep on following me."

20 Then Peter turned around and saw the follower that Jesus liked a lot. He was walking behind them at the lake. (Remember, at their last dinner together before Jesus died, this man leaned close to Jesus, and asked him, "Who is going to turn against you?"*) 21 At the lake, Peter looked at that follower, then he asked Jesus, "Sir, what about this man?"

22 Jesus said, "Don't worry about him. Maybe I want him to stay alive until I come back again, but you don't have to worry about that. You just follow me." 23 When Jesus's followers heard what Jesus said, they thought that he said that this man was not going to die. But Jesus didn't say that he wouldn't die. He said, "Maybe I want him to stay alive until I come back again, but you don't have to worry about that."

The last words of this book

24 That follower, the one Jesus was talking about, he is the one that wrote this book. He saw all those things happen, and we know that he wrote the true story about Jesus.

25 Jesus did a lot of other things too, but I can't put them all in this book. You know, if somebody tried to write about all those things, the world is not big enough to hold all the books that they would make.

* **21:20** John 13:25

The followers of Jesus did great things

(The book in the Holy Bible called Acts)

About this book

Luke wrote this book. He was a doctor. This is the 2nd book he wrote. His 1st book is about the things that Jesus did when he was here on the earth. We have translated some of that book, see Some important parts of the good news about Jesus that Luke wrote. *This 2nd book is about the things that Jesus's followers did after Jesus went back to heaven. Luke wrote both of these books for a man called Thiofilus, but we can learn a lot from them too.*

Luke was a friend of Paul, one of Jesus's special workers, and he went with Paul to a lot of countries and helped him as he told people the good news about Jesus.

Some of the things that Luke wrote about in this book, are things he saw happen, and the rest are things that Paul and Jesus's other followers told him about.

Luke wrote this book about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven. It is now part of the Holy Bible, and it is important for us today. It tells us about how the first Christians lived for Jesus, and how they started the first churches in the towns where they lived. And it tells us how God's Holy Spirit worked in them, and how they told everyone about Jesus, so that a lot more people believed in him. We can learn a lot today from this book that Luke wrote a long time ago.

Chapter 1

1 I'm writing to you again, my friend
Thiofilus. I wrote to you before, about all
the things that Jesus did, and the things that
he taught people. * 2 He kept on doing those
things, and the Holy Spirit helped him tell
his special workers the things they had to
do. After that, God took Jesus up to heaven.
3 You see, before God took Jesus up to
heaven, when he was on the earth, people
killed him. Then he came alive again, and
his followers saw him a lot of times in the
next 40 days. Jesus showed them that he
really was alive, so they are really sure that
it is true. And he told them a lot of things
about God's family.
4 One day, Jesus was eating some food
with his followers in Jerusalem city, and
he said to them, "Don't leave Jerusalem yet.
I already told you that my father promised
to give you the Holy Spirit. Well, wait here
until God does that. * 5 Remember John
the Baptiser. He baptised people with
water. That means, he took them through
a special washing ceremony. But in a few
days time, God will baptise you with the
Holy Spirit. That means, he will put his
spirit in you." *

* **1:1** Luke 1:1-4 * **1:4** Luke 24:49 * **1:5** Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33

God took Jesus up into heaven

6 You know, at that time, the Roman
government people were the bosses over all
the people there. So when Jesus's followers
met together with him, they asked him, "Sir,
are you going to fight the Romans at this
time, and beat them, and give us back our
own country, with our own boss for us Israel
people?"
7 Jesus said to them, "My father controls
everything. He knows the time that things
will happen. You don't need to know the time.
8 But the Holy Spirit will come to you, and
he will give you power, and then you will
tell people about me in Jerusalem, and all
over Judea country, and in Samaria country,
and you will go to people everywhere in the
world, and you will tell them about me."*
9-10 After Jesus told them that, God lifted
him up to heaven. His followers were looking
at him as he was going up. Then a cloud
came in front of Jesus, and his followers
couldn't see him any more. They kept on
looking up into the sky, and suddenly 2 men
wearing white clothes stood next to them.*



God lifted Jesus up into heaven

11 They said, "You men from Galilee, why are
you standing here looking up into the sky?
God took Jesus up into heaven, but he will
come back again one day. You saw him go
up into heaven just now, and he will come
back in the same way that you saw him go."
12 That happened at Olive Trees Hill.

They found a man to take the place of Judas

Then Jesus's followers left that place, and
they walked about a kilometre back to
Jerusalem, 13 and then they went upstairs
to the room where they were living.

These are the names of Jesus's 11 special
workers,

– Peter
– John
– James
– Andrew
– Philip
– Thomas
– Bartholomew
– Matthew
– James. His father's name was Alfius.
– Simon. He used to be one of the mob
that wanted to fight the Roman
government bosses.
– Judas. His father's name was James.*

14 All those men met every day to pray
together. Jesus's brothers and some women
met with them too. One of those women was
Mary, the mother of Jesus.
15 After a few days, the people that believed
in Jesus had a meeting. There were about
120 people at that meeting. Peter stood up
and talked to them. 16-17 He said, "Listen,
friends, a long time ago the Holy Spirit told
David about Judas, the son of Iscariot, and
David wrote that story in God's book. Now
it has happened. You know, Judas used to be
with us, and he worked with us. He was one

* **1:8** Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48 * **1:9-10** Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-51
* **1:13** Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16

of Jesus's special workers. But the Jewish leaders paid Judas to take a mob of bad men to catch Jesus. 18 After that, the Jewish leaders used that same money to buy some farm land. And Judas died in that place. His belly split open, and all his guts fell out. 19 Everybody that lived in Jerusalem heard about that, so they called that place *Akeldama* in their language. That means *the farm land of blood*."*

20 Peter kept on talking. He said, "God also told David to write about Judas in the part of God's book called Psalms. He wrote,

'Empty out his house, God, and don't
let anybody else live in it.'

And he also wrote,

'Let somebody else have his job.'"*

21-22 And Peter said, "So now we have to pick somebody else to have Judas's job and be one of Jesus's 12 special workers. He will help us tell people the true story, that Jesus is alive. Yes, Jesus died, but then God made him alive again. The man that we pick has to be one of the men that went around with our leader Jesus. He has to be somebody that was with us from the time that John baptised Jesus, right up to the time that God took Jesus up into heaven."*

23 So they all talked together, and they found 2 men that were with them all that time. One man was Joseph Barsabbas. He also had another name, Justus. The other man was called Matthias. 24-25 Then Jesus's special workers prayed. They said, "Judas left his job, and went his own way, and now he is dead. He went to that bad place. And God, you know everyone properly, and you know the way they think. Please show us the man that you want to take Judas's place, and to do his job, and to be a special worker of Jesus."

26 So they put the names of those 2 men into a jar, and one man shook it. Then one of them closed his eyes and took one of those names out of the jar. That name was Matthias. So Matthias joined Jesus's 11 special workers, to work with them.

Chapter 2

The Holy Spirit came

1 The special day came for the Jewish ceremony called Pentecost, and all Jesus's followers met together in one place.* 2 Suddenly there was a noise that came from the sky, like a strong wind blowing. Everyone in the house heard that noise. 3 Then they saw something like flames of fire that spread out and touched each person there. 4 The Holy Spirit went into all of them, and they all started to talk in different languages. The Holy Spirit gave them power to talk in those languages.

5 There were some Jewish people from a lot of different countries that were staying in Jerusalem at that time. Those people really



Something like flames of fire touched Jesus's followers, and the Holy Spirit went into them

* **1:18-19** Matthew 27:3-8 * **1:20** Psalm 69:25; 109:8 * **1:21-22** Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:9; 16:19; Luke 3:21; 24:51
* **2:1** Leviticus 23:15-21; Deuteronomy 16:9-11

respected God. 6They heard the noise, and they crowded around that house. They heard Jesus's followers talking in the languages of all their different countries, and they were really surprised. 7They said, "These men are from Galilee, 8so how come we can hear them talking in our own languages? 9-11Some of us were born Jews, and some of us became Jews later. We are from a lot of different countries, and we can hear them talking in the languages of those countries. Some of us are from Parthia, and some from Media, and some from Elam, and some from Mesopotamia, and some from Judea, and some from Capadoshia, and some from Pontus, and some from Asia, and some from Frigia, and some from Pamfilia, and some from Egypt, and some from places in Libya near Cyrene, and some of us are from Crete, and some of us are from Arabia, and some of us are visiting from Rome. But all of us can hear these people talking in our own languages. They are talking about the wonderful things that God does."

12Those people were shocked, and they didn't understand. They asked each other, "What does this mean?"

13But some other people laughed and made fun of Jesus's followers. They said, "That mob are just drunk. They drank too much wine."

Peter talked to the people at Jerusalem

14Then Peter got up to talk to those people, and Jesus's 11 other special workers got up too. Peter said in a loud voice, "All you Jewish mob, and all you people that live in Jerusalem, listen to me properly now, and I'll tell you the true story. 15You reckon we are drunk, but no, we are not drunk. It is only 9 o'clock in the morning, too early to get drunk.

16But I'll tell you what's happening. You know, a long time ago, God told his man, Joel, to write about what is happening here now, and it is in God's book. Joel wrote,

17'God said, "In the last days, before I judge everybody,
I will give my Holy Spirit to all sorts of people.
I will give my spirit to your sons, and to your daughters, and they will tell other people the things that I tell them to say.
Your young men will see the special things that I will show them,
and your old men will dream about the special things I want them to know.
18I will even give my Holy Spirit to all my workers, men and women,
and they will tell other people the things that I tell them to say.
19-21And I will do powerful things in the sky that will shock everyone.
The sun will turn dark, and the moon will turn red like blood.
And I will do powerful things on the earth too.
People will fight each other, and there will be fire and big smoke."
Then God's really great and special day will come, and he will judge everybody.
But God will save everybody that calls to him for help and asks him to save them.'

Joel wrote that in God's book."*

22-23Peter kept on talking. He said, "All you mob, listen, and I'll tell you about Jesus, the man from Nazareth. He was a very special man. God helped him to do great and powerful things, to show you that he is really special. You mob saw Jesus doing those things right here in front of your eyes.

* **2:17-21** Joel 2:28-32

But you grabbed him, and you gave him
to bad men that don't know God, and they
killed him on a cross. But you see, God
already knew that was going to happen.
God planned those things a long time ago.*
24 Yes, those bad men killed Jesus. They hurt
him a lot, so that he died. But God didn't let
him stay dead. God made him alive again.
Nobody could make Jesus stay dead.*
25-28 A long time ago, God told his man,
David, to write about Jesus, and it is in God's
book. David wrote,

'God, I know that you are always right
here with me.
You are close by my side and you look
after me, so nobody can frighten me.
So I am very happy, and I tell everyone
that you are good.
I know that you will not leave my dead
body in a grave.
You will not let the body of your
special person rot away.
You showed me the right way to live,
so that I can keep on living.
You are right here with me, and you
make me very happy.'

David wrote that in God's book."*
29 Peter kept on talking. He said, "My
friends, I can tell you, for sure, that our
grand-father, David, was not talking about
himself. You see, he died, and people buried
him. His grave is still here, and we can see
it today. So we know he didn't come alive
again. 30 But David was one of God's men,
and he wrote God's messages for people. And
God promised David that one day, some time
later, a man from David's own family will
become the big boss over his people.* 31 You
see, God told David something that will
happen later, so David wrote that message
for us. That message was about the Christ,
the special man that God was going to send,
and it tells us that God was going to make
him alive again. It tells us that God was not
going to leave him in the grave, or let his
body rot away. 32 And now, all of us mob here
can tell you, that message is all about Jesus.
He died, but then God made him alive again,
and we all saw him alive again. 33 Then God
took him up into heaven. He is there now,
sitting right next to God, on God's right-hand
side, the place where the most important
person sits. And God gave Jesus the Holy
Spirit, and today Jesus gave us the Holy
Spirit, just like God promised. That's the
reason why you are seeing and hearing us
talk in lots of languages today.
34 You see, David didn't go up into heaven,
but Jesus did, so we know David didn't write
those words about himself, but he wrote
them about Jesus. And David wrote some
more words about Jesus too. He wrote,

'God told my leader,
"Sit with me, on my right-hand side,
35 and sit there until I beat all your
enemies,
and then you can put your feet on
them to show that you are their
boss." '*

That's in God's book too."
36 Then Peter said, "So all of you Israel
mob have to be sure about this. You know,
you got the soldiers to nail Jesus to a cross
and kill him. But God made him alive again,
and God made him our boss. Yes, he is the
Christ, the special man that God promised
to send to save us."
37 All the people heard the things that Peter
said, and they felt a lot of shame. So they
said to Peter, and to Jesus's other special
workers, "Friends, what can we do?"
38-39 Peter told them, "You have to turn

* **2:22-23** Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:33; John 19:18 * **2:24** Matthew 28:5-6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:5
* **2:25-28** Psalm 16:8-11 * **2:30** 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Psalm 132:11 * **2:34-35** Psalm 110:1



Peter told all the people there to follow Jesus

around and follow Jesus. Then let us baptise you, to show that you turned away from the wrong things you are doing, and now you follow Jesus Christ. Then God will not do payback to you for those bad things. And he will give you the Holy Spirit to live in you, just like he promised. You see, God promised to give the Holy Spirit to everyone that he picks to be his own people. That promise is for you, and for your kids, and even for people in other countries a long way away."

40 And Peter told them a lot more things to be careful about. He kept on telling them, "Let God save you, so that he will not punish you along with all the people that do bad things and don't want Jesus."

41 Then a lot of people believed the things that Peter said. So Jesus's special workers baptised them. They baptised about 3,000 people that day, and those people joined Jesus's other followers. 42 They all kept on meeting together, and they listened to everything Jesus's special workers taught them. They were like a big family. They ate food together and remembered that Jesus died for them, and they prayed together to God.

Jesus's followers shared everything together

43 God gave power to Jesus's special workers, and they did powerful things. So all the people really respected God. 44 The people that believed in Jesus met together, and they shared everything they owned with each other.* 45 Some of them sold the things they owned, and then they gave that money to other people that needed it. 46 They all met together every day in the yard of God's ceremony house. And they met together in each other's houses too, to eat food and remember that Jesus died for them. They were all very happy and good to each other. 47 They praised God, and they told other people that he is really good. All the people in Jerusalem thought those people that believed in Jesus were good people. And God saved more people every day, and they joined in with the other people that believed in Jesus.

Chapter 3

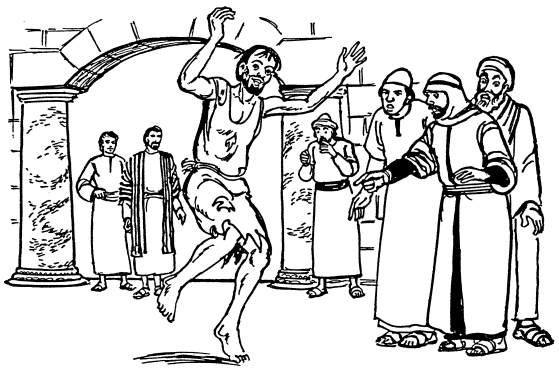
A man couldn't walk, but Peter got Jesus to make him better

1-3 There was a man that couldn't walk. He was crippled all his life. Every day, somebody brought him to sit near one of the gates at God's ceremony house. Everyone called that gate *the beautiful gate*. As people went in through that gate, the crippled man asked them for money.

One day, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Peter and John went to pray at God's ceremony house. They were going in through that Beautiful Gate, and that crippled man saw them and asked them for money. 4 Peter and John looked straight at that man, and Peter said, "Look at us."

* **2:44** Acts 4:32-35

5 So the man looked at them. He thought,
"I reckon these 2 men will give me some
money."
6 But Peter said, "I haven't got any money.
But I have got something really good for
you. Jesus Christ, the man from Nazareth,
has the power to make you better, so I'm
talking to you with his power, and I tell you,
get up and walk."
7 Then Peter held the man's right hand
and helped him to stand up. Straight away
the man's feet and ankles got strong. 8 He
jumped up and started to walk around, and
he went with Peter and John into the yard of
the ceremony house. That man was walking,
and jumping around, and he was telling
everyone that God is really great and really
good.
9 All the people that were there saw him
walking, and they heard him saying that
God is really great. 10 They knew he was
the man that used to sit near the Beautiful
Gate and ask them for money, and they were
really surprised. They thought, "How did
this happen to him?" 11 All the people there
were really surprised, and they ran to Peter
and John. They were at a place in God's
ceremony house called Solomon's veranda.
And the man kept holding on to Peter and
John.



Peter got Jesus to make a crippled man better

Peter told the people about Jesus

12 Peter saw all those people and said to them,
"All you Israel people, why are you surprised
like this? Why are you looking at us? Do you
think that we are really powerful, and that
we made this man walk? Do you think that
we are so good that we can do that? No. We
are not. 13-14 God made this man better, so
that everyone will know that Jesus is really
great. But you mob grabbed Jesus and gave
him to the soldiers, for them to kill him.
Pilate, the judge, wanted to let Jesus go free,
but all you mob kept on shouting, 'No, don't
let Jesus go. You have to kill him. You have
to let another man go free instead, even
though the other man is a murderer.' Jesus
was a properly good man that lived God's
way, but you said that he was not good.

But Jesus worked for God, and after they
killed him, God made him come alive again,
and God made him really powerful. This
is the same God that our grand-fathers
respected a long time ago. They were
Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.* 15 Yes, you
killed Jesus, the one that gives life to people.
But God made him alive again. And both
of us saw him with our own eyes, he was
really alive again.

16 Now you are looking at this man here,
and you know he used to be crippled. But
we believed that Jesus can make him better,
so Jesus did make him better. You mob saw
that with your own eyes."

17 Peter kept on talking to them. He said,
"My friends, I know that you and your leaders
didn't understand about Jesus. You mob
didn't know that he was the special man that
God sent to us. 18 But a long time ago, God
told his men to tell people about Jesus, and
those men wrote those messages in God's
book. They all said that God was going to
send his special man, the man that is called

* **3:13-14** Exodus 3:6, 15; Matthew 27:15-23; Mark 15:6-14; Luke 23:13-23; John 19:12-15

the Christ, and they said that people were going to hurt him and kill him. And now God has made all that happen.

19 So listen. You mob have to change the way you live, and you have to turn back to God, so that he will not blame you or do payback to you for the bad things you did. 20-21 Then God will make your spirits happy and strong. You see, God picked Jesus and sent him to you. He is the Christ, God's special man. Jesus will stay in heaven until the right time comes for God to make everything new and right again. Then God will send Jesus to you again.

God told everyone about that a long time ago, and he got his men to write about it in his book. 22 One of those men was Moses. He wrote,

> 'God picked me to tell you his messages, and just like that he will pick one of your people later on. That man will be God's special man, and he will tell you God's messages. You have to listen properly to everything he tells you. 23 If anyone will not listen to him, that person will not belong to God's people, and that person will die.'*

24 Samuel was another of God's men a long time ago. He also told people that all these things were going to happen. And all God's other men that came later, they told people the same story. 25 God promised all these things to our grand-fathers that lived a long time ago, and he promised them to you too. A long time ago, God said to our grand-father Abraham,

> 'I will use your family to do good things for all the nations in the world.'*

26 So, you see, first of all, God made Jesus alive again. After that, he sent him to do good things for you. Yes, God sent Jesus to help you Israel mob turn around and stop doing bad things, and live the right way."

Chapter 4

Soldiers grabbed Peter and John

1 Peter and John were still talking to the people there, then some Jewish boss men came to them. Those bosses were the men that look after the Jewish ceremonies, and the boss over the soldiers that looked after God's ceremony house, and some men called Sadducees, that didn't believe that anyone will ever come alive again. They all came to Peter and John. 2 They heard Peter and John teaching the people and saying that God will make people alive, just like he made Jesus alive. And those boss men were really angry, 3 so they grabbed Peter and John. Those boss men wanted to take them to court, but it was already late in the afternoon, so the soldiers locked up Peter and John in jail, to wait until the next day.

4 Some people already heard Peter and John's message, and a lot of them believed it, so they started to follow Jesus. More and more people started to follow Jesus. There were about 5,000 men following him at that time.

5 The next day, all the Jewish leaders met together in Jerusalem city to judge Peter and John in court. They were the Jewish bosses, and the elders, and the men that taught the Jewish law. 6 The big boss of all the Jewish ceremonies was there. His name was Annas. And 3 men of his family were there. Their names were Cayafas, and John, and Alexander. And there were some other people from his family there too.

7 Those Jewish leaders got Peter and John to stand there in the middle of them, and they said, "This man couldn't walk. He was

* **3:22-23** Leviticus 23:29; Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19 * **3:25** Genesis 22:18; 26:4

crippled. What power did you use to make this man better? And who told you to do that?"

8 The Holy Spirit was in Peter, and he told Peter what to say. Peter said, "Listen, all you elders and bosses of our people. 9 You are asking us now about the good thing we did for this crippled man. You are asking us about how we made him better. 10 Well, we used the power of Jesus Christ to make this man better. And we want you, and all our Israel countrymen, to know about Jesus, the man from Nazareth. You nailed him to a cross and killed him, but God made him alive again.

11 You know, a long time ago, one of God's men told a picture story about you boss mob, and about Jesus too. They said that some work-men built a house out of big stones, but those work-men thought one of those stones was rubbish, so they chucked it away. But they were wrong. That stone was properly good, and now God made it the most important stone of all. You are like those work-men, and Jesus is like that stone. You did not want him.*

12 But Jesus is the only one that can save people. God didn't send anyone else to save us. Jesus is the only one in the world that has power to save people."

13 The leaders knew that Peter and John were ordinary men that never went to Jewish school to learn about God's book, but Peter and John were not frightened to talk back to them. So those leaders were shocked. Then they remembered that Peter and John were Jesus's friends and often listened to him. 14 Those leaders saw the man that used to be crippled. He stood right there next to Peter and John. So those leaders couldn't say anything bad about Peter and John.

15 So they told Peter and John to go out of the court, and then they talked to each other. 16 They said, "It's hard for us to punish those 2 men. Everyone in Jerusalem knows that they did that powerful thing, that they made that crippled man better. We can't say that it isn't true. 17 But we have to stop people talking about it. So we will tell those 2 men not to talk to anyone about Jesus again. And we will tell them that if they do talk about Jesus, then we will make trouble for them."

18 So those leaders called Peter and John back to the court. They told them, "Don't talk to any other people about Jesus. Don't teach anyone about him, or we'll give you big trouble."

19 But Peter and John said to those leaders, "Do you think that God wants us to listen to you? Or do you think that he wants us to listen to him, and do the things that he says? What do you reckon? We know he wants us to do whatever he says, 20 and we can't stop now. We have to talk about the things that we have seen and heard."

21-22 The leaders couldn't think of any way to punish Peter and John. They knew that all the people were saying that God made that man better. That man was already more than 40 years old, so all the people were saying that God is really great and really good for making him better. So again those bosses told Peter and John, "Don't talk about Jesus any more, or we'll give you big trouble." Then they let them go free.

The Christians prayed together

23 Peter and John left that court and went back to the other people that believed in Jesus. They told them everything that the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and the other Jewish leaders said. 24 The other followers listened to Peter and John, and then they all prayed to God together. They

* **4:11** Psalm 118:22

said to him, "God, you are the boss over everything. You made the sky, and the earth, and the sea, and everything in them.* 25 The Holy Spirit talked to your man, David, our grand-father that lived a long time ago, and the Holy Spirit told him to write this in God's book. David wrote,

'The people from different countries
are really angry,
and they are talking about doing
something stupid, something that
will not work.
26 Their bosses and leaders are getting
ready to fight.
They want to get together to fight
against God,
and they want to fight against the man
that God picked to be his special
person.'*

27-28 And now that has happened, just like David wrote. Herod and Pontius Pilate are both bosses from different countries. They, and some of their countrymen, they all met together in this city. And they met with Jewish people too. They all tried to work out a way to get rid of Jesus. He was your worker, the special one that you sent to us. You, God, are the one with power, and you knew everything they were going to do, and you let them do it.* 29 And now, God, you heard the bad things they reckon they will do to us. We are your workers. Please help us to not be frightened, and help us to keep on telling everyone about Jesus. 30 Show everyone your great power. Make sick people better. Let us do powerful things with the power of Jesus, your special man that works for you. Then everyone will know that we are telling them the true story."

31 After they finished praying God shook the house that they were meeting in, and the Holy Spirit went into them all and filled them. They kept on telling everyone God's message about Jesus, and they weren't frightened of anyone.

The Christians shared all their things

32 All those people that believed in Jesus agreed with each other and felt the same way about things. They shared everything they owned with each other. They never said, "Those things are mine, you can't have them." No, they reckoned everything belonged to everyone.* 33 At the same time, Jesus's special workers talked in a powerful way and told everyone, "Our leader Jesus is alive again." And God was good to his followers, and he gave them everything they needed.

34-35 All those Christians had everything they needed. Nobody was poor or hungry. You see, sometimes Christians that owned farm land or houses sold them, and got some money, and then they gave it to Jesus's special workers, and those special workers gave that money to anyone that needed it.

36 One of the Christians that sold their land was Joseph. Jesus's special workers called him *Barnabas*. That name means *helper.* He was from the island called Cyprus, and he belonged to the Levi tribe. 37 Barnabas sold his farm land, then he gave the money to Jesus's special workers, for them to share it with the other Christians.

Chapter 5

A man and his wife tried to trick the Holy Spirit

1 There was a man called Ananias, and his wife was called Safira. They sold some land too, 2 but they kept some of the money for themselves. Ananias only gave some of it to Peter and to Jesus's other special workers,

* **4:24** Exodus 20:11; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 146:6 * **4:25-26** Psalm 2:1-2
* **4:27-28** Matthew 27:1-2; Mark 15:1; Luke 23:1, 7-11; John 18:28-29 * **4:32** Acts 2:44-45

for them to share it with the other Christians. Ananias lied to them. He said, "This is all the money we got for our land." His wife knew what he was doing, and she agreed to it.

3 Then Peter said to him, "Ananias, why did you listen to Satan, the boss over the bad spirits? Why did you let him be your boss? He even got you to lie to the Holy Spirit. You kept some of that money for yourself, the money you got for that land. 4 Look, that land was yours, and you didn't have to sell it. But you sold it, and you got some money. Then you could do anything you liked with that money. You didn't have to bring it to us. So why did you think you could trick us, and tell us that this little bit of money was all you got for that land? You lied to us. But you didn't only lie to people, you lied to God too."



Ananias lied to Jesus's special workers and to the Holy Spirit

5-6 As soon as Ananias heard Peter say that, he fell down and died. Then the young men there got up and wrapped up his body in cloth, then they took it out of the house and buried it. Later on, a lot of people heard about what happened, and they were frightened.

7 The wife of Ananias came into that house about 3 hours later, but she didn't know that her husband was dead. 8 Peter asked her, "Can you tell me, is this all the money that you and Ananias got for that land?"

She said, "Yes, that's all the money."

9 So Peter said to her, "Why did you and your husband agree with each other to try to trick the Holy Spirit? Listen. Your husband is dead, and the men that buried him are near the door right now, and they will carry you out too."

10 Right then, Safira fell down and died in front of Peter. Then the young men came in, and they saw her dead, so they took her out and buried her next to her husband.

11 Then all the Christians were really frightened. And all the other people that heard about those things were really frightened too.

Jesus's followers got Jesus to make a lot of people better

12 Jesus's special workers kept on doing powerful things to show everyone that God is powerful. And all the Christians kept on meeting together in God's ceremony house, in the part called Solomon's veranda. 13 The people in that city thought the Christians were really good people, but most people were too frightened to join them. 14 But some people kept on listening, and then a lot of men and women started believing in Jesus, so they joined up with the Christians. 15 A lot of people saw Jesus's special workers do powerful things, so they brought sick people and put them on swags on the roads. They thought, "Even if Peter doesn't touch them, maybe his shadow will touch them as he walks past them, and that will make them better." 16 Big mobs of people came to Jerusalem city from the towns near there, and they brought their sick people, and the people that had bad spirits in them too. And Jesus's special workers made all of them better.

An angel messenger opened the jail doors

17 There were some people that didn't believe
that anyone will ever come alive again.
They were called *Sadducees*. The big boss
of the Jewish ceremonies was a Sadducee.
He and all the other Sadducees were really
jealous of Jesus's special workers. 18 So those
Sadducees got some soldiers to grab Jesus's
special workers, and lock them up in the
jail. 19 But that night, God sent an angel
messenger to Jesus's special workers, and
he opened the jail doors and let them out.
20 That angel said to them, "Go and stand
in God's ceremony house, and tell all the
people there everything about this new life
that Jesus gives."

21 So those men listened to that angel,
and they went to God's ceremony house
very early in the morning, and they started
teaching the people there.

At the same time, the big boss of the
Jewish ceremonies and his friends, they
called together all the men of the Jewish
Leaders Council, for a meeting. Then they
sent the soldiers to the jail to get Jesus's
special workers. 22 Those soldiers went to the
jail, but they couldn't find those men there.
So they went back to the meeting, and they
said, 23 "We got to the jail, and the guards
were standing there, near the locked doors.
We opened the doors and went inside, but
we couldn't find anyone in there."

24 The boss over the soldiers that guarded
God's ceremony house heard the soldiers
say that, and so did the bosses of the Jewish
ceremonies, but they didn't understand. They
thought, "How did those men get out? What
will happen next?"

25 Then somebody came and said to them,
"Listen, those men that you put in the jail are
in the yard of God's ceremony house. They
are standing there teaching the people." 26 So
the boss over those soldiers went there with
his men, and they got Jesus's special workers.
But they were not hard on them. They didn't
force them to come, they just asked them
to come quietly. The soldiers didn't want to
hurt them. They were frightened, because
they thought the people there might get
angry and throw stones to try to kill them.

27 The soldiers brought Jesus's special
workers to the Jewish Leaders Council, to
talk to them. Then the big boss of the Jewish
ceremonies got angry with them and said,
28 "We told you not to teach people about
Jesus. But you didn't listen to us. You told
everyone in Jerusalem about him. You want
people to think that we killed him. You are
blaming us."*

29 Peter stood there with Jesus's other
special workers, and he said, "We've got to
listen to God and do whatever he says, and
not listen to people. 30 You got men to kill
Jesus by nailing him to a cross. But God
made him alive again. We Jewish people
respect God, and so did our grand-fathers
that lived a long time ago. That same God
made Jesus alive again. 31 And he gave Jesus
the best place in heaven, right next to God
himself, on his right-hand side, the place
where the most important person sits. So
now Jesus is our leader, and he is the one
that can save us. God did that so that all the
Israel people can turn back to him, and they
can stop doing bad things, and then he will
not punish them. 32 We saw everything that
Jesus did, so we tell everyone all about it.
And God gave his Holy Spirit to the people
that follow Jesus, and that Holy Spirit does
powerful things, to show everyone that what
we say is true."

33 The Jewish council men heard Peter
talking like that, and they were really angry.
They wanted to kill Jesus's special workers.

* **5:28** Matthew 27:25

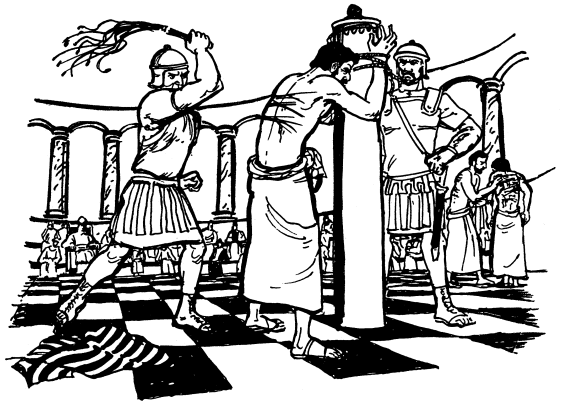
34 But one of them stood up in the meeting. His name was Gamaliyel. He was one of the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law. All the people knew that he was a good man, and they respected him. Gamaliyel told the soldiers, "Take Jesus's followers outside for a while."

35 Then he said to the council men, "Listen, you Israel mob. We have to think carefully now. You want to kill those men, but listen to this. 36 A while ago there was a man called Thoodas. He wanted to fight the Roman government. He told everyone that he was great, and about 400 men listened to him and followed him to fight the Romans. But he died in that fight, and his followers all ran away. So in the end nothing happened. 37 After that, at the time when the Romans were counting our people, there was another man, called Judas. He was from Galilee country. He led a mob of men to fight the Romans, but the Romans killed him too, and chased all his followers away.

38 So I'm telling you now, don't kill these followers of Jesus. Let them go. You see, if it was men that told them to do these things, and to tell people about Jesus, nothing will happen. 39 But if God told them to do these things, you can't stop them. If you try to stop them, you might find yourselves fighting against God."

The Jewish council men listened to Gamaliyel, and they agreed with him. 40 They called Jesus's special workers back to the meeting, and they told the soldiers to hit them with whips. Then the council men told them, "Don't ever teach people about Jesus again." Then the council men let them go.

41 So Jesus's special workers left that meeting, and they were very happy. They knew that God reckoned they were good enough to feel pain for Jesus, and to be shamed for following him, so they were happy, even though the soldiers hit them.



The Jewish council men got soldiers to hit Jesus's special workers with whips

42 And Jesus's followers kept on telling people the good news about him. They never stopped. Every day, they kept on teaching people in the yard of God's ceremony house, and they also went to different people's houses to teach them. They said, "Jesus is the Christ, the special man that God promised to send to save people."

Chapter 6

The Christians picked 7 men to be church workers

1 At that time, a lot of people believed in Jesus and started to follow him. Some of them talked in the Greek language, and some of them talked in the Jewish language, called Hebrew. The Christians that talked Greek complained about the Christians that talked Hebrew. They said that the people that looked after the widows didn't give enough food or money to the widows that talked Greek.

2 So Jesus's 12 special workers called all the other Christians to a meeting. They said, "We 12 men have been giving out the money and food, but now that job is too big for us. We haven't got the time to do that job and then teach people God's word properly.

We have to keep on teaching people God's word, so somebody else has to give out the money and food. 3 So, friends, you pick 7 of your own men to do that job. They can give the money and food to the widows. You have to pick men that other people say are good men. They have to be men that God's Holy Spirit controls properly, and they have to be men that always think properly. We will let those men take over that work. They will give money and food to the widows, 4 while we will keep on praying and teaching God's word."

5 All the Christians agreed with those 12 men. So they picked Stephen. He was a man that really trusted God, and that God's Holy Spirit controlled properly. And they picked Philip, and Procorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas. Nicolas was from a city called Antioch. He was not born a Jew, but he turned to God and started to follow the Jewish ceremonies, and after that, he believed in Jesus. 6 They brought those 7 men to Jesus's 12 special workers, and those 12 men prayed for God to help those 7 men, and they put their hands on their heads to show that they were giving those 7 men that job.

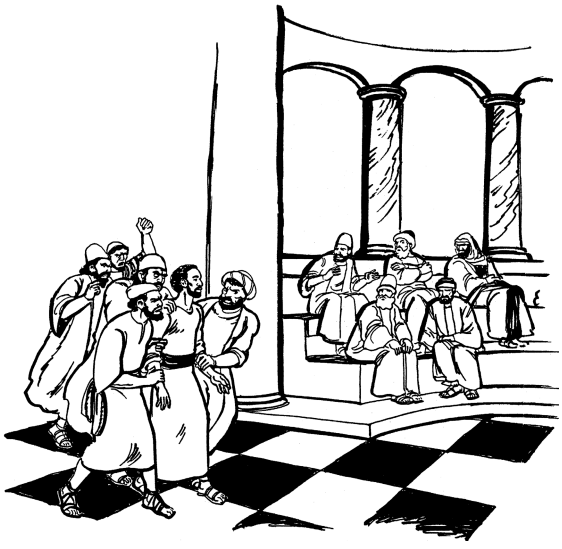
7 At that time, the Christians kept on telling God's word to more people, and a lot more people in Jerusalem believed in Jesus. Even a big mob of the men that looked after the Jewish ceremonies believed in Jesus.

The Jewish leaders grabbed Stephen

8 God helped Stephen to be good to everybody, and he gave Stephen the power to do great things, to show people that God was great. 9 But some Jewish men started arguing with him. Those Jewish men were from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia and Asia. They used to meet together at a Jewish meeting house called *the meeting house of the free men.* 10 But God's Holy Spirit helped Stephen to think properly and gave him the right words to say. His words were so strong that those men couldn't win any argument. 11 So they talked to some other men in secret and paid them money to tell lies about Stephen. Then those other men said, "We heard Stephen say really bad things about Moses, and about God."

12 They told those lies to their elders and law teachers, and to a lot of other people at God's ceremony house. Then all those leaders got angry, and they went out and grabbed Stephen, and they took him to the mob called the Jewish Leaders Council, for them to judge him. 13 Those men from that meeting house of the free men got those liars to stand up and say, "Stephen keeps on talking against this ceremony house. And he keeps on talking against our Jewish law. 14 You know, we heard him say that Jesus from Nazareth will knock down this house. He says that Jesus will change the way we live and stop us doing the things that Moses told us to do."

15 All the men in the Jewish Leaders Council looked carefully at Stephen, and they saw that his face was shining, just like the face of one of God's angel messengers.



Some Jewish leaders took Stephen to the Jewish Leaders Council

Chapter 7

Stephen told the Jewish leaders a long story

1 The big boss of the Jewish ceremonies
said to Stephen, "These men are saying bad
things about you. We think that they are
telling the true story about you, but what
do you say?"

2-4 Then Stephen said, "Listen to me, my
countrymen and my leaders. Think about
the story about our grand-fathers that lived
a long time ago. Our great God came to
our grand-father Abraham, while he was
still living in Mesopotamia country, where
the Chaldia mob lived. God said to him,
'Leave your country and your family. Go to
the country that I will show you.' Abraham
listened to God, and he left that country, and
he went to live in a place called Haran. He
lived there until his father died. Then God
brought him here, to this country that you
live in now. *

5 But God didn't give any of this country
to Abraham. He didn't even give him a little
bit of it. But God promised him that later
on the people born into his family would
own all of this land. At that time, Abraham
didn't even have any kids. * 6 But God told
him, 'You will have grand-kids, and more
grand-kids after them. Your family will go
to a country that belongs to other people,
to live there. Those people will treat your
family really bad and make them work hard
for no pay. They will do that for 400 years. *
7 But after that, I will do payback to those
other people, for treating your grand-kids
really bad like that. Then your grand-kids
will come out from that country, and they
will show respect to me here in this place.' *

8 Then God promised to look after Abraham,
and Abraham agreed to follow him. God
told Abraham that his mob had to do a
young man operation on all their boys, to
show that they agreed with God. After that,
Abraham had a son called Isaac, and 8 days
later Abraham did a young man operation
on him. After that, Isaac grew up and had a
son called Jacob, and he did that operation
on him too. And Jacob did the same for
his 12 sons, and those 12 men became our
grand-fathers that lived a long time ago. *

9 Joseph was one of those 12 men. His
brothers were jealous of him, and they sold
him to some people that took him to Egypt.
He had to work there for no pay. But God
was with Joseph and looked after him there
in Egypt. * 10 Joseph got a lot of trouble there,
but God saved him from all that trouble.
God helped Joseph to think properly about
everything. God showed Egypt's big boss
that Joseph was really good. So the big boss
made Joseph the boss over all the people in
Egypt, and he made Joseph the boss over
his big house too. *

11 After a long time, there was a dry time
for all those countries. There was no rain,
so no food grew in Egypt. And there was
no food in Canaan, the country that our
grand-fathers were living in. They had no
food, and they were very hungry. * 12 Then
Jacob heard that there was food in Egypt. So
he sent his sons to Egypt to get food. Those
men were our grand-fathers that lived a long
time ago. When they got to Egypt, they met
Joseph, but he looked so different that they
didn't know him. Then they bought some
food and took it home.

13 After that, Jacob sent them to Egypt
again to get more food, and this time
Joseph told them, 'I am your brother.' And

* **7:2-4** Genesis 11:31; 12:1, 4 * **7:5** Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8; 48:4 * **7:6** Genesis 15:13-14 * **7:7** Exodus 3:12
* **7:8** Genesis 17:10-14; 21:2-4; 25:26; 29:31; 35:18 * **7:9** Genesis 37:11, 28; 39:2, 21 * **7:10** Genesis 41:39-41
* **7:11** Genesis 42:1-2

Egypt's big boss heard that Joseph had some brothers.* 14 Then Joseph sent his brothers to get his father Jacob, and all his family, to come and live in Egypt. So all 75 of them went to Egypt.* 15 That's how Jacob and his family went to Egypt, and they lived there until they died.* 16 Later, their grand-kids took their bodies back to the place called Shekem, and they buried them in a cave. A long time before that, Jacob's grand-father Abraham bought that cave from Hamor's family. He paid the full price for that cave."*

Stephen talked about Moses

17 Stephen kept on talking to the men of the Jewish Leaders Council. He said, "Remember, a long time before that, God told Abraham, 'I will give you a big family, and they will become a great nation.' And God also said, 'Your family will move to another country, but after 400 years I will bring your family back and give them this country.' So Abraham's family lived in Egypt, and they had lots of kids and grand-kids, and those families grew into a big mob of people. Then it was almost time for God to bring them back to this country.* 18 Then, a new man became Egypt's big boss. That new big boss didn't know anything about Joseph.* 19 He tricked our family, and he was very hard on them. He made our mob throw their baby boys into the river to kill them.* 20 Moses was born while that man was the big boss. Moses was a very good little baby, and his mother and father looked after him in their house for 3 months.* 21 After that, they had to leave Moses out at the river, but the big boss's daughter came along and found him, and she took him home and called him her own son.* 22 So Moses grew up in the big boss's family, and the teachers in Egypt taught him a lot of their wise things. Moses became an important man. He talked well, and he did everything properly.

23 Moses kept on living in the big boss's family until he was 40 years old. Then one day, he went to visit his own people. They were our grand-fathers, the Israel mob.* 24 While he was there, he saw an Egypt man beating up an Israel man. Moses wanted to help that Israel man, so he killed that Egypt man. 25 Moses reckoned, 'Now my people will understand about me, and they will know that God will use me to save them.' But they didn't understand that.

26 The next day, Moses saw 2 of his own men fighting, and he tried to get them to stop fighting. He said, 'You 2 men, you are both family. Why do you hit each other?' 27 But the man that started the fight pushed Moses away. He said, 'Nobody said that you can be our boss or our judge. 28 Are you going to kill me like you killed that Egypt man yesterday?' 29 Moses heard that man's words, and he got frightened. He thought, 'Everyone knows that I killed that man. Now I will get big trouble.' So he ran away from Egypt and went to live in the country called Midian. He didn't belong to that country, but he got married there and had 2 sons.*

30 Moses stayed in Midian country for 40 years. Then one day, he was in the desert place near the big hill called Sinai, and God sent one of his angel messengers to him there. It happened like this. Moses saw a little tree that was burning with flames of fire.* 31 It kept on burning all the time, but it didn't finish up that little tree. Moses was surprised. He thought, 'How come that fire doesn't finish up that tree?' So he went

* **7:13** Genesis 45:1, 16 * **7:14** Genesis 45:9-10, 17-18; 46:27 * **7:15** Genesis 46:1-7; 49:33 * **7:16** Genesis 23:3-16; 33:19; 50:7-13; Joshua 24:32 * **7:17** Genesis 12:2; 15:13-15 * **7:18** Exodus 1:7-8 * **7:19** Exodus 1:10-11, 22
* **7:20** Exodus 2:2 * **7:21** Exodus 2:3-10 * **7:23** Exodus 2:11-15 * **7:29** Exodus 18:3-4 * **7:30** Exodus 3:1-10

closer to have a good look at it. Then he heard God talk to him from that fire. God said, 32 'I am the God of your grand-fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I am their God.'

Moses was so frightened that he started shaking. He was too frightened to look at that little tree any more. 33 Then God said to him, 'Moses, take off your shoes. The ground you are standing on is my special ground. 34 Listen, I saw those bosses in Egypt, they were hitting my people. I heard my people crying and groaning, and now I'm going to save them. So now, Moses, you go back to Egypt. I'm sending you back there to save them.' "

35 Stephen kept on talking to that mob of Jewish leaders. He said, "You see, God's people didn't listen to Moses before. They said, 'Nobody said that you can be our boss or our judge.' But later, God sent Moses back to save them, and to be their boss. And God sent his angel messenger to help Moses, the same angel that made that little tree keep on burning with fire.* 36 Moses helped God's people leave Egypt. He did powerful things in Egypt, so that the big boss there let them go. So God's people all followed Moses out of Egypt, and when they got to the water called the Red Sea, he did another powerful thing to let the people walk across to the other side. And later, he did more powerful things for them, while they walked around in the desert for 40 years.*

37 That same man, Moses, said to the people of Israel,

> 'God will get one of your own people,
> and send him to tell you his message.
> He will be like me.'*

38 All our grand-fathers were with Moses in the desert country. And God sent an angel messenger to Moses, at the big hill called Sinai, to tell him the good message that helps people live with God. And then Moses told our grand-fathers that same message.*

39 But our grand-fathers didn't listen to Moses. They didn't want him to be their leader. So when Moses went back up that hill, they said that they just wanted to go back to Egypt. 40 They told Aaron, 'Make us statues of gods, and we will get them to show us the way back to Egypt. We followed that Moses out from Egypt, but now he is not here. What happened to him? We don't know.'* 41 So then they made a statue that looked like a young cow. They brought some animals, and they killed them and burned them to give them to that statue. And they had a big party to show respect to the statue they made.* 42 So God turned away from our grand-fathers. He left them, and they showed respect to the sun and the moon, and the stars too.

Some time later God told one of his men to write about that, and now it is in God's book. He wrote,

> 'You people of Israel, you were in the
> desert for 40 years, and at that time,
> did you bring animals to kill and give
> to me? No, they were not for me.
> 43 You only respected the god called
> Molek, and the star god called Refan.
> You made statues of them, and you
> carried things around with you to
> help you show respect to them.
> So listen, I will send you all away from
> your country, I will send you a really
> long way away, even past the city
> called Babylon.' "*

Stephen talked about God's ceremony house

44 Stephen kept on talking to the Jewish Leaders Council. He said, "A long time ago, God talked to Moses, and he showed Moses

* **7:35** Exodus 2:14 * **7:36** Exodus 7:5; 14:21; Numbers 14:33 * **7:37** Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 * **7:38** Exodus 19:1—20:17; Deuteronomy 5:1-33 * **7:40** Exodus 32:1, 23 * **7:41** Exodus 32:2-6 * **7:42-43** Amos 5:25-27

a picture of his special tent, and God told Moses how to make it. Our grand-fathers carried God's special tent with them through the desert. That tent showed everyone that they had God's law.*

45 Some years later, Moses died, and then Joshua was their leader. He and our grand-fathers came into this country, and they fought against the people that lived here. God made those people run away, and our grand-fathers got this country. And they brought that tent with them into this country, and they kept it here for a long time. It was still here when David became their big boss.*

46 God was good to David. And David wanted to build a ceremony house, instead of that tent, for the God of us Israel people. So David asked God to let him build that house.* 47 But God stopped David, and instead it was Solomon, David's son, that built God's ceremony house.* 48 But, you know, our great God does not live in houses that people build. You see, God told one of his men to write about that, and it is in God's book. He wrote,

49-50 'God says, "I fill up all of heaven. It is
like my big seat.
And the whole earth is just like
something for me to rest my feet on.
So what sort of house will you people
build for me?
You can't build a place big enough for
me to live in.
You see, I made everything."'"*

Stephen talked strong to the Jewish Leaders Council men

51 Then Stephen talked to them straight. He said, "You mob are just like your grand-fathers that lived a long time ago. You don't take any notice of God. You don't listen to him, and you don't do anything he says. You don't do anything the Holy Spirit tells you to do.* 52 God sent men to your grand-fathers a long time ago to tell them his messages, but they beat up God's men. God got some messengers to say that he will send his really good man to us, but they even killed those messengers from God. Then that really good man came to us. He was Jesus. But you mob told the people to kill him. You were the ones that murdered him. 53 You see, God sent his angel messengers to your grand-fathers to give you God's law, but you didn't listen, and you didn't do anything it says."

They killed Stephen with stones

54 The men of the Jewish Leaders Council heard Stephen say that, and they got really angry. They were so angry that they were rubbing their teeth together. 55 But the Holy Spirit controlled Stephen. He looked up into the sky, and he saw God there, shining very bright, and he saw Jesus standing at God's right-hand side. 56 Stephen said to everyone, "Look, I can see into heaven. Its door is open, and I can see God's special man there in heaven. He is standing at God's right-hand side."

57 When the Jewish council men heard that, they covered their ears so they couldn't hear Stephen, and they yelled out really loud, and they jumped up quick and grabbed him. 58 Then they dragged Stephen outside the city and started throwing big stones at him to kill him. And the men that told lies about Stephen took off their coats and gave them to a young man to look after. The name of that young man was Saul.

59 Those men kept on hitting Stephen with big stones. Then he called out, "Jesus, my leader, let my spirit come to be with you now."

* **7:44** Exodus 25:9, 40 * **7:45** Joshua 3:14-17 * **7:46** 2 Samuel 7:1-16; 1 Chronicles 17:1-14
* **7:47** 1 Kings 6:1-38; 2 Chronicles 3:1-17 * **7:49-50** Isaiah 66:1-2 * **7:51** Isaiah 63:10



Stephen prayed for the men that killed him

60 Then he went down on to his knees, and he shouted, "Jesus, don't blame these men for doing this bad thing." And after he said that, he died.

Chapter 8

1-3 And Saul agreed with that Jewish council mob. He reckoned it was all right for them to kill Stephen.

After that, some good men got Stephen's body and buried it, and they cried a lot for him.

Saul made trouble for the Christians

But Saul and his friends started making a lot of trouble for the Christians in Jerusalem. They went into the houses of Christians and dragged out the men and women, and locked them up in jail. Saul and his men were trying to finish up the Christian people. So a lot of those Christians ran away from Jerusalem to Judea country, and to Samaria country. But Jesus's 12 special workers stayed in Jerusalem. *

Philip went to Samaria

4 The Christians that ran away from Jerusalem went to a lot of different places, and in all those places they told people the good news about Jesus. 5 One of them was Philip. He went to a town in Samaria country and told everyone, "Jesus is the Christ, the special man that God promised to send." 6 God gave Philip a lot of power. A lot of people saw him do powerful things, and they listened to him, and they thought carefully about his message. 7 You see, a lot of people had bad spirits in them, and Philip used God's power to force those bad spirits out of them. Those bad spirits screamed as they left those people. And Philip also used God's power to make a lot of crippled people better, and other people that couldn't walk because their legs were too weak, Philip made them better too. 8 So the people in that town were very happy.

9 A man that used to do magic lived in that town in Samaria. His name was Simon. He did that magic for a long time before Philip went there. Everyone there was surprised by the things he did. He used to say, "I am a great man." 10 All the people talked about him and said, "This man is really great. He has God's power." Important people said that, as well as other people.

11 Simon did that magic for a long time, and the people there were always surprised by the things he did, so they listened to him. 12 But then Philip went to that town and told the people the good news about Jesus, and about God's family, and he told them that God sent Jesus Christ to save people. A lot of men and women listened to Philip and believed in Jesus, and then Philip baptised them. 13 Simon believed in Jesus too, so Philip baptised him. After that, Simon followed Philip everywhere, and he watched him doing powerful things. Simon was very surprised by those powerful things that Philip did.

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* **8:1-3** Acts 22:4-5; 26:9-11

14-17 But at that time, the Holy Spirit didn't go into any of those Samaria people. Philip only baptised the people to show they belonged to Jesus. Then Jesus's special workers in Jerusalem heard that the people in Samaria believed God's word, so they sent Peter and John to Samaria. After they got there, they put their hands on the people that believed in Jesus, and prayed for them. Then the Holy Spirit came into those people.

18-19 Simon watched Peter and John. He saw them put their hands on people, and then the Holy Spirit went into those people. So Simon said to Peter, "Let me have that power too, so that if I put my hands on people, the Holy Spirit will go into them. If you give me that power, I will pay you money."

20-21 But Peter said to him, "You think you can buy God's power with money, but you are wrong. No way. Only God can give people that power. And God can see that you are not thinking the right way, so he will not give you that power, and he will not let you work with us. Look out. God can finish you up, and finish up your money too.
22 Stop thinking in that really bad way. Turn around and think God's way. Pray to him and ask him not to punish you for thinking like that. 23 I can see that you are jealous, and that you want to do bad things, and that those bad things are controlling you."

24 Then Simon said to Peter, "Pray to God for me so that he will not punish me, and those bad things you said will not happen to me."

25 After that, Peter and John talked to the people there, and they told them more of the message about Jesus. Then they left that town to go back to Jerusalem. They went through a lot of little towns along that road in Samaria country, and they told the good news about Jesus to the people in those towns.

Philip talked to a man from Ethiopia

26 While Philip was in Samaria, one of God's angel messengers came to him and said, "Get up, and go south along the desert road, you know, the road that goes from Jerusalem to the town called Gaza." 27 So Philip got up, and he started to go along that road, and he saw a man from Ethiopia country sitting in a trailer, and horses were pulling the trailer along that road. He was the sort of man that couldn't have any kids. He worked for an important woman called Candace. She was the big boss over Ethiopia. That man was one of her important workers. He looked after all her money. But he had a break from that work and went to Jerusalem to show respect to God, and then he started to go back home along that road. 28 Philip saw him sitting in his trailer, and he was reading God's book. He was reading the part that Isaiah wrote a long time ago. Isaiah was one of God's men that told people God's messages.

29 Then the Holy Spirit said to Philip, "Catch up with that trailer and walk along beside it."

30 So Philip ran up close to the trailer, and when he was beside it, he heard that man reading from the words that Isaiah wrote in God's book. Philip asked him, "Can you understand that book you are reading?"

31 The Ethiopian man said, "No, I can't understand it. I need somebody to help me." Then he asked Philip to climb up into the trailer and sit beside him. 32 He was reading these words in God's book,

"Some people took him away to kill him,
just like men take a sheep away to kill it,
but he was quiet and didn't say anything.
You know that a sheep is quiet,
and it doesn't make a noise while men cut off all its wool,

well, he was quiet, just like that.
33 Men shamed him, and they didn't give
him a proper trial in court.
Then they killed him, so now he can't
have any kids."*
34 And the Ethiopian man said to Philip,
"Who was Isaiah talking about? Was he
talking about himself or somebody else?"
35 Then Philip told him that Isaiah was
talking about Jesus. And he kept on talking,
and he told that Ethiopian man the good
news about Jesus.



Philip told the man from Ethiopia
the good news about Jesus

36-37 They kept going along the road, and
they came to some water. The Ethiopian
man said, "Look, there is some water. I want
you to baptise me now." 38 Then he told the
man that was controlling the horses to stop.
And the Ethiopian man and Philip went
down into the water, and Philip baptised
the Ethiopian man.
39 After they came up out of the water, the
Holy Spirit quickly took Philip away. The
Ethiopian man never saw him again, but
he was really happy, and he kept going on
his way home.
40 But the Holy Spirit put Philip in a town
called Azotus. Philip went around telling
people the good news about Jesus. He
walked north, and he told the good news
about Jesus to the people in all the towns
along the way, until he got to the town
called Caesarea, and he stayed there.

Chapter 9

Saul kept on making trouble for Christians

1-2 At that time, Saul was still making trouble
for Jesus's followers. He was telling them,
"I'm going to hurt you and kill you." He went
to the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies
and said, "I want to go to the city called
Damascus and grab the followers of Jesus
there. Will you write letters for me to take
to the people in the Jewish meeting houses
there? Tell them that you want me to grab
anyone that belongs to that mob called the
Jesus Way mob. I will grab those men and
women, and tie them up, and I will bring
them back to Jerusalem for you to punish
them." So that big boss wrote letters like
that, and he gave them to Saul to take to
Damascus.

Saul met Jesus

3 Then Saul got some men, and they went
along the road to Damascus. As they got
close to that city, suddenly a bright light
from heaven shined down on Saul, and it
shined all around him. 4 He fell down on
to the ground, and he heard a voice saying
to him, "Saul. Saul. Why are you making
trouble for me and hurting me?"
5 Saul asked, "Who are you, boss?"
And that voice said, "I am Jesus. You are
making trouble for me and hurting me. 6 But
get up and go into the city. Somebody there
will tell you what to do."
7 The men that were with Saul were
shocked. They heard that voice, but they

* **8:32-33** Isaiah 53:7-8



Suddenly a bright light from heaven shined down on Saul, and Jesus talked to him

couldn't see anyone. They just stood there, they were so shocked that they couldn't say anything. 8 Saul got up from the ground and opened his eyes, but he couldn't see anything. He was blind. So the other men held his hand and took him into Damascus. 9 He was blind for 3 days, and he didn't eat anything or drink anything in those 3 days.

10 There was a man called Ananias that lived in Damascus. He believed in Jesus. Ananias had something like a dream, but he was still awake. He heard Jesus say to him, "Ananias."

And Ananias said, "Yes, sir, I'm here."

11 And Jesus said to him, "I want you to get up and go to Straight Street. Go to the house that Judas lives in, and find a man there from the town called Tarsus. His name is Saul, and he is praying to me right now. 12 He had something like a dream, and he saw you, Ananias. And he saw you come and put your hands on him, to make him see again."

13 But Ananias said, "But sir, people have told me about that man Saul. He's a properly cheeky man. He hurt your people in Jerusalem, and he did a lot of bad things to them. 14 And the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies told him that he can grab all the people here that say they follow you, Jesus, and he can take them to jail. He came here now to do just that."

15 But Jesus said to Ananias, "Don't worry. Go to him anyway. You see, I picked that man to do my work. He will tell a lot of people about me. He will tell Jewish people about me. And he will tell people that are not Jews about me, even their biggest bosses too. 16 I will show him that some people will not like him talking about me, so they will give him big trouble and hurt him."

17 So Ananias got up and went to the house that Judas lived in. He went inside, and he put his hands on Saul, and he said, "Saul, my friend, you saw Jesus on the road as you were coming here. Well, he has sent me so that you can see again, and the Holy Spirit will come into you and fill you." 18 Then some things fell down from Saul's eyes. They were like fish scales, or like finger nails. After that, Saul could see again. He got up, and the Christians there baptised him. 19 Then he ate some food, and he got strong again. Saul stayed in Damascus for a few days with the people that followed Jesus.

Saul told the people in Damascus about Jesus

20 As soon as Saul was strong again, he started talking to the Jewish people in their meeting houses. He told them, "Jesus is God's son."

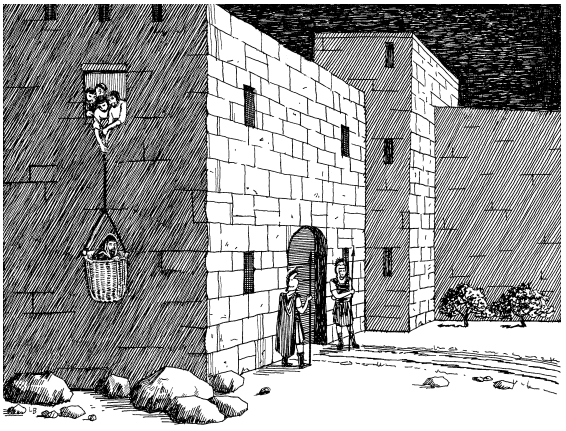
21 All the Jews that heard him were really shocked. They said, "Wow, this man has really changed. He's the man that really hurt the people in Jerusalem that followed Jesus. And he came here to grab the people here that say they follow Jesus. He was going to tie them up with chains and take them back to the bosses of our ceremonies in Jerusalem."

22 But Saul told those people about Jesus. The Jewish people in Damascus argued with him, but he showed them that Jesus really is the man that God promised to send to save

us, the man that is called the Christ. Saul got better and better at showing them he was right, and they couldn't show that he was wrong. And they didn't like it.

23-24 After that, some of those Jewish people talked with each other about killing Saul. There was a big wall around that city, and it had some gates in it. Every day and every night, they watched those gates. They thought they might see Saul going out of the city, and then they can catch him and kill him.

But somebody told Saul about them. 25 So the Christians there helped Saul get away. They got a big basket, and they took Saul to that big wall in the night. They went up to a window, high up in that wall. Then they tied ropes to the basket and put Saul in it, and then they put it through that window, and they let it go down to the ground outside the wall. Then Saul got out of the basket and ran away. *



The Christians in Damascus put Paul through a window and let him down to the ground in a basket

26 After that, Saul went to Jerusalem, and he tried to join the people there that followed Jesus. But they were frightened of him. They didn't believe that he followed Jesus too. So they kept away from him. They didn't want to let him join them.

27 But Barnabas, one of Jesus's followers there, he listened to Saul and believed his story. So he took Saul to Jesus's special workers, and he told them Saul's story. He said, "On the way to Damascus, Saul saw our leader, Jesus, and Jesus talked to him. After that, Saul told the people in Damascus about Jesus. He wasn't frightened of them." 28 Those church leaders in Jerusalem believed Barnabas, so Saul stayed there with them, and he went around Jerusalem with them. He talked to everyone about Jesus and wasn't frightened of anyone.

29 There were some Jewish people in Jerusalem that talked the Greek language. Saul told them to believe in Jesus, but they argued with him. Then they got angry and tried to kill him. 30 The Christians heard about this, so they took Saul to the town called Caesarea and put him on a ship, and they sent him back to his home town, called Tarsus.

31 Then, at last, everything settled down and was quiet for the Christians in the churches in Judea country, and in Galilee country, and in Samaria country, and they got stronger for Jesus. The Holy Spirit helped them to be strong, and they respected Jesus properly. And more people joined them and believed in Jesus.

Peter got Jesus to make a crippled man better

32 After that, Peter went around visiting God's people that lived in Judea country, and he went to the town called Lydda. 33 He met a man there called Anias. About 8 years before that time, Anias got crippled. He couldn't walk, so he always lay on his swag. 34 Peter said to him, "Anias, Jesus Christ makes you better. Get up and roll up your

* **9:23-25** 2 Corinthians 11:32-33

swag." Right then Anias got better, and he stood up. 35 When the people in Lydda saw him, a lot of those people changed their ways and believed in Jesus. Lydda was in the country called Sharon, and the people there saw him, and a lot of them changed their ways and believed in Jesus too.

Peter got God to make a woman alive again

36 There was a Christian woman that lived in a town called Joppa. Her name was *Tabitha*. Her name in the Greek language was *Dorcas*. She always did good things and helped poor people. 37 But she got sick and died. The other Christians there washed her body, and they put it in a room upstairs in her house. 38 Joppa was near Lydda, and the Christians in Joppa heard that Peter was in Lydda. So they sent 2 men to Lydda, and those men asked Peter, "Please come to Joppa with us right now."

39 So Peter went with those 2 men. After he got there, the Christians took him to her house, and then they went upstairs. The widows stood there with Peter, and they cried, and they showed him the shirts and other clothes that Dorcas made for them while she was still alive.

40 Peter told everyone to go outside. Then he got down on his knees, to show respect to God, and he prayed. Then he turned and looked at the body, and said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and she saw Peter, then she sat up. 41 Peter held out his hand for her and helped her to stand up. Then he called out to the widows and to all God's people there, and he told them to come. Then he showed them that Tabitha was alive. 42 Those people that saw her alive, they started telling other people about it, and soon everybody in Joppa heard that story, and a lot of people believed in our leader Jesus.

43 Peter stayed in Joppa for a long time. He lived with a man called Simon. Simon was a leather worker.

Chapter 10

An angel messenger came to a Roman soldier

1 There was a soldier that lived in the town called Caesarea. His name was Cornelius. He was the boss over a mob of soldiers in the Roman army that were called the Italian Mob. 2 He and his family respected God, and they always tried to do things that made God happy. Cornelius gave a lot of money and things to poor people, and he prayed to God every day.

3 One afternoon, at 3 o'clock, he was praying, and he had something like a dream, but he was not asleep, he was awake. He saw an angel messenger from God come to him and call his name, "Cornelius."

4 Cornelius looked at the angel and was frightened of him. He asked him, "What do you want, boss?"

The angel said, "Cornelius, God heard you pray and saw you give money and things to poor people. It is like you gave that money and those things to God, so God is thinking about you. 5 So send some men to Joppa to find a man called Peter. 6 He is staying with a leather worker called Simon. His house is near the sea. Tell your men to get Peter and bring him back to you."

7 The angel finished talking with Cornelius and went away. Then Cornelius called 2 of the men that worked in his house, and one of the soldiers that looked after him. That soldier respected God too. 8 Cornelius told them everything that happened, and then he told them to go to Joppa and get Peter.

Peter had something like a dream while he was still awake

9 The next day, in the middle of the day, those men were walking along and getting

near to Joppa. At that same time, Peter went up on to the flat roof of the house to pray. 10 He started feeling hungry and he wanted something to eat, but he waited and prayed while the people in the house were getting some food ready. Then Peter had something like a dream, but he was still awake. 11-12 He saw the sky open up, then he saw something like a big sheet. Somebody was holding on to the 4 corners of that sheet, and there were things in the middle of it. It was coming down from the sky to the ground. There were all sorts of animals in it, and lizards, and snakes, and birds. Their Jewish law said, "Don't eat those sorts of animals, they are no good." 13 Then a voice said to Peter, "Get up, Peter. Kill some of those animals and eat them."

14 But Peter said, "No, boss. I can't do that. Our Jewish law says we can't eat those sorts of animals. They are no good, so I never eat any of them."

15 Then the voice said to Peter, "If God says that something is good, don't say it is no good."

16 That happened 3 times. Each time that voice told Peter to eat one of those animals, and each time Peter said, "No," and each time the voice said, "If God says that something is good, don't say it is no good." Then that sheet went back up into the sky.

17 Peter sat there and thought, "What does this mean? What is God telling me?"

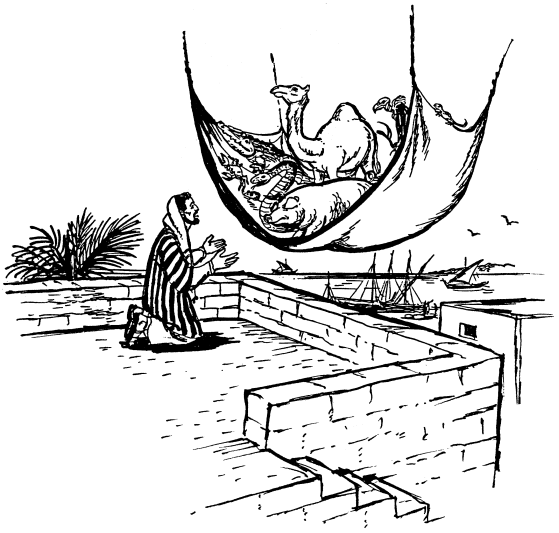
While Peter was still trying to understand it, those 3 men from Cornelius walked into that town. They asked people, "Where does Simon live, the leather worker man?" And the people told them how to get there. Then they went to that house and stood outside the gate, 18 and they asked, "Is Peter here?"

19 At that same time, Peter was thinking about what he just saw, and the Holy Spirit said to him, "Listen, 3 men are down at the gate. They are looking for you. 20 So get up and go down to them. You see, I sent them to you, so just go with them. Don't worry."

21 Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the man you are looking for. Why did you come here?"

22 They said, "Cornelius sent us. He is a boss in the Roman army. He is a good man, and he respects God. All the Jewish people say he is a good man too. God sent one of his angel messengers to Cornelius and told him to ask you to come to his house and talk to him."

23 So Peter said that he will go with them the next day, and he asked them to come in and stay there that night.



Peter had something like a dream and saw a sheet with all sorts of animals in it

Peter went to the Roman soldier's house

The next morning, Peter got up and went with those men. Some of the Joppa Christians went with him too. It was a long way, so they had to camp one night along the road. 24 The next day, Cornelius called all his relatives and his close friends to come to his house in Caesarea to wait there for Peter. And Peter and his mob got there at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon.



Peter went to the Roman soldier's house

25 Peter started to go into the house, and
Cornelius met him and got down on to his
knees in front of Peter, to show him respect.
26 But Peter lifted him up and said, "Stand
up. I'm only a man, like you." 27 Peter kept
on talking with Cornelius, then they went
into the house, and Peter saw a lot of people
there. 28 He said to them, "You know, you
Roman people are not Jews, and the Jewish
law teachers reckon that people that aren't
Jews are no good, so a Jewish man shouldn't
go into their house. But God showed me
that I can't say that anyone is no good. He
showed me that it is all right for me to visit
you. 29 Then these men came and asked me
to come here, so I didn't argue with them,
and I came here with them. Now, please
tell me, why did you ask me to come here?"
30 Cornelius said, "4 days ago I was praying
in my house at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.
Suddenly I saw a man wearing bright shining
clothes standing in front of me. 31 And he
said to me, 'Cornelius, God heard you pray,
and he knows that you give money and
things to poor people. 32 So send some men
to Joppa, and tell them to get Peter and
bring him back here. He is staying with
Simon, a leather worker. His house is near
the sea.' 33 So right away I sent those men to
bring you here. Thank you for coming. We
are all here, and we know that God is with
us. We are ready to hear everything that he
told you to say to us."

Peter told the Romans about Jesus

34 Then Peter started telling those Roman
people his message. He said, "Now I really
understand that God treats everyone the
same. * 35 If anyone respects God, and if they
do the right thing, God will let them come
to him, and he will listen to them. It doesn't
matter if they are Jews, like us mob, or if
they belong to a different nation, like you
Roman mob.

36 This is the message that God sent to the
Israel people. Jesus Christ can make all of
us friends with God. You see, Jesus is the
number one boss over everybody. 37 Listen,
you know the things that happened, first in
Galilee country, and then in Judea country.
At first John the Baptiser told the people
to turn to God. 38 Then God gave Jesus the
Holy Spirit, and he gave him power to do
his special work. Jesus was from a town
called Nazareth, and he went everywhere
doing good things. Some people were sick,
and the devil, the boss over the bad spirits,
was giving them big trouble. But Jesus
made them all better. You see, God was
with him.

39 And I was one of Jesus's special workers.
We went around with him, and we saw all
the good things that he did. We saw all those
things he did in Jerusalem city, and in all
the rest of the Jewish people's country. But
then his enemies killed him. They nailed him
to a cross. 40 But after 2 days, when it was the
3rd day, God made him alive again, and God
let people see him alive. 41 Not everybody
saw him alive, but we saw him. We even

* **10:34** Deuteronomy 10:17

ate and drank with him. And God picked us to tell other people about him. 42 Jesus told us to tell them that one day he will be the judge of everybody. It will be like God will take everybody into a big court, and Jesus will be the judge. He will judge everybody that is alive, and he will judge everybody that is dead too.

43 But listen, a long time ago, God sent his men to tell people his messages, and they all talked about Jesus. They said that if anyone believes in him, God will say that they are not guilty of the bad things they did."

The Holy Spirit went into people that were not Jews

44 While Peter was still talking, the Holy Spirit came down and went into all the Roman people that were listening to him. 45 The Christians that went there with Peter, they were Jews, and they were surprised to see God give his Holy Spirit freely to people that were not Jews. 46 You see, they heard that mob talk in different languages and say that God is great, so they knew that God gave them his spirit.

Then Peter said, 47 "God gave the Holy Spirit to these people too, just like he gave the Holy Spirit to us. Now nobody can stop us from baptising them in water." 48 So he told the other Christians to baptise them, to show that those Roman people follow Jesus, the man that God sent to save people.

Then those Roman people asked Peter to stay with them for a few more days.

Chapter 11

Peter told the Jewish Christians what God taught him

1 Jesus's other special workers, and the other Christians in Judea, they heard about Peter's visit to Caesarea. They heard that some people in Caesarea, that were not Jews, believed God's word. 2 After Peter got back to Jerusalem, some of the Jewish Christians argued with him. They reckoned he broke their law. 3 They said, "You went into the house of people that are not Jews, and you even ate food with them."

4 Then Peter told them all the things that happened. 5 He said, "I was in the town called Joppa, and I was praying, and I had something like a dream, but I was still awake. I saw something like a big sheet with things in it. Somebody was holding on to the 4 corners, and they let it come down from the sky to me. 6 I looked inside it, and I saw all sorts of animals, and lizards, and snakes, and birds. 7 Then I heard a voice say to me, 'Get up Peter. Kill some of those animals and eat them.' 8 But I said, 'No, boss. I will not. Our law says we can't eat that sort of animal. They are no good, so I never eat any of them.'

9 Then I heard that voice from the sky again. It said, 'If God says that something is good, don't say it is no good.' 10 That happened 3 times, and then that sheet and everything in it went back up into the sky.

11 Just then 3 men came to the house I was staying in. They came from Caesarea. 12 The Holy Spirit told me, 'Don't worry, just go with those men.' So I went with them, and these 6 other men here, they went with me too. We got there, and we went into a Roman man's house. 13-14 That man told us that he saw an angel in his house, a few days ago. The angel said to him, 'Peter has a message for you, so send somebody to Joppa to get him. He will tell you how God can save you, and your family, and everyone else in your house too.'

15 I started talking to those people, and then the Holy Spirit came into them, just like he came into us that first time. 16 And I remembered that our leader Jesus said, 'John baptised people with water, but God

will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'* 17 You know, we believed in our leader Jesus Christ, and God gave us the Holy Spirit. And now those people that are not Jews, they believe in Jesus too, and God gave them the Holy Spirit too, just like he gave him to us. So, you see, I couldn't try to stop God. No way."

18 The Jewish Christians heard Peter say that, and they stopped arguing with him. They started to thank God and say he is really good. They said, "Now we understand it. God will let anyone come to him, even people that are not Jews, and after they turn away from doing bad things, and they come to him, then he will give them new life that never stops. God is so good."

The Christian people in Antioch got strong

19 At the time when some men killed Stephen, those men wanted to kill the rest of the Christians too. So a lot of Christians ran away from Jerusalem, and they went a long way, even to other countries. They told people in those places the message about Jesus, but they only told it to their own countrymen, the Jews. Some of those Christians went to Fonisha country, and some of them went to the island called Cyprus, and some of them went to the city called Antioch.* 20 But some of them, men that belonged to Cyprus and men that belonged to the town called Cyrene, they went to Antioch too, and they didn't just talk to Jews, they talked to people that are not Jews too. They told them the good news about our leader Jesus. 21 God helped them tell people his message, and a lot of people that were not Jews believed in Jesus and followed him.

22 The Christians in Jerusalem heard about those things happening at Antioch, so they sent one of their men there. His name was Barnabas. 23 He got to Antioch, and he saw everything that was happening. Then he knew that God was very good to the people there, so he was very happy. He told those new Christians, "Stay strong for Jesus and keep on following him all the time." 24 Barnabas was a good man. He let the Holy Spirit control him, and he really trusted God. He got lots more people there to follow Jesus.

25 After that, Barnabas left Antioch, and he went to the town called Tarsus to look for Saul. 26 He found Saul there, and he took him back to Antioch. They both stayed there for a year, and they met with the Christians in the church there, and they kept on teaching them. A lot of people in Antioch followed Jesus, and that was the place where people first used the name *Christians* for the people that followed Jesus Christ.

The Antioch Christians helped the Judea Christians

27 At that time, some Christian men left Jerusalem and went to Antioch. They had the power to tell God's messages. 28 One of those men was Agabus. He stood up in a meeting, and the Holy Spirit told him a message to tell everybody. He said, "There is going to be a very hard time for all the people everywhere. There will be no food to eat anywhere." (And that really happened later, when Claudius was the biggest Roman boss.)* 29-30 The Christians in Antioch heard Agabus tell that message, and they remembered the Christians in Judea. They knew that the Judea Christians were poor, so they would have a very hard time if there is not much food. The Antioch Christians wanted to help them, so they all put money into a bag. Each of them gave as much money as they could. Then they gave it to Barnabas and Saul, and those 2 men, took it to the Christian leaders in Jerusalem, in Judea country.

* **11:16** Acts 1:5 * **11:19** Acts 8:1-4 * **11:28** Acts 21:10

Chapter 12

The big boss killed James, one of Jesus's special workers

1 In Jerusalem, at that time, the big boss was called Herod. He told his soldiers to grab some of the Christians. 2 One of them was James. He and his young brother, John, were both special workers of Jesus. Herod told his soldiers to kill James with a big knife.

3 The Jewish leaders told Herod that this made them very happy, so he told his soldiers to grab Peter too. It was the time for the Jewish people to have their ceremony where they ate flat damper. 4 So Herod thought, "I will wait until the end of that ceremony, then I will judge Peter and kill him." So they put Peter in jail, and Herod told 4 little mobs of soldiers to guard Peter there. Those little mobs had 4 soldiers each, and they took turns to guard Peter. *

5 Peter stayed there in jail, and the other Christians prayed for him a lot.

Peter walked out of the jail

6 That Jewish ceremony was almost finished, and Herod was going to judge Peter the next day. That night, Peter was asleep in that jail. There was one soldier on each side of him, and they tied each of his hands with chains to those soldiers. And 2 other soldiers stood at the gate of the jail.

7 Suddenly, there was a bright light in that little room in the jail, and one of God's angel messengers came and stood in front of Peter. That angel touched his side to wake him up, and said, "Quick. Get up." And the chains fell off Peter's hands. 8 Then the angel told him, "Get dressed and put on your shoes." So Peter did that. Then the angel said, "Now put on your coat and follow me."

9 So Peter put on his coat and followed



An angel messenger came to get Peter out of jail

the angel, and they just walked out of that little room in the jail. Peter was not sure that all these things were true. He thought, "Maybe I'm dreaming. Maybe this is not really happening to me."

10 Peter and the angel walked past the 1st mob of soldiers in that jail, then they walked past the 2nd mob of soldiers. After that, they came to the big iron gate in the outside wall of the jail. That gate just opened by itself in front of them, and they walked out of the jail into the city street. They walked together along that street, and then suddenly the angel left Peter and went away.

11 Then Peter woke up properly. He said to himself, "Now I know that this is true. I'm not dreaming. God did send one of his angels to save me. That big boss Herod, and the Jewish leaders, they wanted to hurt me, but God saved me from them." 12 After Peter thought that, he went to Mary's house. She was the mother of John Mark. A lot of Christians were there in her house, and they were praying for Peter.

13 Peter knocked on the door of that house, and a worker went to the door. She was a girl called Rhoda. 14 She heard his voice, and she knew it was Peter, so she was very happy.

* **12:4** Exodus 12:1-27

She was so happy that she forgot to open the door. She just ran back into the house and told all the people, "Peter is here, standing outside the door."

15 Those people said, "You are crazy in your head." But she kept on telling them that Peter really was there. Then they said, "It can't be him. It has to be the angel that looks after him."

16 But Peter kept on knocking on that door. After a little while they stopped arguing, and they opened the door, and they saw him, and they were really surprised. 17 Peter held up his hand to get them to be quiet, then he told them the story about how God got him out of that jail. Then he said, "Tell this story to the other Christians, and make sure you tell it to James too." Then he left them and went to another place.

18 After the sun came up, the soldiers in the jail saw that Peter wasn't there, and they were really upset and worried. They were all saying things like, "What happened to Peter? Who let him get away?" 19 Then Herod told them all to look everywhere to find him. But they didn't find him. So Herod judged the soldiers that were guarding Peter. He asked them some questions, then he told the other soldiers to kill them.

After that, Herod left Judea country and went to stay for a while in the town called Caesarea.

Herod, the big boss, died

20-21 At that time, Herod was very angry with the people that lived in the towns called Tyre and Sidon. That made a problem for those people. You see, Herod was the boss over Galilee country, and those people got all their food from Galilee, and they didn't want Herod to stop them from getting that food. So some of them went to Herod's house to talk to him about this problem. At Herod's house, Blastus was one of his important workers. So those men talked to Blastus, and they said, "Please help us, we want to talk with Herod. We want to stop all this trouble." So Blastus got Herod to agree to talk to those people, then he told them the day that Herod was going to talk to them.

On that day, Herod put on his special clothes, and he sat in his special seat, to show everyone that he is the big boss over that country. And then he talked to all those people. 22 They all wanted to make him happy so they shouted, "This is not a man talking. He is a god."

23 Herod liked their talk. He didn't tell them that he is only a man, and that God is the great and powerful one. So then one of God's angels punished Herod. That angel put worms inside of Herod's body, and they ate his guts, and he died.

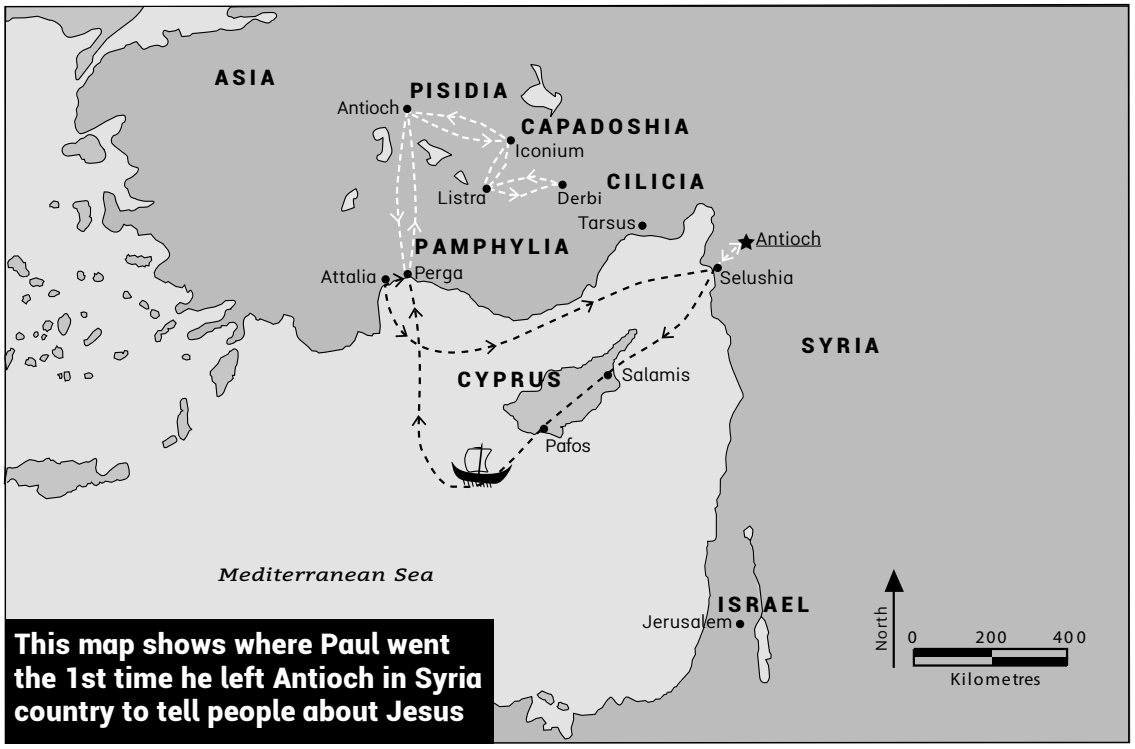
24 At that time the Christians kept on telling everybody about Jesus, so a big mob of people heard that message, and a lot of them believed in Jesus.

The Holy Spirit picked Barnabas and Saul for a special job

25 After that, Barnabas and Saul finished their work at Jerusalem, so they went back to the city called Antioch. And they took John Mark with them.

Chapter 13

1 Barnabas and Saul, and some other men in the church in Antioch, used to tell people God's messages and teach them God's word. Those other men were Simeon (his other name was Niger), and Lucius from the country called Cyrene, and Manen (he grew up with Herod, the big boss). 2 At one time, Barnabas and Saul, and those other men, they stopped eating food for a while, and they prayed to God. At that time, the Holy Spirit said to them, "Pick out Barnabas and Saul for me now. I've got special work for them to do."



This map shows where Paul went the 1st time he left Antioch in Syria country to tell people about Jesus

3 So those men kept on praying and not eating any food for a bit longer. Then they put their hands on Barnabas and Saul, and they prayed for them and told them, "You can go now and do God's work."

Barnabas and Saul went to Cyprus Island

4 The Holy Spirit told Barnabas and Saul the places they had to go to. So they went to the town called Selushia, and then they got on a ship and sailed to the island called Cyprus. 5 They took John Mark with them to help them in their work. They got off the ship at a town called Salamis, on Cyprus Island, and they went to the Jewish meeting houses in that town, and they told the people God's message about Jesus.

6-9 Then Barnabas, and Saul, and John Mark went over to the other side of the island, to the town called Pafos. (Saul had another name. They called him *Paul*.) The Roman boss over that island lived in Pafos. His name was Sergius Paulus. He was a man that could think properly, and he wanted to hear God's message, so he sent men to bring Barnabas and Saul to him. There was a Jewish man there that worked for Sergius Paulus. His Jewish name was Bar-Jesus, and his Greek name was Elimas. He was a magic man, and he used to reckon that he was telling people God's messages, but he was lying.

Elimas tried to stop Barnabas and Paul from telling God's message to Sergius Paulus. He kept on telling his Roman boss, "Don't listen to them."

But the Holy Spirit was with Paul and gave him power. He looked straight at Elimas 10 and said, "You are just like the devil, the boss over the bad spirits. You tell a lot of lies, and you do a lot of bad things. You try to stop everything that is good, and you

try to change God's true story, and you lie about him. You are trying to trick people. You have to stop doing that. 11 God will punish you now. He will make you blind, and you will not see the sunlight for a while." Suddenly Elimas felt himself going blind, and he walked around asking somebody to hold his hand and take him to the place he wanted to go to.

12 The Roman boss saw all that happen, and he heard everything Paul said about our leader Jesus. He thought, "Wow. This message is really good." So he believed in Jesus.

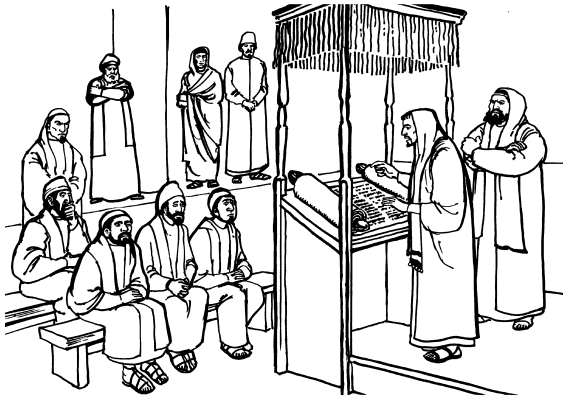
Paul and Barnabas went to another place called Antioch

13 Paul and his friends got on a ship and left Pafos, on Cyprus Island, and they sailed to the town called Perga, in the country called Pamfilia. Then John Mark left them there, and he went back to Jerusalem.

14 Paul and Barnabas went on from Perga to another town called Antioch, in the country called Pisidia. Then on Saturday, the day the Jews get together to show respect to God, Paul and Barnabas went into the Jewish meeting house, and they sat down with the men there. 15 Some of the leaders in that meeting read from God's book. They read words from the law that Moses wrote, and they read other words that God's men wrote a long time ago. Then the leaders said to Paul and Barnabas, "Friends, if you have something to say that will help the people here, go ahead and say it."

Paul told the Antioch people the message about Jesus

16 So Paul stood up and lifted up his hand to get the people to be quiet and listen to



Paul went to the Jewish meeting house in Antioch and told people about Jesus

him. Then he said, "All you Jewish men and all you other people that respect God, listen to me. 17 A long time ago, the God of us Jewish people picked our grand-fathers to be his own people. They went to the country called Egypt to live, and while they were there, God made them strong, and they had a lot of kids. So they became a really big mob of people. Then God used his great power to take them out of that country. * 18 Then they were in the desert country for 40 years. Sometimes they didn't listen to God, but he looked after them anyway. * 19 Then they got to the country called Canaan, and God helped them fight against 7 different tribes, and they won. They killed all their enemies, and God gave that country to his own people to keep. *

20 It was about 450 years from the time they went to Egypt, to the time they got that country. Then God picked leaders for them, so they always had a leader to look after them. After lots of other leaders, God picked Samuel to be their leader. He was a man that told God's messages to the people. * 21 Samuel was their leader, but the people wanted a

* **13:17** Exodus 1:7; 12:51 * **13:18** Numbers 14:34; Deuteronomy 1:31 * **13:19** Deuteronomy 7:1; Joshua 14:1
* **13:20** Judges 2:16; 1 Samuel 3:20

big boss that would always tell them what to do. So God gave them Saul. He was the son of Kish. Saul belonged to the Benjamin tribe, and he was the big boss over the Israel people for 40 years.*

22 Then God stopped Saul from being their big boss, and God picked David, and he made David the big boss over the Israel people. And God said this, 'Look at this man, David, the son of Jesse. He is a man that makes me happy. He will do everything that I want him to do.'* 23 And God promised that a man from David's family will come to save us Israel people. And now that man has come. His name is Jesus.

24 But before Jesus came, John the Baptiser came and talked to us Israel people. He said, 'Stop doing bad things. Turn around. Turn back to God, and then I will baptise you.'* 25 And John said, 'Who do you reckon I am? Do you think I'm that special man that God promised to send to save his people? No way. He will come later. I am nothing. I'm not good enough to touch his feet or untie his shoes.' That's what John told everyone when he was finishing his work.*

26 Listen, friends. Some of you are Jews that belong to our grand-father Abraham's family, and some of you are not Jews but you respect our God. All of you have to listen to this message that God sent to us. It is about how God wants to save us. 27 A long time ago, the men that told God's messages to people wrote those words in his book. They said that God will send a special man, but people will kill him. And people read those words from God's book in their meetings every Saturday, but they don't understand them. The people in Jerusalem and their leaders didn't know that Jesus was that special man, and they said, 'We have to kill him.' 28 So, even though he didn't do anything wrong, they asked Pilate, the Roman judge, to kill him anyway.* 29 That's how Jesus died, just like those men wrote in God's book.

And after they killed Jesus, they took him down from the cross and put him into a grave.* 30 But then God made Jesus alive again, 31 and Jesus's followers saw him a lot of times. They were the mob that were in Galilee country with him, and they came to Jerusalem with him. And now those people are telling everyone about Jesus.*

32 And we are telling you the same good news about Jesus. You see, a long time ago, God promised our grand-fathers that he will do something good for them, 33 and God did it for us, their grand-kids. He made Jesus alive again. You see, we can read it in God's book, in the part called Psalm number 2. God said,

'You are my son.
Now people will know that I am your father.'*

34 You see, God made Jesus alive, so Jesus will never rot in the grave. We know that is right because we can read that God told his son,

'I made special promises to David,
and I'm making those same promises to you.'*

35 And in another psalm in God's book, David said to God,

'You will not let your special person rot in the grave.'*

36 But David was not saying that he was that special person. You see, at that time, David did God's work, and then he died, and people buried him next to his grand-fathers. His

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* **13:21** 1 Samuel 8:5; 10:21 * **13:22** 1 Samuel 13:14; 16:12; Psalm 89:20 * **13:24** Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3
* **13:25** Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:7; Luke 3:16; John 1:20, 27 * **13:28** Matthew 27:22-23; Mark 15:13-14; Luke 23:21-23; John 19:15 * **13:29** Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42 * **13:31** Acts 1:3
* **13:33** Psalm 2:7 * **13:34** Isaiah 55:3 * **13:35** Psalm 16:10

body rotted in that grave. 37But Jesus's body
didn't rot in a grave. God made him alive
again. So those words in God's book were
not about David. They were about Jesus.
38-39You see, my friends, I'm telling you this
message. Jesus died for us, so if we believe
in him, God will say we are not guilty of the
bad things we did. Jesus will make us right
and good. The law that Moses gave us can't
do that, it can't make us right and good. 40A
long time ago, God told some of his men to
write about that, and it is in God's book. And
now you people be careful. Don't be like the
people that those men wrote about in God's
book. One of them wrote,
41 'Listen all of you people that make fun
of God,
he will do something that you will not
believe,
even if somebody tells you about it.
You will be really shocked, but you
will not believe it,
and then you will die.'*
Don't let that happen to you. You have to
believe the things God does." That's the
message that Paul told the people in that
meeting in Antioch.
42-43Then the meeting finished, and Paul
and Barnabas started to go out of that
meeting house. Some of the people said to
them, "Can you come back next Saturday
and tell us more about those things?" And a
lot of Jews and other people that respected
God followed Paul and Barnabas. Paul and
Barnabas talked with them and told them to
keep on trusting God, and to keep on letting
him help them.
44The next Saturday, nearly all the people
in that town came together to hear God's
message about Jesus. 45But the Jewish
leaders saw those big mobs of people, and
they got really jealous. They started saying
bad things to the people about Paul, and
they told them, "Paul is telling lies. His
message about Jesus is not true."
46Paul and Barnabas were not frightened
of them. They said, "God sent us to tell his
message to you Jews first. But you didn't
listen to it, and that shows us that you don't
want to live with God for ever. So now we
will tell God's message to people that are
not Jews. 47You see, God told us to do this.
It's in God's book. He said,
'I gave you this job, to be like a light
for the people that are not Jews.
You will tell people everywhere in the
world that I can save them.' "*
48Those people that were not Jews heard
those words, and they were very happy. They
said, "Thank you God for this message. It
is really good." And a lot of people there
believed in Jesus. You see, a long time before
that, God picked those people to live with
him for ever. 49And those people told God's
message about Jesus to other people, and
a lot of people all over that country heard
God's message.
50But the Jewish leaders made trouble
for Paul and Barnabas. There were some
important women in that town that were
not Jews, but they respected God. And there
were some important men there too. The
Jewish leaders told them bad things about
Paul and Barnabas, so those important
people made big trouble for Paul and
Barnabas. They made so much trouble that
Paul and Barnabas had to leave that town.
51As they left, they shook the dirt off their
feet to show those Jewish people that they
were wrong. Then Paul and Barnabas went
to the town called Iconium.* 52But the people
there in Antioch that believed in Jesus were
very happy, and they kept on letting the Holy
Spirit control them.

* **13:41** Habakkuk 1:5 * **13:47** Isaiah 42:6; 49:6 * **13:51** Matthew 10:14; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5; 10:11

Chapter 14

Paul and Barnabas told people about Jesus, in Iconium and Listra

1-4 The same thing happened in the town called Iconium. Paul and Barnabas went to the Jewish meeting house, and they talked strongly about Jesus to the people there. They told them that God is very good to people. And a big mob of people believed in Jesus. Some of them were Jews, and some of them were not Jews. But there were other Jewish people that didn't believe in Jesus, and they talked to the other people that were not Jews, and they got them to hate the Christians. So the people of Iconium split up into 2 mobs. One mob reckoned that Paul and Barnabas were right, but the other mob reckoned those Jewish people were right. Paul and Barnabas stayed in Iconium a long time, and they kept on telling people about Jesus, and they were not frightened of anyone. And God helped Paul and Barnabas do powerful things, to show that they were telling the true story about Jesus.

5 Then some of those people that didn't believe in Jesus, and their leaders, they made a plan to hurt Paul and Barnabas, and to kill them with stones. Some of that mob were Jews, and some of them were not Jews. 6 But somebody told Paul and Barnabas that those people wanted to kill them, so Paul and Barnabas ran away to the country called Lyconia. They went to the towns called Listra and Derbi, and to the country around those towns, 7 and they told people there the good news about Jesus.

In Listra Paul got Jesus to make a crippled man better

8 In Listra there was a man that was crippled. He was born crippled. He never walked in his life. 9 As Paul was talking to the people there, that crippled man was sitting there listening to him. Paul looked straight at him, and when he saw that man's face, he knew that the man believed that Jesus can make him better. 10 So Paul said real loud, "Stand up on your feet." And the man jumped up and started to walk around.

11 A big mob of people saw Paul do that, and they yelled out in their own Lyconian language, "The gods turned themselves into men, and they came here to us." 12 And those people reckoned Barnabas was their boss god called Zeus, and they reckoned Paul was their messenger god called Hermes, because Paul did all the talking. 13 There was a house for Zeus just outside the town, and there was a man there that looked after the ceremonies for Zeus. That man and all the people got some bulls and some flowers, and they took them to the gates of the town. They wanted to show respect to Paul and Barnabas, just like they always showed respect to their



People in Lyconia reckoned Paul and Barnabas were gods, so they wanted to give them flowers and kill bulls for them

gods. They were going to kill those bulls for them, and they were going to give them the flowers too.

14 But somebody told Paul and Barnabas what those people wanted to do, and then Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes to show them they were upset, and they ran into the crowd of people, and they shouted, 15 "What are you doing? Why are you doing this? Don't do it. We are just men, like you. We are telling you good news, and we are saying that you have to stop showing respect to things that are not the true God. You have to turn around and follow the God that is alive. He made the sky, and the earth, and the sea, and everything in them.* 16 He let the people in every country go their own way, up until now, 17 but he still shows them that he is the only real God. He always did good things for them, and he does good things for you too. He gives you rain, and he makes your food grow, so that you can be happy." 18 Paul and Barnabas kept on talking to the people like that. The people still wanted to kill the bulls for them, but in the end, they listened to Paul and Barnabas, and they didn't kill those bulls.

People threw big stones at Paul

19 After that, some Jewish people came to that place from the towns called Antioch and Iconium, and they talked to the Listra people, and they made them get angry with Paul. Then those Jewish people threw big stones at Paul. They hit him with those stones until they thought he was dead. Then they dragged him outside the town and left him there. 20 Then the Christians stood around Paul. They thought he was dead too, but then he got up, and he went back into the town.

Paul and Barnabas told the Derbi people about Jesus

The next day, Paul and Barnabas left that place and went to the town called Derbi. 21 Paul and Barnabas told the people there the good news about Jesus, and a lot of people believed in him.

Paul and Barnabas helped the new churches in each town

After that, Paul and Barnabas went back to Listra, and Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia country. 22 In each of those towns they talked to the Christians and said, "Keep on believing in Jesus, and don't turn away from him. Some people will keep on making big trouble for all of us Christians, but don't worry, Jesus is with us. We are in God's family now."

23 Then, in each town, Paul and Barnabas picked leaders for the Christians in the church there. After that, they stopped eating for a while, and they prayed for those leaders. They prayed, "Jesus, our leader, these men believe in you now, so we ask you to look after them all the time."

24 Then Paul and Barnabas left that place, and they went through Pisidia country, and they came to the country called Pamfilia. 25 In a town called Perga, they talked to the people about Jesus. Then they went to the town called Attalia, near the sea.

Paul and Barnabas went back to Antioch

26 Paul and Barnabas got on a ship at Attalia, and they went back to Antioch, in Syria country. Antioch was the city where they started from, some time before. It was those Antioch Christians that asked God to look after Paul and Barnabas and be good to them, and then they sent them out to tell people about Jesus. That is the reason why

* **14:15** Exodus 20:11; Psalm 146:6

Paul and Barnabas went back to Antioch after they finished that work.

27 Paul and Barnabas got all the Christians in Antioch to come together, and they told them all about the things God helped them do. They said, "We told the people that are not Jews about Jesus, and God let them believe in him." 28 And Paul and Barnabas stayed there a long time, with the Christians at Antioch.

Chapter 15

The church leaders had a meeting in Jerusalem

1 At that time, some men came to Antioch from Judea country, and they started to teach the Christian men, "If you don't have the young man operation that Moses wrote about, God will not save you. That operation is in our law."* 2 Paul and Barnabas heard those men saying that, and they didn't agree with them. They argued with them and told them they were wrong. The Christians at Antioch thought about that problem, then they told Paul and Barnabas to go with some other men to Jerusalem, to talk about it with Jesus's special workers and the other church leaders there.

3 So Paul and Barnabas did what the Christians at Antioch said. They left Antioch to go to Jerusalem, and on their way, they went through Fonisha country and Samaria country, and they talked to the Christians in those places and told them everything that God did in the other countries. They said, "A lot of people that are not Jews believe in Jesus now." The Christians in Fonisha and Samaria were very happy to hear that news.

4 After that, Paul and the men with him got to Jerusalem, and the Christians there were happy to see them. Jesus's special workers, and all the church leaders there, told them, "We are happy you came." Then Paul and Barnabas, and the other men with them, told the Christians in Jerusalem everything that God helped them do.

5 But some of those Christians in Jerusalem were from the Pharisee mob, that were strong for the Jewish law. They stood up and said, "Those men that are not Jews, they might be Christians, but they have to have that young man operation too, just like Moses said. We have to tell them to do all the things in the law of Moses."

6 Then Jesus's special workers, and all the church leaders, met together to talk about that problem. 7 They talked about it for a long time, and then Peter stood up and said to them, "My friends, you know that God picked me, and I was the first person to go to the people that are not Jews to tell them the good news about Jesus. God did that so that they could hear about Jesus and believe in him.* 8 God always knows what people are thinking, and when those people that are not Jews believed in Jesus, God gave them the Holy Spirit to show them that he wants them in his family too. You see, at first he gave the Holy Spirit to us, then he gave the Holy Spirit to those people that are not Jews.* 9 He did the same thing for them that he did for us. They believed in him, and he made them clean from the wrong things they did. 10 So, why are you telling those Christians that are not Jews to do something that is too hard for them? You are making God angry. You know that we can't keep all of the law of Moses. It is too hard for us, and it was too hard for our grand-fathers too. 11 But our leader, Jesus, is good to us Jewish people, and he is also good to people that are not Jews. He saves

* **15:1** Leviticus 12:3 * **15:7** Acts 10:1-43 * **15:8** Acts 2:4; 10:44

everybody that believes in him. That law doesn't save anybody. Jesus saves us because he is good to us."

12 Then everyone stopped talking and listened to Barnabas and Paul. They told everyone that God gave them power to do great things for the people that are not Jews. God did that to show those people that the story about Jesus is true.

13 They finished talking, then James stood up and said, "My friends, listen to me. 14 Peter just told us the story about how God showed himself to people that are not Jews, and that he picked some of them to be his own people. 15 Peter's story agrees with what God told his men to write, a long time ago, and their words are in God's book. One of them wrote,

16 'God said,
"I will come back later,
and I will fix up David's family again.
David's family are like a tent that
broke and fell down.
But I will fix them up and make them
strong again.
17-18 And some people from other countries
will ask me for help.
They are my people too.
I am God. I promised to do that a long
time ago, so I will do it." '*

That's all in God's book."

19 And James kept on talking. He said, "I think we shouldn't make it hard for people that are not Jews, when they turn to God. 20 We have to write them a letter, to tell them not to worry about getting that young man operation. But we'll tell them to follow just these rules,

– If somebody reckons that a statue is a god, and if they give food to that statue to show respect to it, don't eat any of that food.
– And don't sleep with somebody that you are not married to, as if they are your wife or husband.
– And if somebody holds an animal's neck really tight to kill it, don't eat its meat.
– And don't eat the blood of animals.*

21 You see, every Saturday the Jewish people read the law of Moses out loud in their meeting houses, and this happens in all the towns where those people live. They have been doing that for a long time, and people that are not Jews have already heard those rules."

The church leaders wrote to the Christians that are not Jews

22 Then Jesus's special workers, the church leaders, and all the Christians in Jerusalem picked 2 of their leaders to go with Paul and Barnabas, and take this news to the Christians in the city called Antioch, in Syria country. One man was Judas Barsabbas, and the other man was Silas. 23 So the church leaders wrote a letter for them to take with them. They wrote,

"This letter is from Jesus's special workers, and from the other church leaders in Jerusalem. We are writing to you Christian people that are not Jews, that live in Antioch, and in the rest of Syria country, and in Cilicia country. You are like brothers and sisters to us.

24 Listen, we heard that some men from here went to you and told you things that worried you and upset you. But those things are not true. We didn't send those men. 25 So we met together and picked some messengers, and we are sending them with our good friends Barnabas and Paul. 26 You know, Barnabas and Paul work for our leader Jesus Christ, and people

* **15:16-18** Amos 9:11-12 * **15:20** Exodus 34:15-17; Leviticus 17:10-16; 18:6-23

tried to kill them for doing that. 27 We are sending Judas and Silas with them, and they will tell you the same things that we are writing in this letter.

28 The Holy Spirit told us that you don't need to get that young man operation. And that's what we think too. So we are telling you to just follow these rules,

– 29 If somebody reckons that a statue is a god, and if they give food to that statue to show respect to it, don't eat any of that food.
– And don't eat the blood of animals.
– And if somebody holds an animal's neck really tight to kill it, don't eat its meat.
– And don't sleep with somebody that you are not married to, as if they are your wife or husband.

Make sure you don't do those things, and you will be all right.

That's our message to you now.

Goodbye."

30 Then Judas and Silas went with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch. They called all the Christians there to come to a meeting, then they gave them the letter. 31 Those Christians read that letter, and they were very happy. 32 Judas and Silas were men that told God's messages to people, and they talked a lot to those Christians. They helped them to be happy and to believe strongly in Jesus. 33 After that, Judas and Silas left Antioch to go back to the church in Jerusalem. The Antioch Christians said to them, "We pray you will have a safe and happy trip."

34-35 But Paul and Barnabas stayed there in Antioch, and they kept on teaching the people the message from God about Jesus. And a lot of other Christians helped them do that too.

Paul and Barnabas stopped working with each other

36 Some time later, Paul said to Barnabas, "You know all those towns we went to before, where we told the people the message about Jesus, well, let's go back and find out if the Christians are all right."

37 Barnabas said, "Yes. And let's take John Mark with us."

38 But Paul didn't think that was a good idea. He said, "John Mark went with us before, but he didn't stay with us. In Pamfilia country he left us and went home."*

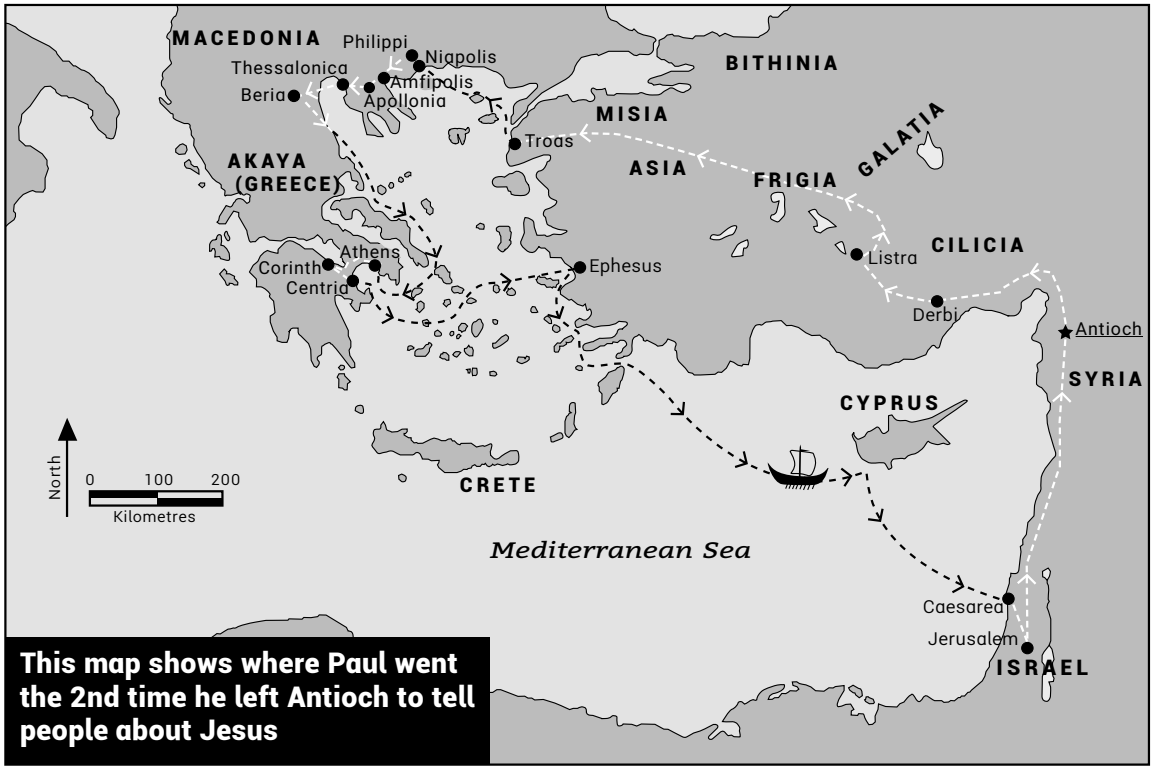
39 Paul and Barnabas didn't agree with each other about John Mark, and they had a big argument. They got very upset with each other, so they each went a different way. Barnabas and John Mark got on a ship and went to the island called Cyprus. 40-41 Paul picked Silas to go with him. The Antioch Christians asked God to look after Paul and Silas, then those 2 men left there and went through Syria and Cilicia countries. Paul talked to the Christians in every place, and he helped them be strong for Jesus.

Chapter 16

Paul, Silas and Timothy told people about Jesus in lots of towns

1 Then Paul and Silas went to the town called Derbi, and then to the town called Listra. A Christian man called Timothy lived in Listra. Timothy's mother was a Jew, and she believed in Jesus too, but Timothy's father was a Greek. 2 All the Christians there in Listra said that Timothy was a good man, and all the Christians in the town nearby, called Iconium, they said that too. 3 But the Jewish people in those places knew that Timothy's father was Greek, and they knew that the Greek people don't do a young man

* **15:38** Acts 13:13



This map shows where Paul went the 2nd time he left Antioch to tell people about Jesus

operation on their boys, like the Jewish people do. Paul wanted Timothy to go around with him to a lot of places, and he wanted the Jewish mob in every place to be happy with Timothy, so he got them to do a young man operation on Timothy.

4 Then Paul, Silas and Timothy went through that country, and in every town they told the Christians about the things that the leaders in Jerusalem talked about, and they told them all to do everything that those leaders said in their letter. 5 So the people in the churches in those places, they trusted Jesus more strongly, and every day more people joined them and trusted in Jesus too.

Paul had something like a dream and saw a man from Macedonia country

6 Paul and his friends wanted to tell the message about Jesus to the people in the country called Asia, but the Holy Spirit told them, "No, don't go there." So they went through the countries called Frigia and Galatia. 7 Then they got to the country called Misia, and they tried to go on into the next country, called Bithinia. But again the Holy Spirit said, "No, don't go there." 8 So they went past Misia and got to the town called Troas.

9 They stayed in Troas, and that night, Paul had something like a dream, but he was not asleep, he was still awake. He saw a man from Macedonia country. That man was standing there, and he was saying to Paul, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

10 I, Luke, joined with Paul and Silas there at Troas. After Paul saw that Macedonian man, we knew that God wanted us to tell the good news to the people in Macedonia, and we got ready to go there.

A woman called Lydia believed in Jesus

11 We got on a ship and went straight to the
town called Samothrace, and the next day
we got to the town called Niapolis. 12 We left
the ship there, and we went by road to the
town called Philippi, and we stayed there for
a few days. Philippi was the main town in
that part of Macedonia, and a lot of Roman
people lived there.

13 On the next Saturday, we went outside
the town to a place near the river. We
thought we might see some Jewish people
meeting there to pray. Some women were
there, and we sat down and talked with
them. 14 One woman was from the town
called Thiatira, and her name was Lydia.
Her job was to sell purple cloth. She was
a woman that respected God. Jesus helped
her to listen carefully to the things Paul
talked about, and she believed in Jesus.
15 Then we baptised Lydia and her family.
After that, Lydia asked us to come and stay
at her house. She said, "You mob know that
I really believe in our leader Jesus now, so
please come and stay at my house." She kept
on asking us until we agreed, so we stayed
at her house.

Paul got Jesus to force a bad spirit out of a young woman

16 On another day, we started to go to a place
where people meet together and pray to God.
There was a young woman on that road that
had a bad spirit in her. That spirit showed
her things that were going to happen to
people later on. Some men made this young
woman work for them with no pay. People
used to pay a lot of money to her bosses, and
then she told those people things that will
happen to them later.

17 That young woman saw Paul and the rest
of us going on that road, and she followed
us, and she kept on shouting, "These men
serve the God that is the greatest of all gods.
They can tell you what to do so that God
will save you and not punish you."

18 She kept on doing that for a lot of days.
In the end Paul got angry. He turned around
to the young woman and said to that bad
spirit, "My boss, Jesus Christ, says, 'Get out
of her.' " Then the bad spirit came out of that
young woman.

19 Her bosses saw this happen, and they
thought, "This is bad for us. Now she can't
tell anybody what will happen to them, and
she will not get us any more money." And her
bosses were angry with Paul and Silas. They
grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them to
the Roman judges in the middle of that town.

20 Her bosses said to the judges, "These
men are making a lot of trouble for everyone
in our town. They are Jews, 21 and they are
telling people to do things that our Roman
law says are wrong."

22 A lot of other people there joined that
woman's bosses and started blaming Paul
and Silas. Then the judges told their soldiers,
"Rip the shirts off Paul and Silas, and hit
them with sticks."

23 So the soldiers hit Paul and Silas really
hard with sticks, and then they put them
in the jail. They told the boss over that jail,
"Make sure Paul and Silas don't get away."
24 So the jail boss put them in a little room
that was right in the middle of that jail. He
made them sit down on the ground, and
then he locked their ankles between 2 big
bits of wood, so that Paul and Silas couldn't
move their legs.

Paul told the jail boss that God can save him

25 Later, in the middle of the night, Paul
and Silas were praying out loud to God and
saying that he is really good, and they were
singing songs to God. The other prisoners
were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there
was a very big earthquake. It shook the jail,
and even the cement underneath it, and all



Paul and Silas were praying and singing songs to God while they were in jail

the doors of the jail swung open, and all the chains fell off the arms and legs of all the prisoners.

27 The jail boss woke up and saw that the doors of the jail were open, and he thought, "All those prisoners ran away. I'm in big trouble now." So he got his big knife, and he was going to kill himself.

28 But Paul saw the jail boss and shouted to him, "Don't hurt yourself. We are all here."

29 The jail boss told somebody to bring some lights, then he ran into the jail and got down in front of Paul and Silas, to show them respect. He was so frightened that he was shaking. 30 Then he took Paul and Silas out of the jail, and he asked them, "Sirs, what can I do so that God will save me?"

31 They said, "Believe in Jesus, our leader, and God will save you. And he will do the same for your family too."

32 Then Paul and Silas told the jail boss and his family all about Jesus, and they all believed in Jesus. 33 Then, while it was still night time, the jail boss washed the sores on their backs, and Paul and Silas baptised the jail boss and his family. 34 Then the jail boss took Paul and Silas into his house, and he gave them some food to eat. And the jail boss and his family were all really happy because they believed in God.

Paul and Silas left Philippi

35 The next morning, the judges said to some policemen, "Go and tell the jail boss, 'You can let those 2 prisoners go now.' " Then the policemen went to the jail boss and told him that message.

36 So the jail boss told Paul, "The judges have sent a message telling me to let you and Silas go free. So you can go quietly out of the jail now."

37 But Paul said to the policemen, "No. Yesterday those judges didn't take us to court to find out if we did anything wrong, or not. They just told men to hit us in front of the crowd. Then they put us in jail. But that is against the Roman law, because we are Romans. You see, even though we are Jews, we are Romans too. Our names are on the list of all the Roman people. So those judges broke the Roman law yesterday. And now they want to send us away while nobody is looking. No way. Those judges have to come to us and tell us that they are sorry, and they have to take us out of this jail themselves."

38 So the policemen went and told the judges everything Paul said. As soon as those judges heard that Paul and Silas were not just Jews, but they were Romans too, they got frightened. Those judges knew they broke the Roman law. 39 So the judges came and talked easy to Paul and Silas. They said, "We are sorry about what happened yesterday." Then they took Paul and Silas out of that jail, and they kept on asking Paul and Silas to leave that town soon.

40 After that, Paul and Silas left the jail and went to Lydia's house. They met with her and with the other Christians there, and they told them to keep on trusting our leader Jesus. Then Paul and Silas left Philippi.

Chapter 17

Paul told people in Thessalonica about Jesus

1 Paul and Silas went through the towns
called Amfipolis and Apollonia, and they got
to a town called Thessalonica. There was a
Jewish meeting house there, 2-3 so Paul went
to that meeting house on the next Saturday
to tell the people about Jesus. He used to
do that in all the towns and cities that he
went to. Paul went to that meeting house
in Thessalonica each Saturday for 3 weeks,
and he read some parts of God's book and
talked about them to the people there. They
were the parts where God's men wrote about
the special man that God promised to send,
called the Christ. They wrote that people
will hurt God's special man, and kill him,
but then God will make him alive again.
And Paul said, "Jesus is that special man
that God sent to save us. People killed him,
but God made him alive again."

4 A lot of people there believed that message
about Jesus, and they joined Paul and Silas.
Some of those people were Jews, and some of
them were not Jews but they respected God,
and a lot of them were important women.

Some Jewish people made trouble for Paul and Silas

5 But some of the Jewish people there were
jealous of Paul. So they went to the middle
of the town and found some trouble makers,
and they lied to those trouble makers and
told them that Paul and Silas were bad
people. Then that mob of trouble makers
started shouting and saying bad things about
Paul and Silas. Some of them went into the
house that belonged to a Christian man. His
name was Jason. They were looking for Paul
and Silas, to drag them outside, so that the
mob could beat them up. 6 They couldn't find
Paul and Silas in that house, so they grabbed
Jason, and some of the other Christians there,
and they dragged them to the town bosses.
They shouted, "Those 2 men, Paul and Silas,
they make trouble everywhere, and now they
have come to our town to make trouble here
too." 7 And they said, "All this Christian mob
are against everything that our big boss in
Rome tells us to do. They reckon Jesus is
really the biggest boss. And this man here,
Jason, he is letting them stay at his house."

8 The town bosses, and all the people there,
they heard that story, and they got angry.
9 The town bosses forced Jason and the other
Christians to pay some money, and they told
them, "You can only get your money back if
Paul and Silas don't make any more trouble."
Then the bosses let Jason and those other
Christians go.

Paul told people in Beria about Jesus

10 Then, that same night, the Thessalonica
Christians sent Paul and Silas out of their
town, to another town called Beria. As soon
as Paul and Silas got to that town, they went
to the Jewish meeting house to talk to the
people there. 11 The Jewish people that lived
in Beria listened to the message about Jesus,
and they wanted to hear more, and they
thought about it carefully. They were not
like the Jews in Thessalonica. The Beria
people read God's book every day to find
out if Paul's message was true. 12 So a lot of
those Jewish people believed in Jesus, and
some of the important women and men that
were not Jews believed in Jesus too.

Jewish people from Thessalonica made trouble for Paul

13 But the Jewish people in Thessalonica
heard that Paul was in Beria telling people
God's message about Jesus, so they went to
Beria and made trouble for Paul. And they
got a lot of other people to make trouble too.
14 So some of the Christian men in Beria took
Paul out of that town, but Silas and Timothy

stayed in Beria. Those Christian men took Paul down to the sea, and they went on a ship to the city called Athens. 15 Then Paul said to the men that took him to Athens, "As soon as you get back to Beria, tell Silas and Timothy to come to me here. Tell them to hurry and come here as soon as they can." Then those men left Paul in Athens and went back to Beria.

Paul was upset by all the statues in Athens

16 Paul was in Athens waiting for Silas and Timothy to come, and he walked around in that city. He saw a lot of statues everywhere, and he saw that people thought they were gods. They respected them and prayed to them. That upset Paul a lot. 17 So he went to the Jewish meeting house a lot, and he talked with the people there about Jesus. Some of those people were Jews, and some of them were Greeks that believed in God. And every day Paul went to the place in the middle of the city, where there were a lot of people, and he talked about Jesus to the people that he met there.

Paul talked to the Athens people about Jesus

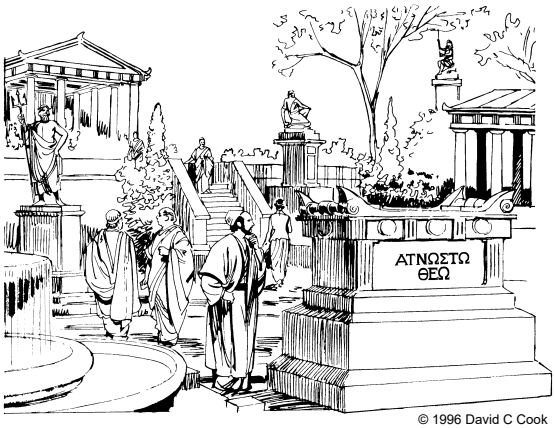
18 Some of that Athens mob always thought about the best way to live, and they always talked to other people about it. Some of them were called Epicurians, and some of them were called Stoics. They talked to Paul, and he told them about Jesus. Paul said that Jesus died, and that God made him alive again. Some of that mob said, "This man is just talking rubbish." Others said, "We think he is talking about gods from other countries."

19 So they took Paul to a meeting of the city council, and they asked him, "What are you telling everyone? Tell us what this new message is all about. 20 We are surprised when we hear some of the things you say, and we want to understand what you mean." 21 You see, the Athens people, and the people from other places that lived there, they liked to talk about new ideas all the time, and they liked to hear anything new that other people told them.

Paul told the Athens council about the God that they didn't know

22 Then Paul stood up and talked to the council mob at Athens. He said, "I can see that you Athens mob think a lot about gods. 23 I walked around this city, and I saw a lot of statues that you set up, to show respect to a lot of gods. And I saw a stone table that you set up, and you wrote on it, 'This is for that god that we don't know.' Look, you don't know that God, but you show respect to him anyway. Listen, I do know him, so now I want to tell you all about him. I'll tell you about that God that you don't know.

24 He is the God that made all the world, and he made everything in the world. He is the boss over everybody everywhere. He is boss up in the sky, and he is boss down here on the ground. So nobody can build a house big enough for him to live in. *



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The people in Athens had a stone table for the god that they didn't know

* **17:24** 1 Kings 8:27; Acts 7:48

25 And he doesn't need us to do anything
for him. You see, he is the one that makes
us alive, and he gives us our breath, and he
gives us everything we need. *
26 At first he just made one man, then later
he made all of us from that man. All of us in
every tribe everywhere were born into that
man's family. And God gave each tribe their
own country, and he planned where they
will live and how long they will live there.
27 He did that so that we can look for him,
and maybe we can find him. But really, he
is not very far away from any of us. 28 That
old story is true that says, 'He is with us all
the time. He is the one that makes us alive,
so that we can walk about and do things.'
And even one of your own Athens people
wrote something about him. He wrote,

'We are his kids.'

29 So, if it is true that we are God's kids,
we shouldn't just dream up something and
then make a statue like that from gold or
silver or stone, and say, 'My god looks like
this.' No way. Nobody can make any sort of
statue that is anything like God.
30 You see, at first people didn't know about
God, but at that time he didn't worry about
it. Now it is different. Now he says to all of
us, that we have to turn around and stop
doing bad things. 31 And if we don't stop
doing bad things, he will give us big trouble.
He is going to have a big court, and all of us
will have to stand in front of the judge. He
has already set the date for that. It will be a
fair court, and he has picked one man to be
the judge. That man died, but God made him
alive again. God did that to show everybody
that he picked that man to be the big judge."

Some council people believed in Jesus

32 The council men heard Paul say that a
man died and then came alive again, and
some of those council men laughed at Paul.
Some others said, "You can tell us more
about this later, at some other time." 33 So
Paul left that council meeting. 34 But some of
the others believed what Paul said, and they
believed in Jesus. One of them was a council
man called Dionisius. And another one was
an important woman called Damaris. And
there were some other people that believed
in Jesus too.

Chapter 18

Paul went to the city called Corinth

1 After that, Paul left Athens, and he went
to a city called Corinth. 2 In Corinth, he met
a Jewish man and his wife. His name was
Aquila, and her name was Priscilla. Aquila
was born in a country called Pontus, but he
used to live in a city called Rome. Before this
time, the big boss in Rome, called Claudius,
told all the Jewish people to get out of Rome.
So Aquila and Priscilla left Rome and went
to live in Corinth.
3 Aquila and Priscilla made tents. That was
their work. And Paul made tents too, so
he stayed with them in Corinth, and they
worked together.
4 Every Saturday the Jews in Corinth met
together in the Jewish meeting house there.
Paul met with them there too. He talked a
lot with those Jewish people, and he talked
to the Greek people there too. He tried to
get them to believe in Jesus.
5 Then Silas and Timothy came to Corinth
from Macedonia country, and after that, Paul
spent all of his time telling God's good news
to the Jewish people. He told them, "Jesus
is the Christ, the man that God promised to
send to save us." 6 But those Jewish people
wouldn't listen to Paul, and they said bad
things about him. So Paul shook the dirt

* **17:25** Isaiah 42:5

from his clothes, to show them that they were wrong, and he said to them, "I told you God's good news, but you didn't listen. So you can't blame me for anything that happens to you now. You can only blame yourselves. From now on, I will go and tell God's word to the people that are not Jews."

7 So Paul stopped going to the Jewish meeting house, and he moved to live with a man that was not a Jew, but he respected God. His name was Titius Justus, and he lived in the house next door to the Jewish meeting house. 8 Another man, Crispus, was the boss of the Jewish meeting house. Crispus and everyone in his family believed in Jesus. And a lot of other people in Corinth heard Paul talk about Jesus, and they believed in him too. So the other Christians baptised them all in water.

9 One night, Paul had something like a dream, and our leader Jesus said to him, "Don't be frightened, but keep on telling the people in this city about me. Don't stop talking about me. 10 I am with you, and nobody will attack you. Nobody will hurt you. You see, I've got a lot of people in this city." 11 So Paul kept on teaching God's word to people in Corinth. He stayed there and did that for one and a half years.

A Roman boss didn't judge Paul

12 Later on, a new man became the Roman boss over Corinth, and of the country around it, called Akaya. That new boss's name was Gallio. The Jewish leaders got together, and they grabbed Paul, and they took him to the judge's seat in the court house of that new boss. They blamed Paul, 13 and they told that boss, "This man is teaching people wrong. He is telling them to break our Jewish law. He is telling them the wrong way to show respect to God."

14-15 Then Paul got up to talk, but Gallio said, "Wait." And he said to the Jewish leaders, "I will not listen to you mob. You are only arguing about words, and names, and your own Jewish laws. I will not judge those Jewish things. You mob look after that yourselves. This man didn't do anything bad, and he didn't break our Roman law, so I will not listen to you." 16 Then Gallio sent those Jewish leaders away from the judge's seat.

17 There were people watching that court, and they grabbed the leader of a Jewish meeting house. His name was Sosthenes. They beat him up right there in front of the judge's seat. Gallio saw them hitting him, but he didn't do anything to stop them.

Priscilla and Aquila went to Ephesus with Paul

18 Paul kept on living in Corinth for some time, then he said *goodbye* to the Christians there, and he went to the town called Centria, and Priscilla and Aquila went with him. After they got to Centria, Paul cut all the hair off his head. You see, at some time before this, Paul made a strong promise to God, and then at this time, he did what he promised to do. And in Jewish culture, after people finish doing what they promise to God, they cut off their hair.* After that, Paul got on a ship to go to Syria country, and Priscilla and Aquila went with him.

19-21 That ship stopped half-way, at a town called Ephesus. They got off that ship there, and Paul went into the Jewish meeting house in Ephesus, and he talked to the Jewish people there. They asked him to stay there longer, but he said, "No, sorry, I've got to say *goodbye* and keep going. But if God wants me to come back here one day, I will come back." Then he got on a ship to go to Syria country, and he sailed away from Ephesus. But Priscilla and Aquila stayed there.

Acts

* **18:18** Numbers 6:18



This map shows where Paul went the 3rd time he left Antioch to tell people about Jesus

Paul went to Jerusalem, then to other places

22 Paul stayed on that ship until he got to the town called Caesarea. Then he left the ship, and he kept going by road to Jerusalem city, and he said *hello* to the Christians there. Then he went north to Antioch, a city in Syria country.

23 Paul spent some time with the Christians in Antioch, then he left and went again to Galatia and Frigia countries. He taught the Christians in those places more about Jesus, to make them strong for him.

Priscilla and Aquila told Apollos more about Jesus

24-26 At that time, there was a Jewish man living in a town called Alexandria. His name was Apollos. Somebody there taught him some things about Jesus. He could talk really good, and he knew God's book properly, and he liked to teach people about Jesus. He taught them the things he knew, but he didn't know the whole story about Jesus. He only knew the message John the Baptiser taught to people.

Apollos went to Ephesus, and he went to the Jewish meeting house there, and he talked strongly to everyone, and he told them all the things that he knew about Jesus. Priscilla and Aquila heard him talk, and they said to him, "Come with us, and we will tell you more about Jesus." So he went with them, and they told him the rest of the story about Jesus, and they told him how God saves people.

Apollos helped the Christians in Akaya country

27 Later on, Apollos told the other Christians in Ephesus, "I want to go to Akaya country."

They said, "That's good. You go there." And they wrote a letter to the Christians in Akaya, and told them, "Be friendly to Apollos." So Apollos went to the city called Corinth in Akaya country.

Before that time, God was good to some of the Corinth people, and he helped them believe in Jesus. After Apollos got to Corinth, he really helped those new Christians there. 28 But some of the Jewish leaders didn't believe in Jesus, so Apollos argued strongly with them all the time. And he talked to everyone, showing them that God's book tells us about the man that God promised to send to save us, the man that is called the Christ. And he showed them that Jesus is that man.

Chapter 19

Paul helped some men follow Jesus

1 At that time, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul was visiting places in Frigia country and Galatia country. Then Paul left those places and went through Asia country, then he went on to the town called Ephesus. He met some men there that reckoned they were Christians. 2 Paul asked them, "Did the Holy Spirit come into you when you believed God's message?"

They said, "No, he didn't. We don't know anything about the Holy Spirit. We've never heard of him."

3 So Paul asked them, "Who baptised you, and why did they do it?"

They said, "We got John the Baptiser to baptise us, to show we were sorry for doing bad things."

4 Paul said, "John baptised people that turned away from doing bad things. But he also told people to believe in the man that was coming after him. That man is Jesus."*

5 Those men heard that story about Jesus, and they believed in him too. Then the Christians baptised them to show that those men were following Jesus, their leader. 6 Then Paul put his hands on their heads, and the Holy Spirit came into each one of them. The Holy Spirit gave them the power to talk in different languages. And the Holy Spirit gave them messages, and they told everyone those messages. 7 There were about 12 men in that mob.

People in Asia country heard about Jesus

8 For the next 3 months, Paul went to the meetings that the Jewish people had in their meeting house in Ephesus, and he talked strongly to the people there. He tried to get them to understand how God takes people into his family. 9 Some of those people believed that message about Jesus. But some of them didn't believe it, and they didn't want to keep on hearing it, so they stood up in front of everybody and said bad things about the Christian people. (Another name for the Christians was the *Jesus Way* mob.)

So Paul left the Jewish meeting house, and he took the Christians with him. They didn't go to the Jewish meeting house any more, but they had their meetings in a meeting house called *Tiranus Hall*. Paul was there every day, and he talked with people there about Jesus. 10 He kept on doing that for 2 years, so people from all over that country called Asia heard God's message about Jesus. Both Jewish people and Greek people heard that message about Jesus.

God gave Paul a lot of power

11 And God gave Paul the power to do great things that nobody else can do. 12 He made sick people better, even if they couldn't come

* **19:4** Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:4, 7-8; Luke 3:4, 16; John 1:26-27

to him. Their friends got things that he touched, like handkerchiefs or aprons, and they took them and put them on those sick people. Then those sick people got better, and bad spirits came out of them.

Some men that were not Christians tried to use Jesus's power

13-14 There were also some Jewish people there that were not Christians, and they went around to a lot of places, and in each place they tried to get bad spirits to come out of people. There were 7 men that were doing that. They were sons of Sceva, a boss of the Jewish ceremonies. They went into a house and said to a man that had a bad spirit, "I'm using the power of Jesus, the man that Paul talks about, and I'm telling you to come out of this man."

15 But that bad spirit didn't come out. He said to those men, "I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but I don't know you mob." 16 Then the man that had the bad spirit jumped on those 7 men, and he knocked all of them down, and he tore their clothes off, and he beat them up. They all ran out of the house to get away from him.

17 All the people that lived in Ephesus heard that story about those 7 men. Jewish people heard that story, and Greek people heard it too, and they all got really frightened, and they really respected Jesus, and they said good things about him.

Christians burned their books about bad magic

18-19 At that time, some of the Christians in Ephesus were still doing bad things, and some of them used to sing people and curse people. They had a lot of books that showed them how to do that bad magic. Those Christians heard about those 7 men, and then they said that they were sorry for the bad things that they were doing, and they



Christians in Ephesus burned their books about bad magic

gathered up all of those books about magic, and they burned them. Everybody saw them burn those books. Those books about magic cost a lot of money. They reckoned all of those books together cost about 5 million dollars. 20 That's how the message about Jesus got very powerful, and a lot of people heard that message.

Some work-men got money from people that respected a woman god

21 After those things happened, Paul wanted to visit the Christians in Macedonia country and Akaya country again, and then he wanted to go on to Jerusalem after that. And he said, "After I go to Jerusalem, I have to go to Rome too." 22 Timothy and Erastus were his helpers at that time. Paul sent them ahead of him to Macedonia country, but Paul stayed a little while longer in Ephesus, in Asia country.

23 Soon after that, some of the people in Ephesus tried to make a lot of trouble for the Christians, the *Jesus Way* mob. 24 There was a man there that used silver to make little models of the special house of a woman god called Artemis. That man's name was Demetrius. And there were other men there that made those little house models too.

They sold them to people that respected Artemis, and they got a lot of money from that business.

Demetrius got a lot of people to go wild

25 Demetrius had a meeting with his work-men and the other men that made things for that god called Artemis. Demetrius said to them, "Men, you know that we make these things and we sell them for a lot of money. 26 But that man, Paul, he talks to big mobs of people, and he says, 'Don't buy those things. Those statues that people say are gods, they are not gods at all. It was people that made them, so don't show respect to them.' Lots of people here in Ephesus listened to him, and now even the people from other towns in this Asia country agree with him, and they don't want to buy the things we make. 27 If people keep on listening to Paul, we'll soon go broke. And not only that, but people will reckon they don't have to come to the special house of Artemis to show respect to her. People all over our Asia country and everywhere show respect to our great woman god Artemis, but soon people might not think that Artemis is great at all."



Demetrius was angry with Paul, so he had a meeting with the work-men

28 All the men there heard Demetrius say that, and then they were very angry with Paul. They started to shout, "Artemis is very great. She is the god of us Ephesus mob."

29 A lot of the other people in the town heard them shouting, and they went and joined those men and started shouting too. They got angry with Paul, and they grabbed the 2 men from Macedonia that used to go around with Paul. Their names were Guyus and Aristarkus. They dragged those 2 men to the sports oval of that town. 30 Paul wanted to go there too, to talk to the people, but the other Christians wouldn't let him do that. 31 There were some government officials of that country that were friends with Paul. They heard that those people went wild, so they sent him a message to tell him strongly, "Don't go to that sports oval. That mob are too wild. They might kill you."

The wild mob kept on shouting for 2 hours

32 That big mob of people were a bit mixed up. Some of them shouted one thing, and some of them shouted something else. But most of them didn't even know what the meeting was about. 33 One of the Jewish men there was called Alexander. Some people there pushed him to the front so that he could talk to the crowd of people. So Alexander held up his hand, to get the mob to be quiet.

34 But some of that mob knew that Alexander was a Jew, and that the Jews didn't show respect to Artemis, so they shouted, "Artemis is very great. She is the god of us Ephesus mob." And that mob kept on shouting like that for about 2 hours.

An important government leader got the mob to settle down

35 Then an important government leader in that town got the mob to stop shouting, and he said to them, "Listen, Ephesus people, everyone knows that we Ephesus people

look after the special house for Artemis, the great woman god. And everyone knows that we look after the statue of her that fell down from the sky. 36 Nobody can say that those things are not true. So you have to be quiet now. Don't do anything that will make trouble for us. 37 Why did you bring these 2 men here? They didn't do anything bad. They didn't go into the special houses for our gods and take things from there. And they didn't say anything bad about our woman god. 38 If Demetrius and his mates want to blame anyone about anything bad, they have to do it the right way. They have to go to the judges in the courts. If anybody wants to blame somebody else, those judges are ready to listen. That's their job. 39 Or if anybody wants to complain about something else, there are other government bosses that can meet together and think about that problem. 40 You see, you mob now are not a proper meeting, and if the big Roman bosses hear about all this trouble, they might say that we Ephesus people are trying to start a fight against the Roman government. If they ask me about all this trouble, I will not know what to tell them."

41 Then the government leader told the mob, "You can all go home now." And they all went away from that sports oval.


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An important government leader in Ephesus got the mob to settle down

Chapter 20

Paul went to the countries called Macedonia and Greece

1 Everyone in the mob went home, then Paul asked all the Christians to meet with him. He said to them, "I'm going to Macedonia country now. You have to always keep on believing in Jesus, and always be strong for him. I'm going now. Goodbye."

Then Paul left and went to Macedonia country. 2 He visited all the Christians in the towns and cities in Macedonia, and he told them a lot of things to help them be strong for Jesus.

Then he kept going and went to Akaya country. Another name for that country is Greece. 3 Paul stayed in Greece for 3 months. Then he got ready to go back to Syria on a ship. But he heard that some Jewish men were going to try to kill him, so he changed his mind and didn't go on that ship. Instead, he went by road through Macedonia country again. 4-5 Paul had some friends that were going with him, but at that time they didn't go with him by road. They got on that ship and went to the town called Troas and waited for Paul there. Those men were,

- Sopater. He grew up in the town called Beria, and his father's name was Pirus.
- Aristarkus and Secundus, 2 men from Thessalonica.
- Guyus, from Derbi.
- Timothy, from Galatia country.
- Tikicus and Trofimus, 2 men from Asia country.

Those men waited for Paul in Troas.

Luke, the man writing this story, went with Paul to Troas

6 I went with Paul by road to the town called Philippi, and we stayed there. Then the time came for the Jewish people to have their flat

damper ceremony, and after that, we got on a ship and sailed for 5 days. Then we got to the town called Troas, and we met the other men that were waiting for us there. We stayed in Troas for 7 days.

7 On the Sunday, the Christians at Troas got together after the sun went down, to eat food together to remember that Jesus died for them. And we met together with them. Paul started talking to the Christians, and he kept on talking for a long time, right up until the middle of the night. You see, he was going to leave Troas the next day. 8 We were meeting in an upstairs room. It was 3 floors high. There were a lot of oil lamps burning in that room, and the smoke made some people get sleepy. 9 There was a young man sitting there at an open window. His name was Yutikus. Paul kept on talking for a long time, and Yutikus got very sleepy. Then he went properly to sleep, and he fell out of that window, all the way down 3 floors, to the ground. Some people went down to pick him up, but he was dead. 10 Paul went down too, and he lay down and put his arms around the young man, and he pressed himself against him. Then he said, "Don't worry, he is alive." And that was true. That young man came alive again.

11 Then Paul and the other people there went back upstairs again, and we all ate food together to remember that Jesus died for us. Then Paul talked with the Christians until the sun started to come up. Then he left them and went to the ship. 12 Then everyone went home, and they took the young man home too. He was alive again, so everyone was happy.

Paul left Troas and went to Miletus

13 Then we went back to the ship, but Paul didn't get on the ship with us. He wanted to go by road to the town called Assos. The rest of us got on the ship and sailed to Assos. 14 We met Paul there, and he got on the ship with us, then we all sailed to the town called Mitilini. 15 The next day, we kept going, and we sailed to a place near Kios Island. And the next day, we sailed past Ephesus to Samos Island. The next day, we left Samos Island and sailed to the town called Miletus, and we stopped there. 16 You see, Paul was in a hurry to go to Jerusalem, so he didn't want to stop at Ephesus and stay with the people there in Asia. It was nearly time for the Jewish ceremony called Pentecost, and Paul wanted to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost time.

Paul talked to the Christian leaders of Ephesus

17 So after the ship arrived at Miletus, Paul sent a message to Ephesus to get the church leaders to come and talk with him at the ship.

18 After they got there, Paul talked to them. He said, "Each one of you knows the good way that I lived, all the time that I was here with you in Asia country, from the first day that I was here until the day that I left.



Paul got the Christian leaders from Ephesus to come and talk to him

19 You know the way I worked for our leader
Jesus. I didn't try to make myself important,
and sometimes I cried when people went
wrong. And you know that some of the
Jewish people here tried to hurt me. 20 And
you know that I told you all of God's message,
everything that will help you. I didn't keep
anything secret. I taught you God's message
in places where everyone heard me, and I
taught you in your homes too. 21 I talked to
everyone. I talked to Jewish people and to
people that are not Jews. I told all of them,
'You have to turn to God and stop doing bad
things, and believe in our leader Jesus.' "

Paul told some Christians, "You will not see me again"

22 Paul kept on talking to them. He said,
"And now I want to tell you this. God's spirit
clearly showed me that I have to go to
Jerusalem, so I'm going there. I don't know
what will happen to me at Jerusalem. 23 But I
do know that in each town I went to, up until
now, the Holy Spirit told me that the people
in Jerusalem will hurt me and put me in
prison. 24 But I will keep going to Jerusalem
anyway. I want to finish the work that our
leader Jesus told me to do. I have to tell
people the good news, that God is good to
us, and that he saves us. I really don't care
about myself, I don't even care if they kill
me, so long as I can tell them that good news.
25 In the past I told you all how to join
God's family, and I taught you about Jesus,
but I can't do that any more. I know that
none of you will see me again. 26 So I want
you all to understand that if any of you don't
end up in God's family, you can't blame me.
27 I told you all everything that God wants to
do for you. 28 Now you leaders have to make
sure you keep on following Jesus properly,
and you have to help God's people to follow
him properly too. The Holy Spirit picked
you to be their leaders, so look after them
properly. Remember, God bought his people
with the blood of his own son.
29-30 I know that after I go away from here,
other people will come to you, and they
will teach you lies. They will try to trick all
of God's people. They will be like cheeky
dingoes that kill sheep. Even in your own
group of Christians, some men will get up
and say things to trick other Christians.
They will change the true story and tell
it wrong, so they can get people to follow
them. 31 So watch out. Make sure each one of
you keeps on believing the true story about
Jesus. Remember, I was here with you for
3 years, and in all that time, I always told
you not to believe a different message. And
when I thought that you were going wrong,
I even cried about you."

Paul asked God to look after the Christian leaders

32 Paul kept on talking. He said, "Now I'm
asking God to keep you safe, and to keep you
believing the true message that God is very
good to you and will save you. If you keep on
believing that message, you will grow strong
for God, and you will know that you are in
God's family, and God will give you the good
life that he is keeping for his own people.
33-34 Listen, you mob know me. You saw
the way that I lived when I was with you. I
showed you the right way for a Christian to
live. I never wanted to get anyone's money
or good clothes. I always worked to get the
money that I needed, and to get money
for my friends too. 35 I did everything in a
way that showed you that we all have to
work hard to get enough money, not just for
ourselves, but to give some to people that
don't have the things they need. We have
to remember that our leader, Jesus, said, 'If
people give things to you, that can make
you a bit happy. But if you give things to
other people, you will be properly happy.' "

The leaders said goodbye to Paul, and they were very sad

36 Paul finished talking, then he got down on
his knees with all of those Christian leaders,
to show respect to God, and he prayed with
them. 37 They all cried a lot, and they hugged
Paul and kissed him. 38 You see, they heard
Paul say that they wouldn't see him again,
and that made them very sad.

Then they all went with him to the ship.

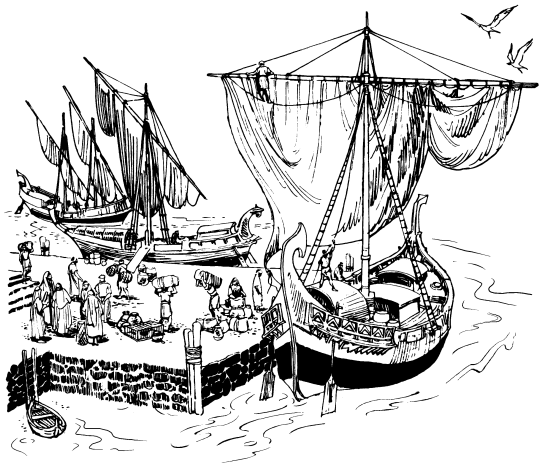
Chapter 21

Luke, the man writing this story, went with Paul to Tyre

1 We were very sad, but we had to say
goodbye to the Christian leaders of Ephesus.
Then Paul and the rest of us got on the
ship, and we sailed to the island called Cos.
The next day, we sailed to the island called
Rhodes. And then, the next day, we sailed
to the town called Patara, and we stopped
there. 2 That ship wasn't going to Fonisha
country, so we got off it and got on another
ship. 3 We sailed on that ship until we could
see the island called Cyprus, and we went
past it, on its south side, and we kept sailing
until we got to Syria country. Then the ship
stopped at a town called Tyre, and they
started to unload it there.

Christians told Paul not to go to Jerusalem, but he kept going anyway

4 While the ship was at Tyre for the workers
to unload it, we got off it, and we found the
Christians there, and we stayed with them for
7 days. God's Holy Spirit told those Christians
to tell Paul, "Don't go to Jerusalem." So they
told him that, but Paul wanted to keep going
to Jerusalem. 5 The ship workers finished
unloading the ship, and then it was time for
it to leave, so we went back to the sea shore



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The workers had to unload the ship in Tyre

to get on the ship. All the Christian men, and
their wives and kids, they all went with us to
the sea shore. We all got down on our knees
there on the sand, to show respect to God,
and we prayed. 6 After that, we said *goodbye*
to those other Christians, then we got on the
ship, and the others went back to their homes.

Paul left Tyre and went to Caesarea

7 We left Tyre on that ship, and we sailed
to a town called Tolemayis. There were
Christians in that town too, so we went and
said *hello* to them, and we stayed with them
that night. 8 The next day, we got back on
the ship, and we left Tolemayis and sailed
to the town called Caesarea. We left the
ship there and went to Philip's place, and
we stayed with him. He was a man that was
always telling other people how to become
followers of Jesus. (A few years before this,
the Christians in Jerusalem picked 7 men
to take care of the Christian widows, and
Philip was one of those men.* 9 He had 4
daughters that were not married. Each of
them had power from the Holy Spirit to tell
God's special messages to people.)

* **21:8** Acts 6:5; 8:5

The Christians couldn't stop Paul going to Jerusalem

10 A few days later, a Christian man came there from Judea country. His name was Agabus. He had power from the Holy Spirit to tell God's special messages to people. * 11 He came to us, and he took off Paul's belt. Then he tied his own feet and hands together with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says this, 'See the man that owns this belt. The Jewish leaders in Jerusalem will tie him up, just like this, and they will give him as a prisoner to the people that are not Jews.' "

12 The rest of us heard him say that, then we all talked really strongly to Paul. We said, "Please don't go to Jerusalem."

13 But Paul said, "Stop crying and trying to make me change my mind. Stop telling me not to go to Jerusalem. I work for our leader Jesus, so I'm ready for people to put me in prison in Jerusalem, and I'm even ready for them to kill me."

14 Then we knew that Paul wouldn't listen to us, so we stopped trying to tell him not to go to Jerusalem. We just said, "All right. We want our leader, Jesus, to do whatever he wants to do."

Paul went on to Jerusalem

15 After a few days we got ready and left Caesarea, and we went to Jerusalem. 16 Some of the Christians from Caesarea went with us too. They took us to stay in the house of Mason. He was a man from Cyprus Island. He was a Christian for a long time. He became a Christian when people were first starting to hear the message about Jesus.

17 After we arrived in Jerusalem the Christians there were happy to see us and say *hello* to us.

Paul agreed to do a Jewish ceremony

18 The next day, we went with Paul to talk to James, one of the Christian leaders. All of the other Christian leaders in Jerusalem were there too. 19 Paul said *hello* to them, and then he told them about all of the things that God helped him do in the countries of the people that are not Jews. 20 After they heard his story, James and the other leaders said to God, "Thank you God. You are great."

Then they said to Paul, "Listen, brother, there are thousands of Jewish people here that believe in Jesus, and they are very careful to do everything in the law that Moses gave us. 21 But we have heard people say that you tell the Jewish Christians in those other countries to stop following our law. Those people reckon you tell Jewish people not to do a young man operation on their sons, and they reckon you tell Jewish people to stop doing other things from our culture. Look, we know their story isn't true, 22 but some of the other Jewish people here believe that story about you. And those people will hear that you came here, and they might be angry with you. So you need to do something to show everyone that the story they heard about you is not true.

23 So listen. Do this to show everyone that story is not true. You see, there are 4 men among us that have promised something to God, so they have to buy things to do a ceremony to make themselves clean. 24 So you join those men, and go with them to God's ceremony house, and do that ceremony with them, and pay for the things they buy. Then they can shave their heads. That's our culture, to show that they have done everything they promised to do. And the people will see you do all that with those men at God's ceremony house, and they will know that the things people told them

* **21:10** Acts 11:28

about you are not true, and they will know that you do everything in our Jewish law and culture.* 25 We leaders know that the Christians that are not Jews don't have to do everything in our Jewish law, and we wrote them a letter about it. But we told them,

– If somebody reckons that a statue is a god, and if they give food to that statue to show respect to it, don't eat any of that food.
– And don't eat the blood of animals.
– And if somebody holds an animal's neck really tight to kill it, don't eat meat from that animal.
– And don't sleep with somebody that you are not married to, as if they are your wife or husband.

That's what we wrote in our letter."*

26 Paul listened to everything they said, and he agreed to do that ceremony with those 4 men. The next day, he got them together, and they started to do the ceremony to make themselves clean. After that, Paul went to God's ceremony house, and he told the leader of the Jewish ceremonies the date they will finish that ceremony and give animals to God for each of them, the way they do in Jewish culture.

Some Jews grabbed Paul

27-29 Paul and the other 4 men had to do that ceremony for 7 days to make themselves clean. Just before it finished, Paul walked along the road with a man that was not a Jew. His name was Trofimus. Some Jewish people from Asia country saw them together, and they thought that Paul took Trofimus into God's ceremony house, and that was against their Jewish law. The next day, Paul went back to God's ceremony house, and those Asia Jews saw him there. They called out to the other Jews there. They shouted, "You Jewish men, come and help us punish this man. This is the man that teaches people everywhere to rubbish us Jewish people, and our law, and he tells them not to respect this ceremony house. He even brought a man that is not a Jew into it, so now it is not clean any more." Then all those Jewish people got angry with Paul, and they grabbed him.*

30 A lot of people everywhere in that city heard that there was trouble in God's ceremony house, and they ran there. They all grabbed Paul and dragged him outside. Then straight away, the guards shut the gates of God's ceremony house.

Roman soldiers stopped the mob from killing Paul

31 That mob started hitting Paul, trying to kill him. Somebody went to the big Roman boss and said, "The people in Jerusalem are going wild." 32 So he quickly got a big mob of soldiers, and some boss soldiers, and they all ran to the mob that was hitting Paul. The mob saw the Roman soldiers and their big boss, so they stopped hitting Paul.

The soldiers took Paul to their big house

33 Then the big boss told his soldiers to grab Paul and tie him up with 2 chains. Then he asked that mob, "Who is this man, and what did he do?"

34 Some of the people there started shouting one thing, and some of them started shouting something else, and they kept on shouting really loud. There was too much noise, and the big boss soldier couldn't understand them. So he told the soldiers, "Take him into your big house."

35 Then the soldiers took Paul away, and a lot of people followed them. Those people were trying to hit Paul all the time. The soldiers got to the steps of their big house,

* **21:23-24** Numbers 6:13-21 * **21:25** Acts 15:29 * **21:27-29** Acts 20:4

and the boss told them to carry Paul up the steps into their house. 36 The mob kept on shouting, "Kill him. Kill him."

37 The soldiers started to take him into their house, but Paul talked to the boss in the Greek language. He said, "Can I talk to you?"

The boss said, "Can you talk Greek? 38 I reckon you are that man from Egypt country, that fights against us Romans. You got lots of other men to join you, and you took 4,000 of those men to the desert to get ready to fight us. We call you mob the Murderers, because you are always killing people. Am I right? You are that man from Egypt, right?"

39 Paul said, "I'm not that man. I am a Jew from Tarsus, and Tarsus is an important town in Cilicia country. Please, can I talk to these people?"

40 The boss said, "All right. You can talk to them."

So Paul stood on the steps and held up his hand to get everyone to be quiet, and after they all stopped shouting, Paul talked to them in their own language, called Hebrew.

Chapter 22

Paul told the mob his story

1 Paul said, "You mob are Jewish, and I am Jewish. I respect you like you are my family. Please listen to me now while I tell you that I haven't done anything wrong."

2 All those people heard Paul talking to them in their own Hebrew language, so they settled down and became quiet, and they listened to him.

Then Paul said to them, 3 "I am a Jew, just like you. I was born in Tarsus, in Cilicia country, but I grew up here in Jerusalem. I was a young man here, and I learned all our laws. You know Gamaliyel. You know he is a really good teacher, right? Well, he taught me all the laws that Moses gave to our grand-fathers. And I wanted to always do everything God says, so I never broke any of those laws. I'm sure that all you mob properly follow those laws too.* 4 And I used to hurt anyone that followed Jesus, all those people that belonged to the *Jesus Way* mob. Whenever I found them, I grabbed them and put them in jail. I did that to men and women. I wanted to kill those people.*

5 The big boss of our Jewish ceremonies knows that, and so do the other men that belong to our Jewish Leaders Council. They gave me letters to take to our Jewish countrymen in Damascus. Those letters said that it was all right for me to grab the Christians there, and tie them up, and bring them to Jerusalem, for our leaders here to punish them.

So I got some other men to join me, and we were going along the road to Damascus. 6 In the middle of the day, we were getting close to Damascus, and suddenly a bright light from the sky shined all around me. 7 The light was so bright that I fell down to the ground. Then I heard the voice of somebody talking to me from the sky. He said, 'Saul. Saul. Why are you making trouble for me and hurting me?'

8 I asked him, 'Who are you, boss?'

He said, 'I am Jesus, from Nazareth. You are making trouble for me and hurting me.'

9 The men that were with me saw that very bright light, and they heard that voice, but they didn't understand the words that the voice said to me. 10 Then I said, 'What do you want me to do, boss?'

He said, 'Get up and go into Damascus. A man there will tell you everything that I picked you to do.' 11 That light was so bright it made me blind. I couldn't see, so the men with me held my hand and took me into Damascus. 12 A Jewish man lived in that

* **22:3** Acts 5:34-39 * **22:4** Acts 8:3; 26:9-11

town. He respected God, and he properly followed our Jewish laws. His name was Ananias. All the Jewish people living in Damascus said that he was a good man. 13 He came to me and stood beside me, and he said to me, 'My friend Saul, look up. You will see again now.' So I looked up, and straight away, I could see again. And I saw him standing there beside me. 14 Then he said, 'The God that we respect, and that our grand-fathers respected, he picked you, and he will show you everything he wants you to do. You will see the man that is properly good, and you will hear him talking to you. 15 He wants you to tell everyone that you saw him, and that you heard him talk to you. 16 So now, don't wait. Stand up, and I will baptise you. Pray to our leader, Jesus, and ask him to wash you properly inside, so God will not punish you for all the bad things you did.' That's what Ananias said to me."

Paul said that he had to go to people that are not Jews

17 Paul kept on talking to that mob. He said, "After that, I went back to Jerusalem. One day, I went to God's ceremony house. While I was praying there, I had something like a dream. 18 I saw my leader, Jesus, and he was talking to me. He said, 'Don't stay here. Leave Jerusalem now. The people here will not believe anything you tell them about me.'

19 I said to him, 'But, sir, they know me. They know that I went to a lot of our meeting houses looking for people that believe in you. I grabbed anyone that believed in you, and I beat them up, and I put them in jail. 20 The people here know about Stephen too. He told people about you, and they killed him. And I stood there watching them kill him, and I agreed with them. I even looked after the coats of the men that were killing him. The Jerusalem people know all that, so I reckon they will believe my story.'*

21 But our leader, Jesus, said to me, 'No, don't stay here. Leave Jerusalem. You see, I'm sending you a long way from here. I'm sending you to people that are not Jews.' "

22 The mob listened quietly to Paul until he said that. You see, they didn't like the people that were not Jews, so when they heard him talk about those people, that mob got very angry. They started shouting, "Kill him. Don't let this sort of man stay alive on this earth."

Paul told the soldiers he was a Roman, so they didn't whip him

23 The mob kept on shouting, "Kill him." And they took off their coats, and they threw dirt into the air, to show that they were very angry.

24 So the big boss soldier told his soldiers, "Take Paul into your big house and hit him with a whip so he will tell us why that mob are shouting at him."

The soldiers took Paul into their house, 25 then they stretched out his arms and tied them so that they could whip his back. But Paul talked to the boss soldier that was standing there. He said, "Wait. I'm a Jew, but I'm a Roman too. My name is on the list of all the Roman people. But you didn't take me to court, and no judge said that I'm guilty, so if you whip me, you will be breaking the Roman law."

26 That boss soldier heard what Paul said, then he went to the big boss soldier and told him about Paul. He said, "This man is not just a Jew, he is a Roman too. Do you really want us to whip him?"

27 The big boss soldier was shocked. He went to Paul and said, "Tell me, are you really a Roman?"

* **22:20** Acts 7:58

Paul said, "Yes, I am."

28 Then the big boss soldier said, "I'm a Roman too. I paid a lot of money to get the men in a Roman office to write my name on the list of all the Roman people, to make me a Roman."

Paul said, "I've been a Roman all my life. They wrote my name in that book as soon as I was born."

29 Those soldiers that were going to whip Paul, they heard him say that he was a Roman, so they left him. The big boss soldier was frightened too. He remembered that he told the soldiers to tie Paul's arms and whip him, and it was against the law for him to do that to a Roman.



The soldiers were going to whip Paul's back, but he told them that he was a Roman

The big boss soldier took Paul to the Jewish Leaders Council

30 The big boss over the soldiers still wanted to know why the Jewish leaders were blaming Paul, so the next day he talked to the bosses of the Jewish ceremonies, and to the other Jewish Leaders Council men. He told them to have a meeting. Then he took Paul to that meeting, and he took off his chains, and he told Paul to stand up in front of them, to listen to what they say, and to tell his story to answer them.

Chapter 23

A Jewish boss got angry with Paul

1-2 One of the men at the Jewish Leaders Council meeting was the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies. His name was Ananias. Paul stood up in front of Ananias and all the men at the Jewish Leaders Council meeting, and he looked straight at them, and said, "My brothers, I have respected our God all my life, and I have always done whatever I reckoned was right."

As soon as Paul said that, Ananias told the men that were near Paul to hit him on the mouth.

3 Then Paul said to Ananias, "God will punish you for that. You reckon that you are a good man, but you are not a good man. You sit there to judge me using our law, but you don't follow that law yourself. Nobody showed you that I did anything wrong, but you told these men to hit me."*

4 The men that were standing near Paul said, "You are saying something bad to God's man, the big boss of our Jewish ceremonies. You can't do that."

5 Paul said, "I'm sorry, friends. I didn't know that he is the big boss of our Jewish ceremonies. I know that Moses wrote in our Jewish law, 'Don't say bad things about your people's big boss.' "*

The soldiers took Paul away from the Jewish Leaders Council

6-8 Some of the Jewish Leaders Council were men that belonged to the Sadducee mob, and

* **23:3** Matthew 23:27-28 * **23:5** Exodus 22:28

others belonged to the Pharisee mob. The Sadducee mob believed that after people die, they will never become alive again. And they believed that there are no spirits, not even God's angel messengers. But the Pharisee mob believed that all of those things are true, and they were strong for the Jewish law. Paul worked out that some of those council men were from the Sadducee mob, and some of them were from the Pharisee mob, so he shouted out loud to them. He said, "My friends, I'm a Pharisee man, like my father was. I believe that after people die, one day God will make them alive again. That's the reason why I'm here in this court."*

As soon as Paul said that, the Pharisee mob and Sadducee mob started to argue with each other. 9The council split up into 2 mobs and started shouting at each other. Some of the teachers of the Jewish law were from the Pharisee mob. They stood up and said, "We reckon this man hasn't done anything wrong. Maybe an angel or some other spirit talked to him. That's all right."

10Then those 2 mobs argued with each other and got really wild, and the big boss soldier thought, "They are going to tear Paul to bits." So he told his soldiers, "Go and save Paul from those council men, and take him back to your big house." So the soldiers did that.

Jesus told Paul that he will go to Rome

11That night, Paul saw Jesus come and stand near him, and Jesus said to him, "Be brave, Paul. You told people here in Jerusalem about me, and you have to tell people in Rome about me too."

Some men said, "We will kill Paul"

12The next morning, some of those Jewish men met together secretly and thought about a way to kill Paul. Then they promised God, "We will not eat or drink anything until we kill Paul. If we break this promise and don't kill Paul, then, God, you can kill us." 13There were more than 40 men in that mob.

14They went to the Jewish ceremony bosses and the Jewish elders and told them, "We promised God that we will not eat or drink anything until we kill Paul. 15So we want you to go to the big boss soldier and say to him, 'The Jewish Leaders Council wants to ask Paul some more questions. Can you bring him to our meeting house?' But we will hide beside the road, and when they bring Paul along that road, we will jump up and kill him."

A young man talked to the boss soldier

16But the son of Paul's sister heard what those Jews were going to do, so he went into the big house of the soldiers and told Paul about it. 17Then Paul called out to one of



A young man told Paul that some men made a plan to kill Paul

* **23:6-8** Matthew 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 26:5; Philippians 3:5

the boss soldiers and said, "Please take this young man to your big boss. He has some news to tell him."

18 So that soldier took him to his big boss and said, "That prisoner, Paul, asked me to take this young man to you. He has some news to tell you."

19 The big boss soldier held the young man's hand and took him away from the other people, and then he asked him, "What is the news you have for me?"

20 The young man said, "The Jewish leaders will ask you to take Paul to their council place tomorrow. They will tell you they want to ask him some more questions. But that is not true. 21 Don't do what they will ask you to do. There are more than 40 men that will hide beside that road and wait for Paul to come along, so they can grab him and kill him. They even promised God that they will not eat or drink anything until they kill Paul. They are ready right now. They are just waiting for you to agree to do what they want."

22 The big boss soldier said to the young man, "You can go home now, but don't tell anyone that you told me this news."

A lot of soldiers took Paul to a safe place

23-24 Then the big boss soldier got 2 other boss soldiers and told them, "You have to take Paul north to Caesarea town tonight. Take him to Felix, the government boss of this country. And you have to keep him safe. So get 200 soldiers ready to go with you. And get ready 70 soldiers that ride horses, to go there with you too. And get ready 200 soldiers that use spears, and they can go with you too. And get horses for Paul too. All of you have to be ready to leave at 9 o'clock tonight."

25 Then that big boss soldier wrote a letter for them to take with them to that government boss. He wrote,

26 "Dear Felix,

I am Claudius Lisias. I'm writing to you, Felix. You are the government boss over this country, and I respect you. I hope you are good and happy.

27 I'm sending this man, Paul, to you. Some Jews grabbed him, and they were going to kill him, but somebody told me that he is a Roman, so I got my soldiers, and we saved him. 28 Then I wanted to know about the bad thing those Jews blamed him for, so I took him to their Leaders Council. 29 I found out that they only blamed him for things in their Jewish law. He has not broken any of our Roman laws, so it is not right for us to kill him or put him in jail.

30 And right now somebody told me that some Jews are planning secretly to kill Paul, so I'm sending him to you. I reckon you can judge him properly there. And I told the Jews that want to blame him, 'Go and do that in the court at Caesarea.' "

That is the letter that the big boss soldier wrote to Felix.

31 So the soldiers did everything that their big boss told them to do. They got Paul and took him with them. That night, they stayed at a town called Antipatris. 32 The next day, the soldiers that didn't ride horses went back to their big house in Jerusalem, and the soldiers on horses kept going with Paul. 33 After they got to Caesarea on their horses, they took Paul to Felix, the government boss, and they gave Felix the letter.

34 Felix read the letter, and then he asked Paul, "What country are you from?"

Paul said, "I'm from Cilicia country."

35 Then Felix said, "The people that are blaming you will come here, and I will listen to them, and I will listen to you too, and then I will say if you are guilty or not." And he told the soldiers, "Put Paul in the jail in the big house called Herod's House."

Chapter 24

The Jewish leaders blamed Paul in Felix's court

1 Then, 5 days later, the Jewish leaders from Jerusalem came to Caesarea. One of them was Ananias, the big boss of the Jewish ceremonies, and another one was Tertullus, a lawyer. And there were some Jewish elders in that mob too.

They went to the court house of Felix, the government boss, and they told him that Paul did bad things. 2-3 So Felix told a soldier, "Bring Paul into this court house."

Then Tertullus started to blame Paul. He said to Felix, "You have been our government boss for a long time, and you have been a good boss for us. You have made a lot of things good in this country, and we have been happy all the time, with no trouble. So we just want to thank you for everything that you do for us all the time. 4 But now, I don't want to take up too much of your time, so I'm asking you to listen to me for a little while. 5 You see, this man is a trouble maker. He makes trouble everywhere he goes. He gets the Jewish people angry everywhere, and they go wild. He is the leader of the *Nazarene* mob. 6-7 He even tried to do things in God's ceremony house that are against our law. So we grabbed him. 8 If you ask him questions, you will find out for yourself that everything we are telling you is true."

9 The other Jewish leaders blamed Paul too, and they reckoned that everything Tertullus said was true.

Paul said that the Jewish leaders were wrong

10 Then Felix, the government boss, let Paul know that it was his turn to talk.

So Paul said, "I know that you have been a judge in this country for a long time, so I'm happy to tell you the true story.

11 You can check on my story, and you will find out that it was just 12 days ago that I went to Jerusalem to show respect to God. You know, 12 days is not enough time for me to make a lot of trouble. 12 This mob didn't see me do anything wrong. I wasn't arguing with anyone, and I wasn't making people angry or wild. I didn't do those things at God's ceremony house, or in a Jewish meeting house, or anywhere in Jerusalem. 13 They can't show you that the things they say are true.

14 But I can tell you this, I do show respect to the God that our Jewish people respect, the God that our grand-fathers respected a long time ago. It is true that I'm with the mob called the *Jesus Way* mob. The Jewish leaders say that we are wrong, but that is not true. And I believe everything in God's book. I keep our law, and I believe everything that God got his men to write in his book. 15 You know, these Jewish leaders here believe that one day God will make all the dead people come alive again, both the people that were good and the people that were bad. And I believe that too. 16 So I always try to do whatever God wants, and I always try to do whatever other people want too. You see, I want to feel good about everything I do.

17 Let me tell you what happened. A few years ago I went to some other countries, and then a few days ago I got back to Jerusalem. I brought some money with me to give to poor people there, and I wanted to show respect to God by giving things to him at his ceremony house. * 18 And I did the ceremony to make myself clean. Some Jewish people saw me there at God's ceremony house. But I was by myself. There was no mob of people with me, and I was not getting

* **24:17** Acts 21:17-28

anyone to go wild. 19 It was some other Jews
from Asia country that made the people go
wild. If those Asia Jews really thought I did
something wrong, why didn't they come
here to blame me in front of you? I reckon
they know their story isn't true. 20 And this
mob here, they had me in their Jewish court
in Jerusalem. But can they tell you that they
found me guilty of something? No. I told
them my story, and they didn't say that I was
guilty of anything. 21 But there is one thing
that I said in that court that made them
angry. I shouted, 'You are judging me today
because I believe that God will make all the
dead people become alive again.' That's all."*

Felix stopped the court to wait for the big boss soldier to come

22 Then Felix stopped the court. You see,
he already knew a lot about the Christian
people, the *Jesus Way* mob. Felix said to the
people in the court, "Lisias will come here
later. He is the big boss over the soldiers in
Jerusalem. And after I listen to his story I
will say if Paul is guilty or not."

23 Then he told the boss soldier, "Take
Paul back to the jail and make sure that he
stays there, but don't tie him up. And let his
friends come to visit him, to look after him."

Felix wanted Paul to give him money to let him go free

24 A few days later, Felix came back with
his wife. She was a Jewish woman. Her
name was Drusilla. Felix told a soldier to
bring Paul to them, and they listened to him
talk. Paul told them, "We have to believe in
Jesus. He is the Christ, the special man that
God sent to save us." 25 And Paul told them
about the way God wants people to live. He
said that God wants us to do what is right,
and that he wants us to control ourselves.
And Paul told them that God will judge
everybody one day.

Felix heard Paul talking about those things,
and he got frightened. He said, "Stop, Paul,
that's enough for today. You can go back to
the jail now. Maybe I will have time to listen
to you another day, and then I will get you
to come and talk to me again."

26 Felix hoped that Paul might give him
some money to let him get out of jail, so
he often sent somebody to get Paul, and he
talked with him. But Paul didn't give Felix
any money, so Felix didn't let him go.

27 Felix kept Paul in jail there for 2 years.
Then the time came for them to change the
boss over that country, and another big boss
came to take over from Felix. The name
of the new boss was Porcius Festus. Felix
wanted to keep the Jewish leaders happy,
so he didn't let Paul go out of jail. Paul was
still in jail there when Festus took over.

Chapter 25

Festus said that he will judge Paul in Caesarea

1 Festus started to be the new government
boss over that country, then 3 days later, he
left Caesarea and went to Jerusalem. 2 The
bosses of the Jewish ceremonies and the
other Jewish leaders talked to him there in
Jerusalem. They blamed Paul and reckoned
he did bad things. 3 Then they asked Festus,
"Can you tell your soldiers to bring Paul to
Jerusalem right now, and judge him here?"
You see, they were going to secretly hide
near the road and wait for Paul to come
along, then jump up and kill him.

4 But Festus said, "Paul is in Caesarea, and
my soldiers are guarding him there. I'll be
going back to Caesarea in a few days, 5 so
you pick some of your leaders to come with
me. They can blame Paul in my court there."

* **24:21** Acts 23:6

Paul asked for Caesar, the biggest boss, to judge him

6 About 8 or 10 days later, the Jewish leaders went with Festus back to Caesarea, and the next day, Festus sat on the judge's seat in the court house there. He told his soldiers, "Bring Paul in now."

7 They brought Paul into that room, then the Jewish leaders from Jerusalem stood up and blamed him. They told Festus, "Paul did a lot of bad things." But they couldn't show him that their story was true.

8 Then Paul talked to everyone there and said that he was not guilty. He said, "I haven't done anything wrong. I didn't break the Jewish law, and I didn't break the rules about God's ceremony house, and I didn't break the Roman laws."

9 But Festus wanted the Jewish leaders to be happy, so he asked Paul, "How about this? I can send you to Jerusalem, and I can judge you there. Will that be all right?"

10 Paul said, "No, I don't want to go to Jerusalem. Look, the biggest Roman boss is Caesar, and he made you the judge here, so this is the right place for you to judge me. You know I didn't do anything wrong to the Jewish people. 11 If I did something bad so that your law says you have to kill me, I will let you kill me. But I didn't do anything bad like that. So nobody can give me to this mob and let them kill me. No. Instead of that, I want you to send me to Caesar, the biggest Roman boss. Then he can judge me in his big city, Rome."

12 Festus had some special men that always helped him work out what to do, so he talked with them. Then he said to Paul, "All right. You want me to send you to Caesar, and I will do that. I'll send you to Caesar, and he can judge you there in Rome."

Festus told Agrippa about Paul

13 After a few days, another country's big boss came to Caesarea. His name was Agrippa. And his young sister came with him. Her name was Bernice. They came to say *hello* to Festus, and to say, "We are happy because you are the new government boss over this country."

14 While they were there at Caesarea, Festus told Agrippa about Paul. He said, "I want to tell you about a prisoner here. Felix left him in jail here, and I'm not sure what to do with him. 15 You see, I went to Jerusalem, and the Jewish ceremony bosses and elders there, they told me that this man did a lot of bad things. They asked me to say he is guilty, and to tell my soldiers to kill him.

16 But I told them, 'That's not how we Romans judge people. If somebody blames another person, we don't say that person is guilty until after we get them in front of a judge with the people that are blaming them. And we let that person say why they reckon they are not guilty.'

17 So those Jewish leaders came here to Caesarea with me. I didn't waste any time. The next day, I sat down on the judge's seat, and I told some soldiers to bring Paul in. 18 The Jewish leaders stood up and blamed him, but they didn't blame him for anything really bad, like I thought they would. 19 They only talked about things that some Jews believe, but that other Jews don't believe. They argued about a dead man that Paul says is alive. His name is Jesus.

20 I didn't know how to find out the true story, and I didn't know how to judge Paul, so I said to him, 'How about this? I can send you to Jerusalem, and I can judge you there. Will that be all right?'

21 But Paul said, 'No, I don't want to go to Jerusalem. I want Caesar to judge me, that biggest boss in Rome.' So I told my soldiers to guard Paul here, until I can send him to Caesar."

22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I want to hear that man myself."

Festus said, "All right, I'll let you hear him tomorrow."

Festus wanted Agrippa to help him write a letter about Paul

23 The next day, Agrippa and his young sister Bernice came into the big room that had the judge's seat. There was a lot of ceremony for them as they came in. Some boss soldiers came with them, and the leaders of Caesarea came with them too.

Then Festus told his soldiers, "Bring Paul in here now." So they brought him in. 24 Then Festus said, "Big Boss Agrippa, and all of you that are here now, look at this man. A lot of Jews in Jerusalem, and the Jews here in Caesarea too, they want me to say that this man is guilty. They shouted at me. They said, 'You have to kill him now.'

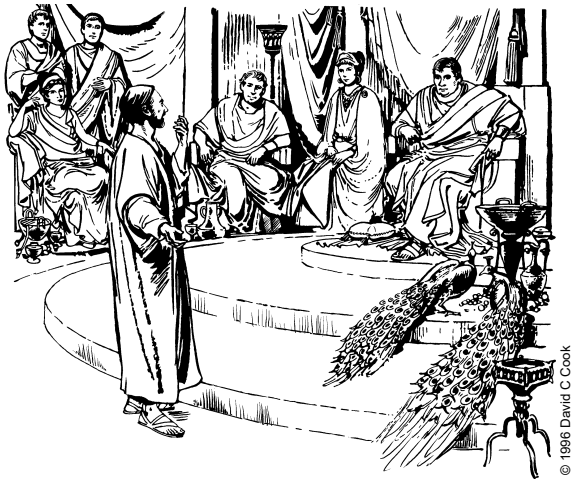
25 So I asked them, 'What did he do?' And I found out that he didn't do anything bad, so we can't kill him. But then he asked me to send him to Rome, for our biggest boss to judge him, so I will send him to Rome. 26 But I can't think of anything to write about him, I don't know any bad things he did to tell our big boss about. So I brought him here. I want you all to hear him tell his story, and I especially want you, Agrippa, to hear him. Then we can ask him some questions, and maybe I will find out something to write about him. 27 You see, I reckon it's not right to send a prisoner to Rome without telling our biggest boss what people are blaming that prisoner for."

Chapter 26

Paul talked to the big bosses

1 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "All right, you can talk to us now and tell us your story."

So Paul waved his hand to thank Agrippa,


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Paul told Big Boss Agrippa why he was not guilty

and he started to tell them why he was not guilty. He said, 2-3 "Big Boss Agrippa, I reckon I'm lucky. You know all about the culture of us Jews, and you know the things we argue about, and today you are hearing me talk. I reckon you will understand me. You see, the Jewish leaders are blaming me for a lot of things. So I ask you, please wait and listen to me now."

Paul said that he used to be a Pharisee man

4 Then Paul said, "A lot of Jewish people know the way I lived from the time I was a young man. They know the way I lived in my home country, and also in Jerusalem. 5 They know that I joined the Pharisee mob, and I kept our law properly, like all the Pharisee mob do. Those Jews that are blaming me, they know this, and they can tell you this about me if they want to. *

6-7 You see, boss, a long time ago, God promised our grand-fathers that he will do something real good for us Jews. And I reckon God does everything that he says he will do. All of us Jews, in all of our 12 tribes, we are all waiting for God to do the

* **26:5** Acts 23:6; Philippians 3:5

good thing that he promised, and we show respect to him all the time. We all reckon he will do it. But now those Jewish leaders are blaming me for believing that God is doing it. 8 You see, God can make dead people alive again. So why can't any of you people here believe that?"

Paul said that he used to hurt Christians

9 Paul kept on talking. He said, "You know, at one time I thought I had to stop people from following Jesus, the man from Nazareth. I did a lot of things to try to stop them. 10 I started in Jerusalem. I put a lot of Christians in jail. The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies told me to do that. And if they judged any of those Christians and said, 'Kill them,' I agreed with them, and I said that too. 11 I often punished the Christians that were in the Jewish meeting houses. I tried to get them to say bad things about Jesus.

I was so angry with Jesus's followers that I even went to other towns to get them."*

Paul said that he met Jesus

12 Paul kept on telling his story. He said, "The bosses of the Jewish ceremonies in Jerusalem said that I can go to Damascus to grab the Christians there, so I started to go to Damascus to look for the Christians. 13 And I'll tell you what happened next, boss. In the middle of the day, while I was going along the road, I saw a bright light in the sky. It was even brighter than the sun. It shined all around me, and all around the men that were with me. 14 We all fell down on to the ground. Then I heard the voice of somebody talk to me in the Hebrew language. He said, 'Saul, Saul, why are you making trouble for me and hurting me? You are hurting yourself too, you know.'

15 Then I asked, 'Who are you, boss?'

And he said to me, 'I am Jesus. You are making trouble for me and hurting me. Whenever you hurt my followers, you are hurting me too. 16 But stop doing that, and get up, and stand on your feet. Listen, I came to you like this to pick you to be my worker. I want you to tell everyone everywhere about the things you have seen, and tell them about the things that I will show you later. 17 Your own Jewish people will give you trouble, and people that are not Jews will give you trouble too. But I will look after you. You see, I will send you to other countries, to people that are not Jews, 18 and you will tell them the true message about me. It will be like you will open their eyes so that they can see things properly. They will come to God. Then Satan, the boss over the bad spirits, he will not control them with his power any more. It is like they are always in the dark now, but they will come into the light. They will believe in me, and they will stop believing lies. And then God will say they are not guilty of the bad things they did, and they will be God's people.' Jesus said that to me."

Paul said that he did everything Jesus told him to do

19 Paul kept on talking to them. He said, "It happened like that, Big Boss Agrippa. Jesus talked to me from heaven, and I did everything he told me to do. 20 I told a lot of people to stop doing bad things and turn to God, and to start doing good things to show that they are following God now. At first I told that message to the Jews in Damascus, then I told it to the Jews in Jerusalem, and I told it to the Jews in Judea country. After that, I told it to people that are not Jews."*

* **26:9-11** Acts 8:3; 22:4-5 * **26:20** Acts 9:20, 28-29

Paul's message is the same as the message in God's book

21 And Paul said, "I told everyone this message, but some of the Jewish people didn't like it, so they grabbed me, and they tried to kill me. They did that in God's ceremony house.

22 But God helped me. You see, God helps me all the time, and he is still helping me now. So I'm standing here now, and I'm telling you mob that Jesus is the special man that God promised to send to us, the man that is called the Christ. I'm telling this message to you big bosses, and I'm telling it to all you other people too. This message is already in God's book. I'm only saying things that Moses wrote about a long time ago. God's other men wrote about these things too. 23 They said that people will hurt God's special man, and kill him, but then God will make him alive again. They said that he will be the first person to come alive again after being dead, and that's how he will show everyone that God can save them. He will be like a light for everyone, for both Jewish people, and for people that are not Jews."*

Paul wanted them all to become Christians

24 While Paul was talking, Festus suddenly shouted, "Paul, you are crazy. You have been reading and learning too much, and it made you go crazy in your head."

25 But Paul said, "No, Festus, sir, I'm not crazy. I'm talking in a true and sensible way. 26 The other big boss here knows about these things, so I can talk to him, and I know he will understand. You see, people everywhere have heard about Jesus."

27 Then Paul said, "Boss Agrippa, do you believe the message God's men wrote in his book? Yes, I reckon you do believe it."

28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have just been talking to me for a little while. You can't get me to become a Christian so quick."

29 Paul said, "It doesn't matter if it is quick, or if it takes a long time. I'm asking God that you, and everyone here that is listening to me, will become just like I am now. I want you to become Christians. But I don't want anyone to put you in jail for being a Christian, like they did to me."

Agrippa said that Paul has to go to Rome

30 Then those 2 big bosses stood up, and Bernice, and all the others there, they all got up too, 31 and they all went out of that big room. While they were going out, they said to each other, "This man didn't do anything bad. We don't have to kill him, or even keep him in jail."

32 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "But you can't let him go free, because he asked you to send him to Rome, so that our biggest boss can judge him there. So you have to send him to Caesar."

Chapter 27

The Romans started to take Paul to Caesar, their biggest boss

1 Later on, Festus, the government boss over that country, reckoned it was time for Paul to go to Rome, in Italy country. So he took Paul and some other prisoners to Julius. Julius was the boss over a mob of soldiers that were called the Augustus Mob. Festus told him, "Take all these prisoners to Rome." And they let me, Luke, go with them.

2 So we got on a ship that came from a town called Adramitium. It was going to sail to some of the towns along the coast of Asia country. Another one of Paul's friends came with us too. His name was Aristarkus. His

* **26:23** Isaiah 42:6; 49:6; 1 Corinthians 15:20



This map shows where they took Paul from jail in Jerusalem to get to the biggest boss in Rome

home town was Thessalonica, in Macedonia country. We all started sailing on that ship, and 3 the next day, we stopped at the town called Sidon. Julius was good to Paul, and he let him go and see his friends there, so they could give him anything he needed. Then Paul came back to the ship.

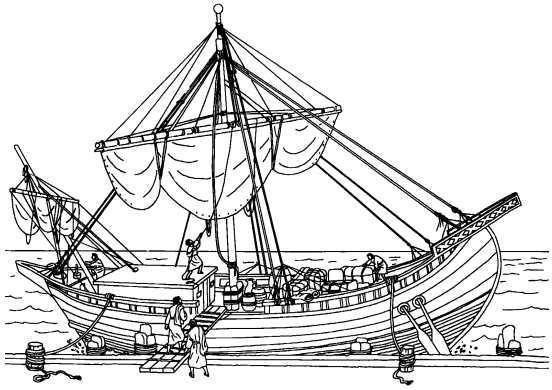
4 After that, the ship left Sidon, but the wind was blowing against us, so the ship went along the north side of Cyprus Island, to get away from the wind. 5 Then we crossed over the sea close to the coast of Cilicia country and Pamfilia country, and we got to a town called Myra, in Lisia country. Then we got off the ship there and looked for another ship to take us to Rome, in Italy country.

6 In Myra, people told Julius, "There is another ship here that came from the town called Alexandria, and it is going to sail to Italy country." So Julius took us to that other ship, and we got on it, and we left Myra.

7 We sailed slowly for a few days, and then we went close to the coast of Asia country, near a town called Kenidus. After that, the wind got very strong. It didn't let the ship sail straight ahead towards the west, so we sailed towards the south. We sailed along the south side of Crete Island to get away from the wind. We went past Cape Salmone. 8 The wind was still strong, so the ship couldn't sail properly, and we went slowly along the coast of Crete Island until we got to a place called Fair Havens Harbour, near a town called Lasia.

Paul told the ship's men to wait, but they kept going

9 It took us a long time to get to Fair Havens Harbour. It was already October, and the bad



This is the sort of ship that Paul went on

weather was coming soon. If we kept going, we might get big trouble from storms. So Paul talked to the men that looked after the ship. He said, 10 "Listen, men, I reckon that if we keep going, we will get big trouble. I reckon a storm will wreck this ship, and you will lose everything in it, and we might drown too."

11 But the boss soldier didn't listen to Paul. He listened to the boss of the ship-men and the owner of the ship. 12 That place, Fair Havens Harbour, was not a good place to stay in the cold weather time, so most of the men on the ship reckoned we had to leave there and go on a bit further, to a town called Phoenix, and stay there for the cold weather time. The harbour at Phoenix was all right. It was open to the sea in the west, but the strong winds didn't blow from the west in the cold weather time.

13 We waited at Fair Havens Harbour until the strong wind stopped. Then a little wind started to blow from the south, and the ship-men thought that they could sail the ship to Phoenix, so they lifted the anchor, and sailed west along the southern shore of Crete Island. 14 But after a little while, the wind changed, and a big strong wind blew across the island from the north side, and it pushed the ship to the south, away from the land. (That wind was called the *Northeaster*.) 15 The ship-men couldn't steer the ship the right way. The wind kept on blowing it the wrong way. So they just let the wind take the ship anywhere. 16 The ship was towing a little boat behind it. The sea was very rough, so we wanted to put that little boat up on the deck of the ship, so that it would not get full of water. But the wind was too strong for us to do that. Then we went beside a little island called Cauda. That island blocked the wind, so it wasn't as strong, and we lifted the little boat up out of the water and tied it on to the deck of the ship. There was still a lot of wind, so it was really hard work for us, but we did it.

17 After that, the ship-men tied ropes around the middle of the ship to make it stronger, so the big waves would not break it. The wind was pushing the ship very fast, and the ship-men reckoned we might hit the sand-bars near Libya country, and get stuck there, so they got a big bag on a rope, and they threw it out behind the ship and let it drag in the water. This made the ship slow down a bit, but the wind kept on blowing it along. 18 The strong wind and the big waves kept on throwing the ship about. It was very rough. The next day, the ship-men wanted to make the ship lighter, so they started to throw away the things that the ship was carrying. 19 On the 3rd day of the storm, the ship-men even threw away a lot of the ship's own things, like its sails, and poles.

20 The wind kept on blowing really hard, and the sky was full of dark clouds all day and all night. We couldn't see the sun or the stars for a long time, so we didn't know where we were. And the wind and the waves kept on throwing us about, and after some time we thought we were going to drown in the sea.

Paul told everybody on the ship that they will not drown

21 None of us on the ship wanted to eat any food. We didn't eat anything for a long time.

Then one day, Paul stood up in front of us and said, "Listen, men, you didn't listen to me in Crete. I told you not to sail out of that little harbour, but you did. So now you are in trouble, and you lost all the things this ship was carrying. 22 But listen. Don't be frightened. I'm telling you that none of us will die. But the wind and the waves will wreck this ship. 23 You see, I work for God, and last night he sent one of his angel messengers to me. He came and stood beside me, 24 and he said, 'Paul, don't be frightened. You have to go and stand in front of Caesar, the big boss in Rome. And God will be good to all the other men that are with you on this ship too. None of them will die.'

25 Listen friends, don't be frightened. I believe that God will help us, just like that angel told me. 26 But the ship will crash on to an island, and we will all go on to the land there."

Paul stopped the ship-men from leaving the ship

27 We were in that storm for 2 weeks. The wind was still blowing the ship across the water called the Adriatic Sea. Then, in the middle of the night, the ship-men thought the ship was getting close to land. 28 So they got a rope with a stone on the end of it and dropped it into the water to find out how deep it was. That stone went down 37 metres into the water, so they knew the water was 37 metres deep. We went a little further, and then they threw the stone out again. This time it only went down 28 metres, so they knew the water was not as deep there. 29 That's how they knew for sure that the ship was getting close to land. Then they got frightened. They thought the ship might smash on to some rocks, so they threw down 4 anchors on ropes from the back of the ship, to stop the ship. They really wanted day-light to come, so they could see the land.



The ship-men threw down 4 anchors on ropes to stop the ship from going on to the rocks

30 The ship-men wanted to leave the ship and get in the little boat, so they lied to everyone. They said, "We are going to drop some anchors from the front of the ship." Then they started to put the little boat down into the sea.

31 But Paul said to the boss soldier, and to the other soldiers, "If these ship-men don't stay on the ship, you will all drown." 32 So the soldiers cut the ropes of the little boat and let it fall down into the water, and the waves took it away.

Paul got them all to eat some food to stay alive

33 Just before day-light came, Paul tried to get everyone to eat some food. He said, "For the past 14 days you were too worried, and you didn't eat anything. 34 So now I'm telling you, you've got to eat some food, so you will get stronger and stay alive. I know that none of you will drown."

35 After he said that, while everyone was looking at him, Paul picked up some bread and thanked God for it. Then he broke a bit off and started to eat it. 36 Then the rest of us felt better, so we all ate some food. 37 There were 276 of us on that ship altogether.

38 Everyone ate as much as they wanted, then they threw all the bags of food out of the ship into the sea, and that made the ship a bit lighter.

The ship started to break up

39 Then the day-light came, and we saw the land. The ship-men didn't know that place, but they could see a bay with a beach, and they reckoned, "Maybe we can steer the ship on to that beach." 40 So they cut the anchor ropes and let the anchors stay in the sea, and at the same time, they untied the rudders, so they could steer the ship again. Then they put up the sail at the front of the ship, and then the wind started to blow the ship towards the land. 41 But half-way there, it hit a sand-bar, not far from the beach. The front of the ship got stuck there, and it didn't go any further. Then the big waves kept on hitting the back of the ship, and they started to break it up.

The boss soldier saved Paul

42 The soldiers said to their boss, "Let's kill all the prisoners so they can't swim to the beach and run away."

43 But their boss wanted to save Paul, so he said, "No."

Then he told everybody, "If you can swim, jump into the water now, and swim to the land. You mob go first." 44 After they did that, the other people that couldn't swim grabbed things that float, like bits of broken wood from the back of the ship, and they held on to those things in the water until the waves washed them to the beach. So we all got to that land. None of us drowned.



The ship broke up, but everyone got to the land

Chapter 28

A cheeky snake bit Paul

1 After we got to the land all right, we found out that it was an island called Malta. 2 The people that lived there were good to us. It was raining, and it was cold, so those people lit a fire and told us, "Come and get warm at this fire."



A cheeky snake bit Paul, but he just shook it off into the fire

3 Paul walked around and picked up some sticks and put them on the fire. But a cheeky snake jumped out from those sticks to get away from the fire, and it bit Paul's hand and just hung on there. 4 The people saw it hanging from Paul's hand, and they knew that it was a cheeky snake, so they said to each other, "I reckon that prisoner murdered somebody. He was lucky in the sea, and he didn't drown, but the god that punishes people will not let him stay alive. That snake will kill him dead."

5 But Paul just shook the snake until it fell off into the fire, and nothing happened to him. 6 The people watched Paul. They

thought, "His body will swell up, or he will fall down dead." But after they waited a long time, they saw that he was still all right. Nothing bad happened to him. So then they changed their minds and said, "This man is a god."

Paul got Jesus to make a lot of people better on Malta Island

7 The Roman boss over that island was called Publius. He owned some gardens near that beach. He was good to us. He told us to come and stay at his house, so we stayed there for 3 days, and he took care of us.

8 At that time, Publius's father was very sick. He was just lying on his bed all the time. He was hot with fever, and he had diarrhoea. So Paul went to see him. Then Paul put his hands on him, and he prayed for him, and Publius's father got better.

9 After Paul did that, all the other sick people on the island came to him, and God made them better too. 10 Then the people there did a lot of things to show us that they thought we were great. And when the time came for us to get ready to sail away on another ship, those people gave us food and other things that we needed.

We all sailed to Putioli, then we kept going by road

11 There was another ship there that had statues of the twin gods called Castor and Pollux on the front of it. That ship came from the town called Alexandria before the bad weather started, and it stayed on Malta Island until the bad weather was finished. We stayed on Malta Island in that bad weather time too, for about 3 months. Then that ship got ready to go on to Italy country, so we all got on that ship to go to Rome, in Italy country.

12 We sailed away from Malta Island, and we got to an island called Sicily, and we stopped at a town called Siracuse. We stayed there for 3 days. 13 Then we kept going on that ship, and we got to a town called Regium, in Italy country. The next day, the wind was blowing from behind us and pushing us fast, and the day after that, we got to the town called Putioli. Then we got off there, and we left that ship. 14 We met some Christians in Putioli, and they asked us to stay with them, so we stayed there for a week. Then we left Putioli and started to go along the road to Rome.

Christians came from Rome to meet Paul

15 Some Christians that lived in Rome heard that we were coming, so they came out from Rome to meet us half-way. Some of them met us at the place called Appius, and some of them met us at the place called *the 3 pubs*. Paul saw those people, and he felt really good and happy, and he thanked God for them.

16 Then we all got to Rome. The Roman boss that was in charge of the prisoners there let Paul live in a house by himself, but there was always a soldier there to guard him.

Paul talked to the Jewish leaders in Rome

17 Paul was in Rome for 3 days, then he sent a message to the Jewish leaders to come and talk with him. So they came, and Paul said to them, "My brothers, I didn't do anything bad to our people, and I didn't say anything bad about our Jewish culture. But our leaders in Jerusalem grabbed me, and they were going to kill me. Then the Roman soldiers came and got me, and they made me their prisoner. 18 The Roman bosses asked me questions in their court, and then they listened to what I said, and they didn't find any reason to kill me. They reckoned that I didn't do anything bad, so they wanted to let me go. 19 But the Jewish leaders didn't agree, so I had to ask those bosses to send

me to Caesar, the big boss in Rome, for him to judge me.

But I don't want to blame my own Jewish people about anything.* 20So I asked you to come here now. I want to meet you, and I want to tell you my story. You see, I believe in the man that we are all waiting for. He is the man that God promised to send to us Israel people. But our leaders of Israel didn't agree with me, and that is the reason why I'm a prisoner now, tied up with this chain." That is what Paul told the Jewish leaders in Rome.

21Then they said, "We didn't get any letters about you from our Jewish friends in Judea country. And some people came here from Judea, but none of them said anything bad about you. 22But we know that people in a lot of places don't agree with the Christians, so we want to hear what you have to say."

23Then they talked together and agreed to come back on another day to hear Paul.

Paul said, "People that are not Jews will believe God's message"

When that day came, a lot of Jews came to Paul's house. He started talking with them in the morning, and he kept going all day, until the sun went down. He told them about how God wants to bring people into his family, and he tried to get them to understand that Jesus is the man that God sent to save people. He showed them what God's book says. He talked to them about the words that Moses wrote in God's book, and also the words that God's other men wrote in his book. He showed them that God's men all told messages about Jesus.

24Some of them believed Paul's words, but some of them didn't agree with him. 25So they started to argue with each other, and then they got up to go home. Then Paul told the people that didn't believe his message, "The Holy Spirit said a true word to your grand-fathers, a long time ago. He told God's man, Isaiah, to write this, and it is in God's book. He wrote,

26-27 'Go to the Jewish people and say,
"You keep on hearing God's words with your ears,
but you don't understand them properly.
It's like your ears are going deaf.
You keep on looking with your eyes, and you see God doing things,
but you don't understand what you see.
It's like you closed your eyes.
Your problem is that you don't want to know God's message.
If you do understand God's message properly, you will turn around and come back to him,
and then God will not say you are guilty for the bad things you did.
But you mob don't want to come back to God."'*

That's what Isaiah wrote."

28-29Paul kept on talking to them. He said, "You Jewish people have to understand this. God sent his message to you, but you didn't listen to it. So he is sending that message to the people that are not Jews, and they will listen to it, and believe it." That is what Paul told the Jewish people in Rome that did not believe his message.

30For the next 2 years Paul was a prisoner in Rome, but he was not in jail. They let him stay in the house that he rented. A lot of people came to him, and he was happy to see them and to talk with them. 31He taught them how God takes people into his family, and he taught them all about our leader Jesus Christ. He wasn't frightened of anyone, and nobody tried to stop him talking to people.

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* **28:19** Acts 25:11 * **28:26-27** Isaiah 6:9-10

Some important parts of the letter that Paul wrote to the Christians at Rome

*(From the book in the Holy Bible called **Romans**)*

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 20 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians that were living in the city called Rome, in the country called Italy, where Italian people come from. At that time Rome was a very important city.

Some of the Christians in Rome were Jews. That means that they belonged to the same nation as Jesus, and Paul, and most of the other people in the Holy Bible. But some other Christians in Rome were not Jews.

A long time before Paul wrote this letter, God gave a special law to the Jews. He didn't give that law to other people, that were not Jews. But some Christian Jews in Rome thought that God would not save anyone that didn't follow that law. So Paul wrote this letter to tell them that God will save anyone that believes in Jesus. The law is important, but it isn't the way for God to save people.

We have translated the parts of this letter that are important for people that are not Jews, like Indigenous Australians and most of the other people in Australia. We have not yet translated the parts of this book that are mainly talking to Jewish people.

This book has a lot of good messages for everyone, about how God saves people, and about how the Holy Spirit helps them. So it is very important for us today.

Chapter 1

1 I am Paul, and this letter is from me. I work for Jesus Christ, and God picked me to be Jesus's special worker, to go and tell people the good news that he will save them.
2 A long time ago, God promised to do that. He got some of his men to tell people about it, and they wrote about it in God's book.
3-4 That good news is about our leader Jesus Christ. He was born into David's family. David was the big boss of the Jewish nation a long time ago. Jesus was born as a human being into David's family, but really, Jesus is God's own son. God showed us in a powerful way that Jesus is his son. He did it like this. People killed Jesus, but God used his Holy Spirit to make him alive again.
5 And you know, God is very good to me. He picked me to be Jesus's special worker. He told me to go to people that are not Jews to tell them about Jesus, and get them to believe in him and do whatever he says.
6 And God wanted you to believe in him and to do what he says too. God picked you, so now you belong to Jesus Christ.
7 I'm sending this letter to all you people

that belong to God, and that live in the city called Rome. God picked you to follow him, and to be his people.

I'm asking God our father, and Jesus Christ our leader, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

8 The first thing I want to do is to say *thank you* to my God. I can talk to God and say *thank you* because Jesus Christ made us God's friends. I thank God for all of you Christian mob there. You really believe in Jesus now, and people everywhere in the world are talking about how you really trust in Jesus. 9 I pray to God all the time, and I ask him to help you. That's true. God knows it's true. I work hard for God, I tell everyone the good news about his son. 10 Whenever I pray to him, I ask him that, if he agrees, he will let me come and see you soon. 11 I have been waiting for a long time. I really want to see you. I want to help you get more power from God to make you strong. 12 Then I will see how much you trust God and you will see how much I trust God, and that will make all of us happy. 13 You know, friends, I tried to come and see you lots of times, but God stopped me every time. I want to come and work there with you and get more people to follow Jesus, just like I do at other places.* 14 I've got to tell God's word to all sorts of people. I have to tell it to people that have my culture, and to people that have other cultures. I have to tell it to people that can think good and to people that can't think good. I have to tell everybody God's word. 15 So I want to come to Rome and tell God's good news to all you mob there too.

16 I don't feel any shame about God's good news. It is a really good story because it has God's power in it. Whenever people believe this good news, God saves them. It is the same for everybody, for Jewish people and for people that are not Jews.* 17 God's good news is this. God saves people that trust him, and he makes them properly good. God says this in his book,

> "If you trust God, he will say you are good, and you will really live."*

If we do bad things, it makes God angry

18 God in heaven gets very angry with people that do bad things. He gets angry whenever they do things against him, and whenever they do bad things to other people. They go against God, but that's not all, they try to stop other people hearing the true story about God. And that makes God very angry.

19 God clearly shows everybody enough for us to understand the true story about him. Everybody knows about him. 20 Even though we can't see God, we can know about him. If we look at the things he has made, we can know about him, that he is really great and really strong. Ever since he made the world, we can look at everything that he made, and we can know about him from those things. So nobody can say that they don't know about God. 21 The trouble was this. Even though people could work that out about God, they really didn't want to know him. They didn't want to say to him, "Thank you, you really are the true God." They couldn't think properly about him. They could only think in stupid ways. They didn't understand anything.* 22 They told everybody that they could think really good, but they were fools. 23 They didn't respect the wonderful God that never dies, but instead they made models of things that do die. They made things that look like people, or birds, or animals, or snakes, or those sorts of things, and they respected those things. They didn't respect God.*

* **1:13** Acts 19:21 * **1:16** Mark 8:38 * **1:17** Habakkuk 2:4 * **1:21** Ephesians 4:17-18 * **1:23** Deuteronomy 4:16-18


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People made things that looked like animals or people, and they respected them instead of respecting God

24 So God let them go their own way, and they did whatever they felt like doing. They did whatever their dirty minds thought about, so they did bad things with each other's bodies. 25 They didn't want the true story about God. They wanted to believe a lie, and they respected the things that God made instead of respecting God himself. You know, God is really great, and everyone has to tell him, "You are really good." And they have to keep on doing it for ever. Yes, that's right, but people didn't respect God like that.

26 So, after people turned away from God, he let them do whatever dirty things they thought about. Even women didn't want to sleep with men any more, like wives do with their husbands, but instead they did things with each other that were not normal. 27 And men too did the same sort of thing. They didn't want to sleep with women any more, they wanted to sleep with other men, as if they were women. They did bad things with each other, and that gave them real problems. And those problems were the right thing for them.

28 You see, they didn't like to even think about God, so he let them think about lots of bad things, and they did all sorts of wrong things. 29 They are very bad, and they are greedy, they want lots of money and things. And they are really horrible. They want to take things that belong to other people. They murder people, they argue, they cheat other people, and they do mean things to people. They gossip, 30 they say bad things about other people, they are cheeky, and they hate God. They think that they themselves are never wrong. They think they are great, and that is what they tell everybody. They always think up new ways to do something bad, and they never respect their parents. 31 They are stupid, they don't do what they say they will do, they don't love anybody, and they never feel sorry for anybody. 32 A long time ago, God said, "Anyone that does these sorts of things has to die." That is true, and those people know that God said that, but they don't take any notice of him. They keep on doing those bad things, and worse still, they push other people to do them.

Chapter 2

God is the really good judge

1 And you do those same bad things too. You might try to blame other people, but you are just as bad as them, so if you try to blame them, you really blame yourself.* 2 And, you know, God will judge people that do bad things, and he knows the true story, so he will judge them the right way. 3 So if you do the same bad things as the people you blame, God will punish you too. 4 Think about this. God is very good to you, he doesn't easily get angry with you, and he doesn't punish you straight away for the bad things you do. You know that God is good like that, right?

* **2:1** Matthew 7:1; Luke 6:37

He is good to you. He tries to get you to come back to him and stop doing bad things.
5 If you don't turn around and come back to God, you just make things worse for yourself. One day, he will get really angry with you. On that day he will judge everybody properly and fairly. 6 God will give each of us the right pay for whatever we have done.* 7 Some people keep on doing good things, and later on God will be good to them. They want to make God happy, so they listen to him, and they do the good things he tells them to do. Later on, he will give them life that never ends. They will live with him for ever. 8 But he will get really angry with selfish people that don't want to know the true story but just want to do bad things. 9-11 And God will not treat one sort of people any better than all the others. It will be the same for Jewish people and for people that are not Jewish. God will punish everyone that does bad things, he will punish Jewish people that do bad things and people that are not Jewish that do bad things. They will all get very big trouble. But God will do good to everyone that does good things, Jewish people and people that are not Jewish. God will make them great. They will feel happy and quiet inside themselves, and everybody will respect them.*
12 God gave the law to the Jewish people, so they know that law, and if they do bad things, God will punish them the way that law says. And the same too for people that are not Jewish, if they do bad things, he will punish them. 13 It doesn't matter if you know that law or not, if you do good things, God will tell you, "You are all right." 14 There are people that aren't Jewish, but sometimes they do good things just like the law says. They don't have that law, but they know in their minds what is right and what is wrong. 15 They show that God wrote his law inside them. They feel bad whenever they do something that is wrong, but sometimes they do something that is right, and it makes them feel good. 16 God sees everything that everybody does and everything that everybody thinks. Nobody can hide anything from him. One day, God will get Jesus Christ to judge everybody about these things. That is the message that I tell everybody.

(The next part, 2:17—3:8, mainly talks to Jewish people, so we have not translated it yet.)

Chapter 3

Nobody is really good

9 So what about those of us that are Jewish people? Will God be more good to us than to other people? No way. Both Jewish people and other people do bad things, just like I already said. 10 It is like God says in his book,

"Nobody is really good, not even one person,
11 nobody understands about God,
nobody even tries to get to know him.
12 Everybody turns away from God,
they all go wrong,
not even one of them does good things.*
13 They say things that make big trouble for other people,
whenever they talk, they tell lies and trick people.
Their words hurt people, their mouths are just as bad as cheeky snakes.*
14 They swear at other people and say bad things about them.*
15 They are always ready to kill other people.

* **2:6** Psalm 62:12; Proverbs 24:12 * **2:9-11** Deuteronomy 10:17 * **3:10-12** Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3
* **3:13** Psalm 5:9; 140:3 * **3:14** Psalm 10:7

16 Wherever they go, they hurt people
and make them really sad.
17 They don't know how to live without
fighting.*
18 They don't respect God or take any
notice of him."*

19-20 You know, it's like this. God gave his law to the Jewish people for them to follow. And God is the judge of everybody in the whole world. And nobody has kept all of that law, so nobody can argue with him. Nobody can tell God, "I have kept all those laws, so I'm all right. You can't punish me." We can't say that, because we all broke that law at some time.*

So why is the law there? It is there just to let us know that we always go wrong. That's what it is there for.

If we believe in Jesus, God says we are all right

21-22 But now it is different. God showed us a different way. And if we follow his way, he will be happy with us and say that we are all right. His way is not about that law, it is about us trusting Jesus Christ. God tells us about this in his book. God says that if we trust in Jesus, he will save us. It doesn't matter who we are. God treats everybody the same.* 23 We all went the wrong way, and we did bad things. Nobody is properly good, like God wants us to be. 24 But Jesus Christ died for us. He took the payback for those bad things that we did. So now God is really good to us, and he says that we are all right now, and he will not blame us any more. And we don't have to pay anything. 25 God sent Jesus to die for us, so that, if we believe that Jesus died for us, God isn't angry with us any more. Jesus let people kill him, and his blood came out, so now, if we trust him, God says we are all right. That shows that God was right and fair in the past, at those times when he didn't punish people for the bad things they did. 26 And it shows that he is fair at this time now, when he tells everyone that believes in Jesus that they are all right now.

27 So none of us can talk up big about anything that we ever did. The only thing that matters is this, we believe in Jesus. 28 It is like this. We believe in Jesus, so God tells us, "You are all right now." But if we only think about that law and try to do the things it says, God will not tell us that we are all right.

29 So now, what do you reckon? Is God just the God of the Jewish people, or is he the God of other people that are not Jews too? Of course he is God of both. He is God for the people that are not Jewish as well as for the Jews. 30 There is only one God. He makes Jewish people all right if they believe in Jesus, and he makes other people all right if they believe in Jesus too.*

31 So what do you reckon about God's law? We believe in Jesus now, so do we have to forget everything God said in his law? No way. If we believe in Jesus, we agree that the law is from God.

Chapter 4

(The next part, 4:1-12, mainly talks to Jewish people, so we have not translated it yet.)

Abraham believed God

13 Remember that story about Abraham, that old man that lived a long time ago. God promised him that one day the people born into his family would be great people everywhere in the world. And Abraham believed that word that God promised him.

* **3:15-17** Isaiah 59:7-8 * **3:18** Psalm 36:1 * **3:19-20** Psalm 143:2; Galatians 2:16 * **3:21-22** Galatians 2:16
* **3:30** Deuteronomy 6:4; Galatians 3:20

Abraham didn't have the law at that time. He just believed God, and then God said that Abraham was good, and God promised to look after his family.* 14 So don't think that God only promises good things to people that follow the law of Moses. Nobody can follow that law properly, so if God only promised good things to people that follow the law, nobody would get those good things. And if God only promised good things to people that follow the law, it wouldn't matter if people trust God or not. But really, God is not like that. He promises good things to people that trust him.*

15 People try to follow that law, but they can't do it, and whenever they break that law, God gets angry with them and punishes them. So all the law does is give us trouble. (The only way people will not break the law is if there is no law to break.)

16 So it is important that we trust God, just like Abraham trusted God. It doesn't matter if we are Jewish or not Jewish. If we believe God, like Abraham did, we belong to his family, like he is our grand-father.* 17 God promised that a long time ago, and it is in his book. God told Abraham, "I will make you the father of lots of nations." Abraham believed that God can do that. You know, God can do anything. He can even make dead people alive again, and he can make new things out of nothing.*

18 Everyone reckoned that Abraham was too old to have any kids, but he believed that God was going to make him the father of lots of nations. God promised Abraham that later on lots of people were going to be born into his family and they were going to be a real big mob.* 19 Abraham kept on believing God, and he waited for God to do that, just like he promised. Abraham knew that his body was old. It was so old it was nearly dead. He was about 100 years old. And Sarah, his wife, she was also too old to have a baby. But Abraham kept on believing anyway.* 20 He didn't start thinking, "Maybe God will not keep his promise after all." No, he kept on believing, and that made him strong, so that he could tell everyone that God is good. 21 He just thought, "I know that God will do whatever he promised."

22 So God said to Abraham, "Now I'm saying you are properly good, like you never did anything wrong"*

23 That's in God's book. God told his men to write it there, but they didn't write it just for Abraham. 24 They wrote it for us too, so we can be sure about this. If we really trust God, he will also tell us, "You are properly good." You know, our leader Jesus died, but after that God made him alive again. 25 It was us who did bad things, but God let people kill Jesus instead of us. He took the payback for those bad things we did. Then God made him alive again, so now God tells us, "You are all right."*

Chapter 5

God makes us his friends

1-2 So we believe in Jesus now, and God says we are all right, and he will not punish us. God is really good to us. Jesus Christ, our leader, did all that for us. Now we can be happy and think about how good it will be for us later, when we will be with God. God will show us how great he is, and he will make us great too. 3 We can be happy now too, even if things go wrong for us and we get trouble. We know that God lets us get trouble to make us strong, so that we will learn how to keep on believing, even if we

* **4:13** Genesis 17:4-6; 22:17-18; Galatians 3:29 * **4:14** Galatians 3:18 * **4:16** Galatians 3:7 * **4:17** Genesis 17:5
* **4:18** Genesis 15:5 * **4:19** Genesis 17:17 * **4:22** Genesis 15:6 * **4:25** Isaiah 53:4-5

have problems. 4 And after we learn to keep on believing, then we will become better people. And after we become better people, we can think about the time that will come, the time when everything will be good for us. 5 And we can be sure that God will be good to us then, because he already gave us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in us, so we know that God loves us.

6 Jesus Christ died for us while we were still really weak. At that time, we didn't care about God at all. But Jesus came, just at the right time, and he died instead of us. 7 You know, people don't usually agree to die instead of somebody else, not even instead of a good person. Maybe there is somebody that would die to save a really good person. 8 But Jesus Christ died for us while we were still really bad people. That shows that God really loves us very much.

9 And that's not all. Jesus Christ bled and died instead of us, so now God tells us, "You are all right," and he will not be angry with us when he judges everyone. 10 It is like this. We were God's enemies, then his son Jesus died for us, so now we are God's friends. And that's not all. Now that we are God's friends, Jesus lives in us and saves us. 11 So we are really happy now, because Jesus saved us and made us good friends with God.

Jesus Christ is different from Adam

12 Think about the story about Adam. God told him, "If you eat any fruit from that tree, you will die." Then Adam did the wrong thing, he ate that fruit, so he died. And it's the same for everybody now. We are all from Adam. We are all in his family, and we all do wrong things, so we all die.* 13-14 You see, before God gave Moses the law, it was like this, everybody did wrong things, so they died. They didn't have the law to show that what they did was wrong, but they all died. So that shows us that they all did wrong things. Yes, all the people from Adam did wrong things, even though they didn't break a rule, like Adam did.

At first Adam came, and Jesus came later. I will talk about them both now.

15 Jesus Christ did something very different from the wrong thing Adam did. Adam did a bad thing, so lots of people have to die. But Jesus Christ did a good thing, so that God can give lots of people new life. Yes, God is very good to us, even though we are not good. So, you see, Jesus does a better thing for us than Adam did. 16 That new life that God gives us is a lot different from the trouble we got from Adam. Adam did one bad thing, and God said that he was guilty. And he died. So now we all do bad things, and we get trouble. But we get something really good from Jesus. Even though we did bad things, God says we are all right. 17 That one man, Adam, he did something bad, so now lots of people die. But that other man, Jesus Christ, he did something good, so now lots of people will live with God for ever. God is really good to them now, and he makes them good too. Yes, Jesus did a much better thing for us than Adam did.

18 Adam went wrong, and after that, everybody did bad things. So God had to punish everybody. But then Jesus did something really good, so after that, God will not punish us, but he will let us live with him for ever. 19 That one man, Adam, did something wrong. He did something God told him not to do, so now lots of people do wrong things. But that other man, Jesus, he did something good. He did everything God told him to do, so now he will make lots of people good.

* **5:12** Genesis 3:6

20 You see, the law came and showed people
that they did wrong things. But that didn't
stop them. They still did wrong things. Yes,
people kept on doing more bad things, but
at the same time God kept on being good to
people, more and more. 21 It was like this. We
couldn't stop ourselves doing bad things, so
we all had to die. But now, nothing will stop
our leader, Jesus Christ, from being really
good to us. He did a really good thing for
us, so now God says that we are good too,
and we will live with him for ever.

Chapter 6

Christians can't keep on doing bad things

1 God was really good to us even though
we did bad things. So what do you reckon?
Maybe we should keep on doing bad things,
so that people can see how good God is.
2-4 No way. Just think about that baptism
ceremony. Church leaders baptised us to
show that we joined up with Jesus Christ.
And you know that Jesus died, and they
buried him, but God, our really great father,
made him alive again. And we joined up
to him, so we can't think about doing bad
things any more. It is like we died to those
bad things. And it is like God makes us
alive again to do good things. That baptism
ceremony was to show that we died to bad
things and got buried, just like Jesus Christ
died and got buried, but God gave us new
life too, just like Jesus came back to life.
If we live in a new way like that, we will
not go wrong any more. So if we start to
think about doing something bad, we have
to remember that we are dead to doing bad
things, and so we can't do it. We have to live
in a new way like that all the time.*

5 We joined up with Jesus Christ and it
is like we die, just like he died, and then
it is like we come back to life, just like he
came back to life. 6 We know that they nailed
Jesus Christ to that cross, and it was like
they nailed a part of us there too, that old
part of us that makes us do wrong things
all the time. It got nailed to that cross with
Jesus, and it is dead. So now it doesn't have
any power over us. It can't make us do bad
things. 7 You know, if something is dead, it
can't do anything. Well, that bad old part of
us is dead now, so it can't make us do bad
things any more.

8 It is like we died, just like Jesus Christ
died, and now we know that we will also
live again with him. 9 He came back to life
after he died, so we are sure that he can
never die again. Nothing can kill him ever
again. 10 He died once and took the payback
for the bad things that people do, but God
made him alive again, and now he lives
and works for God. 11 Well, we have to think
about ourselves in that same way. We joined
up with Jesus Christ, so now, if we start to
think that we want to do something bad,
we have to remember this, that bad part of
us died, just like Jesus died, so we can't do
anything bad. We have to think about living
God's way, so we live and work for him, just
like Jesus Christ does.

12-14 So don't just think about the law that
comes from Moses. It talks about the bad
things people do. If you just think about that,
you will want to do those same bad things
yourself. Then that law will be your boss,
and your bodies will make you want to do
bad things too. Don't be like that. Don't let
any part of your body be your boss. Don't
do whatever it wants. Instead, you have to
give your bodies to God and let him use
you to do good things. You have to think
about him all the time, and remember that
he is very good to you, and that he made

* **6:2-4** Colossians 2:12

you alive again in a new way. If you think like that, you will not want to do anything bad. God is really good to you. That law is not your boss any more.

Do whatever God wants

15 But maybe you think like this, "We can do whatever bad things we want to do, because that law is not our boss any more and God will be good to us anyway." No way. Don't think like that. 16 You know that if you always do whatever another person wants, you make that person your boss. So if you do bad things all the time, you make those bad things your boss, and in the end you will die. But if you do whatever God wants all the time, you make him your boss, and in the end he will say that you are really good. 17 Actually, you used to do bad things all the time, but now you have made God your boss, and you really want to do whatever he wants. I thank God for that. 18 You are free now. You don't have to do those bad things any more. You have got a new good boss now, and you have to do good things all the time. 19 I'm trying to say this in a way that you will really understand. In the past you used your body for wrong things. It was like those bad things were your boss, so you kept on doing more bad things. But now you have to use your bodies for good things. You work for God, and he gets you to do good things so that you will be his special people.

20 In those days you worked for the wrong boss. You made those bad things your boss. So you did bad things, and you never wanted to do good things. 21 And what did you get after you did bad things? You got shame, that's all. And you know that people that do those bad things have to die. 22 So now you can't think about doing bad things any more, but instead, you have to only think about working for God. Then you will do good things, and then you will be God's special people and you will live with him for ever. 23 That's how it is. If we do bad things, we will get our pay for doing those things. We will die. That's all the pay we will get. But if we join up to our leader, Jesus Christ, God will give us properly good life. We will live with him for ever.

Chapter 7

The Jewish law

1 I am talking now to my own countrymen, you Jewish people. You know the law that God gave to Moses. That law is for people to follow only while they are alive. It is not there for them after they die. 2-3 I'll talk about one part of the law to show you what I mean. That law says that a woman is only allowed to marry one man. If a married woman sleeps with a man that is not her husband, as if he is her husband, she breaks that law, and she is guilty. But if her husband dies, then she can marry another man and sleep with him, and she will not be breaking any law.

4 You know that Jesus died for us. His body was dead on the cross. And, my friends, you believe in Jesus, so it is like you died too. So that old law is not for you any more. You belong to Jesus now. He came alive again, and it's like you have a new life now too. God gave you that life so that you can do a lot of good things for him.

5 You know, we all have a bad part in us that wants us to do bad things. And at first, when we didn't believe in Jesus, that bad part in us was our boss. And when that law told us not to do bad things, that bad part in us made us think about those bad things and want to do them, and so we did them anyway. So we had to die. 6 But now we believe in Jesus, we don't have to live that old way any more. It's like we died to that

old way, so we don't have to follow that old law any more. We have the Holy Spirit in us now, and he helps us to do what God wants us to do. So we live that new way now.

That law shows us that we go wrong

7 Some people might reckon that the old law is no good because it made us go wrong, but that's not true. The law is good. You see, God gave people the law to clearly show them what is right and what is wrong. For example, a part of that law says, "If something belongs to somebody else, don't think about getting it for yourself." Now think about this. If somebody doesn't know that law, they don't know that it is wrong to want to get other people's things.* 8 And, you know, we all have a bad part in us that wants to do bad things, so when that bad part in us hears the law, it makes us want to do that same wrong thing that the law talks about. But if we don't hear that law, that bad part in us can't get us to go wrong like that. 9 And you know, some people didn't know that law at first, but after they heard it, that bad part in them made them want to do those bad things. 10 So then they had to die. You see, it's like this. That law's job is to show us how to live, but we don't do everything it says, so the law tells us that we have to die. 11 That bad part of us uses that law to trick us, so that we do bad things. And then we have to die.* 12 But that law itself is really good. It tells us to do things that God says are right and good.

13 So, does that good law kill people? No way. It's like this. That law shows us the things that God said are wrong, and that law says that we have to die if we do those wrong things. So that law shows us that it is really bad to go wrong, and to do bad things against God.

A fight goes on inside us

14 The problem is not the law, it is us. We know this. That law came from God, so there is nothing wrong with that law. But there is something wrong with us. We keep on going wrong. There is a bad part inside us that makes itself our boss, and we do whatever that boss tells us to do. 15 We don't understand it. We want to do good things. But we can't do those good things that we want to do. Instead, we do the things that we hate.* 16 We don't want to do those bad things. We know that they are wrong. So that shows that, really, we agree with the law and we reckon the law is good. 17 So really, it's not us that does those bad things. It's that bad part of us that is inside us.

18 We know that we can't do anything good by ourselves. We want to do the right thing, but we can't. 19 We keep on trying to do good things, but we can't. No, we keep on doing the bad things we don't want to do. 20 That proves it. It's not us that does those bad things. It's that bad part inside us that does those bad things.

21 This is what happens. It is like another law. Every time we try to do something good, that bad part of us wants to take control and make us go wrong.

22 Really, we ourselves, we want to live the right way, 23 but there is a big fight going on inside us. That bad part of us makes its own law. It makes us think the wrong way. It makes us its prisoners so that we can't do the things we really want to do. 24 We feel really sorry for ourselves. How can we get free from this bad boss in our bodies that will make us die? Who can make us free?

25 Thank God, Jesus Christ can make us free. He is the answer. God made a way for us to be free. Jesus will be our new leader, and he is stronger than that old boss inside us.

* **7:7** Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21 * **7:11** Genesis 3:13 * **7:15** Galatians 5:17

This is what I have been saying up until now. We ourselves, we really want to do things that are right, but we have a bad part in us that is our boss, and it makes us do things that are wrong.

Chapter 8

God's spirit lives in us

1 The important thing that I want to say now is this. If we belong to Jesus Christ, God will never say we are guilty. 2 His spirit is in us, and he gives us new life, and he makes us strong so that we can say *no* to that bad part of us that tries to make us go wrong. That is the new way that we live, because we belong to Jesus, and it makes us free from the old way of doing bad things and ending up dead.

3 You see, the law that came from Moses couldn't help us. We were too weak. If we thought about some bad thing that we wanted to do, then we couldn't help ourselves, we just did it. That law just made us think about those bad things, and then we wanted to do them. But God set us free from all that. He sent his own son to us. Jesus had the same sort of body that we bad people have. Then God punished him instead of us. Jesus died instead of us. 4 If we listen to his spirit in us, and if we do whatever he says, we will not listen any more to that old part of us that tells us to do bad things. We will do good things, like the things in his law.

5 Some people just think about themselves, so they only do whatever makes them feel good. They let that bad part inside them be their boss, and they do whatever it tells them to do. But other people think about God and his spirit, and they do whatever the Holy Spirit tells them to do. 6 If we let that bad part inside us be our boss, and if we only do whatever makes us feel good, we will die. But if we do the things the Holy Spirit tells us, and if we let him control us, we will live happy and quiet inside ourselves. 7-8 That bad part inside us fights against God, so if we do whatever it says, we don't do the things that God wants us to do. If we are like that, we can never follow God's laws. If we live like that, we can never make God happy.

9 But I know that you aren't like that any more. You haven't let that bad part of you be your boss, but you have joined up with the Holy Spirit, and now he lives inside you. That's right. If people don't have the spirit of Jesus Christ in them, they don't belong to him. 10 But Jesus Christ does live inside you. Yes, you did bad things, so your bodies will die, but God says that you are all right now, so his spirit makes you alive. 11 Remember that Jesus died, but God made him alive again. And God will do that for you too. Your bodies will die, but after that, God will make them alive again. His spirit will do that. He lives inside you. *

12 So, my friends, you don't have to do bad things any more. You don't have to do whatever that bad part of you tells you to do. 13 If you keep on doing those bad things, you will die. But if God's spirit is in you, he can help you block that bad part of you, like you kill it, and then you will not do those bad things, and you will live with God for ever. 14 It is like this. God's kids are those people that listen to his spirit and follow him.

15 God didn't give you his Holy Spirit to make you frightened of him. No, he gave you his spirit to make you his kids. You are not like a prisoner that has to work for a cheeky boss, and that boss makes him frightened all the time. No way. You have God's spirit in you, so you can talk to God and say, "Dad, you are my own good father." *

* **8:11** 1 Corinthians 3:16 * **8:15** Mark 14:36; Galatians 4:6

16 And his spirit in us talks to our own
spirits, and he tells us, "That is right, you
really are God's kids." 17 We joined up with
Jesus Christ, God's son, so we are part of
God's family now, and we will get some of
the good things that God gives to his son.
But people gave Jesus a lot of trouble, and
they will give us a lot of trouble too, because
we belong to him. Yes, we will get trouble,
and we will get good things too.

God will make everything really good later

18 But don't worry about the trouble we get
now. Later God will make everything so
good for us that we will not even think
about the trouble we get now. 19 It is like
this, everything in the world is waiting for
that time when God will set everything right
and show everyone who his kids really are.
20 Think about Adam and Eve. They went
wrong, and after that, God let everything
in the world get messed up. It was people
that went wrong, not the other things in
the world, but everything else went wrong
anyway, from the things that the people
did.* 21 So now everything in the world is
waiting for God to fix things up, so that
nothing will go bad and rot away like it does
now. And one day, God will fix it all, and at
the same time he will show everyone that we
are his family. 22 We know that everything
in the world now just dies and rots away.
Everything has got that problem. Think
about a woman. At the time she has a baby,
she gets trouble and has a lot of pain. Well,
that is a picture of the way everything in the
world is now. There is a lot of trouble and
a lot of pain. 23 And we get trouble too. We
are Christians, and we have the Holy Spirit
in us, but we still get trouble. God gave us
that Holy Spirit to show us a little bit of the
good that will come later. But right now, we
get pain and problems too. So we just wait
for God to fix everything up and to really
make us his family. Then he will give us new
bodies, just like he promised us.* 24-25 We
are really sure that he will save us and fix
everything up for us even though he hasn't
done it yet. We know he will do it one day,
so we just have to keep on waiting for it.

26 And we can be sure too that the Holy
Spirit will always help us. We know that
we are weak, and we don't understand very
much, so sometimes we don't know what
to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays with
us and talks to our father for us. He even
groans with words that nobody can properly
say. 27 And our father understands the Holy
Spirit. God already knows everything that
everybody thinks and the way everybody
feels, so the Holy Spirit always prays for
God's people and asks for the things that God
already wants. 28 And we know too that God
picked us out to be his people, to love him
and to do whatever he wants, so he makes
everything work out good for us. 29 A long
time ago, God knew about each of us, and
he knew which of us will believe in him, so
he planned to make us like his son. He sent
Jesus to us. He is God's son, and he is like
the older brother to all of us. 30 So, after he
picked us out, he called to us to come to
him, and after we came to him, he said that
we are all right now, and he will make us
really great too.

31 So as we think about all of this, what do
we learn? It is this. We are on God's side. He
is with us, so it doesn't matter who is against
us, they can't win against God. 32 He really
did a lot for us. He sent his own son to die
instead of us. And that's not all. He will give
us everything else that we need too. 33 God
himself is the one that says, "You are good,"
so nobody can blame us and tell God, "They

* **8:20** Genesis 3:17-19 * **8:23** 2 Corinthians 5:2-4

are no good." 34 God picked us out to be his own people, so nobody can tell him to punish us. You see, Jesus Christ died for us, and God made him come back to life, and now he sits up there with God in heaven and asks God to help us. He will not turn around and tell God to punish us. No way.

We can win every time

35 But sometimes things go wrong for us, and sometimes we get trouble. Does that mean that Jesus Christ has stopped loving us? No way. He will keep on loving us. Some people don't want us to follow Jesus, so maybe they will hit us, and maybe they will be hard on us. Then can we think that Jesus has stopped loving us? No way. Or if we get too cold from not enough clothes, or if we go hungry, or if people hurt us or kill us, then does that mean that Jesus has stopped loving us? No way. Nothing will ever stop him from loving us. 36 It is like God says in his book,

"Some people find out that we belong
to God, and they kill us.
They reckon we are weak like sheep
and they can kill us whenever they
want to."*

37 Don't worry about any of these things. We win every time. Jesus loves us all the time, so he helps us get through it all, and we win in the end.

38-39 I'm really sure that nothing at all can make God stop loving us. Even if they kill us, it doesn't matter, God still loves us. Those good spirits, the angels, they will not stop him. And those bad spirits, they can't make him stop loving us. Things that happen now will not stop him, and things that will happen later will not stop him either. No strong spirit anywhere can stop him from loving us. Nothing anywhere. Nothing way up in the sky, nothing way down in the sea, nothing anywhere can stop him loving us. You see, God showed us that he loves us. He sent Jesus Christ, our leader, to die for us.

(The next part, 9:1—10:4, mainly talks to the Jewish people, so we have not translated it yet.)

Chapter 10

God will save everybody that trusts him

5 It's like this. A long time ago, Moses wrote that people will be all right if they follow all of God's law. He wrote, "If anybody always does everything in God's law, they will live."* 6 But God's book also tells us that if we trust God, he will say that we are all right, even though we don't always do everything in God's law. So don't think that somebody has to go up to heaven, to bring Jesus Christ down to the earth. 7 And don't think that somebody has to go down to the place where the dead people are, to get Jesus Christ and make him alive again.

8 This is what God says in his book,

"You already have God's message.
You know that message, so you can
think about it, and you can talk
about it."*

That message is the same message that we tell everybody. We say, "You have to trust Jesus." 9 Yes, you have to really believe that God made Jesus alive again after he died, and you have to tell people that you belong to Jesus. If you believe like that, and if you talk like that, God will save you. 10 If you really believe God, and if you tell everybody that you believe in him, then he says that you are all right, and he saves you.

11 God says this about Jesus in his book,

"Everybody that trusts him will always
know that they are going the right
way, and God will save them."*

* **8:36** Psalm 44:22 * **10:5** Leviticus 18:5 * **10:8** Deuteronomy 30:14 * **10:11** Isaiah 28:16

12 That message is for everyone, Jewish
people and people that are not Jewish. We
are all the same, we have the same God, and
he is good to everyone that asks him for help.
13 And God says this in his book too,
"God will save everybody that calls out
to him for help and asks him to save
them."*
14 But what about people that don't believe
in God? They can't call out to him, right?
And what about people that have never even
heard about Jesus? They can't believe in him,
right? Somebody has to tell them about him,
and then they can believe in him. 15 And
somebody has to send those messengers to
go and tell the people about Jesus. God says
this in his book too,
"It is really good to see God's
messengers come and bring his good
news."*
16 But some people don't want to hear God's
message. A long time ago, Isaiah, one of
God's men, wrote this in God's book,
"Hardly anybody believes the message
we tell them, God."*
17 But, you see, people have to hear that
good message about Jesus Christ before they
can believe in him.

(The next part, 10:18—11:36, mainly talks to Jewish people, so we have not translated it yet.)

Chapter 12

Live the way that makes God happy

1 My Christian friends, God is so very good to
us. So I really want you to use your bodies
to live for him. A long time ago, God told
his people to give him animals to show him
respect. They did it like this. They used to
kill the animals and burn them up. But now
it is different. Now you have to use your
bodies to live for him and do good things,
it's like you are giving your own bodies
to God while you are still alive. If you do
that, you will make God happy. That is the
proper thing to do to show that you follow
God. 2 Don't be like most of the people in the
world that like to do bad things. You have
to be different from them. You have to let
God change the way you think, so that you
will become new people. Then you will be
able to find out the things that God wants
you to do, and you will know what is good,
and the things that really make God happy.
3 God wants me to tell you this, and he
helps me to say it. Don't think that you
are better than you really are, but think
properly about yourself. God himself makes
it possible for you to believe in him, so think
about how much you trust him. That is the
important thing. 4 I will tell you a picture
story. Christians are like a body. You know
that we each have a body, but that body
has a lot of different parts. Each part of our
body has its own job to do. But the parts all
belong to that one body, so they all belong
to each other.* 5 Well, that is a picture of us,
God's people. We all belong to Jesus Christ,
and it is just like each of us is a part of his
body. Each of us has our own job to do. We
all belong to Jesus, so we all belong to each
other.
6 God is good to us and gives each of us the
power to do something properly. So if God
gave you the power to tell his message to
people, well you have to do that whenever
you believe he has a message for you to tell.*
7 Or maybe God gave you the power to help
other people, well you have to do that. Or
if God gave you the power to teach other
people, well he wants you to do that. 8 Or
maybe God gave you the power to cheer
people up, well that is your job. Or maybe he

* **10:13** Joel 2:32 * **10:15** Isaiah 52:7 * **10:16** Isaiah 53:1 * **12:4** 1 Corinthians 12:12 * **12:6** 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

gave you the power to share your money and things with other people, well he wants you to share them with people that need them. Or maybe God gave you the power to be a leader, well you have to try to lead people properly. Or if God gave you the power to feel sorry for people that have troubles, and the power to be good to them, well that is his job for you, so be happy while you do it.

9 Don't just pretend to love other people. You have to love them properly. That means you have to hate everything that is bad for them and love everything that is good for them. 10 You have to love each other like brothers and sisters that belong to the same family. You have to respect other Christians more than you respect yourself. 11 Don't get lazy as you work for God, but work hard and be really happy about it.

12 We know that everything will be really good after God fixes everything up, so think about that and you will be really happy. But if people give you trouble now, don't give up, but stay strong for God. And keep on talking to God about everything. 13 If any of God's people need anything, you have to give them whatever you can. If they are visiting your town, and they need somewhere to stay, let them stay at your place.

14 If anyone makes trouble for you, don't ask God to punish them, but ask him to help them.* 15 If somebody is happy, you be happy with them too. If somebody is sad, you be sad with them too. 16 Always try to be friends with other Christians and don't argue with them. Don't think to yourself, "I'm too good to be with them." Sit down with anybody and be their friend. Remember, you don't know everything.*

17 If people do some bad things to you, don't do payback to them. You have to do good things, so that people will know that you are good. 18 Try not to argue with anybody, and try not to fight with anybody.

19 Listen, my good friends, if somebody does something bad to you, don't do something bad to them. Don't do payback to them. No, just wait for God. He will get angry with them, and he will do payback to them one day. We can read this in God's book,

> "God says, 'It is my job to do payback to people for the bad things they do. I will punish them, so don't try to do it yourself.' "*

20 Instead of you doing payback to them, you have to do like God says in another place in his book. He says,

> "If your enemies are hungry, give them food to eat. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. Then they will be sorry and feel shame for the bad things they did to you."*

21 So don't do payback to anybody. Don't do bad things to them. If you do that payback, it is like you let that bad part of you win. But instead, you have to be good to everybody. That's how you properly win against bad things.

Chapter 13

Respect the government

1 Now I will talk about the government bosses. Remember that God put them there and gave them their jobs as bosses, so you have to do what they say. They make laws for everybody, and they make sure we all follow those laws. 2 So if you don't do the things that their law says, you're going against the people that God put there. And he will get those bosses to punish you. 3 People that do whatever is right don't have to worry about those bosses. But people that do things that are wrong will get frightened of them. So if you do things

* **12:14** Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:28 * **12:16** Proverbs 3:7 * **12:19** Deuteronomy 32:35 * **12:20** Proverbs 25:21-22

that are right, the bosses will say that you are good. 4 Those government bosses really work for God, and their job is to make things good for you. But if you do things that are wrong, look out, you can be frightened of them. They will get you and punish you. God gave them that job to punish everybody that does bad things, and he helps them do it. 5 So you have to do what they say, so that they don't punish you. And you know that it is the right thing to do, so you will not feel bad about it.

6 You have to pay tax money to the government too, for the same reason. Those government bosses work for God, and they need that money to do their job.* 7 So you have to give everybody whatever you owe to them. You have to pay taxes and pay the bills the government bosses send you. And you still have to respect those bosses.

Love people

8 If ever you borrow anything from anybody, you have to give it back, so that you don't owe anything to anybody. But you always owe each other this one thing, you have to love each other. If you love other people, you keep God's law. 9 God's law says, "Love other people just as much as you love yourself." You know there are lots of other laws too, like, "Don't sleep with somebody that you are not married to, as if they are your wife or husband," and, "Don't murder anybody," and, "Don't steal anything," and, "If something belongs to somebody else, don't think about getting it for yourself." But if you really love other people, you will not do any of those wrong things anyway. So that law that says to love people, it says what all the other laws say when you listen to them all together.* 10 If you really love people, you will never do bad things to them, so you will be doing what God's law says you have to do.

Wake up, Jesus will come back soon

11-12 And here is another thing to think about. You know that Jesus will come back soon and save us from the bad things that are going on. There is not much time left. It is closer now than it was at the time when we first believed in him. It's like it's night time now, but Jesus will come back soon, so it is like the day-light will come soon. It's like it's time for us to wake up from sleep. We have to stop doing the bad things that people do in the dark. Instead, we have to do the good things that people do in the light. 13 We have to do things that are right and good and honest, like the things people do in the day-light. We can't go to wild grog parties, and we can't get drunk. We can't sleep with anyone that is not our own wife or husband, as if we are married to them. We can't do wrong things with our bodies. We can't get into fights and arguments. We can't be jealous of other people. 14 But instead, you have to be like our leader, Jesus Christ, so that whenever other people look at you, it will be like they see him. And whenever that bad part inside you makes you want to do something bad, take no notice of it. Just don't think about doing that bad thing.

Chapter 14

Don't argue with other Christians

1 There are some Christians that are not sure if it is right or wrong for them to do some things. But don't worry, let people like that be in your church, and don't argue with them about whatever they think they have to do. 2 It's like this, some people believe that God will let them eat all sorts of food, but other people are not so sure, so they only eat vegetables. 3 People that eat all sorts of food can't think that they are better than the

* **13:6** Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25 * **13:9** Exodus 20:13-15, 17; Deuteronomy 5:17-19, 21; Leviticus 19:18

others. And people that only eat vegetables can't tell the other people that they are wrong. God is happy with both sorts of people, people that only eat vegetables and people that eat everything. 4 So you can't tell anybody else that they are wrong. God is their boss, not you. Only God can say, "You are right," or, "You are wrong." And he can help them to keep on doing good.

5 Here is another thing. Some people think like this, "Some days are special for God, and the other days are not." Other people think, "Each day is the same as every other day." Each of us has to make up our own mind about it. 6 People that make one day special, they do that to give respect to God on that day. And people that eat all sorts of food, they do that to give respect to God. They say *thank you* to God for that food. And in the same way, people that don't eat some sorts of food, they do that to give respect to God. They say *thank you* to God too. 7-8 None of us is our own boss. We belong to God, and he is our good boss all the time. He is our good boss while we are alive, and he is our good boss after we die. 9 Remember that Jesus died and then came alive again. So now he is the good boss over people that are alive and also the boss over people that are dead.

10 So then it is God, not you, that can tell other Christians that they are wrong. You can't think that you are better than any other Christian. No. We've all got to stand in front of God one day. Then God will tell each of us the things that we did right and the things that we did wrong.* 11 We can read this in God's book,

> "God says that this will happen, for sure. Everybody will get down on their knees in front of him to give him respect. And everybody will say that God is really good. They will say that he is the only great God."*

12 That means that one day every one of us will have to face God and tell him all about everything that we ever did.

Don't make other Christians go wrong

13 So we have to stop being like judges. We have to stop telling each other, "You are wrong." Instead of that, we have to make sure that we help other Christians, and make sure we don't do anything that makes them go wrong. 14 I know for sure that our leader, Jesus, said that it's all right to eat any sort of food. But somebody might believe that it is wrong to eat some sort of food. Then it is wrong for that person to eat it, but not for anybody else. 15-16 Sometimes you might know that something is all right, so you think you will eat it. But if you know that another Christian will get upset when you eat it, then don't eat it. Leave it. If you love other Christians, you will not do things that hurt them. Remember, Jesus Christ died for those people, so don't eat that food. You know that it is all right to eat it, but leave it anyway. Then nobody will blame you.

17-18 We belong to God. He doesn't give us rules about the things that we can't eat or drink, but he wants us to have his spirit in us so that we will do the things that are right, and we will always feel good and quiet inside ourselves, and we will always be happy. If we live like that as we work for Jesus Christ, then we make God happy. And other people are happy with us too.

19 So we have to do everything we can to help each other. We have to try to agree with each other and to help each other get strong. 20 God is bringing people into his family, but if you eat something that upsets another Christian, so that they go away,

* **14:10** 2 Corinthians 5:10 * **14:11** Isaiah 45:23

you will mess up God's work. So don't do that. You know that there is nothing wrong with the food itself, but it is wrong for you to make another person stop believing. 21 So if another Christian will get upset and go wrong because you eat meat or drink wine, then don't eat any meat, and don't drink any wine. 22 If you believe it is all right for you to do it, then just keep quiet about it. You know it is all right, and God knows it is all right, but don't show it off in front of other people. Make up your mind about the right thing to do, and do it. Then you will be happy. 23 But if anyone is not sure if it is right or wrong for them to eat something, then they can't eat it. If they don't believe that it is all right to eat, and if they eat it anyway, then God will say that they do wrong. If we don't believe that something is all right, then it is wrong for us to do it.

Chapter 15

Strong Christians have to help weak Christians

1 Some of us are strong and trust God about these things, but other Christians are weak and worry about them a lot. We strong Christians have to be easy on those weak Christians, and help them get strong. We have to think about the problems they have with these things. We can't just do whatever makes us happy. 2 No, we have to do whatever the other Christians think is right, to help them get strong and trust God more. 3 Remember what Jesus Christ did for all of us. He didn't just do things that made himself happy. No. He let those cheeky people say bad things about him, like God's book says,

> "People said bad things about you, God,
> and they said those same bad things about me."*

4 You know, a long time ago, God got his men to write lots of things like that in his book. He did that to teach us mob that are here today about God. As we think about those things that they wrote, God cheers us up and helps us keep going for him, and we know for sure that God will do everything he promised to do for us. 5-6 I want God, the father of our leader, Jesus Christ, to do that for you. He is the one that can cheer people up, and he keeps them going. I'm asking him to help you follow Jesus Christ properly so that you all live happy together like one family. Then you will all thank him and say that he is really good.

7 So you have to be good to other Christians, and let them join you, just like Jesus Christ was good to you, and he let you join God's family. Then people will say that God is really good. 8 Remember this. Jesus Christ came here and worked for his own nation, the Jewish people. A long time ago, God promised some things to their elders, and later, Jesus came to show them that God will do what he promised. 9 And Jesus came for the people that are not Jews too, to show them that God feels sorry for them, and that God is good to them, so that they will thank God and tell everybody, "God is really good." God got his men to write about this, and their words are in God's book. One of them wrote,

> "All right God, I will tell all the people that are not Jews about you,
> and I will sing to you and say, 'You are really great.' "*

10 And another one of God's men wrote,

> "You mob that are not Jews can be happy, together with God's people."*

11 And another one of God's men wrote,

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* **15:3** Psalm 69:9 * **15:9** 2 Samuel 22:50; Psalm 18:49 * **15:10** Deuteronomy 32:43

"All you mob that are not Jews can say,
'God is really great,'
And all the people everywhere can say,
'God is really good.' "*
12 And Isaiah, another one of God's men, wrote,
"A Jewish man from David's family
will become the leader of every
nation, even the people that are not
Jews, and they will be sure that he
will save them."*
13 You see, you can be sure that God can save you. So now I ask him to help you trust him properly, and to make you really happy, and feel good and quiet inside yourselves. Then the Holy Spirit will use his power to help you be really sure that God will do everything that he said he will do.

Paul's job

14-15 My Christian friends, I'm sure that you already know about the things that I wrote in this letter. Before I started to write this letter, I remembered that you are good people and that you know a lot, and you even teach each other about the things I wrote about. But I got brave and started to write to you anyway, to get you to think a bit more about some of those things. God is good to me, 16 and he picked me out to be a worker for Jesus Christ. My job is to tell the good news about Jesus to people that are not Jews. After I tell them that good news, God's spirit works in them to make them good and right, and God is really happy with them. It is like I give them to God, like a really good gift.

17 So I like to tell everybody about the things that Jesus Christ has helped me do in my work for God. 18-19 But I will not talk about anything else. I just want to talk about whatever Jesus Christ did. He used me, but he is the one that did it. He got me to tell his true message to people that don't know God, and his Holy Spirit got me to do powerful things too. After they heard my message and saw the things I did, they turned around and believed God. I started to tell people in Jerusalem the good message about Jesus Christ, and I kept on telling people that message everywhere I went, right out to Illyricum. 20 I always want to tell that good story to people that have never heard about Jesus Christ. I don't want to go to places where somebody else already told them about Jesus, and just tell them a bit more. No, I want to go and tell people that haven't heard about Jesus. 21 It is like God's book says,

"There are people that have never
heard about God.
Nobody ever told them anything about
him.
But they will hear the message about
him.
And they will understand it."*

(The next part, 15:22-29, says things for just some of the people at Rome at that time, so we have not translated it yet.)

Paul asked the Roman Christians to pray for him

30 My Christian friends, I really want you to pray to God with me. You believe in our leader, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit gets us to love each other, so please pray for me. 31 I will go to Judea soon, so ask God to save me from the mob there that don't believe in Jesus. And ask God that his people in Jerusalem will be happy with the way I will help them. 32 Then, if God wants me to, I will come to you mob in Rome. I know I will be really happy to meet you, and I will have a

* **15:11** Psalm 117:1 * **15:12** Isaiah 11:10 * **15:21** Isaiah 52:15

good rest with you there. 33 And now I ask God to be with all you mob. He can make us live happy together. Yes, that's right.

Chapter 16

(The next part, 16:1-16, says things for just some of the people at Rome at that time, so we have not translated it yet.)

Be careful, some people will tell you the wrong story

17 Listen, my Christian friends, I'm telling you straight, you've got to be really careful about people that make you split up and argue with each other. Remember that you heard the true message about Jesus Christ, and you learned to follow his way, but there are some people that want you to leave that way and go another way. They tell you a different story, and they get you to argue with each other. So don't listen to them. Keep away from them. 18 They don't work for our leader, Jesus Christ, but they just work for themselves. They try to trick people. They talk really nicely to people and say good things about them. They do that to get whatever they want for themselves. They trick people that don't think about it properly. 19 But don't let them trick you. Everyone knows that you do what God wants, so I'm happy about you. But I also want to tell you to be careful. I want you to understand the things that are good, and don't even think about doing the things that are bad. 20 You know, Satan, the boss over the bad spirits, he tries to get you to go wrong. But God is stronger than Satan. God is the one that makes us happy and quiet inside ourselves. And he will beat Satan, so that Satan can't do anything to you any more.

I ask our leader, Jesus, to be really good to you.

(The next part, 16:21-24, says things for just some of the people at Rome at that time, so we have not translated it yet.)

Everybody has to tell God that he is good

25-27 God is really great and powerful, so everybody has to tell him that he is good. He can make you strong. This is his message. It is the good news about Jesus Christ. A long time ago, God planned to get both the Jewish people, and the people that are not Jews, to believe in him. But at first he kept it a secret, and he just got the Jewish people to follow him. After that, he got his men to write about it ahead of time, and their words are in his book. Now his message about Jesus is for every nation. It is not just for the Jewish people, but everybody everywhere can trust him, and they can listen to him and do what he wants. God is the only one that can think good enough to make it all work out like that. So everybody has to tell God and Jesus Christ, "You are great." They have always got to do that for ever.

From Paul

The 1st letter that Paul wrote to the Christians at Corinth

(The book in the Holy Bible called 1 Corinthians)

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 20 years after Jesus went back to heaven. It is now in the Holy Bible.

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians that were living in the city called Corinth, in the country we now call Greece, where Greek people come from. A big earthquake knocked that city down more than 160 years ago, so the Greek people built a new town about 3 kilometres away and called it Corinth. That town is still there today.

At the time when Paul wrote this letter, Corinth had 2 harbours for ships, and those ships brought a lot of things to Corinth. A lot of people bought things and sold those things there, to get money for themselves. There were also a lot of people there that did bad things to get money.

Paul went to Corinth to tell the people there about Jesus, and he stayed there teaching them for about a year and a half (see Acts 18:1-18). Some of the Corinth people believed Paul's message and became Christians.

Then Paul went to other places. But the Christians at Corinth started to have some problems. So they wrote a letter to Paul and asked him some questions. Then Paul wrote this letter to answer those questions, and to tell them the right way for Christians to live.

This letter has a lot of good messages for Christians today. Paul wrote it to help the Christians in Corinth live the right way, and it can help us work out the right way to live too.

Chapter 1

1 I am Paul, and this letter is from me. God wanted me to go and tell people about Jesus Christ, so he picked me to be his special worker. And Sosthenes is here with me. He is our Christian friend, and he is helping me write this letter.

2 I'm sending this letter to you Christians there in Corinth city. God picked you to be his own special people, and he joined you to Jesus Christ. You are in God's family now, along with everyone that says to Jesus, "You are my leader." He is their leader, and he is our leader too.*

3 I'm asking God our father, and Jesus Christ our leader, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

God gives his people lots of good things

4 I always thank God for you mob. You belong to Jesus Christ now, and God is really good to you.

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* **1:2** Acts 18:1

5 Yes, Jesus Christ gave you everything you need. He lets you know a lot of things, and he gives you the power to tell God's message to people. 6 That shows that the message we told you about Jesus Christ is true. 7 You really want our leader, Jesus Christ, to come back from heaven, and while you are waiting for him, you have all the spiritual power that he gives us to do his work. 8 God will keep you believing properly in our leader Jesus Christ, and you will stay strong for him until the day when he will come back from heaven. At that time, nobody will be able to blame you or say that you did anything wrong. 9 God picked you to be friends of his son, our leader Jesus Christ. And you can trust God, he will keep you strong for Jesus.

Don't split up to follow different Christian leaders

10 My Christian friends, our leader Jesus Christ wants me to say this to you. All you Christians have to agree with each other and stay together. Don't split up. Please think the same way as each other, and agree together about the right way to follow Jesus.

11 You see, my friends, some of Chloe's mob told me what is going on there in Corinth. They reckon that you are arguing too much with each other and you are splitting into different groups. 12 They reckon some of you say, "Paul is our leader," and others say, "That other man, Apollos, he is our leader," and others say, "No, not them. Our leader is Peter," and others say, "Jesus Christ is our leader."*

13 Listen, that's not right. Don't split up into groups like that. If you do that, it's like you are splitting up Jesus Christ. Stop and think about it. Did I, Paul, die for you on a cross? No way. And when Christian leaders baptised you, when they took you through that special washing ceremony, did they baptise you to show that you belonged to me, Paul? No way. 14-15 I thank God that I only baptised a few of you, so none of you can say, "Paul baptised me, so he is my leader." I only baptised Crispus and Guyus.* 16 And I just remembered, I baptised Stefanas and his family too. But I can't remember baptising anyone else.* 17 You see, Jesus Christ didn't send me to baptise people. He sent me to tell the good news to people, that Jesus died for them. That message is powerful. God didn't send me to say smart words to people. That sort of talk is useless. People might just think about my smart words, and not listen to God, and so they will not hear God's powerful good news.

God shows his power in the message about Jesus

18 We tell everybody the message that Jesus died on a cross to save them. Some people hear that message and think it is stupid. Those people's spirits are finishing up, and they are lost. But other people hear that message and think it is good. You are like that mob, and so are we. We know that message is from God. It tells us that he is using his power to save us. 19 It is like God says in his book,

> "People might think they are smart,
> and they might reckon they know
> everything,
> but God shows them that they are not
> wise, and he will stop them from
> doing what they are thinking about."*

20 So what does that tell us about the smart people in this world? And what about those people that reckon they properly know the Jewish law? And what about those people that can talk really good, so that they win arguments? None of them get to know God.

* **1:12** Acts 18:24 * **1:14-15** Acts 18:8; 19:29; Romans 16:23 * **1:16** 1 Corinthians 16:15 * **1:19** Isaiah 29:14

They leave God out. They don't think about him, and in the end God shows us that they are all stupid.* 21 You see, God is properly wise. He knows that most people in this world want to be smart and think up their own ideas about God. But he blocks them, so they will never get to know him that way. Instead, God is happy to save everybody that believes his message. And we tell you that message, even though other people think we are stupid.

22 You see, the Jewish people want to see God do something powerful, and then they reckon they will believe him. And other people that are not Jews, they just want to hear about smart ideas. 23 But we are not like those people. We tell people about Jesus Christ, and we tell them that he died for them on the cross. The Jewish people can't understand that. It isn't what they want, so they don't believe it. And the other people that are not Jews, they reckon it is stupid, so they don't believe it. 24 But we are different. God has picked us to save us. Some of us are Jews and some of us are not Jews, but when we listen to that message about Jesus Christ it is a powerful message for us. We believe it and God saves us. And we know that God is really wise because he sent Jesus to save us. 25 People might reckon that is a stupid thing for God to do, but God's way is better than the best idea any person ever had. And people might reckon that God is weak, they might reckon that he just let his son die. But they are wrong. God did that to show us that he is stronger than anyone else.

26 My Christian friends, remember what you were like before God picked you. Most of you were not the smart sort of people. Most of you were not powerful people. Most of you didn't belong to important families. 27 You see, people in this world reckon you are stupid, but God picked you anyway. He did that to show that those smart people are wrong, and they have to feel shame. Yes, God picked the weak people in this world to show that the powerful people are useless, so they have to feel shame. 28 And God picked people from this world that are not great, and people that are like nothing, so that in the end, those other people that reckon they are great, they will become like nothing. 29 God does that so that nobody can ever get up in front of God and say, "I'm really good. I'm better than other people."

30 But as for you, God joined you to Jesus Christ. You and us together, Jesus helps us to be wise, like God. And Jesus makes us to be God's friends, so that he will tell us we are all right. And Jesus makes us God's own special people too. Jesus died to pay for us and set us free from everything that is wrong. 31 So we have to talk the way God tells us to. He says this in his book,

"If you want to talk about great things,
don't talk about yourself,
but talk about God, and tell everyone
about the great things that he does."*

Chapter 2

Paul only said the words that the Holy Spirit gave him

1 My Christian friends, remember when I first came to you and told you God's message. I didn't use smart words, like a man that thinks he knows everything. 2 No. I only told you about Jesus Christ, and that he died on the cross for us. I didn't talk about other things. 3 I felt weak and frightened while I was with you. I was so frightened I was shaking.* 4 I didn't think up smart ideas or use smart words to get you to believe my message. No. I trusted God's spirit to use his

* **1:20** Job 12:17; Isaiah 19:12; 33:18; 44:25 * **1:31** Jeremiah 9:24 * **2:3** Acts 18:9

power to show everyone that my message is true. 5 I did that so that you will not trust in a smart person, but you will trust in the power of God.

6 You see, whenever I am with people that trust in Jesus, and are strong for him, that's when I can talk about things that are wise and good. I don't mean smart ideas that people in this world think up, like how the bosses in this world plan things. Those bosses will finish up anyway. 7 No, the wise and good things that we talk about are the things that belong to God. He planned those things a long time ago, before he made the world, but he didn't tell anybody about them until now. 8 None of the bosses in this world understood those things. So they killed Jesus. They nailed our very great and good leader to a cross. 9 But, you know, God says this in his book,

"God got good things ready for the
people that love him.
Those things are better than anything
anybody else can ever think up.
Nobody ever saw or heard anything
as good as the things that God got
ready for us."*

10 But God's spirit shows these things to us. His spirit understands everything, even those things that God has not yet told anybody. 11 You see, nobody knows what another person is thinking. Only that person's own spirit knows, nobody else. Well, it is like that with God too. Only God's spirit knows what God is thinking. 12 And remember this, God didn't get us to think the way the people of this world think. No. God gave us his spirit, and his spirit helps us, so we can understand all the good things God gave us. 13 Those are the things that we tell you about. We don't use words that smart people taught us, but we use the words that God's spirit teaches us. And we tell God's message to people that have God's spirit living inside them, and we help them understand it.

14 You see, if God's spirit is not living inside people, they can't believe any message from God. They can't understand what God wants to teach them. They think it is all stupid. You see, the Holy Spirit is the only one that can help people understand the things of God. 15 People that have God's spirit can think about all these things and understand them. But people that haven't got God's spirit can never understand the people that have got his spirit. 16 God says this in his book,

"Nobody can know what God is
thinking.
Nobody can try to tell him the right
way to think."*

But the Holy Spirit is in us, so we can think the same way that Jesus Christ thinks.

Chapter 3

Don't argue with each other

1 Now listen, my Christian friends, when I was there with you, you started to believe in Jesus, but you didn't understand a lot about him, and you didn't let the Holy Spirit control you. You still let your old human spirits control you. You were just like babies that don't understand things. 2 You know, babies can't eat hard food. They can only drink milk. Well, that is a picture of you mob. I couldn't teach you hard things. You couldn't understand them. And even now you are not ready to listen to me.* 3 Even though you are Christians you still don't live like Christians. You still let your old human spirits control you. You want things that other people have. And you argue with each other. That shows that you are letting your human spirits control you, not the Holy

* **2:9** Isaiah 64:4 * **2:16** Isaiah 40:13 * **3:2** Hebrews 5:12-13

Spirit. You are still like people that don't know God. 4 You see, some of you say, "Paul is our leader," and others say, "No, not Paul, Apollos is our leader." And you argue with each other. You are just like the people of the world, not God's people. *

Paul and Apollos worked together for God

5-8 Just think about Apollos and me, Paul. We are not important bosses. We are only workers for God. God gave each of us our jobs, and we helped you believe in Jesus Christ.

I'll use picture talk now. Think about a garden. One worker plants seeds, and another worker puts water on the young plants to help them grow properly. But it is God that makes the seeds grow up to be big plants. The worker that plants the seeds is not important, and the worker that gives water to the plants is not important. The important one is God. He makes the plants grow. Well, that picture story about a garden is a picture of you mob. God is making you grow like he makes those plants grow. And Apollos and me, we work in God's team, just like those workers in that garden. I started telling you about Jesus, and Apollos taught you more about him. We both want you to have life, but we can't give you new life. God is the one that gives you new life. We are just his workers, and you know, God will pay each of us for our work. * 9 We are like 2 men that work for God in his garden, and you are like God's garden.

Christians are like God's house

And I'll use another picture story. This picture story shows that you are like God's house that he is building for himself. 10-11 This is the picture story. One builder starts to build a house. First, he puts cement down on



One worker plants seeds



Another worker waters the plants



It is God that makes the plants grow

* **3:4** 1 Corinthians 1:12 * **3:5-8** Acts 18:4-11, 24-28

the ground for the building to stand on. That cement is called the *foundation*. Then other builders build the house on that cement foundation. This story is a picture of you getting into God's family. God was good to me and gave me the power to work for him. I told you about Jesus, and it is like I put down a good foundation for you at that time. And now other Christian workers are teaching you more about Jesus. They are like the builders that build on that foundation. They have to do it properly. Jesus is the only strong foundation. Nobody can put down any other foundation for God's family.

12 I'll tell you more of this picture story about the builders. Good builders build with really good things like gold, or silver, or jewels. But other builders don't work properly, they don't care, they only use wood, or grass, or leaves. If a fire comes, the parts of the house that are made of wood, or grass, or leaves, those parts will burn up. But the parts that are made of gold, or silver, or jewels, those parts will stay good. So you can know which builders did a good job. Christian workers are like those builders in the picture story. Some Christian workers do a good job and tell God's word properly, and some don't do a good job. 13 One day, Jesus Christ will come back, and then God will show which workers did a good job, like the fire in the picture story shows if part of the house is good or not. 14 If they did a good job, it will stay good a long time, like the good parts in the picture story. And if they did a good job, God will pay those good workers. 15 But if it is no good, it will finish up, like the rubbish parts in the picture story. And if it is no good, God will not pay those workers, but he will still save them.

16 You know that God's spirit lives in you Christian people. You are like a special house that God lives in.* 17 Yes, you mob are God's special people, like his special house here on earth. So if somebody makes a Christian mob split up, it is like they break up God's house, and God will punish that person properly.

18 Some of you mob think you are really smart, but you are thinking wrong, like the people of this world that don't know God. So stop tricking yourselves. Instead, you have to think God's way. Other people might think you are fools, but really, you will be wise. 19 The people of this world think they are very smart, but God knows they are fools. We can read this in God's book,

"People reckon they are smart,
but God uses their own smart ideas
like a trap, and he catches them."*

20 And we can read this in another place in God's book,

"Smart people think up great ideas, but
God knows those ideas are useless."*

21 So don't think that any human person is the important leader. You see, Jesus is your leader, and God gives you everything you need. 22 Yes, he gives you his workers to help you. He gave you me, and he gave you Apollos, and he gave you Peter. We are all here to help you. God uses everything to help you. If you live, or if you die, God will make it good for you. He will use things that happen now to help you, and he will use things that will happen later, to help you. 23 You see, you belong to Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ belongs to God. And God is the most important one.

Chapter 4

Respect those people that work for Jesus

1 So when you think about me and Apollos, remember that we are just workers for Jesus

* **3:16** 1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16 * **3:19** Job 5:13 * **3:20** Psalm 94:11

Christ. You see, at first God didn't tell anyone his message, but now he wants Apollos and me to tell that message to people. That is the special job that God gave us. 2 And, you know, if a boss gives his worker an important job, the worker has to be careful to do it properly.

3 And when you mob think about me, maybe you think I'm doing a good job, or maybe not. Well, I don't care what you think. I don't care what anybody thinks about me. It doesn't even matter what I think about myself. 4 I reckon I haven't done anything wrong, but that doesn't make me right. You see, God is my judge, and I only care about what he thinks about me.

5 So I'm telling you, don't judge people before the right time comes. You have to wait until our leader Jesus comes back again from heaven. He knows every secret. He will show everyone the secret things that people think about doing. And at that time God will praise each of his good workers, and he will say good things about them.

6 My Christian friends, I've been talking about Apollos and me, to help you to understand the things we teach you. You know that wise people say this, "Don't do anything more than what is in God's book." We want to help you learn what that means. You see, nobody can say that one person is better than another person. 7 You yourselves are no better than other people. God gave you everything that you have. So you can't reckon that you are really smart, and that you got it for yourselves.

8 You think you know everything, and you think you don't need to learn anything more, but you are wrong. You think that you are spiritually rich, but you are not. You think you have a lot of power, like you think you are big bosses, and you think that we haven't got any power, but you are wrong again. You know, it would be good if you had God's power so that you can be big bosses for him, and Apollos and me can be bosses with you, but that is not the way it is. 9 No, I reckon it is like this. Even though we are Jesus's special workers, God lets us look weak. You know how soldiers take prisoners out to kill them in a place where everybody can watch them die. Well, I reckon it is like that with us. God lets us look weak, like those prisoners, so that everyone on the earth, and in heaven too, can look at us. 10 They see that we work for Jesus Christ, and lots of people think we are fools. But you mob reckon you are different from us. You reckon you are really smart because you know Jesus Christ. Yes, everyone thinks we are weak, but you reckon you are strong. You reckon everyone has to respect you, but you don't care if they respect us or not. 11 You see, the bad people of this world were always hard on us special workers, and they are still hard on us right up to now. We go hungry, and thirsty, and our clothes are old rags. We haven't got anywhere to live. 12 We have to work hard all the time to get money for food. Some people swear at us and ask bad spirits to hurt us, but we just ask God to be good to them. If people are hard on us, we just put up with it.* 13 If people say bad things about us, we answer with good words. But people keep on treating us like we are the world's worst rubbish.

14 I'm telling you all this to help you see that what you are doing is wrong. I'm not trying to shame you. You see, I love you like you are my own kids, and I want you to live the right way. 15 I'm like a father to you. I was the first person to tell you the good news about Jesus Christ, and he gave your spirits new life, so I'm your spiritual

* **4:12** Acts 18:3

father on this earth. And even if you have lots of other people teaching you about God, I was the first person to tell you about him, so I'm the only one that is like your father in Christian things. 16 So I'm asking you to live the way I live, and to do the same sorts of things that I do.*

17 That is the reason why I sent Timothy to you. He will help you do that. He is like a son to me, and I love him very much. He always keeps on working properly for Jesus. He will help you remember the way I live for Jesus Christ. He will teach you the same things that I teach in every church everywhere.

18 You see, some of you reckon you are really great, and you say, "Paul is frightened to come back here." 19 But you are wrong. I want to go back and visit you. So if our leader Jesus wants me to, I will do that soon. And then I will find out if you really have God's power, or if you are just talking. 20 You see, if people are really in God's family, they have God's power, and they will live God's way. They don't just talk and keep on living the bad way.

21 So think about this. Will you keep on doing bad things, or will you stop? I am coming to you, and if I find you still doing bad things, I will punish you. Is that what you want? But if you stop doing bad things, I will love you, and I will be easy on you.

Chapter 5

Don't have a bad person in your church family

1 Now listen. I have to talk straight to you about this. Some people have told me there is something bad going on in your church family. One of you has his father's wife as his girlfriend, and he is sleeping with her as if they are married. Look, even people that don't know God don't do that.* 2 But you mob don't seem to care, and instead, you think you are great. But listen, you really have to feel shame and be sad, not happy. That man is doing a very bad thing, so you can't let him stay in your church family.

3 Listen, I'm not there with you mob, but I think about you mob a lot, and I'm thinking about that man that is doing that very bad thing, so I'm telling you what you have to do. 4 I know that you will meet together as followers of our leader Jesus, and I will be thinking about you and praying for you. It will be like I will be there with you, and the powerful spirit of Jesus will be there with you too. 5 Then, at that meeting, you have to ask God to let Satan hurt that man. Satan is the boss over the bad spirits. Satan will hurt that man's body, and then God can save that man's spirit, when our leader Jesus comes back.

6 So stop telling everyone that you are properly good. It's not true. Let me tell you a picture story about baking powder. We put a little bit of baking powder into the flour when we make damper. And that little bit of baking powder goes into all the flour in the bowl and makes all the dough swell up.* 7 That is a picture of that one person in your mob that does bad things. He is like that baking powder in the picture story. He will get all of you mob to go wrong, like that baking powder made all the dough swell up. So get rid of that bad person. Then you will be straight and clean, like new clean dough that hasn't got any baking powder in it. And really, you are clean like that. Remember, Jesus Christ died for us to clean us from the wrong things we did, so we are like that clean dough. Jesus is like the young sheep that the Jews kill and eat at their ceremony called Passover. Well, just like that young sheep dies, Jesus died for us. And think

* **4:16** 1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17 * **5:1** Deuteronomy 22:30 * **5:6** Galatians 5:9

about this. Before that ceremony, they have to get rid of all that stuff that makes damper swell up, and then they eat flat damper.* 8That is a picture of us church people. Just like the Jews have to get rid of all that stuff that makes damper swell up, we have to get rid of everything that is bad, and we have to stop doing bad things. Instead, we have to be good and honest and true.*

9I wrote you a letter before, and I told you, "Don't be good friends with bad people. There are some people that sleep with somebody that is not their own wife or husband, as if they are married to them. Keep away from those people." 10But I did not mean that you have to keep away from the people of this world that don't know God. Some of them sleep with somebody that is not their own wife or husband. Some of them are greedy, like they want a lot of things and money. Some of them trick other people to get their money, and some of them respect bad spirits and make them their gods. If you try to keep away from all those bad people, you will have to leave this world, and you can't do that.

11No. This is what I meant. Don't be good friends with people that reckon they are Christians, but they do bad things all the time. If they sleep with somebody that is not their own wife or husband, as if they are married to them, then don't be good friends with those people. Or if they are greedy, don't be good friends with them. If they respect bad spirits, and if they make those spirits their gods, don't be good friends with them. If they yell and swear at other people, don't be good friends with them. If they always get drunk, don't be good friends with them. If they trick other people to get their money, don't be good friends with them. Don't even eat food with a Christian that does things like that. 12-13You see, I can't be the judge of people that are not Christians. God will judge those people, and he will punish those people that do bad things. But if a Christian in your church group does bad things, you have to work out how to punish them. You have to do what God says in his book,

"Get rid of bad people from your group."*

Chapter 6

Don't go to the law courts to sort out trouble between Christians

1There is something else I have to talk to you about. If one of you Christians has a problem with another Christian, why do you go to the court house to sort it out? That is not right. Those court house people are not God's people. No. You have to get Christians to sort it out. Remember, we Christians are God's special people 2and one day God will get us Christians to be the judges of all the other people in the world. So, if you are going to be a judge of other people one day, why can't you sort out your own little problems now? 3You know, one day we Christians will even be judges of God's angel messengers. So we have to know how to sort out our problems here on the earth.

4Sometimes you don't agree with each other about some little thing, and then you go to other people, and you get them to be your judges. 5I talk like this so that you will feel shame. I reckon there has to be somebody there in your church that is wise enough to help you sort out these problems between yourselves. 6But no, you don't do it that way. Instead, one of you Christians goes to the court house people to argue against

* **5:7** Exodus 12:5 * **5:8** Exodus 13:7; Deuteronomy 16:3 * **5:12-13** Deuteronomy 13:5; 17:7

another Christian. You stand up in front of judges that don't believe in Jesus Christ, and you get them to sort it out. That's not the right way to settle your problems.

7 You see, when you go to the court house to argue about these things you are letting the bad spirits win. Look, if people do bad things to you, just let them do those things and don't worry about it. That's the better way. Even if they rob you, don't worry. 8 But instead of that, you mob are doing those bad things yourselves. That is wrong. You even do bad things to other Christians, and you even rob other Christians.

9 Listen. You know what will happen to bad people, right? They will not be in God's family. They will never get the good things that God will give to his people. Don't let anyone trick you about this. I'll tell you now about the sort of people that will not be in God's family. People that sleep with somebody that's not their wife or husband, as if they are married. Those people will not be in God's family. Or 2 men that sleep together as if one of them is a woman, they will not be in God's family. And people that respect other spirits more than they respect God, 10 and people that steal things, and greedy people that want a lot of money and things, they will not be in God's family. And people that always get drunk, and people that yell at other people and swear at them, and people that trick other people to get their money, none of those people will be in God's family.

11 And I know that some of you used to be bad people like that before. You did that sort of bad thing, but now you believe in Jesus Christ and let him be your boss. And God's spirit came into you and washed you inside, and he made you God's own special people, so that God says you are all right now.

Use your bodies to show everyone that God is really great

12 Some of you say, "I'm free from the Jewish law now, so I can do anything I want to." Yes, but not everything will be good for you.

You see, I can say that too. I can say, "I'm free from the Jewish law, so I can do anything I want to." But I don't want to do bad things. And if I think about doing bad things, I will start doing bad things, and I will not be able to stop myself. But I don't want that. *

13 Some of you say, "God made our bellies for food, and he made food to fill our bellies." So you think that you can do what you want with your bodies, and it doesn't matter. You think you can sleep with somebody that is not your wife or husband, as if you are married to them. But you are wrong. Don't forget that, in the end, God will finish up your bellies, and he will finish up the food too. You see, God made your bodies for you to live his way. You can't sleep with anyone you want to. You have to use your bodies the way God wants you to use them. 14 You see, our bodies are important to God. Our leader, Jesus died, but then God made him alive again. And God will use his power to make our bodies alive again too. 15-16 Think about this. God says this in his book,

> "The man and his wife will join with each other, and their bodies will be like one body." *

So, if a man pays a woman money to let him sleep with her, he joins his own body to her body and becomes like one body with her. And you know, your bodies are parts of Jesus Christ's body. So don't let part of Jesus's body join up to the body of a bad woman. No way. 17 But, you know, if you join on to our leader, Jesus, you join your spirit to his spirit, and the 2 of you become like one spirit.

* **6:12** 1 Corinthians 10:23 * **6:15-16** Genesis 2:24

18 So never sleep with anyone that is not
your own wife or husband and do what
married people do together. Get away from
that sort of bad thing. You see, other bad
things that you do are outside of your own
body. But if you sleep with a person you
are not married to, you hurt your own body.
19 And you know, God gave you his spirit and
he lives in you. Your body is the home of the
Holy Spirit. You don't belong to yourself any
more, but you belong to God. * 20 Remember
this, God bought you. He paid a lot for you.
So you have to use your body to live for him,
to show everyone that God is really great
and good.

Chapter 7

Paul answered their questions about marriage

1 You wrote a letter to me and asked me
some questions, and now I will answer one
of those questions. You asked me, "Is it good
for a man to stay single and never marry a
woman?" My answer is, "Yes, but only if he
can stay single without going wrong." 2 You
see, a lot of people can't do that. They try
to stay single, but then they go wrong, and
they end up sleeping with somebody, as if
they are married to each other. So, I reckon,
every man has to have his own wife and
only ever sleep with her, and every woman
has to have her own husband and only ever
sleep with him.

3 If a wife needs her husband to sleep with
her and do what married people do together,
he has to agree to it, to make her happy. And
if a husband needs his wife to sleep with him
and do what married people do together, she
has to agree to it, to make him happy. 4 You
see, the wife's body does not only belong to
her, it also belongs to her husband. In the
same way, the husband's body doesn't only
belong to him, it also belongs to his wife.

5 So, if your husband or wife wants to sleep
with you, to do what married people do
together, you can't say, "No." But both of
you can agree to wait for a while without
sleeping together, so you can use the time
to pray. Then, soon after that, you have to
sleep together again. If you don't, Satan
might trick you. He knows you can't control
yourselves very well. If you go too long
without sleeping together, then he will try
to get one of you to sleep with somebody
else. 6 I'm not saying that you have to stop
sleeping together. I'm saying that if you both
agree to stop for a while, so you can pray
more, that's all right. 7 You know, I reckon
it is good for everyone to stay single, like
me. But God helps people in different ways.
He helps some people be a good husband or
wife, and he helps other people stay single
without going wrong.

8 Now I will talk to you people that are not
married. Maybe your wife or husband has
died, or maybe you never married anyone.
This is what I reckon. Stay single, like me.
9 But you have to control yourself properly.
If that is too hard for you, then marry
somebody. If you are always wanting to
sleep with somebody and do what married
people do together, don't try to stay single.

10 Now I will talk to you Christians that
are married, and your partner is another
Christian. Don't get divorced. This rule
comes from our leader, Jesus, not just from
me. A wife can't leave her husband. 11 But if
she does leave him, she has to stay single.
Or she can go back to her husband. And it
is the same for a husband. He can't leave
his wife. *

12 Now I will talk to you people that are
married, but your partner is not a Christian.

* **6:19** 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16 * **7:10-11** Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18

This is not a rule that comes from our leader, Jesus, but this is what I reckon. If a Christian man has a wife, and if she doesn't believe in Jesus, but she agrees to stay with him, that man can't split up the marriage, he can't divorce her. 13 If a Christian woman has a husband, and if he doesn't believe in Jesus, but he agrees to stay with her, that woman can't split up the marriage, she can't divorce him. 14 You see, if a woman believes in Jesus, but her husband doesn't, God says it's good for them to stay married. And in the same way, if a man believes in Jesus, but his wife doesn't, God says it's good for them to stay married. And I'll tell you about their kids too. If their mother or father believes in Jesus, God reckons those kids are special. They are not just like the kids of people who don't believe in him.

15 So if you have a husband or wife that isn't Christian, and they want to leave you, then you can let them go. Christians don't have to try to make their partners stay with them if their partners are not Christians. God wants us to be quiet and happy. He doesn't want us to be arguing and fighting with each other. But if your husband or wife isn't Christian, but they agree to stay with you, then don't leave them. 16 Listen, Christian wife, maybe you can help your husband turn around and let God save him. And listen, Christian husband, maybe you can help your wife turn around and let God save her.

Stay the same as you were when you first believed

17 You know, I've been talking to you about marriage, and I said that married people have to stay married. Well, our leader Jesus gives us all different lives. Some people are married, some people are not married. Some men have had a young man operation, some men haven't. Some people are workers with no pay, some people are free. But this is the rule that I tell Christians in all the churches, everywhere I go. I tell them, "You don't have to try to change those things. You can just stay the same as you were when God picked you to be in his family." 18 It's like this. Some of you were born Jews, so your Jewish family did a young man operation on you. After that, God picked you to be in his family. All right, don't try to get another operation to change it back again. And some of you are not born Jews, but God has picked you to be in his family. All right, don't try to be Jewish now. Don't get a young man operation. 19 It doesn't matter if you get that Jewish operation, or not. This is what's important, you have to do what God tells us all to do.

20 You see, God picked each of you to be in his family, so don't try to change everything. Stay the same as you were at that time when God picked you. 21 Sometimes bosses own their workers. Those workers belong to their bosses and their bosses control them. They have to do what their bosses say, and they don't get any pay. If God picked you while you were a worker like that, don't worry. Don't try to run away and get free. (But if your boss says you can go free, then do that.) 22 Some of you are that sort of worker. Your boss owns you and controls you. But think about this. God picked you to join up with Jesus, and you are in his family, so now you are properly free. You are free from the bad things you used to do. They don't control you any more.

In the same way, some of you are free people, nobody owns you. But think about this. God picked you, and you are in Jesus's family, so now Jesus owns you and you work all the time for him. 23 You see, God bought you and he paid a lot for you. So don't let anyone else control you and get you to go wrong. 24 You see, my Christian friends, I'm telling you that each one of you has to live

for God, and stay the same as you were when God picked you.

25 I'm going to talk now about young people that are not married, and I will try to answer your question. Our leader Jesus didn't tell me what to say about this, but I will tell you what I think. God is good to me and he helps me think properly, so I reckon you can believe me. This is what I think. 26 People everywhere are making trouble for God's people these days, so I reckon it is best for you to stay the way you are. 27 This is what I reckon, if you are married, don't try to leave your partner. But if you are not married, don't look for a partner. 28 The bad people in this world will make a lot of trouble for God's people, and married people will find it hard to live with that trouble. I want to save you from getting too much trouble, so I'm telling you to stay single. But if you do marry somebody, you are not doing wrong.

29-31 My Christian friends, listen to what I'm saying. There is not much time left before Jesus will come back, and he will change this world. So don't just think about the things of this world. That is the reason why I'm telling you married men that after Jesus comes back, it will not matter if people are married or single. And I'm telling you people that are sad, don't worry, the trouble that makes you sad will go away when Jesus comes back. And I'm telling you people that are happy, the things that make you happy will go away when Jesus comes back. And I'm telling you people that buy things for yourselves, you will not own those things after Jesus comes back. You see, we do those things in this world now, but soon, when Jesus comes back, all those things will finish up. So don't just live for those things now.

32 You see, I don't want you to be worried about the things in this world. A single man thinks a lot about Jesus, and he only wants to make Jesus happy. 33 But a married man wants to make his wife happy too, so he also thinks a lot about the things in this world. 34 So he has a lot to think about. He doesn't just think about God, but he thinks about his family too. And it is like that for women too. A single woman thinks a lot about God, and she wants both her body and her spirit to belong to him. But a married woman wants to make her husband happy too, so she also thinks a lot about the things in this world. 35 I'm saying this to help you. I'm not making rules for you, but I want you to listen properly to God, and think about him, and work properly for him. Don't let anything get in your way and stop you from doing that.

36 Maybe a young woman was promised to a man, but those 2 think it is better to work for God, and they agree not to get married yet. And maybe that woman is getting older now, and soon she will not be a good age to marry, so that man thinks that it is best for him to marry her now. That's all right. He has to do what he thinks is good. It's all right for them to get married. He will not be doing anything wrong.

37 But maybe another young woman was promised to a man, and those 2 agreed to work for God and not to get married, but this man still wants to stay single, and he can control himself. Well, he can stay single if he wants to. If he doesn't get married, that is good. 38 This is what I reckon. The man that marries his promise does something good. But the man that stays single does something better.

39 And now I will tell you about widows. A married woman has to stay with her husband while he is alive. She can't leave him and go away and marry another man. But if her husband dies, then she can marry again. But a Christian widow has to marry a Christian man. 40 But I reckon she will be more happy if she stays single, and I think God's spirit is telling me what to say to you.

Chapter 8

Some people give food to statues that they think are gods

1 I will answer your next question now, about those statues that some people make, and they think those statues are gods. They give food to those statues, and they reckon the statues give that food power. Then those people eat that food, or they sell it to other people. And you Christians asked me, "Can we eat that food that they gave to those statues?" That's what you asked me.

Well, before I answer your question, I want you to remember this. All of us know something, but if we think we know more than other people, we start thinking wrong, like we reckon we are really smart. No, we can't try to be smart. Instead, we have to love people. If we love other people, it helps them to get strong. 2 So if you reckon you know all about everything, you don't really know much at all. You still have to learn a lot more. 3 But if you love God, then God really knows you, like you are his good friend.

4 All right, now I will answer your question about the food that people give to those statues that they think are gods. We Christians know that a statue is not really a god at all. We know that there is only the one God. 5 But some people, that are not Christians, they respect lots of spirits. They respect spirits in the sky, and spirits on the earth. And they think those spirits are gods, and they let those spirits be their bosses. And people make statues that they think look like those spirits, and they think those statues get power from those spirits. 6 But we Christians know that those statues are nothing at all. We know there is only one God. He is our father. He made everything, and we want to do whatever he wants, as long as we live. And there is only one true boss. He is Jesus Christ. He worked with God, and together they made everything. And Jesus gives us Christians real life.

7 But some Christians don't understand all that. They showed respect to those statues for a long time before they became Christians, and then they believed in Jesus, but they still think those statues have power. They can't work out what is true and what is not true. They know that it is wrong to respect those statues, so they don't eat any of the food that people give to those statues. They think that if they do eat that food, then they are doing something wrong, and it makes them feel bad, like they are not clean. 8 But really, it doesn't matter if we eat that food or not. If we eat it, we will not get anything special, and if we don't eat it, we will not miss out on anything. You see, no food can help us be close friends with God.

9 But you have to be very careful. Even though you are free to eat anything, you have to think about those Christians that can't work out what is true and what is not true. You don't want to make them go wrong. 10 It's like this. Some of you Christians know it's all right to eat food in that place where people show respect to those statues. But if you go and eat that food, another Christian might see you there. If that other Christian doesn't know what to think about that food, they might think that you are showing respect to that statue when you eat that food, so that Christian will think it's all right to show respect to that statue. And then that Christian will show respect to that statue, and that is wrong. 11 So you will wreck that other Christian that is not so sure about these things. You see, you yourself know that food has no power, but if then you eat it, and that makes another Christian go wrong, you are doing wrong because you wreck that other Christian. And Jesus Christ died for that person. 12 You see, if other Christians

are not sure what is right or wrong, and if they see what you do, and if that gets them to do something wrong, you are really bad. If you hurt them like that, you are really hurting Jesus Christ. Don't do that.

13 So, you see, this is what I think. I reckon every other Christian is like a brother or a sister to me, so I will not eat anything that gets them to go wrong. If something that I want to eat might get another Christian to do something wrong, I will not eat it. Never.

Chapter 9

Paul talked about himself as an example

1 Some of you mob might ask me if it is all right for me to write to you and tell you all these things. Yes, it is all right. You see, God picked me to be Jesus's special worker, so I'm free to tell you these things. I have seen Jesus, our leader, with my own eyes. I work for him, and I told you mob about him, and now you belong to him. 2 Maybe other people reckon I'm not Jesus's special worker, but you know that I am. You see, you believed what I told you, and now you are Christians. That shows that Jesus sent me to you.

3 Some people think that maybe Jesus didn't send me, and they ask me a lot of questions, so I tell them about the way I work for Jesus. 4 I work like this. I never ask people for food or drink. You know, it's all right for me to ask for it. It can be my pay, for the work I did when I told them about Jesus. But I never ask for it. If I need anything, I buy it for myself.

5 And it is all right for me to have a Christian wife and take her everywhere with me, but I don't do that. Jesus's other special workers, and his brothers, and Peter, they all have wives, and they take their wives with them when they go to other places. But not me. 6 And I think that it's only Barnabas and me that work hard to get our own money to pay for the things we need. I don't think the others do that.

7 You know, everyone that works gets some sort of pay for their work. You know about soldiers. They don't have to buy their own food or their gear. And you know about gardeners. They work, and they always eat some of the food they grow. And it is the same for people that look after cows. They work, and they can drink some of the milk they get. You see, it's right for people to work and then get something for it. So, if my work is to tell you about Jesus, it's right for you to give me something for my work. But I never ask you to give me anything.

8 And I'm not just saying what people reckon. God says the same thing in his laws. 9 You see, a long time ago, God gave Moses this law,

> "If you get an animal to work for you, you have to let that animal eat something while it works."*

That is the law. And listen, God wasn't just thinking about animals when he gave Moses that law. 10 He was thinking about us people too. People have to get food, just like animals do.



God said that you have to let animals eat while they work for you

Listen to this picture story about the gardeners that grow food. One man digs up the ground and puts seeds in the ground.

* **9:9** Deuteronomy 25:4; 1 Timothy 5:18

Then those seeds grow into food plants, and after that, another man gets the food from those plants and puts it in a shed. Those 2 men both worked hard, so they both get some of that food. 11 That garden is a picture of all of you Christians, and those gardeners are like the people that told you God's good news. You see, we worked hard when we told you God's good news. We gave you what your spirits needed. So now it is only fair for you to give us the things that our bodies need. But we never ask you to give us anything. *

12 Other people ask you to give them things, and that's all right for them, so it has to be all right for us too. But we never ask you to give us anything. You see, if we ask for things when we tell people the good news about Jesus Christ, some of them will not listen to that good news. But we want everybody to listen to our message about Jesus, so we never ask anybody for anything. We reckon it's better to go short of things.

13 You know about the Jewish people that work all the time in God's ceremony house. They cook the meat that other people bring to give to God. They also get some of that meat for themselves, and that's good. You see, they get something for their work. * 14 And just like that, our leader Jesus said that his workers have to get something too. He said that the people that hear the good news and get new life, they have to give something to the people that told them that good news, so that Jesus's workers get the food and other things that they need. *

15 Well, I am the one that told you the good news, but I haven't asked you for anything. And even now, while I write to you, I'm not asking you for anything. I reckon it is better for me to die than to ask you for something. Now I can tell people that I gave you that good news, and I didn't ask for anything. You got it for nothing, and that makes me happy.

16 You see, God told me to tell the good news to everyone, so I've got to do it. If I don't tell people that good news, God will give me big trouble. So I can't say, "I'm really good. I tell people that good news." No. I can't do that. 17 But suppose I got this job just because I wanted it, then I will want some pay for it. But no, it wasn't like that. I'm just doing what God told me to do. 18 And I'm very happy when I can give everyone that good news for nothing. That is like my pay. You see, it is all right for me to ask them for those things. I know that. But I don't do it.

19 You know, I'm a free man and nobody can force me to work for them. But I work for everyone without pay, so that a lot of people will listen to me and believe in Jesus Christ. 20-21 I do it like this. If I'm with my own people, the Jews, I live like a Jew, so the Jews will listen to me and believe in Jesus. I follow the Jewish law like they do. I know that the Jewish law is not really for me any more, but I want the Jewish people to believe in Jesus. (I don't forget God's law. I always follow the law that Jesus Christ gave us.)

Or if I'm with people that don't know the Jewish law, so they never worry about it, I live like they do. I don't worry about that law either. I live like they do, so they will listen to me and believe in Jesus. 22 Or if I'm with weak people, I become weak too, so they will listen to me. I go to all sorts of people and live like they live. I do everything I can to get them to listen to me, so some of them will believe in Jesus, and God will save them. 23 I do all these things so that I can help more people hear the good news about Jesus Christ, so that I can be happy, together with all the people that believe in Jesus.

* **9:11** Romans 15:27 * **9:13** Deuteronomy 18:1 * **9:14** Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7

24 Now think about the people that run in
a race. They all run, but only one of them
wins that race and gets the prize. Well, we
have to be like those people that run in a
race. We have to try hard to win. That is, we
have to try hard to do whatever God wants,
so that in the end God will give us new life.
That will be like our prize. 25 Those people
that run in races, they control themselves
and train their bodies so they can win a
prize, even though that prize will only be
good for a little while. But it is better for us.
We control ourselves properly so that we
will win a prize that will be good for ever.
God will give us new life, so that we will
live for ever.

26 So, you see, I'm like a good runner that
runs in a straight line to the end of the race.
And I'm like a fighter that hits and doesn't
miss. 27 I control my body, and I make it do
what is right. I want God to give me that
good prize. I don't want God to say to me,
"You went wrong. You didn't do what you told
other people to do. So you don't get new life."

Chapter 10

God doesn't want you to do anything bad

1 My Christian friends, remember the story
about my mob, the Israel people. A long time
ago, they all followed Moses and walked out
into the hot dry country. And God put a big
cloud above them, and that cloud showed
them where to go. Then they came to the
Red Sea, and God pushed the water back so
that they all walked through the Red Sea
on dry ground.* 2 It was like God baptised
everyone that followed Moses, at first in
the cloud, and then in the sea. 3 They all ate
the food that God gave them,* 4 and they all
drank the water that God gave them. He
used his power to put a special rock there
for them, and water came from that rock,
and they drank it. And that rock followed
them all the time in that dry country. That
special rock was really Jesus Christ. He
went along with them.* 5 That's how God
helped the people. But later most of them
went wrong, and he was not happy with
them. So he killed them, and their bodies lay
everywhere in that dry country.* 6 All those
things happened to the Israel people to show
us that God is not happy with people that do
bad things. Those things happened so that
we will not want to do bad things, like they
did.* 7 Don't do what some of them did. They
showed respect to statues that they thought
were gods. God says this in his book,

"The people sat down to eat and to
drink, to show respect to those
statues. Then they stood up to play."*

8 And some of them slept with a person that
was not their own wife or husband, and they
did what married people do together. So
God killed 23,000 of them in one day. This
story tells us that we can only sleep with
our own wife or husband, not with anybody
else.* 9 And some of them tried to test God.
They tried to see how far wrong they could
go before he punished them. And he did
punish them. Cheeky snakes came and killed
them. This story tells us that we can't try
to test Jesus Christ.* 10 And some of them
complained about God and said that he was
not fair, and one of God's angel messengers
came and killed them. This story tells us
that we can't complain about God and say
he is not fair.*

11 All those things happened to that mob
a long time ago, and God got his men to

* **10:1** Exodus 13:21-22; 14:22-29 * **10:3** Exodus 16:35 * **10:4** Exodus 17:6; Numbers 20:11
* **10:5** Numbers 14:29-30 * **10:6** Numbers 11:4 * **10:7** Exodus 32:6 * **10:8** Numbers 25:1-18
* **10:9** Numbers 21:5-6 * **10:10** Numbers 16:41-49

write it all in his book, to show us that those things are wrong. We have to think about those stories and learn from them. You see, we're living in the end time now, and soon Jesus will come back. 12 So be careful. If you think you are standing strong for Jesus, look out. You might fall down and go wrong. 13 Sometimes you will want to do bad things and you will find it hard to stop yourself, but remember that other people find it hard to stop themselves from doing bad things too. And remember this, God wants to help you. He will show you a way to stop yourself from going wrong, and he will help you to go the right way.

You can't respect Jesus and respect bad spirits too

14 Listen, my friends, I'm telling you this. Keep away from those statues that people think are gods. Don't respect them at all. 15 I know that you people can think properly, so you yourselves work out what is right.

16 Think about when we get together to remember what Jesus did for us. We all drink from that cup, and we remember that Jesus Christ died for us, and his blood came out, and we thank God for him. That joins us together with him and with each other. And when we break up the flat damper and eat it, we all remember that Jesus Christ's body got broken for us. And that also joins us together with him and with each other.* 17 You see, we are a lot of people, but all of us eat from one damper, so all of us are like one body when we eat from that same damper.

18 Think about the Israel people. They give animals to God and cook their meat on a special table. They show respect to God as they eat that meat, and that joins them together with God and with each other.*

19 You see, this is what I'm saying. Those statues that people think are gods, they are really nothing. And if people give food to those statues, that food doesn't get any power at all. 20 Really, those people are showing respect to bad spirits, not God, and they are joining themselves to bad spirits. Don't do that. I don't want you to join up with bad spirits.*

21 You can't go 2 ways at the same time. You can't drink from the cup of our leader, Jesus, and then drink from the cup of bad spirits. You can't eat the damper from the table of Jesus, and then eat food from the table of bad spirits. 22 If you do, you will make God jealous, and he will get angry with you. And he is a lot stronger than you.*

Don't do anything that might give other people problems

23 Some of you might say this, "We are free from that Jewish law. We can do anything we like. We can eat that food that they give to those statues, and it will not hurt us." All right, but I'm telling you, "No. Not everything is good for us Christians to do." And you might reckon, "We are free, so we can do anything." But I'm telling you, "No. Not everything helps us be better Christians."* 24 Don't just think about yourself, and what is good for you, but think about what is good for other people.

25 So, all right, this is what you can do. You can buy food from anyone that sells it, but don't ask them if they first gave it to one of those statues. And don't ask yourself, "Is it all right for me to eat this food, or not?" 26 You see, God's book says,

> "The earth, and everything in it,
> belongs to God."*

Yes, all food is from God, so it is all right for us to eat that food.

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* **10:16** Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20 * **10:18** Leviticus 7:6 * **10:20** Deuteronomy 32:17
* **10:22** Deuteronomy 32:21 * **10:23** 1 Corinthians 6:12 * **10:26** Psalm 24:1

27 Maybe there are some people there that
don't believe in Jesus, and they ask you
to eat dinner with them. If you say, "Yes,"
and you go to their place, then you can eat
whatever food they give to you there. Don't
ask yourself, "Is this food all right or not?"
Don't think about it. Don't ask them any
questions about that food.

28 But then, if somebody there says to you,
"They gave this food to those statues that
they think are gods," then stop. Don't eat
that food. Think about the person that told
you about it. That person might not know
if it is all right to eat that food or not, and
you don't want to give that person a problem.
29 It will not matter to you. You know it is all
right to eat that food. But that other person
doesn't know, and that person might think
you are doing wrong.

Maybe you ask me, "Why can another
person say what I can do and what I can't do?
30 I thank God for my food. So, if I eat that
food, nobody can blame me when I eat it."

31 Don't think like that. You have to think
like this, that we have to live in a way that
shows everyone that God is great and God is
good. So whatever you do, even when you eat
and drink, do it the way God wants. 32 Don't
do anything that might give other people
problems. Don't make problems for Jewish
people, or for people that are not Jewish.
And don't make problems for God's people.
33 Be like me. I always try to do what makes
everyone happy. I try to help other people. I
don't just do things to help myself. You see, I
want God to save those other people.

Chapter 11

1 So you have to try to live the way I live,
and do the same sorts of things that I do,
just like I try to live the way that Jesus
Christ lived. *

Men and women in Christian meetings

2 There is another thing I want to talk to
you about now. I know that you always
remember me, and you do the things I taught
you. That makes me very happy. 3 But I also
want you to know this. Jesus Christ is the
leader of every man, like he is the head one.
And men are the leaders of women, like they
are the head ones. And God is the head one
of Jesus Christ.

4 So think about that when you meet
together, and think about what other people
might reckon when they see what you do. If
a man prays, or if he tells a message from
God in your meeting, he can't cover his
head. If he covers his head, other people
will reckon that he isn't following his leader,
and that will shame his leader, Jesus. 5 But
for women it is different. If a woman prays
in your meeting, or if she tells a message
from God, that woman has to cover her head.
If she doesn't cover her head, other people
will reckon she isn't following her leader, her
husband, and that will shame him. You know,
if somebody cuts off all the hair from a
woman's head, that will shame her. And like
that, if a woman doesn't cover her head in
your meetings, she shames her husband. 6 If
she will not cover her head, maybe she has
to cut off all her hair, right? No. If she does
that, then she will shame herself. She can't
do that. And she can't shame her husband
either. So she has to cover her head in your
meetings.

7 You see, God made the man like himself,
to show everyone that God is great and good.
So a man can't cover his head. He has to
show that he respects God. And a man looks
after his wife, and she shows how good her
husband is, so she has to cover her head to
show that she respects him. * 8 Remember
that God made the man first, then he made

* **11:1** 1 Corinthians 4:16; Philippians 3:17 * **11:7** Genesis 1:26-27

the woman. He took a part of that first man to make the first woman. God didn't take a part of that first woman to make the man. 9 And God didn't make the first man to help the woman, but he made the first woman to help the man.* 10 So a woman has to cover her head to show that she respects her husband as her leader. And, you know, God's angel messengers can see everything we do.

11 You see, we all belong to our leader Jesus. And in his family the women need the men, and the men need the women. 12 It's like this, God made the first woman by taking a part of the first man, but after that, every man was born from a woman. But really, everything comes from God.

13 So if a woman in your meeting doesn't cover her head when she prays to God, do you reckon that's all right? You work it out for yourselves. 14 It is usually like this. If a man has long hair, people will rubbish him. 15 But if a woman has long hair, it is beautiful, and people will say she looks good. God gave her long hair to cover her.

16 I know some people might want to argue with me about all of this, but I'm telling you that we always do it that way. It is our custom. All of God's churches do it that way when they meet together.

The food we eat to remember that Jesus died for us

17 There is something else now that I have to talk to you about. I'm not happy about what happens at your meetings. They are not good, they are bad. 18 You see, some people told me what happens at your church meetings. They say that there are different groups among you, and each group argues with the other groups when you meet together. And I believe that some of that is true. 19 Look, I know some of you will split up into groups, but when you do, you have to let God show you who is right.

20 And when you meet together, you reckon you eat food together to remember that Jesus died for us. But you don't really do that. You don't even share your food with each other at that dinner, so you are not respecting Jesus. 21 You bring your own food and drink, but nobody shares their food with anybody else. And none of you waits for anyone else. So some of you go hungry, while others get drunk. 22 Listen. Each of you have your own home where you can eat and drink. But there are poor people that haven't got any food at your meetings, and if you don't share your food with them, you shame them. That is bad. You are rubbishing God's people, his church. I'm not happy with you when you do that. I can't say anything good about you.

23 Listen. Our leader Jesus gave me this message, and I taught it to you. It is this.

One night our leader, Jesus, had dinner with his special workers, and on that same night, one of those followers turned against him and went to help Jesus's enemies grab him. At that dinner, Jesus picked up some flat damper 24 and thanked God for it. Then he broke it into bits and said, "This damper is my body. You see, I will let bad people break my body. I will do that for you. So whenever you eat this special meal, remember what I did for you."

25 And Jesus did something like that at the end of the dinner too. He picked up a cup of wine and said, "Drink from this cup. God has agreed to save people, and I will die so he can do that. My blood will come out, and it is like I'm using my blood to sign God's new agreement with people, to say that they are not guilty of the bad things they did. So every time you have this special dinner and drink from this cup,

* **11:8-9** Genesis 2:18-23

remember that my blood came out, and that I died for you."* That's what Jesus said that night.

26 You see, every time you eat that damper and drink from that cup you are saying that Jesus died for you. And you will keep on doing that until he comes back again.

27 You see, you want to remember that Jesus died for you, so you eat that damper and you drink from that cup together. But if you do it in a bad way that doesn't respect Jesus, you are guilty. You are just as guilty as those people that hurt Jesus's body and made his blood come out.

28 So, when you eat this meal together, first of all, you each have to think very carefully about yourselves, and the way you live your lives. Then, after you do that, you can eat that damper and you can drink from that cup. 29 You see, if you don't respect the body of Jesus when you eat that damper and drink from that cup, you are doing wrong, and God will judge you and punish you. 30 That is the reason why a lot of you are weak and sick now, and some of your mob have died. 31 But if we think carefully about ourselves and how we live, and if we are sorry for the wrong things we did, God will not punish us. 32 But if God does punish us, he does it to teach us to do good things. So later, when God judges everyone in the world and punishes all the bad people, he will not punish us too.

33 So, my Christian friends, this is what I'm telling you. Whenever you meet together to eat, to remember that Jesus died for you, you have to wait for each other to be ready. 34 And don't come to that meeting hungry. If you are hungry, eat something at home before you come to the meeting, so when you meet together, you will not do something wrong, and God will not punish you.

That's all I want to say about this matter right now. There are some other things that I want to talk to you about, but I will wait until I come and visit you, and then we can sort them out.

Chapter 12

God's spirit gives Christians special power

1 My Christian friends, you know that the Holy Spirit gives special power to Christians. I want to tell you more about that, so that you will understand it properly. 2 Remember this. Before you knew God, you listened to other people that didn't know God, and you did what they did. You used to respect those statues that you thought were gods, but you know, they are just dumb statues, they can't say anything. 3 Now listen, I want you to understand this. If God's spirit is inside somebody, they can never say, "Jesus, get away from me." And the only people that can really say, "Jesus is my leader," are the people that have God's spirit inside them.

4 You know, the Holy Spirit gives us special powers to do things. We call those powers the *gifts* that he gives us. There are different sorts of gifts, but they all come from the same Holy Spirit.* 5 We work for God in a lot of different ways, but all of us work for Jesus. 6 Different people can do different things, but it is the same God that gives each person the power to work for him.

7 It's like this. The Holy Spirit works in each one of us. He gives us these gifts so we can help each other. 8 The Holy Spirit gives one person the power to say a wise message for somebody, and he gives another person the power to know something special. 9 The same Holy Spirit gives another person the power to believe God strongly for something. And he gives another person the power to

* **11:25** Exodus 24:6-8; Jeremiah 31:31-34 * **12:4** Romans 12:6-8

make sick people better. 10 The same Holy Spirit gives another person the power to do great things. And he gives another person the power to tell messages straight from God. The same Holy Spirit gives another person the power to know if something comes from God's spirit, or if it comes from bad spirits. He gives another person the power to talk in special languages, and he gives another person the power to say what those special language words mean. 11 It is the same Holy Spirit that does all those things. He gives gifts to each person, just the way he wants to.

One body has a lot of parts

12 You know, a body has a lot of parts. All those different parts make only one body. And it is like that with Jesus Christ too. We Christians are like his body.* 13 Some of us are Jews, and the rest of us are not Jews. Some of us are free, and some of us are like prisoners that have to work for no pay. But no matter what we are, God put his spirit into all of us, that is, he baptised us in his spirit. He did that to join us together into one body. Now we all have that same Holy Spirit in us.

14 And you know that a body doesn't have just one part. It has a lot of different parts. 15 Suppose a foot thinks to itself, "I'm not a hand, so I don't belong to this body." That doesn't change anything, it is still a part of the body. 16 Or suppose an ear thinks to itself, "I'm not an eye, so I don't belong to this body." But no matter what it thinks, it is still a part of the body. 17 Suppose the whole body was an eye, it wouldn't hear anything. Or suppose the whole body was an ear, it wouldn't smell anything. 18-19 Suppose each part of the body was the same, it wouldn't really be a body. But, you see, God put all the different parts in the body just like he wanted them. In the same way, God put different Christians together to become the church. 20 Yes, a body has a lot of parts, but they make only one body. 21 And a body needs every part. Its eye can't reckon, "I don't need that hand." And its head can't reckon, "I don't need those feet." 22 A body needs every part, even the parts that we think are weak. In the same way, the church needs every sort of Christian.

23 There are some parts of our bodies that we think are not very nice, and we don't want anyone to see them, so we carefully look after those parts and cover them up. 24 But we don't need to cover the beautiful parts of our bodies. God has joined all those parts together to make one body. We might think some parts are not important, but God has made them really important. 25 So all the parts of our bodies live quietly together and help each other. 26 If one part of a body hurts, every other part hurts with it. Or if one part of a body is feeling good, every other part is happy with it.

27 You see, you are all like Jesus Christ's body. Each of you Christians is a part of his body. 28 And God gives people different jobs in his church, and he gives them the power to do those jobs.

- 1st, there are Jesus's special workers, that God sends to other places to tell people his good news.
- 2nd, there are those other people that God uses to tell his messages.
- 3rd, there are those people that can teach other people.
- After that, there are those people that have the power to do great things.
- Then there are those people that have the power to make sick people better.
- And there are those people that can help other people.

* **12:12** Romans 12:4-5

– And there are those people that can lead other people.
– And there are those people that can talk in special languages. *

29 Did God send all of you out to other places to be Jesus's special workers? No, he didn't. Did he give all of you the power to tell his messages? No. Did he give all of you the power to be teachers? No. Did he give all of you the power to do great things? No, he didn't. 30 And he didn't give all of you the power to make sick people better. He didn't give all of you the power to talk in special languages, and he didn't give all of you the power to say what those special language words mean. 31 You see, God gives different powers to different people. So you have to really want the best powers from God.

It is very important to love God and other people

But there is another really good way, so now I will tell you about that way. It is the best way.

Chapter 13

1 You see, we can have power from God, but if we don't love people, we are nothing. Suppose we talk in the languages of other people and even talk in the languages of angels, but if we don't love people, all of that is useless. We will only be making a noise, like somebody banging a drum or hitting a bell. 2 Suppose we tell people God's messages, and suppose we know God's secrets and understand all about everything, and suppose we trust God so strongly that we can get him to move mountains, but if we don't love other people, we are nothing. * 3 Suppose we give everything that we have to poor people, and suppose we stay strong for Jesus, even if somebody burns our bodies so that we die, but if we don't love people, all of that is useless.

4 If we love people, we will be good to them, and we will not get angry with people that give us trouble. If we love people, we will not be jealous of them. If we love people, we will not reckon we are better than they are, and we will not think we are really good when we are not good. 5 If we love people, we will not be rude to them or shame them. If we love people, we will think about what they want, not just what we want for ourselves. If we love people, we will not get angry with them quickly, and we will not keep on remembering the bad things they did to us. 6 If we love people, we will not be happy if they do things that are wrong, but we will be happy if they do things that are right and true. 7 If we love people properly, we will keep on loving them, no matter what happens. If we love people, we will keep on believing good things about them, and we will keep on hoping good things for them, and even if we are getting trouble, we will not give up.

8 You know, I talked to you already about the special power that God gives to his people, and now I'm telling you that one day we will stop using that special power. But we can't stop loving people. If you love somebody properly, you will always love them. But the time will come when God will not need to give us special power any more. When that time comes, God will not tell people his special messages, and God will not get people to talk in special languages, and God will not let people know special things.

9 You see, now we only know a little bit, and the special messages that we get from God only tell us a little bit. 10 Right now we only have a little bit of what God wants to give to

* **12:28** Ephesians 4:11 * **13:2** Matthew 17:20; 21:21; Mark 11:23

us. But the time will come when he will let us understand everything properly. Then we will not worry about the little bits any more.

11 I'll use a picture story about myself to show you what I mean. When I was a little kid I talked like a little kid, and I thought about things the way a little kid thinks about things. I only understood what a little kid can understand. But then I grew up, and now I'm a man, and I've stopped thinking like a little kid. 12 This is what that story means. Now we only understand a little bit. It is like we are looking at things in a dark mirror now. But the time will come when everything will be clear to us, like we are looking straight at them, not in a mirror. Right now we only know a little bit, but at that time we will know everything properly, just like God knows us properly.

13 So I'm saying there are 3 important things for us to keep on doing.

– We have to keep on believing in God.
– We have to keep on knowing for sure that God will be good to us.
– We have to keep on loving God and people.

We have to keep on doing those 3 things, and the most important one is this,

– We have to keep on loving God and people.

Chapter 14

Tell God's messages in a language that people know

1 So always love other people. That is most important. And ask God's spirit to give you special powers too. Ask him for the power to tell special messages from God. That is more important than the power to talk in a special language.

2 If somebody talks in a special language, they are only talking to God, not talking to people. Nobody can understand them. The Holy Spirit is getting them to talk about secret things, but nobody can understand what they are saying. 3 But if somebody tells messages from God, they are talking to other people, and helping them to understand things better and get strong. Those messages from God help people and make them happy, even if they have trouble. 4 You see, a person that talks in a special language helps only themselves. But a person that tells messages from God helps all the people in the church to get strong. 5 I'm happy if you all talk in special languages, but I'm more happy if you all tell people messages from God. The person that can tell God's messages is greater than the person that talks in special languages. But if somebody tells everyone what those words mean, then it is all right. They will help the church get strong.

6 My Christian friends, if I come and talk to you in a special language that you don't understand, that will not help you. But if God shows me something, and if I tell you about it, that will help you. Or if he lets me know something new, and if I tell you about it, that will help you too. Or if he gives me a message for you, and if I come and tell you, or if I teach you something, that will help you too. 7 Think about things that make sounds, like guitars. If we don't



We have to play guitars the right way to make proper music

play them the right way, nobody will think it is proper music.

8 And think about soldiers. Their leader gets one man to blow a trumpet to tell the other soldiers what to do, but if he doesn't blow it properly, they will not know what to do. 9 Well, it is like that for you. You have to talk clearly and say words that people can understand. If they can't understand your words, you will be talking to nobody. 10 You know, there are a lot of different languages in this world, and all of them make sense to the people that know those languages. 11 But if somebody talks to me in a language that I don't know, I will not understand them. I will be like a stranger to them, and they will be like a stranger to me. 12 And it is the same for you too. I know that you really want God's spirit to give you special powers, so ask God to give you the powers that will help the church people be strong.

13 So in your meetings, if anyone talks in a special language, they have to ask God to show them what those words mean so they can tell everybody the message. 14 You see, it is like this. If I pray in a special language, I'm not using my mind. I'm not thinking about my words while I pray. Only my spirit is praying. 15 So what will I do? Sometimes I will pray with my spirit, and sometimes I will pray with my mind. And sometimes I will sing with my spirit, and sometimes I will sing with my mind. 16 You see, if you only thank God with your spirit, in a special language, other people in the meeting can't understand what you are saying, so they can't agree with you and say, "That's right." 17 You might be thanking God, but your words don't help anyone else.

18 I thank God that I talk in special languages more than any of you. 19 But if I talk in a church meeting, I want to tell people more about God, and I want them to understand my words. So, I reckon, if I say 5 words that they can understand, that is better than if I say 10,000 words in a special language that they can't understand.

20 My Christian friends, don't be like little kids in the way you think. You know, little kids don't know much about anything. They don't understand really bad things. So whenever you think about bad things, be like little kids. But whenever you think about anything else, be grown up people. Think properly and understand things properly.
21 You know, God got one of his men to write this in his book,

> "God will get people from other tribes
> to talk to this mob. They will talk to
> them in strange languages.
> But even if God gets strangers to talk
> to this mob, they will not listen to
> him."*

That is what God said.

22-24 It is like this. If you talk in special languages, God will use that talk, but not the way you think. He will use it to show you that it is useless to do that when you are all together in a church meeting. Suppose some strangers come into that meeting, people that don't know very much, and don't believe in God. They will hear you all talking in those strange languages, and they will say, "You mob are all crazy." But if you tell God's special messages, God will use that to show you that it is right to do that in your church meetings. Suppose some strangers come into the meeting, and they hear you telling messages from God. They will listen to what you say, and they will understand it. Then they will know that they are not God's friends, and they will know that they have to turn around and stop doing bad things.
25 Those messages from God will show them

* **14:21** Isaiah 28:11-12

every secret thing that they think about, and they will get down on the ground and show respect to God. And they will say, "It's true, God is really here with you mob."

Have good church meetings

26 So, my friends, this is how to have proper church meetings. Whenever you church people meet together, each one of you can have something to help the other people there. One of you might have a song that all of you can sing to God. Another person might have something that they can teach you. Somebody else might want to tell you about something that God has shown them. Another person might talk in a special language, and then somebody else can tell everybody what those words in that special language mean. Do all those things to help each other be strong Christians.

27 Only let 2 or 3 people talk in special languages in your meetings, and they have to take turns. Only let one person talk at a time, and then, each time, somebody has to tell everybody what those words in that special language mean. 28 But if there is nobody there that can do that, then don't let anybody talk in special languages. They have to be quiet. They can't talk out loud in a special language, but they can talk to themselves and to God.

29 And if the Holy Spirit has given some of you the power to tell messages from God, well, 2 or 3 of you can tell those messages. And the other people there have to think carefully about each message and check it, to make sure each message is really from God. 30 And if one person is telling a message, and while they are talking somebody else gets a message from God, that first person has to stop talking, so that the next person can tell their new message from God. 31 Each of you can tell a message from God, but you have to wait for each other so that only one person talks at a time. Then everyone will learn something, and you will all feel strong for God. 32 You see, if you have power from the Holy Spirit to tell God's messages, you can control your own spirit, and you will wait for the right time to talk. 33 God wants you to respect each other and listen to each other. He doesn't want your meetings to be mixed up and noisy.

And now I'll talk to you about another matter. This is what it's like for God's people in all the other churches. 34 The women have to be quiet in the church meetings. They have to do what the leaders say. That's what the law says. 35 If a woman wants to ask about something, she can wait and ask her husband at home. If women talk in a church meeting, they shame the church.

36 Maybe you think I'm wrong, but remember this, you don't know everything in God's word. It didn't start with you, and you are not the only people that ever heard it.

37 Somebody might reckon that the Holy Spirit gave them the power to tell God's messages, and that they listen to the Holy Spirit all the time. All right, but they have to understand that this letter I'm writing comes from our leader himself, and his people have to do what he says. 38 So if that person will not take any notice of this letter, then you mob can't believe their messages. Don't take any notice of anything they say.

39 So, my Christian friends, this is what I'm telling you about your meetings. If you want to tell messages from God, that is good. And don't stop people from talking in special languages. 40 Do everything properly. Do everything the right way.

Chapter 15

Jesus Christ died, then he came alive again

1 My Christian friends, I want you to remember the good news that I taught you.

You listened to that message and believed it, and you still strongly believe it. 2 And if you keep on believing that good news, God will save you. If you don't keep on believing it, I reckon you didn't believe it properly in the first place.

3 You know, God told me that message, and then I taught it to you. And, you know, a long time ago, God got his men to write about some of those things, and they are in God's book. Now I'll tell you the important part of that message again. Everybody did bad things. We are all bad, but Jesus Christ died instead of us. That message is in God's book.* 4 People buried Jesus. Then after 2 nights, on the 3rd day, God made him alive again. That message is in God's book too.* 5 After that, Jesus showed himself to Peter. Then later he showed himself to all of his 12 special workers.* 6 After that, he showed himself to more than 500 of his followers at the same time. Most of those 500 people are still alive, but some of them have died. 7 Then he showed himself to James, and later he showed himself to all of his special workers.

8 All those people saw Jesus. But I was different from Jesus's other special workers. He didn't show himself to me until some time later.*

9 But before I ever saw Jesus, he sent out his other special workers. They were the first people to go out and tell his message, so they are all more important than me. You see, I used to make a lot of trouble for God's own people, so I'm not really good enough for anyone to call me one of Jesus's special workers.* 10 But God was very good to me. He changed me and made me the way I am now. And so more people heard the good news about Jesus. You see, I've worked harder than any of his other special workers. But it wasn't really me that did that work. No. It was God that gave me the power to do his work, so he is the one that did it. 11 So it doesn't really matter who told you God's message. Maybe it was me, or maybe it was one of his other special workers. We all tell people the same good news about Jesus Christ, and that is the good news that you believed. That is the important thing.

God will make dead people come alive again

12 This is our message. Jesus Christ died, and then God made him alive again. But some of you reckon that God never makes dead people alive again. But you are wrong. 13 You see, if you reckon that God never makes dead people alive again, you are also saying that God didn't make Jesus Christ alive again. 14 And if you reckon that God didn't make Jesus Christ alive again, you are saying that our message is useless, and that you believed something that was wrong. 15 If that's what you reckon, you are saying that we lied to you about God when we told you that he made Jesus Christ alive again. But you are not right. 16 You see, if you reckon that God never makes dead people alive again, you are saying that he didn't make Jesus Christ alive again. 17 And if God didn't make Jesus Christ alive again, like you reckon, then you believed in Jesus for nothing, and it means that you are still guilty of the bad things you did. 18 And if you reckon that God never makes dead people alive again, you are saying that the Christians that died are now lost and gone for ever. 19 You reckon that we can only be sure that Jesus Christ will look after us here in this life. But we Christians get trouble in this life, and other people in the world are more happy than us. So if God

* **15:3** Isaiah 53:5-12 * **15:4** Psalm 16:8-10; Matthew 12:40; Acts 2:24-32
* **15:5** Matthew 28:16-17; Mark 16:14; Luke 24:34, 36; John 20:19 * **15:8** Acts 9:3-6 * **15:9** Acts 8:3

will not make us alive again after we die, they can feel sorry for us. But that is not true.
20 Listen, this is the true story. Jesus Christ died, and God made him alive again. Jesus was the first person to die and then come back to life again, and to live for ever.
21-22 You see, it's like this. God said that everyone that does bad things has to die. Remember the first man, called Adam. He did something bad, so he died. And we are all from Adam, so we are all in his family, and we all do bad things too, so we all have to die. But then another man came, and he only did good things. That man is Jesus Christ. So now, after people die, God can make them alive again. You see, everyone that believes in Jesus Christ is in Jesus's family now, so God will make them alive again. 23 But we each have to wait for our turn. The first one was Jesus Christ. He died, and then God made him alive again. He is the first one to live again. After he comes back, all his people will live again too.
24 Then Jesus will finish up all the bad spirits. Some of them are bosses, and some of them have power. He will take away their power, and he will finish them all up. Then the end will come, and Jesus will give everything to God, the father, and God will be the biggest boss for everybody.
25 You see, Jesus Christ will keep on being the big boss, until he wins against his enemies, and God makes all those enemies do what Jesus says.* 26 In the end he will stop us from dying. He will keep everything alive, and nobody will die any more. 27 God's book says this,

"God will win, and he will make
everything do what he says."*

Those words tell us that God is the one that will make everything do what Jesus says. You see, Jesus will not be the boss over God, but he will be the boss over everything else. 28 When God makes everything do what Jesus Christ says, then Jesus, God's son, will have God as his boss. Then God will control everything everywhere. He will be the one and only biggest boss.
29 You know, sometimes a Christian dies before anyone baptised them, so sometimes you mob try to help them, and you baptise another Christian instead of them. But think about it, if dead people will never live again, that is a useless thing for you to do.
30 And think about me and the other people that work with me. We tell everyone God's message, and some people get angry with us and they want to kill us. 31 Every day, I worry that somebody might kill me. My Christian friends, I'm very happy that you are trusting our leader Jesus Christ, so I'm telling you this. 32 At that town called Ephesus, I got trouble for telling people about Jesus. Some men there tried to kill me, and I had to fight back. I was like a man fighting wild animals. But, if God will not make me alive again after I die, it means I got all that trouble for nothing. Some of you reckon that dead people will never live again. If that is true, then we can be like the people that say this,

"We are going to die tomorrow, so
today we will have fun.
We will eat and drink as much as we
like, and we will not worry about
tomorrow."*

That is what they say, but it is not true.
33 Listen, don't let anyone trick you with that sort of talk. Remember that wise people say this, "Don't have friends that do bad things, or they will get you to do bad things too."
34 So start thinking properly, and do what is right. Stop doing bad things. I think that some of you don't really know God. I'm saying this to make you feel shame.

* **15:25** Psalm 110:1 * **15:27** Psalm 8:6 * **15:32** Isaiah 22:13

We will get new bodies

35 Somebody might hear me say that dead
people will come alive again, and they might
ask me, "How can that happen? What sort
of bodies will they have?" 36 That's a stupid
question. You know, all sorts of things die
and then they get new bodies. Think about
seeds and plants. If you plant a seed in the
ground, that seed dies. But that is not the
end. A new plant grows up. That seed comes
alive again and grows up into a new plant.
37 The thing you put into the ground was just
a seed (maybe a wheat seed, or whatever).
You don't put the body of the plant in the
ground, but just the seed. 38 Then God makes
it grow up and become a new plant, with
its own sort of body. God gives every sort
of seed its own sort of body.

39 Every sort of thing that is alive has a
different sort of body from every other
sort of thing. People have one sort of body.
Animals have a different sort of body. Birds
have another sort of body, and fish have
another sort of body. 40 And other things
have different sorts of bodies too. There are
bodies in the sky, and there are bodies here
on the earth. They are all beautiful in their
own way. The bodies in the sky are beautiful
in a different way from the bodies on the
earth. 41 The sun is bright and beautiful. And
the moon is beautiful too, in a different
way from the sun. The stars are bright and
beautiful too, but they are different again,
and some stars are brighter than other stars.

42 Well, it will be like that for us when
God makes us alive again. The bodies we
have now will die. But after God makes us
alive again, our new bodies will never die.
43 The bodies we have now are weak and
not very good. But after God makes us alive
again, our new bodies will be beautiful and
strong. 44 The bodies we have when we die
are normal bodies. But after God makes us
alive again, we will have new bodies, and
they will be spiritual bodies. You see, there
are normal bodies, and there are spiritual
bodies. 45 This is what God says in his book,

"The 1st man, Adam, became a living
person."*

But we can think of Jesus, that he is the
last Adam. You see, he is the spirit that
makes people alive. 46 It is like this. Right
now, each of us has a normal body. They
are the bodies we got at first. But later we
will each get a new spiritual body. 47 And
think about Adam. He was the 1st man, and
he came from the ground. But Jesus, the
2nd man, came from heaven. 48 Everyone
on earth has a body like the man that came
from the ground. But the people that belong
to heaven will have a body like the man that
came from heaven. 49 You see, the bodies
that we have now are like Adam's body. He
was the 1st man, and God made him out of
the ground. But our spiritual bodies will be
different. They will be like Jesus's body. He
is the man that came from heaven.

50 My Christian friends, this is what I'm
telling you. We can't go to God and live for
ever in his family in our normal bodies. They
are made of meat, blood, bones, skin, and all
that. These bodies that we have now have
to die. They can't go on for ever.

51 Listen, I'm telling you something new.
God didn't tell other people this message
before, but it is important. He will change
all of us. Some of us will still be alive at that
time, but maybe some of us will be dead. It
doesn't matter, God will change all of us.
52 It will happen like this. We will hear the
sound of somebody blowing the last trumpet,
then straight away God will change us. It
will be quick, as quick as you can blink your
eyes. You see, as soon as that trumpet makes

* **15:45** Genesis 2:7

its sound, God will make his dead people alive again. At that time, he will give us new bodies that will never die. God will change all of us, those of us that are alive and those of us that are dead at that time.* 53 You see, the bodies we have now will die, but they will get new life. God will change our normal bodies into bodies that can never die.

54-56 You know, whenever we do bad things, we break God's law, and God's law says we have to die for doing those bad things. There is a power that gets us to go wrong and die like that. It is like a cheeky scorpion that stings us and kills us. But God will change our bodies into bodies that will never die, and at that same time God will finish up that power that makes us go wrong. You know, a long time ago, one of God's men wrote about this, and it is in God's book. He wrote,

"God will finish up that power that
makes everything die."*
"It will be gone. It will not sting us any
more,
and people will not die any more."*

And it will happen just like those men wrote.

57 You see, our leader Jesus Christ has won the fight. So with Jesus we win too. And we say, "Thank you God."

58 So always remember those things, my Christian friends. I love you, and I want you to stay strong for God. Don't let anything take you away from him. Keep on working hard for our leader Jesus. Remember, he will help you, so that everything you do with him will be good. It will not be useless.

Chapter 16

The money for God's people in Jerusalem

1 All right, now I want to talk to you about something else. I will answer the question you asked me about the money that you want to give to God's people in Jerusalem. You know, I talked to the people in the churches in Galatia country, and I told them how to give money to God's people in Jerusalem, and I want you to do it the same way.* 2 Do it like this. On the 1st day of every week, each of you can pick out some of the money that you got that week, and keep it in a separate place. I will come to you soon, and you will have that money ready for me. You will not have to quickly look around and try to find it when I get there. 3 And you can pick a few of your men to take that money to Jerusalem and give it to God's people there. But wait for me to get to you at Corinth. Then I will write some letters to tell the Jerusalem mob that each of those men is a good man. They can take those letters with them. 4 And I might go with them too. If I think it is the right thing for me to do, I will go with them.

Paul made a plan

5 But before I get to Corinth, I have to go through Macedonia country, and after that, I will visit you.* 6 Maybe I will stay with you for a while. I might even stay until the end of the cold weather time, and then you can give me the things I will need for my trip to the next place. 7 You see, I want to stay here in Ephesus for a little while, and then I can come to you. And when I come, I don't want to stay a short time and then go to another place, but I want to stay with you for some time. I hope that our leader, Jesus, agrees with this plan, so that I can stay with you for a little longer time. 8 But right now I will stay here until that day called *Pentecost* comes.* 9 You see, God is helping me do great and powerful things

* **15:51-52** 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 * **15:54-56** Isaiah 25:8 * **15:54-56** Hosea 13:14 * **16:1** Romans 15:25-26
* **16:5** Acts 19:21 * **16:8** Leviticus 23:15-21; Deuteronomy 16:9-11

for him here. But there are a lot of people here that are trying to stop me.*

Paul talked about Timothy and Apollos

10 I want to talk to you now about Timothy. He is doing God's work, the same as me. So if he comes to visit you, make him feel good with you there. Don't let anyone make trouble for him,* 11 and don't let anyone rubbish him. And when he gets up to come here to me, you mob help him and give him what he needs for his trip. I'm waiting for him here, and I'm waiting for the other Christians that are coming with him.

12 And now I want to tell you about our friend Apollos. When those other Christians went to visit you, I really wanted Apollos to go with them and visit you too. I kept on telling him to go, but he reckoned that it was not the right time. He will visit you later, when he can.

The good way to live

13 Now I want to tell you this. You have to always be ready for anything. It's like you have to stay awake and keep on watching what is going on. Never stop believing in God. Always be brave, and be strong in your spirits.
14 And keep on loving God and other people all the time, and do things to help them.

Paul talked about Stefanas

15 You know about Stefanas and his family. They were the first people in Akaya country to believe in Jesus. And they help God's people all the time. So, my Christian friends, I strongly ask you this.* 16 I want you to agree with them and do what they want. And do the same for anyone that works hard for God, like they do.

17 I was very happy when Stefanas, Fortunatus and Akayacus came to me here. You see, you mob were too far away, and you couldn't help me, but instead, they came and helped me. 18 They made my spirit happy, just like they made your spirits happy. Let them know, and let anyone like them know, that you are happy with them for the good things they do.

The last things Paul wrote in this letter

19 The people in the churches here in Asia country say *hello* to you. And so do Aquila, and his wife Priscilla, and the Christians that meet in their house. They know that you belong to Jesus, and they love you, and they say *hello* to you.* 20 All the Christians here say *hello* to you. And you too, whenever you meet other Christians, show them that you know they are special, and that you are happy to see them.

21 *Look, I'm now writing this part of this letter with my own hand, so that you can know for sure that it is me, Paul, sending this letter to you.*

22 And I want to say this to anyone that doesn't love our leader, Jesus, "God will punish you."

And I'm telling Jesus, "Please come back soon."

23 I'm asking our leader, Jesus, to be good to all of you.

24 I love all of you that belong to Jesus Christ.

From Paul

* **16:9** Acts 19:8-10 * **16:10** 1 Corinthians 4:17 * **16:15** 1 Corinthians 1:16 * **16:19** Acts 18:2

The letter that Paul wrote to the Christians at Galatia

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **Galatians**)*

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 20 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians that were living in Galatia country. At that time Galatia was a part of the country that is now called Turkey.

God sent Paul to lots of countries to tell people about Jesus, and one of them was Galatia (see Acts 16:6). A lot of the Galatia people believed in Jesus and became Christians. Most of those new Christians were not Jews. (You see, Jesus belonged to the Jewish nation, so he was a Jew, and so were Peter, and Paul, and a lot of the other Christians at that time.)

After Paul left Galatia, some Jewish people went there and told the new Christians, "You can't be a friend of God unless you become like us Jews. You men have to let somebody do a young man operation on you, and you all have to follow the Jewish law."

The new Christians listened to those Jews and started to go wrong. Paul heard about it and it upset him, so he wrote this letter to get them to go the right way.

This letter has some very important messages for us today. It shows us that we need to trust Jesus and let the Holy Spirit control us, and not listen to anyone that says we have to go a different way.

Chapter 1

1 I am Paul, and this letter is from me. I'm sending this letter to you Christians in the churches in Galatia country.

I am Jesus's special worker, but it wasn't a man that gave me the power to be Jesus's special worker. It wasn't any mob of people. It was Jesus Christ, and God our father. They sent me out to tell everybody about Jesus. You see, God is really powerful. People killed Jesus, but God made him alive again.

2 Your Christian friends that are with me here, they all say *hello* to you.

3 I'm asking God our father, and Jesus Christ our leader, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves. 4 You know, we all did bad things, but Jesus took the payback for all of us. He died instead of us, so now he can save us from this bad world that we live in. That is what God, our father, wanted him to do. 5 So everyone has to say that God is very good and very great. We have to keep on saying it all the time, for ever. Yes, that's right.

Don't listen to the wrong story

6-7 But now listen, you mob. You are giving me a big shock. A little while ago I told you

the true story about God, but now you are already listening to other people, and they are turning you away from God. You are forgetting the good news we told you, and now you are listening to a different story that other people are telling you. They say it is good news, but it is not. We told you the proper good news about Jesus Christ. He loves you, and he is very good to you, and God used him to bring you into his family. But that other mob are trying to change this story into another story, and they call it *good news*. But really, there is only one good news story. They are just messing you up. 8 Listen, don't let anybody teach you a different story that is not the proper good news that we taught you. I pray that God will punish anyone that teaches a different message, no matter who it is, even if it is us, or an angel messenger from the sky. 9 I will say it again. If anyone teaches a story that is different from the story that we told you, the story that you believed, I want God to properly punish that person.

10 I'm not trying to make people happy with me, I'm trying to make God happy with me. I work for Jesus Christ now, so it doesn't matter to me if some people aren't happy when I talk straight like this.

Paul's message came from Jesus Christ, not from people

11-12 You see, my Christian friends, I want you to understand this. Jesus Christ himself told me that good news. No man or woman made up that message. It came from Jesus himself, and after Jesus told me that message, I told it to you.

13 It was like this. You have heard what I was like before. At that time, I didn't believe in Jesus. I was a Jew, and I believed everything that the Jews believe. And you know about the things that I did at that time. I made a lot of trouble for the Christian people. I tried hard to stop them from following Jesus.*

14 You see, our Jewish grand-fathers told us the way we Jewish people had to live, and I tried hard to live that way. I was becoming a better Jew than most of my mates, the other Jews that were the same age as me.* 15 But God was good to me, and he picked me to be his worker even before I was born. 16 God wanted me to go and tell the message about Jesus to the people that are not Jews. So he showed Jesus to me, and he told me all about him. Then I believed in Jesus. God told me that message, so I didn't ask anybody else about it.* 17 I didn't go to Jerusalem to talk to the men that were Jesus's special workers before I was. Instead of that, I went straight away to the country called Arabia. Then later I went back to the city called Damascus.

18 Then, 3 years later, I went south to Jerusalem to meet Peter. I stayed there with him for only 15 days.* 19 I didn't see any of Jesus Christ's other special workers, except James, the brother of Jesus. 20 What I'm writing to you now is true. And God knows that it is true.

21 Later I went north to the countries called Syria and Cilicia. 22 But back in Judea country the Christians there didn't know me. 23 They only heard people say, "The man that tried to stop us believing in Jesus Christ, the man that gave us bad trouble and hurt us, that man has changed, and now he is telling everyone to believe in Jesus Christ." 24 Those Christians heard that I changed, and they were happy, and they thanked God and said that he is really great.

Chapter 2

The church leaders in Jerusalem agreed with Paul

1-2 Then, 14 years later, God told me to go

* **1:13** Acts 8:3; 22:4-5; 26:9-11 * **1:14** Acts 22:3 * **1:16** Acts 9:3-6; 22:6-10; 26:13-18 * **1:18** Acts 9:26-30

to Jerusalem again. This time I went with Barnabas, and I took Titus with me too. We had a little meeting there, with just the important church people, and I told them all about the message that I teach to the people that are not Jews. I wanted to see if they agreed with what I was doing. I didn't want anyone to mess up my work.*

3-4 You see, Titus was there with me, and he is a Greek man, not a Jew. But there were some Jewish men that came secretly into the church in Jerusalem. They reckoned they believed in Jesus, but they didn't really trust him properly. They only came into the church to see what we were doing. And they reckoned that Titus had to follow the Jewish law and have a young man operation. But, you see, if we belong to Jesus Christ, we are free from that law. But those men wanted to force us to keep that law. 5 But we didn't listen to them, not even a little bit. We knew they were wrong. So we didn't tell Titus to have that young man operation. You see, we only want to teach the true message about Jesus, and we want you mob to keep on believing that true message.

6 The Christians in Jerusalem reckon their leaders are important, but it doesn't matter to me if they are important, or not. God treats everybody the same way.* Anyway, those leaders agreed that I was already teaching the true message about Jesus, and that I wasn't leaving anything out. 7 No, they understood that God gave me a special job, just like he gave Peter a special job. God told me to tell the good news about Jesus to the people that are not Jews. And he told Peter to tell that same good news to the Jewish people. 8 God gave Peter the power to be his messenger to the Jews. And God gave me the power to be his messenger to the people that are not Jews.

9 The 3 very important leaders in Jerusalem were James, Peter and John. They heard how much God helped Barnabas and me in our work, and they understood that God gave me this special job. Then they were happy with us, and they shook hands with us to show that they are our friends. They agreed that we had to go to people that are not Jews, and they themselves had to go to the Jewish people. 10 The only other thing that they asked us to do was to help the poor Christians. And that was what I myself really wanted to do.

Paul told Peter, "You are wrong"

11 You know, Peter came to the city called Antioch to visit us Christians there. At that time, I had to straighten him out. I stood up in front of everybody, and I said, "Peter, you are wrong."

12-13 You see, it was like this. Peter is a Jewish man, and at first he was friends with the Christians at Antioch that were not Jews. He even broke the Jewish rules and ate food with them. But then James sent some other Jewish men to Antioch, and after they got there, Peter changed. Those new men reckoned that every Christian has to become a Jew, and Peter was frightened of them. He went back to following the Jewish rules and stopped eating food with those people that were not Jews. All the other Jewish Christians at Antioch were frightened too, and they did the same as Peter, even though they knew it was wrong. And Barnabas did that too. He stopped eating food with people that are not Jews.

14 I knew that they were not properly following God's true message, so I talked straight to Peter in front of everyone. I said, "Listen, Peter, you are wrong. You are a Jew, but you have been living here like you are not a Jew. So you can't turn around now and agree with this new mob. You can't try

* **2:1-2** Acts 11:30; 15:2 * **2:6** Deuteronomy 10:17

to force these people that are not Jews to follow the same rules as us Jews."

God will only say you are all right if you trust Jesus

15 You see, Peter and me, we are Jews, and our Jewish people taught us God's law. We Jews are not like you people that are not Jews. Nobody taught you mob God's law. 16 And we know that if people just try to follow that law, they can't do it properly, so God will not say they are all right. He will only do that for people that trust Jesus Christ. And we trusted Jesus Christ, so now God will say we are all right. You see, if we believe in Jesus, God will say we are all right, and he will not punish us. If we only think about following the law, we will never do it properly, so he will never say we are all right. Nobody can get God to say they are all right by just following the law. *

17 Yes, we trusted Jesus Christ, and now God says we are all right. But some people might reckon, "You left God's law, so now God will say you are guilty. Jesus got you to do something bad." But they are not right. 18 You see, it is like this. I used to try to follow that law to get God to say that I'm all right, but then I found out that I just have to believe in Jesus. So now I can't go back and think that law will make me all right. If I do that, then I really will be guilty.

Jesus lives in his people

19-20 You see, I used to try to follow that law, so that law controlled me. I tried to do everything in that law, but I couldn't do it, so the law said that I had to die. But then I stopped thinking about that law, and I turned around to follow Jesus, and now he controls me, and God makes me properly alive. And you know that Jesus died on a cross. Well, I believe in Jesus, so it is like I died there too. But Jesus is alive now, so I'm alive now too. You see, Jesus lives inside me, right here in my body. And he gets me to do the things that God wants me to do. He is God's son. He loved me, and he gave up his life and died for me. 21 Yes, God is really good to us, and he really did a lot for us. I will never change my mind about that. You see, we can't become good people by following the law. If we could do that, it would mean that Jesus died for nothing. But, of course, he didn't.

Chapter 3

God gives us his spirit when we believe in Jesus

1 Listen, you mob in Galatia, I told you clearly why Jesus Christ died. It is like I painted a picture of him on the cross for you all to see. But now you are forgetting him. You are so silly, it's like somebody tricked you. 2 Think about God's spirit. When did he come into you? Was it when you were trying to follow the law? No, it was when you believed the good news about Jesus. 3 You started your Christian life with the power of God's spirit, and now you are trying to keep it going with just your own power. That is really stupid. 4 You believed the good news about Jesus, so then you went through a lot of trouble. Was that all for nothing? I hope it was not for nothing. 5 Look, God gives you his spirit and he does great things among you with his power. You see, he doesn't think, "They are following the law, so I will do powerful things for them." But he thinks, "They believe the message about Jesus, so I will do powerful things for them."

We have to believe God, like Abraham did

6 Do you know the story about Abraham? It was the same for him. God's book says,

* **2:16** Psalm 143:2; Romans 3:20, 22

"Abram believed what God said, so
God was really happy with him, and
told him, 'You believe me, so now I'm
saying you are properly good, like
you never did anything wrong.' "*
7 And from that you can understand that
Abraham's real family are the people that
believe God, like Abraham did.* 8 And, you
know, God's book says what will happen. It
says that if anyone believes God, God will
say they are all right. God will even say
that to people that are not Jews. God told
Abraham, "I will use your family to do good
things for all the nations."* 9 So God will be
good to everyone that believes him, just like
he was good to Abraham when Abraham
believed God.

10 You see, God will make trouble for those
people that reckon they are all right by just
following the law. They think that, in the
end, God will agree that they are all right.
But they are wrong. God says this in his book,

"You have to keep on doing everything
in the law book, or God will punish
you."*

11 And we all know that nobody can follow
that law properly, so nobody is good enough
for God to say they are all right. But God
says this in his book,

"If you trust God, he will say you are
all right, and you will live."*

12 But if somebody reckons they will live just
by following the law, they are not trusting
God. God also says this in his book,

"A person that does everything in the
law will live."*

13 But if we try to follow that law, we will
not be able to do it properly, and in the
end God will punish us. But we don't have
to follow that law. You see, God already
punished Jesus Christ instead of us. When
Jesus died, he paid for us, and he made us
free from that trouble that comes from the
law. God also says this in his book,

"If people hang somebody from wood
to kill them, that person gets trouble
from God."

And that is what they did, they nailed Jesus
Christ to that wooden cross, and he got that
trouble from God.* 14 Jesus Christ died like
that to pay for all of us. He bought us for
God. So now the people that are not Jews
can get the good things from God that he
said he will give to Abraham's family. And
if we believe in Jesus Christ, God will give
us his spirit, just like he promised.

Nothing can change what God promised

15 My Christian friends, you already know
what 2 people do when they agree about
something, so I will use that as a picture.
They write it on paper, and both of them
sign it, that makes those words very strong.
Nobody can say, "Forget it." Nobody can
change it at all. 16 Well, in the same way,
nobody can change what God promised to
Abraham, and to Abraham's son, and to all
the people in his family. You know, we can
read this story in God's book. God doesn't
say that he promised things to Abraham's
sons, like it is talking about a lot of people.
No, he is talking about only one man. He
says Abraham's *son*. You see, God promised
those things to just one man, and that man is
Jesus Christ.* 17 It's like this. At first God and
Abraham agreed together, and God promised
something to Abraham. Then the law came
430 years later. But that law can't stop
what God promised in his agreement with
Abraham.* 18 You see, God promised to do
something good for Abraham before that law
came. God gives people good things because

* **3:6** Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3 * **3:7** Romans 4:16 * **3:8** Genesis 12:3; 18:18 * **3:10** Deuteronomy 27:26
* **3:11** Habakkuk 2:4 * **3:12** Leviticus 18:5 * **3:13** Deuteronomy 21:23 * **3:16** Genesis 12:7 * **3:17** Exodus 12:40

he promised those things, not because those people follow that law. And it is like that for us too. God is doing something good for us now, because he promised to be good to us.*

The Jewish people had God's law until Jesus Christ came

19 But maybe somebody is asking, "Why did God give his law to his people?" This is the answer. His people kept on doing bad things, so God gave them his law. And he wanted them to follow that law until Abraham's special grand-son came. This was the grand-son that God was talking about a long time ago when he promised good to Abraham. You see, God gave his law like this. He used his angel messengers to tell it to Moses. He was a man that stood in the middle, between God and the people, to help those people listen to God. 20 And you know that a man that stands in the middle has to listen to both sides and help sort things out. But when God talked to Abraham, he didn't need anyone to stand in the middle. God himself promised good things to Abraham.

21 But somebody might say, "God did something wrong. He gave a law that goes against what he promised." That's not right. No way. You see, if a law can give us real life, God would give us that law, and we would follow it and become good people. But no law can do that. 22 God says in his book that everyone does bad things. They can't stop doing those bad things. But if we listen to what God promises us, and if we believe in Jesus Christ, he will save us.

23-25 But before Jesus Christ came, the law was like a boss, and like a school teacher for us Jewish people. It controlled us, and it looked after us. God wanted it to be like that, until Jesus came. We waited for God to send him, so that we can trust him. And then Jesus came, and now we trust him, and God says we are all right. So now we don't need that law to be a boss or a school teacher for us any more.

People that trust Jesus are God's kids

26 It's like this now. You all believe in Jesus Christ, so you are joined to him, and you are all God's kids. 27 You know, when the church leaders baptised you, they took you through that special washing ceremony to show that you are joined to Jesus Christ, and now it is like you are wearing new clothes. It is like you are wearing Jesus Christ himself. 28 You are all joined to Jesus Christ, so you are all joined to each other. You are not different from each other any more. It doesn't matter if you are a Jew or not. It doesn't matter if you are a man or a woman. It doesn't matter if somebody keeps you like a prisoner, or if you are free. None of that matters. You are all joined to Jesus Christ, so you are all the same as each other. 29 You belong to Jesus Christ, so you are in Abraham's family, and you will get everything that God promised to Abraham.*

Chapter 4

1 I will tell you a picture story. There was an old man with a young son, and that old man was sick and going to die. He knew that after he dies that little kid will get everything he owns, but the kid will not know how to look after it. So the old man got some people to be the bosses, and they agreed to look after his things until the boy grows up. He told them how old the boy has to be before he can take over and control those things. After they agreed to that, the old man died. Then that kid owned everything that his father left, but that kid couldn't do anything with it. He was no different from his father's workers. 2 He had to do what his teachers

* **3:18** Romans 4:14 * **3:29** Romans 4:13

and the other bosses told him to do, until he grew up. He had to wait for the right time to come, the time that his father told them before he died. 3 Now I'll tell you what that picture story is all about. We were like that little kid. We had bosses too. The bad spirits that are the bosses over this world, they were our bosses. 4 And just like that little kid, we had to wait for the right time to come. Then, when the right time came, God sent his own son from heaven to the earth. He was born from a normal woman into the Jewish nation, and he did what the Jewish law said. 5 And then he took the payback for all of us, the payback for the bad things we did, and he set us free. So God took us into his family to be his proper kids, and we don't have to follow that law any more. 6 And when we became God's kids, he sent his son's spirit to live right inside us. His spirit in us gets us to call out to God, "My Dad, you are my father."* 7 So those bad spirits are not your bosses any more, but you are one of God's kids, and you will get everything that God gives to his kids.

Don't let the bad spirits be your bosses

8 At first you didn't know God. Those other bad spirits were your bosses. Those spirits are not gods at all, but you couldn't get free from them. 9 But then you heard about Jesus, and now you do know God, or really, God knows you. So don't turn back now to those weak and useless spirits that are the bosses over this world. Don't let them be your bosses again. 10 You think you make God happy if you follow the Jewish ceremonies for special days, or months, or times, or years. But you are wrong. 11 I'm worried about you. I worked really hard to help you, and now I think, "Maybe I wasted my time."
12 Look, my Christian friends, I ask you to free yourselves from that law, just like I did. You see, I used to think I had to follow that law, but now I'm free, just like you.

People in Galatia believed the wrong story, and that hurt Paul

Remember the first time I came to you mob in Galatia. You didn't do anything wrong to me at that time, 13 even though I was sick. And I told you the good news about Jesus.
14 Yes, I had a problem in my body, and it made me look bad to you. But you didn't turn your back to me or say bad things to me. No, instead of that you were good to me, and you said, "Thank you for coming here." You were really happy with me, like I was one of God's angel messengers, or like I was Jesus Christ himself.

15 But now you are not happy with me any more. What went wrong? Back then you loved me so much that you did everything for me, no matter how hard it was for you.
16 But now something is wrong. I'm telling you what is true, and you don't like it. It looks like you turned around, and now you are calling me your enemy.

17 Some people want you to follow the Jewish law, and they are trying hard to get you to join them. But that will not be good for you. They just want to pull you away from me. They want you to listen only to them, nobody else. 18 They don't teach you good things, so don't listen to them. But there are other people that teach you good things, and it is good to listen to them. Yes, it is good to listen to those good teachers all the time, not just when I'm there with you.
19 Listen, I got you to believe in Jesus, so you are like my own kids to me. But now you are hurting me a lot. You know, when a woman has a baby, that baby gives her a lot of pain. Well, just like that, you are giving me a lot of pain. And I will keep on feeling this pain

* **4:6** Romans 8:15-17

until you properly change to be like Jesus Christ. 20 You see, I really worry about you. I wish I could go there and be with you now, to talk with you the right way, and help you.

An old story means something new

21 Listen, you mob that want to follow the Jewish law, you don't really know what that law says. 22 You see, God says in his book that Abraham had 2 sons. The mother of one son was Hagar. She was a worker. She was like a prisoner, and she had to work all the time for Sarah, Abraham's wife, and she got no pay. But Sarah was the mother of the other son. She was always a free woman.*

23 The 1st son was born after Abraham and Sarah talked about it, and then Abraham and the worker got together, and after that she had a son. But it was not God's idea. That 1st son came from the woman that was like a prisoner. But the 2nd son came after God promised to give Sarah a son. That 2nd son came from the free woman.

24 That old story teaches us something else too. Those 2 women are like pictures of the 2 agreements that God made with his people. Hagar is like the agreement that God made on the big hill called Sinai, where he gave the Jews their law. That agreement makes people like prisoners. They are not free. They have to work all the time to follow that law. 25 Hagar is a picture of the big hill called Sinai in Arabia country, and she is like the city here on earth called Jerusalem, where people have to follow that Jewish law. That city and its people are like prisoners that have to work all the time. They are not free.

26 But there is another city called Jerusalem up in heaven. That city's people are free. And we belong to that city, so we are free. 27 There will be a lot of people with us in that city. You see, this is what God says in his book,

> "Be happy, you woman that hasn't got any kids.
> You didn't have to feel all that pain from having a kid.
> You can be really happy, and you can shout out loud.
> You used to be sad and lonely, but now you will have a lot more kids than the woman that has a husband."*

28 You see, my Christian friends, you are like Sarah's son. His name was Isaac. God promised to give that son to Abraham and Sarah. Well, just like that, God promises to make you his kids too. 29 And think a bit more about that story. Remember Ishmael, the 1st son. He was born because of things people did by themselves. But Isaac, the 2nd son, he was born by the power of the Holy Spirit. And you know, at that time, long ago, Ishmael gave Isaac a lot of trouble. And it is like that now too. The people that reckon we have to follow the law, they give the free people a lot of trouble.* 30 But God's book says this about Hagar and Ishmael,

> "Chuck out the working woman and her son. That working woman's son will never get what God promised to the free woman's son."*

31 So I'm telling you, my friends, we are like the free woman's kids. We are not like kids of the woman that had to work all the time like a prisoner.

Chapter 5

Keep trusting Jesus Christ and stay free

1 Listen, Jesus Christ has set us free, and we are properly free. So be strong and stay free. Don't let anyone make you follow that law again. If you do, it's like they make you a prisoner again, because they say you have to do everything that law says.

* **4:22** Genesis 16:15; 21:2 * **4:27** Isaiah 54:1 * **4:29** Genesis 21:9 * **4:30** Genesis 21:10

2 Listen. This is me, Paul, writing this, and
I'm telling you straight. If you try to be
friends with God by having a young man
operation, then you are not trusting Jesus
Christ, so he will not help you at all. 3 I'm
telling you again. If you let somebody do that
operation on you, to make you like a Jewish
man, then you have to do everything else that
is in the Jewish law. 4 And if you are following
the Jewish law to get God to say that you are
all right, that shows that you turned away
from Jesus Christ, and that you forgot that
he is the one that gets God to be good to
you. 5 But listen, we trust Jesus to make us
properly good, and the Holy Spirit tells us for
sure that Jesus will do that. So we are waiting
for him to do it, and we know he will. 6 You
see, if people belong to Jesus Christ, it doesn't
matter if they have a young man operation or
not. The only thing that matters is that they
trust Jesus, and if they do that, they will love
God, and they will love other people.

7 You mob were following Jesus really good,
like you were running in a race and were
nearly winning it. But then somebody got
in your way, so now you are not winning.
Somebody stopped you from believing the
true story, and you stopped living the right
way. 8 That wrong message did not come
from God. No, God is the one that picked
you to be his people.

9 I'll use a picture story about cooking
damper. If you put a little bit of baking
powder into a big lot of flour, it will make
it all swell up. Well just like that, somebody
told a few of you the wrong message, and
now a lot of you are going wrong.* 10 But I'm
trusting God to help you. I reckon you will
stop following that wrong way and you will
follow my words. And, as for that man that is
getting you all mixed up, I don't know who
he is, but I know that God will punish him.

11 Listen, my Christian friends, some people
reckon that I still tell people to have a young
man operation, but that's not right. I teach
people that Jesus Christ died on the cross
to save them. And those Jews that don't
like Jesus, they are always giving me a lot
of trouble. That shows you that I don't tell
anyone to have a young man operation. If
I did tell them to do that, then that Jewish
mob wouldn't get angry and give me trouble.

12 Do you know what I think about those
people that are getting you all mixed up?
I wish they will cut their own bodies, not
yours.

You are free, so love each other

13 You see, my Christian friends, God picked
you to be people that are free from the
Jewish law. But you have to be free in the
right way. You can't just do anything you like,
anything that makes you feel good. Instead
of that, you have to love each other and do
things to help each other. 14 Just think about
that Jewish law. You will follow all of it if
you do this, "Love other people just like you
love yourself."* 15 Don't be like wild animals.
They fight each other and eat each other all
the time. If you don't love each other, you are
just like them. So be careful. If you fight each
other, you might properly finish each other.

Let God's spirit show you the right way to live

16 So this is what I'm telling you, let God's
spirit control your lives, and you will not do
any of those bad things that make you feel
good. 17 You see, it is like this. We all have
a bad part in us that makes us want to do
bad things, to make us feel good. And we
also have God's spirit in us, and he makes
us want to do good things. Those 2 are both
in you, and they both want to control you,
so they are fighting each other inside you

* **5:9** 1 Corinthians 5:6 * **5:14** Leviticus 19:18

all the time. Whenever you listen to God's spirit and try to do good things, that bad part in you tries to stop you, so you don't do what you really want to do.* 18 But if you let God's spirit control you, you will do good things, and you will not need to have the Jewish law as your boss.

19 You see, everybody knows about the bad things that people do to make themselves feel good. They sleep with people that are not their own wives or husbands, and they do what married people do together. They think about dirty things, and then they do those bad things. They don't try to control their bad thoughts. 20 They respect the spirits that are not God. They try to get bad spirits to hurt other people. They hate other people, and they fight other people. They want to be like some other person, and if they can't be, they hate that other person. They get very angry. They want to be more important than everybody else. They will not agree with other people, so they split off into separate groups. 21 They want things that belong to other people. They get drunk. They have wild parties and do all sorts of bad things. Listen, I'm telling you again what I told you before. People that keep on doing those bad things will never be in God's family. They will never get the good things that God will give to the people in his family.

22 But if God's spirit controls people, he gets them to do good things. You know that a good fruit tree always gets good fruit on it. Well, like that, a person with God's spirit does good things. If you let God's spirit lead you, he will get you to love God and to love other people. And you will be happy. And you will feel good and quiet inside yourself so that you will not fight with other people. God's spirit inside you will help you be good to people and not get angry, even if they give you trouble. And he will get you to be friendly to other people, and he will get you to do good things. He will make you the sort of person that other people can trust. 23 He will stop you from thinking you are too important, and he will help you to control yourself. And there is no law to stop anybody doing any of those good things.

24 You see, sometimes doing bad things makes people feel good. But people that belong to Jesus Christ stop doing those bad things. That bad part inside them might make them feel like doing those bad things, but they don't take any notice of it any more. It is like they nailed it to a cross and killed it.

25 So you and me, we have to live like that too. We live with God's spirit in us now, so we have to do what God's spirit tells us to do. We have to let him control us. 26 We can't reckon we are better than anyone else. We can't do things that make other people angry, so that we start fighting each other. And we can't wish we are like somebody else, and then hate that other person.

Chapter 6

Be good to each other

1 My Christian friends, if you catch one of your own mob doing something bad, the rest of you that listen properly to God's spirit, you have to get that person to stop. Make sure you talk to that person in a good and easy way. Remember, Satan tries to get you to do bad things too, so be careful. 2 You have to do this to help each other be strong. You have to help other Christians that have problems. If you do that, you will be doing what Jesus Christ told you to do. 3 Don't think that you are too important to help other Christians. If you are not very important, but you reckon you are really important, then you are just tricking

* **5:17** Romans 7:15-23

yourself. 4 Each one of you has to think about the things that you do, and see if those things are good, or not good. And if they are good, then you can be happy and feel good about yourself. Don't look at other people and think, "Am I better than them?" 5 Each of you have to live your own life the right way. If you go wrong, you can't blame anyone else.

6 By the way, remember this too. If somebody teaches you God's word, you have to share your money, and food, and other good things with that teacher.

7 Listen, you've got to understand this properly. Nobody can ever trick God, so don't ever think you can do that. I'll tell you a picture story about seeds. A gardener plants different sorts of seeds in his garden, then later he gets the food from the plants that grow from those seeds. Whatever sort of seed he plants, that's the sort of food he gets. 8 Well, it is like that with us people. Some people do good things, like a gardener that plants the seeds of good plants. And some people do bad things, like a gardener that plants rubbish seeds. Some people only think about what will make them feel good, so they do bad things. Later God will pay them with something bad. They will die. But other people listen to God's spirit and do good things. Later God will do something good for them. God's spirit will let them live with him for ever.

9 So we have to keep going the right way. Don't get tired of doing good things, and later, God will give you lots of good things. 10 You see, every time we can do something good for somebody, we have to do it. If that person believes in Jesus, they belong to the same family as us, so we really have to do good things for them.

Jesus is the great one

11 *Look. I am writing these words with my own hand. See how big my writing is. This message is very important.* 12 Some Jewish Christians are trying to force you to have that young man operation. They want the other Jews to think that you follow the Jewish law. You see, those other Jews will make trouble for anyone that believes that Jesus died on the cross to save them, and the Jewish Christians don't want to get that trouble. 13 But, you know, even the Jews don't follow the Jewish law properly themselves. Those Jewish Christians only want you to get that operation, and be like Jews, so they can tell everybody that they got you to be Jewish. They want to use your bodies like that, to get the other Jews to say they are good.

14 But I never want to say anything to get other people to say I am good. The only good one for me is Jesus Christ. He died for me on the cross. And when I think about him, the things of this world mean nothing to me, and I am nothing to this world.

God changed each of you into a new person

15 You see, it doesn't matter if somebody did a young man operation on you, or not. The most important thing is this. God changed you into a new person. 16 So I'm asking God to be good to all the people that say that the young man operation doesn't matter. I'm asking God to make them happy and quiet inside themselves. I'm asking this for all the people that God picked to be his own, like he picked the Israel people a long time ago.

17 I hope nobody gives me any more trouble after this. I've got scars on my body from stones and whips, and these scars show everyone that I belong to Jesus.

18 My Christian friends, I pray that our leader, Jesus Christ, will be very good to you, and that he will be with you and help you spiritually.

From Paul

The letter that Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **Ephesians**)*

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now part of the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of countries and lots of towns to tell people about Jesus. One of those towns was Ephesus (see Acts 18:19—20:1). It was a big town in the country that is now called Turkey. About 200 years later the enemies of Ephesus broke it down, and today there are just stones and rubbish at that place in Turkey.

At the time when Paul wrote this letter, the people called the Romans were the bosses over lots of nations. The Roman bosses didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus, so they grabbed him and put him in jail. Paul wrote this letter while he was in that jail, in Rome.

In this letter, Paul wrote about how God planned great things for us Christians. He wrote about how Jesus joins all of us together into his family, no matter what nation we belong to, so that we can be strong for God and live the way he wants us to live.

Paul wrote this letter a long time ago, but it still has good messages for us today. So we have to take notice today of those messages that Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus.

Chapter 1

1 I am Paul, and this letter is from me. God got me to be one of Jesus Christ's special workers. I'm sending this letter to all God's people there at Ephesus, all you people that follow Jesus Christ properly.* 2 I'm asking God our father, and Jesus Christ our leader, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

God gives us a lot

3 God is the father of our leader Jesus Christ. God joined us to Jesus, and he gave us every good thing that our spirits need. So we have to thank him a lot.

4 A long time ago, before God made the world, he picked us to be his people, and he joined us to Jesus Christ, so that now God can say we are good, like we never did anything wrong. He loved us, 5 so he got Jesus to bring us into his family, and now we can be God's own kids. God did that because it is what he really wanted to do. 6 So we thank him a lot for that. God loves his son, Jesus, very much, and after we are joined to his son, God is really good

* **1:1** Acts 18:19-21; 19:1

to us too. 7You know, we were prisoners of the devil, the boss over the bad spirits. But Jesus died for us, and his blood came out for us. Jesus paid for us with his own blood, and he set us free from the devil. So now God will not punish us for all the bad things we did. Yes, God is very good to us.* 8He does all that for us, and he also makes us wise and helps us to think properly. 9God planned it all a long time ago, and nobody knew about it. But now he let us know about it. He told us that he is using Jesus to do the things he planned, things that make him happy. 10And at the right time he will finish doing the things he planned. He will bring everything together, the things in heaven, and the things on the earth. God will bring them all together, and Jesus Christ will be the leader and boss over everything.

11God always does everything that he plans. And a long time ago, he picked us, and planned to join us to Jesus Christ and make us his people. 12At first he picked the Jewish people. They were the first to trust Jesus Christ, and to wait for him to save them. God wanted the Jews to be the first people to praise him, and to say that he is really great. 13Now it is your turn. You people that are not Jews, you heard that good news that God saves you, and you believed in Jesus Christ. And God gave you his Holy Spirit, just like he promised. His spirit in you is like his sign on you, to show everyone that you belong to him. 14And now God promises us that one day we will be properly free from doing wrong things. He gives us the Holy Spirit now. It is the first good thing that he gives us, and it shows us that he will give us other good things, for sure. So we really thank God, and we say that he is really great.

Jesus is the leader of the church

15Some people told me about you, that you keep on trusting our leader Jesus, and they also told me that you love God's people. They told me those things, 16so now I never stop thanking God for you, and I always remember to pray for you. 17I pray to our very great father, the God of our leader Jesus Christ. I pray that his spirit will help you to think properly and show you more about God, so that you will know him better. 18God promised very great things to his people, and now he has them ready for you. I pray that he will show them to you clearly, like he will switch on a light in your minds, so you can know and be sure about these good things. 19I pray that you will know that God is stronger and more powerful than anyone, and that he will use his power to do good things for all of us that trust him.

God is very powerful. 20You see, people killed Jesus Christ, but God used his power to make him alive again, and to take him up into heaven. That shows that God is really powerful. Then God put Jesus in the most important place in heaven. He is sitting right next to God, on his right-hand side.* 21Jesus is now the biggest boss. He is bigger than all the other bosses everywhere, and he is bigger than all the spirits everywhere. He is the big boss over everyone in this world now, and he's the big boss over everyone in the world that will come later. Not one of them is stronger than Jesus. Only Jesus has God's power. 22God made Jesus the boss over everyone. It's like everything is under Jesus's feet. And God made Jesus the leader of his people. Those people are his church.* 23Jesus lives in God's people, like we are his body, and Jesus is our head. He comes into his people and fills them up. He is the boss over everything, everywhere.*

* **1:7** Colossians 1:14 * **1:20** Psalm 110:1 * **1:22** Psalm 8:6 * **1:23** Colossians 1:18

Chapter 2

God is really good to us

1 You know, in the past you mob did lots of bad things. You couldn't be friends with God. It was like your spirits were dead.* 2 You didn't do what God wants, but instead, you always did bad things, just like the other people in this world do. You used to do the things the devil wants. He is the boss over those strong bad spirits that are in the air. That devil is working now inside everyone that will not do what God wants. 3 And it wasn't only you mob that were bad. We were all bad. We were like those other people in this world. We did whatever we wanted to do. We did whatever made us feel good. We did whatever our own bodies and minds told us to do. And that made God angry with us, just like he is angry with everyone else.

4-5 But God didn't punish us. He felt very sorry for us. He loved us, even though we were doing bad things. It is like our spirits were dead. But he was very good to us, and he saved us. He loved us so much that he made our spirits alive, just like he made Jesus Christ alive. 6 And God joined us to Jesus, and God lifted us up to sit with Jesus Christ in heaven. 7 God did those things to show everyone that he is very good to us. He showed those things to people in the past, and he shows them to us now, and he will keep on showing them to everyone for ever. He is showing everyone that he is better than anyone else. He is really good to everyone that belongs to Jesus Christ. 8 God is really good to you. You believed in Jesus, and God saved you. You didn't do anything good, and you didn't pay God anything, but he saved you anyway. 9 You can't do things to save yourself. Even if you do a lot of good things, you can't save yourself. No way. It is God that saves you. Nobody can say, "I'm really good, that is the reason why God saved me." Nobody can talk like that. No way. 10 God is the one that made us what we are, and he wants us to do good things. He already has those good things ready for us to do. He turned us into new people, and he joined us to Jesus Christ, so now we can do those good things.

Jesus Christ brings us all together, Jews and other people

11-12 Think about what you were at first. You were not Jews, so you didn't belong to the special mob called Israel. And at that time you were not friends with Jesus Christ. You didn't know that God promised to send him to save us. And before, when God promised to look after the Israel mob if they agreed to keep his law, he didn't promise that to you. You didn't know anything about those things. You were living without God, and there was nothing good for you in this world. You didn't know anything about the young man operation that God told the Jewish people to do on all their boys. That's the reason why the Jewish people rubbish you. But don't worry about that. They are only talking about the operation that people do to their bodies. They are not talking about the job that God does inside us. 13 But now it is different for you. At first you were far away from God, but then you believed in Jesus. You believed that he died, and that his blood came out for you. Then God joined you to Jesus Christ, and he brought you really close to himself.

14 You see, you mob that are not Jews, you were enemies with us Jewish mob at first. There was something that made us enemies with each other. It was like a wall standing between us. But Jesus broke down that wall,

* **2:1** Colossians 2:13-14

and he brought us together, and he made us become one new group. He has made us friends with each other now. 15-16 You know, Jesus let people kill his body, and he died for all of us. When he did that, he made all those Jewish laws useless, along with all their rules. Jesus Christ died on the cross for everybody. He died for the Jewish people, and he died for the people that are not Jews. When he died, he stopped the Jews from being enemies with other people, and he brought both mobs to God, to be God's friends. He brought them together into one new group. *

17 Jesus came and told people God's message. He said that everyone can be friends with God, and they can be friends with each other. He said that you mob that are not Jews, can be friends with God. You mob were far away from God at that time. And he also said that us Jewish mob can be friends with God. We were more close to God at that time. * 18 So now the Holy Spirit helps us all to come close to God our father, because Jesus Christ died for all of us. It is the same Holy Spirit that helps us both. He helps Jews, and he helps people that are not Jews.

19 So now, you mob that are not Jews, you are not strangers any more. You don't belong to a different nation any more, but you belong to God's family, and you are in God's mob now. 20-22 I will use a house as a picture story. It is like God used Jesus and all his people to build a special house for himself. He used Jesus Christ to start building that house. He is the most important one. Then God used Jesus's special workers, and the other people that told God's messages. They are like the cement slab that the house sits on. Now God is using you mob, with us Jewish mob, to make the rest of the house. It is like God's people are the bricks and the wood. You mob are not Jews, but you are still part of that house. God's spirit carefully joins us together, to make that house bigger all the time, and God lives in his special house. That picture of a house shows us that God is living in us all the time.

Chapter 3

God picked Paul to help the people that are not Jews

1 You mob know about me, Paul, that I am in jail now. You see, I told you mob the message about Jesus. But the bosses didn't like me talking about Jesus to people that are not Jews. So they put me in jail. 2 And you know that God was very good to me, and he picked me to tell you his message. 3 You see, a long time ago, God planned to save people that are not Jews, as well as Jewish people. At that time he didn't tell everybody about it, but later he told it to me. Remember, I already wrote to you about this. 4 When you read those words, you will understand that I know what God planned about Christ. 5 God didn't tell that message to the people that lived before me. But now, God picked Jesus's special workers and other people that tell his messages, and God's spirit told them his plan. * 6 And this is what God planned. He will be good to everyone that believes the good news about Jesus. It doesn't matter if they are Jews, or not Jews. If they believe in Jesus, God will save them. Both will get what God promised. They both belong to the same mob now. They both belong to God, just like arms and legs belong to the same body.

7 God was really good to me. He used his power to help me to be strong. Then he gave me this special job. I have to tell people this

* **2:15-16** Colossians 1:20 * **2:17** Isaiah 57:19 * **3:5** Colossians 1:26-27

good news about Jesus. 8 I'm not important. All of God's people are more important than me. But God was good to me, and he gave me this special job. He sent me to tell the people that are not Jews about the really great things that Jesus Christ can give them. These things are so great that nobody can understand them properly. 9 And God sent me to help everyone to understand the message about his plan. A long time ago, when God made everything, he didn't tell anyone that message. He kept it secret at that time. 10 But now God wants everyone to hear that message. He wants to use his church people to show all the spirit bosses, everywhere, that God is really wise, and that he understands all about everything. 11 God always planned to save people, and he sent our leader, Jesus Christ, to do it.

12 We trust in Jesus, and we are joined to him, so we can come to God, and we can be sure that he will listen to us. We don't have to be frightened of him. 13 So when some people make trouble for me, don't let that worry you. I tell you God's word, and they don't like it, so they make trouble for me. But don't worry. I want you to be strong. You can always feel happy whenever they make trouble for me.

Paul asked God to help the Christians be strong

14 When I think about all these things that our father does, I get down on my knees and pray to him. 15 He made everything in the world, and everything in heaven, and he put every family here too. 16 He is very great, and he can work powerfully in you, so I pray that he will do that. I pray that his spirit will make your spirits strong, inside yourselves. 17 I pray that you will trust Jesus Christ properly, so that he will live inside you. I pray that you will always love God properly, and that you will always love other people too, so that you will always keep standing strong for him, like the roots of a tree always keep it standing up strong. 18-19 I pray for you, and for all God's people. I pray that you will know, in a powerful way, that Jesus Christ loves us very much. He loves us so much that nobody can properly know all about it. But I want you to understand that he loves everybody very much, so that you will become like him in every way, and you will live the good way he wants you to live.

20-21 We have to thank God now. His power works in us, and he does really great things. He can do a lot more than we can ask him for. He can even do more than we can think about. And we are God's people. We are his church. So we always have to praise God and show everyone that he is very great and good. We have to show them what Jesus Christ does, and that he is really great. And we have to keep on doing it for ever and ever. Yes, that's right.

Chapter 4

God's people have to be friends with each other

1 So now, even though I'm in jail because I follow Jesus, I'm asking you strongly to live the right way. You see, God picked you to be his own people, so you have to live his way. 2 Don't think that you are more important than other people. You have to be good to other people, you have to listen to them and try to understand them. Don't get angry with each other, but you have to love each other all the time.* 3 Try hard to let God's spirit keep you together as friends, without any trouble between you.

* **4:2** Colossians 3:12-13

4 All of God's people are like parts of one
body, with the one Holy Spirit living in all
of us. God picked us to be his own people,
so we are all sure of this one thing, that he
will do everything that he promised to us.
5 We all have only one leader, Jesus. There
is only one true message that we all believe,
the good news about Jesus. We all went
through that one ceremony called baptism,
to show that we follow Jesus. 6 And there is
only one God. He is the father of all of us.
He is the biggest boss over everything, and
he lives inside all of us to get all of us to do
what he wants.

7 You see, Jesus Christ has been good to
us. He has given each one of us the spiritual
power to do something properly. They are
spiritual gifts that he gives us, and he
himself picks the person to get each gift.
8 A long time ago, God got one of his men
to write this in his book,

"He went up to the highest place,
and he made lots of prisoners follow
him.
And he gave gifts to people."*

9 That man wrote, "He went up." But think
about it. He couldn't go up unless he first
came down. You see, at first Jesus Christ
came down to the low parts of the earth,
and after that he went back up. 10 It was the
same man, Jesus, that came down here, and
then went up high, right up above all the
sky. So now he can be everywhere.

11-12 And Jesus Christ gives these special
gifts to his people, so that they can help
other people in the church. These gifts
are the powers he gives to Christians. He
gave some of his people the power to be
his special workers, and he sent them out
to other people to tell them his good news.
And he gave other Christians the power
to tell God's messages to people. And he
gave some of them the power to help other
people to believe in Jesus. And he gave
some Christians the power to be pastors,
to look after Christians and teach them
God's way. God gave all these powers to
his people to get them ready, so that they
can work together for him. God works like
that, so that his people get stronger, and
so that more people join his family. We
are like the body of Jesus Christ here on
earth, and he wants that body to get bigger
and stronger. 13 God will keep on using the
people with this spiritual power until we all
join in together, and we all work together
properly. We all believe in God's son, so
we all have to work together, and we all
have to get to know Jesus better. Then we,
God's people, will become like Jesus Christ
himself. We will become what God wants
us to be.

14 So then liars will not trick us, like they
trick little kids. Lots of tricky people will
try to teach us new messages that sound
good, but are wrong. But we will not be
like little kids. We will not believe their lies.
Instead, we will be strong, and we will not
stop believing the true message. 15 We will
love people, and at the same time we will
tell them the true message. Then we will
get stronger for Jesus Christ and become
more like him. It's like we are his body, and
he is the head. 16 He holds the whole body
together. He's like the strings in a body that
join every part together. Each of us is a
different part of his body, and if every one
of us does our job properly, and if we love
each other, the whole body will grow, and
it will get stronger.*

You have to turn around and live the right way

17 I'm telling you this message that our leader,
Jesus, wants me to tell you, so you have

* **4:8** Psalm 68:18 * **4:16** Colossians 2:19

to take notice of it. Don't live any more like the people that don't know God. They can't think straight. 18 They can't understand anything properly. It is like their minds are in darkness. They don't want to know God, and they are a long way away from him. He doesn't give them new life. They do bad things, but they never feel sorry about it. 19 They don't know what is right, or what is wrong, any more. They only want to do all sorts of bad things, and dirty things, and they really want to keep on doing those wrong things.

20 But when you learned about Jesus Christ, you didn't learn to live in a bad way like that. 21 I'm sure that you heard the good story about Jesus, and you learned the true things that Jesus taught to people. 22 You learned that we all have a bad part inside us that gets us to only think about what we want for ourselves, and it gets us to go wrong, and it gets us to do bad things. And you learned that now we have to turn around and stop doing those things. So don't take any notice of that old bad part inside you. Don't think about those bad things any more,* 23 but let the Holy Spirit show you how to think in a new way. 24 You have to live a new way now. You have to live for God. He makes you into a new person, to be like himself, so you have to properly do what is right, and do what is good, like he does.*

25 You know, we all belong to Jesus, like each one of us is a part of his body. So don't lie to each other. Only say the things that are true.* 26 And if you get angry, don't do anything wrong. Don't stay angry all day, but quickly stop being angry.* 27 Don't make it easy for the devil, the boss over the bad spirits, to get you to go wrong.

28 Anyone that steals things from other people has to stop doing that. Instead, they have to do honest work to get things for themselves, and they have to give things to other people that need them. 29 And don't swear, or say any bad talk. Only say good things that will help people, and say things that they need to hear. When you do that, your words will be good for the people that hear you.

30 Don't make the Holy Spirit sad. Remember, he is in you. God gave him to you so that you can be really sure that you belong to God, and that one day God will set you free from everything bad. 31 So don't get upset with people, and don't think about them in a bad way. Don't get angry with anyone. Don't argue or fight with people. Don't yell at anyone, or say bad things about them. Don't do anything bad to anyone. 32 Instead, be good to each other, and try to understand how other people feel. If somebody does wrong to you, don't do payback to them, but let it go. Be good to each other, just like God is good to you. He doesn't do payback to you. You belong to Jesus Christ now, so God doesn't punish you for those bad things you did.*

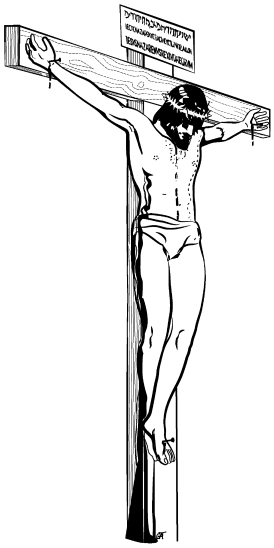
Chapter 5

You are God's kids, so you have to live the right way

1 You are God's kids, and he loves you, so try to be like God. He is good all the time. 2 Always love other people, just like Jesus Christ loves us. He loved us so much that he took our payback, and he died instead of us. You know how people used to kill animals and burn them, to give them to God, for the good smell to make him happy. Well, just like those animals, Jesus died. When Jesus

* **4:22** Colossians 3:9 * **4:24** Genesis 1:26; Colossians 3:10 * **4:25** Zechariah 8:16 * **4:26** Psalm 4:4
* **4:32** Colossians 3:13

died, he gave himself to God. Jesus did that because he loved you. So you have to love other people too.*



Jesus died and gave himself to God because he loved you

3 So don't sleep with somebody that is not your own wife or husband, as if you are married to them. And don't be greedy, wanting lots of money and things. You are God's own people, so don't even think about doing bad things like that. That's not the way for God's people to live. 4 And don't talk in a dirty way or tell dirty jokes, and don't say stupid things. It's not right for God's people to talk like that. Instead, when you talk, you have to thank God a lot. 5 Listen, this is true. If you do those bad and dirty things, you will never get the good things that God gives to his people. It's like this, if you think in a dirty way, you can't be in God's family, you can't be with Jesus Christ. And if you sleep with somebody that is not your wife or husband, as if you are married to them, you can't be in God's family. And if you are greedy, wanting lots of money and things, you can't be in God's family. You see, greedy people really respect money and things more than they respect God.

6 Don't believe anyone that says you can do those bad things. Don't let them trick you. Don't believe their lies. God will get really angry with people that do those bad things, and he will punish those people that will not listen to him or do what he says. 7 So don't join in with people that tell you to do bad things. Don't do what those people do.

8 You see, you used to be like that before. You didn't know what was right, like you were living in the dark. But then you came to our leader, Jesus, and now you are in the light. So live like people that belong to the light. 9 You know, if people have God's light in them, they live in a way that is good, right, and true. 10 So find out what makes God happy, and do that. 11 People that belong to the darkness do wrong things. Don't ever join in with them. Don't do those things that are wrong and useless, but instead, tell everybody that those things are wrong. 12 Those people do bad things when nobody can see them. Those things are so bad that if we talk about them, we feel shame. 13 But whenever light shines on something, everyone can see it. 14 The light shows us what something really is. So some people say this,

"Stop doing bad things.
It's like you are asleep, so wake up now.
It's like you are dead, so come alive again now.
Then Jesus will show you the right way to live, it's like he will shine light on you."

15 So you have to be very careful to live the right way. You have to understand what is right and good. Don't live like stupid people. 16 Do good things every time you can,

* **5:2** Exodus 29:18

because lots of people do lots of bad things these days.* 17 Don't be fools. But instead, understand what God wants. 18 Don't get drunk. If you drink too much grog, you will go wild, and you will do stupid things. Don't do that, but instead, keep on letting the Holy Spirit come into you and fill you up. 19 Use God's songs to talk to each other. You know, you can sing hymns and songs that the Holy Spirit gives you. Sing and make music to God from inside yourselves.* 20 Remember our leader, Jesus Christ, and always thank God, our father, for everything.

Respect each other properly

21 Each of you has to think about what other Christians want, and agree with them, because you really respect Jesus Christ.

Wives

22 You women that are wives, you have to think about what your husbands want, and agree with them, just like God's people always have to agree with what our leader, Jesus, wants.* 23 You see it is like this. Each body has a head that controls it. Well, we are God's people, his church, and we are like a body, and Jesus is like our head. He is the one that saved us. In the same way, husbands are like the head of their wives. 24 Yes, wives always have to think about what their husbands want and agree with them, just like God's people always have to agree with what Jesus Christ wants.

Husbands

25 Yes, and you men that are husbands, you have to do your part too. You have to always love your wives properly, just like Jesus Christ loves the people in his church properly. Jesus let people kill him so that he could save us.* 26 He washed us properly clean, not just with water in the baptism ceremony, but with his word too. 27 So now we can be properly good, and he can bring us to himself, with nothing wrong with us at all.

28 Well, husbands have to love their wives properly, just like Jesus loves us. You know that everyone loves his own body and looks after it properly. Well, in the same way, husbands have to love their wives and look after them, just as much as they love their own bodies. A man that loves his wife, loves himself. 29 No man ever hates his own body. No, instead he gives it food and takes care of it. Jesus Christ does that too. He takes care of his people, the church. 30 We all belong to Jesus, like we are parts of his own body.

31 God says this in his book,

> "A man will leave his mother and father and marry a woman. The man and his wife will join with each other, and their bodies will be like one body."*

32 Those words tell us important things, and they are a picture of something else too. They show us how Jesus Christ and his church are joined together, like one. 33 So I say this to you married people. Every one of you husbands has to love your own wife as much as you love yourself. And every wife has to respect her husband.

Chapter 6

Kids

1 Now I'm talking to you kids. You belong to our leader, Jesus, so you have to do what your father and mother tell you to do. That is the right way to live. 2-3 You see, God made this law, "Always respect your father and

* **5:16** Colossians 4:5 * **5:19** Colossians 3:16-17 * **5:22** Colossians 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1
* **5:25** Colossians 3:19; 1 Peter 3:7 * **5:31** Genesis 2:24

your mother. If you do that, you will be happy, and you will live for a long time on the earth." That was the first time God made a law and promised something with it.*

Fathers

4 Now I'm talking to you fathers. Don't make your kids angry. But instead, as they are growing up, you have to teach them the way God wants them to live, and show them how to live the right way.

Workers

5 Now I'm talking to you workers, you people that have to work for other people all the time. Your bosses are only people, but that doesn't matter, you have to respect them properly, and do whatever they tell you. Work hard for them, like you are working for Jesus Christ. 6 Do what they say, and try to make them happy. Don't only do it when they can see you, but also when they can't see you. Work happily in your job, like you are working for Jesus Christ, and then you will be doing what God wants. 7 Your bosses are only people, but try to work properly for them, like you are working for Jesus, not working for people. 8 Remember this, if you do good things, Jesus, our leader, will pay you with something good later. He will do that, no matter if you work for nothing, like a prisoner, or if you are free.

Bosses

9 Now I'm talking to bosses. You have to do the same, you have to be good to your workers. Don't say anything to frighten them, like saying you are going to punish them. Remember that God in heaven is your boss, and he is the boss over your workers too. And he treats everyone the same, no matter if you are a boss or a worker.*

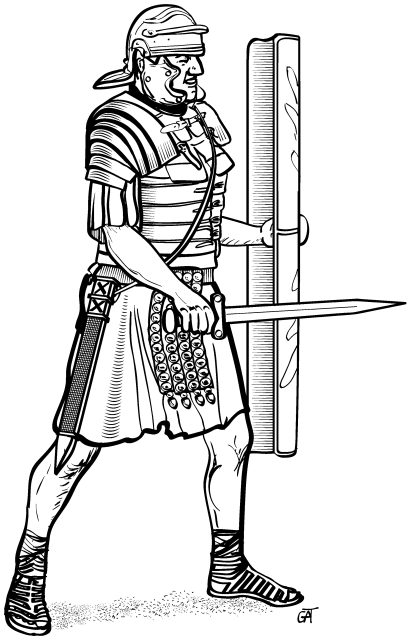
Be like strong soldiers for God

10 The last thing that I want to say to you is this. You are joined to our leader, Jesus, and he is very strong, so you have to use his strong power to fight against the devil, the boss over the bad spirits. 11 You know that a soldier puts on special gear to stop the enemy from hurting him. Well, you have to do that with the special gear that God gives us. Then you will keep strong against the devil, and you will not let him trick you. He tries all sorts of clever ways to fight against us. 12 You see, we are not fighting against people, but we are fighting against a big mob of bad spirits. We are fighting against the bad spirit bosses that we can't see in this bad world. And we are fighting against the powerful bad spirits that live above the earth too. 13 So you have to use all the special gear that God gives you, so that you can stand up to those bad spirits whenever they come at you, and they will not win. And at the end of the fight, you will still be standing strong.

14 So put on that special gear from God, so you can stand up against the devil. This is what that gear is.

– You know that a soldier wears a belt, to hold his clothes on tight, so he can move quickly in a fight. Well, just like that, you take notice of what is true, so you can fight better against the devil.
– And a soldier wears an iron plate, to stop the enemy from hitting his chest. Well, you have to always do what is right, and that will be like an iron plate for you, to stop the devil from hitting you.*
– 15 And a soldier wears special shoes, so that he can always be ready to fight. Well, you have to remember the good news about Jesus, that he

* **6:2-3** Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16 * **6:9** Deuteronomy 10:17 * **6:14** Isaiah 11:5; 59:17



In those days a soldier put on this sort of special gear

makes us God's friends. Then you will be ready to fight the devil.*

– 16 You know that a soldier always has a shield, to stop the spears that the enemy throws at him. In the same way, you have to always trust God. Whenever you do that, it is like you are holding up a shield that stops the things that the devil throws at you. They are like burning spears, but if you trust God, he will stop them and put them out.

– 17 And a soldier wears an iron hat, that stops the enemy from hurting his head. Well, you remember that God has saved you. That will be like an iron hat for you, to keep you safe.

– And you know the long knife a soldier has, called a sword? He uses it to fight back against his enemy. Well, in the same way, you can use God's word to fight back against the devil, and the Holy Spirit will help you.*

18 And always pray in the way that God's spirit leads you. Pray about every problem, and pray in all sorts of ways, and ask God for whatever you need. So always keep on praying for all God's people. 19 And pray for me too. Ask God to give me the right words to say every time I start to tell people the good news about Jesus. Pray that I will not be too frightened to tell them that message properly. God kept it secret for a long time, 20 but now he has sent me to tell this good story to everybody. The bosses here didn't like me telling that story, so they put me in jail. I want you to ask God to make me brave, so that I keep on telling his good story.

The end of Paul's letter

21-22 Now I'm sending Tikicus to you to tell you about me and about what I'm doing these days. He is my Christian friend that I love, and he is a good worker for God. He will tell you all the news about me, and the news about the other people that are here with me. And I also want him to help you feel strong and brave.*

23 You mob are my Christian friends. You believe in God, our father, and you believe in our leader Jesus Christ. So I'm asking them to be really good to you, and to help you to be happy and quiet inside yourselves. And I'm asking God to help you to love him, and to love other people, and to help you to keep on trusting Jesus.

24 I want God to be very good to everyone that never stops loving our leader, Jesus Christ.

From Paul

* **6:15** Isaiah 52:7 * **6:17** Isaiah 59:17 * **6:21-22** Acts 20:4; 2 Timothy 4:12; Colossians 4:7-8

The letter that Paul wrote to the Christians at Philippi

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **Philippians**)*

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of towns to tell people about Jesus, and one of them was Philippi (see Acts 16:11-40). It was in the country that we now call Greece, but at that time they called it Macedonia. About 1,400 years ago an earthquake broke Philippi down, and today there are just stones and rubbish at that place in Greece.

At the time when Paul wrote this letter, the people called the Romans were the bosses over lots of nations. The Roman bosses didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus, so they grabbed him and put him in jail. Paul wrote this letter while he was in that jail, in Rome. His friend Timothy helped him write it.

In this letter, Paul said some very important things to help those Christians get really close to God. And we can learn a lot today from what Paul wrote to the Christians at Philippi, a long time ago.

Chapter 1

1 I am Paul, and this letter is from me, and it is from Timothy too, because he is helping me write it. We work all the time for Jesus Christ. We are sending this letter to all God's special people at Philippi, you people that belong to Jesus Christ. We are writing to you Christian leaders, and to you church helpers, and to all you Christians.*

2 We are asking God our father, and Jesus Christ our leader, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

The Christians at Philippi helped Paul tell people about Jesus

3 Every time I think about you mob, I thank God for you. 4 And every time I pray for you, I'm really happy. 5 You believed the message about Jesus right from the first day that you heard it, and you helped me tell it to other people. Yes, you helped me with my work. And you are still doing it. 6 I know that God is working inside you. He has already started doing a good thing in you, and he will keep on working in you until he has properly finished it. That will be when Jesus Christ comes back again. I'm really sure that God will finish doing this good thing inside you. 7 You see, I love you mob very much, so it is all right for me to think about you like that. You are my friends and God is good to you, just like he is good to me. So you help me every time God lets me tell people the good

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* **1:1** Acts 16:12

news about Jesus. Right now I'm tied up in jail, and sometimes they take me to court, and I tell them the message about Jesus, and I show them that it is true. And you help me do that. 8 Yes, I love you, just like Jesus Christ loves you, and I want to be with you again. God himself knows that is true.

Paul asked God to help the Christians at Philippi

9 So I pray like this for you. I ask God to help you to love each other more and more, and to know God better. I ask God to help you to understand spiritual things better. 10-11 Then you will know the right way to live, and you will do a lot of good things. And I ask Jesus Christ to help you so that you will always do good things, and never do bad things. Jesus is going to come back again, and I want you to be living in that good way. You will show people that God is good, and they will say that he is really great.

Paul was in jail, but he told more people about Jesus

12 My Christian friends, I want to tell you about myself. You know that bad things happened to me, and now I'm in jail. But don't worry, it is good that I am in jail. Now I can tell more people about Jesus. 13 So now everybody here knows that I belong to Jesus Christ, and that is the reason why I'm in jail. All the guards, and soldiers, and everyone else that works in the big boss's house here, they all know that is the reason why I'm in jail.* 14 And the Christians here heard that I'm in jail. Then most of them trusted in our leader Jesus more strongly and got brave, and they are not frightened to tell other people God's message.

15-17 There are Christians here that think in a good way and they want to help me, so they tell people about Jesus. They love me, and they know that God let people put me in jail so that I can tell a lot more people the message about Jesus and show them that this message is true.

But there are other Christians that are a bit jealous of me, and they think they can give me trouble while I'm in jail. They want other Christians to think that they are more important than me. So they tell people about Jesus Christ, and they hope they will get a lot of people to say they are great. They are thinking the wrong way. They only think about themselves.

18 But it doesn't matter. Both mobs are telling people about Jesus Christ. That is the most important thing. Maybe some of them are thinking the wrong way. But the others are thinking the right way. And all of them are telling people about Jesus Christ, so I'm very happy about it.

Which is better, to be with Jesus or to stay alive in this world?

Yes, and I will stay very happy. 19 You mob are praying for me and the spirit of Jesus Christ is helping me, so I'm sure that God will get me out of this jail. 20 I want to be brave and stay strong for Jesus Christ, just like I always am. Then I will not feel shame. Maybe they will kill me, or maybe they will let me stay alive. It doesn't matter. I want to stay strong for Jesus Christ and show everyone how great he is, no matter what.

21 You see, while I'm alive, I want to let people know that Jesus Christ is really great. That is what I live for. But if they kill me, that is even better for me. 22 Maybe they will not kill me, and I will keep on living in this body. Then I will keep on working for Jesus, and I will help more people know him properly. I don't really know what will

* **1:13** Acts 28:30

be best, for me to live, or for me to die. 23 I want to do both. I want to leave this body and go to be with Jesus Christ. That will be a lot better for me. 24 But at the same time, you mob need me, so I want to keep on living in this body so I can help you. 25 When I think about it, I'm sure that God will let me stay alive here, so I can keep on helping all of you. Then you will trust God more, and you will be more happy. 26 Yes, I reckon I will come and visit you again and you will be happy to see me. You will tell everyone, "This is awesome. Jesus Christ is really good and really powerful. He got Paul out of jail and brought him here to help us." You will talk like that to everyone.

Stay strong for Jesus

27 Listen, you heard the good news about Jesus Christ, and you trusted him, so keep on living the way he wants you to live, no matter what happens. Maybe I will come and visit you again, but maybe not. Maybe I will only hear what people tell me about you. Anyway, I want to find out that you are staying strong for Jesus, and that God's spirit is joining you all together, so that you are all agreeing with each other and working together to tell people about Jesus. 28 Some people will try to stop you living for Jesus. Don't be frightened of those people. Stay strong for Jesus. Then you will show those people that, in the end, God will finish them, but he will save you. Yes, God will make that happen. 29 You see, God lets you believe in Jesus Christ. But not only that, sometimes people make trouble for you because you believe in Jesus. God lets that happen too. 30 Those bad people are making trouble for you, just like they made trouble for me when I was there in your town. And bad people are still making trouble for me.*

Chapter 2

Work together with each other

1 Listen. You know that you belong to Jesus Christ, and he helps you to be strong and brave. You know that he loves you, so you are happy. You know that God's spirit is in you, and you share your lives with him. You know how to feel sorry for each other, and how to help each other. You know all that, right? 2 So now make me properly happy. I want you all to love each other properly, and I want you all to agree with each other, and work together, and think the same way about what is right. 3-4 Each of you has to think about what is good for the others. Don't only think about what is good for yourself. Don't think that you are better than other people, but think that they are better than you. And don't do things only to get people to say you are good. And don't try to be a boss over other people.

Be like Jesus, and think like he did

5 You have to think the same way that Jesus Christ thought.

6 He was the same as God.
He was just as important as God.
But he didn't reckon that he had to keep on being important, like God is.
7 Instead, he left all that, and he made himself like a nobody.
He was born into this world and looked like other human beings.
He was a man living here.
And he worked hard to help people.
8 And then he made himself even less important.
He did everything that God wanted him to do, he even died.
He let people nail him to a cross and kill him.

* **1:30** Acts 16:19-40

9 So then God made him alive again and
lifted him up to the most important
place in heaven.
And God made him more powerful
than everyone else.
10 One day, everyone will hear the name
of Jesus, and they will get down on
their knees and show him respect.
All the people and spirits will show
respect to Jesus. Everything in
heaven, and everything on the earth,
and everything under the earth, they
will all show respect to Jesus.
11 And every one of them will say out
loud, "Jesus Christ is the boss."
That will happen to show that God our
father is very great and good. *

God gives you the power to do good things

12 So, my good friends, you always have to do what God wants. I know that you did that when I was with you, and I reckon you still do it now that I'm not with you any more. So you have to work hard and keep on trying to do what God wants. You see, God saved you, so give him proper respect and try to live his way. You have to be too frightened to do any bad thing that will make him angry. 13 God is the one that is working inside you. He helps you think the right way, so that you want to do the good things that make him happy, and he gives you the power to do those good things.

14 And while you do those things, don't get angry or argue about them. 15 Then you will be properly good, so that nobody can blame you for anything. You are God's kids living among really bad people that always go wrong. So you have to live in a way that is properly good. Then everyone will see that you are properly good. You will be like bright stars in a dark sky. * 16 And you have to keep on believing the message about Jesus that gives us real life. Then when Jesus Christ comes back, I will be very happy, and I will know that I didn't waste my time when I worked among you.

17 Yes, I'm happy about you. And even if they kill me, I will still be happy. I know that you believe in Jesus and you work for him, and when you do that, you are giving yourselves to God. And if they are going to kill me, I will be giving my body to God too. So we can all be happy about it together. 18 Yes, you can be happy too. Even if they are going to kill me, you can be happy with me.

Paul wanted Timothy to find out about the mob at Philippi

19 Now I will tell you what I want to do. Timothy is here with me, and I want to send him to you soon. So if that is what our leader Jesus wants, I will send him to you. After that, he will come back and tell me all about you, and that will make me happy. 20 Timothy is different from the other people here. He really cares about you and about how you are going. 21 The others think about the things they want, not the things that Jesus Christ wants. 22 But you know Timothy. Everyone can see that he is a good man. He works with me just like a son works with his father. Together we tell people the good news about Jesus. 23 So I will send him to you. But first I will wait and see what they are going to do to me, then I will send him to you, 24 even though I'm sure that God will let me visit you soon too.

Epafroditus wanted to go back to Philippi

25 Right now I'm sending Epafroditus back to you. You sent him to me a while ago when I needed help. He came here and looked after me. He has been a good Christian friend to

* **2:10-11** Isaiah 45:23 * **2:15** Deuteronomy 32:5

me here. We work together. We are both like soldiers fighting for God. But now I reckon I have to send him back to you. 26 He really wants to see you all again. And you know, after he came here, he got sick, and then somebody told you about it. So now he worries about you. He doesn't want you to be sad and feel sorry for him. So he really wants to go back and see you all again. 27 Yes, he was very sick a while ago, and he nearly died. But God felt sorry for him, and for me too. God was good to him and made him better. And when God did that, he was good to me too. You know, I am already sad about some things, and if Epafroditus died, that would make me really sad. But he didn't die. 28 So now I really want to send him to you, and when you see him again you will be happy, and I will not worry about you any more. 29-30 Epafroditus belongs to our leader, Jesus, just like you do. You couldn't come and help me a while ago, so he came instead of you. And then he nearly died. But he didn't worry. He knew he was working for Jesus Christ while he was helping me, and he was ready to die for Jesus. You have to really respect people like Epafroditus. So when he comes back to you, be happy and say, "Good to see you again. You are our good Christian friend."

Chapter 3

Some people teach things that are not true

1 And now, my Christian friends, before I finish this letter, I want to tell you this. Be happy all the time. Remember that you belong to our leader Jesus. Yes, I told you all these things before, and I am telling you again. I don't get tired of telling you, and this message will stop you from going the wrong way.

2-3 Look out. There are some men that want to teach you the wrong things and get you to go the wrong way. They are like dogs. They go the wrong way. They only want to cut men's bodies. They say that you don't belong to God unless you do what the Jewish law says and have a young man operation. They are wrong. We have God's spirit in us, and he helps us respect God the right way. We know what Jesus Christ did for us, and we trust him. We know that ceremonies that people do will not save us, so we don't trust them. So really, we are the ones that belong to God. Those people that only follow that Jewish law don't belong to him.

Know Jesus properly, this is most important

4 Look at me. I'm more Jewish than they are, and I trusted that Jewish law more than them, but it didn't save me. 5 I was born into the Israel nation, and I belong to the Benjamin tribe. They did that young man operation on me when I was 8 days old, just like the Jewish law says. When I grew up, I joined the Pharisee mob, that are really strong for the Jewish law. I'm properly Jewish. * 6 I really wanted to make God happy, but I followed the Jewish way, and I made a lot of trouble for Christians. And I was strong for the Jewish laws. Nobody could say that I broke any of them. * 7 I used to think that if I lived like that, God will like me. But then I found out the true message about Jesus, and I knew that I was wrong. Those things didn't help at all. Now that I know Jesus Christ properly, I reckon all those things are useless. 8 Yes, they are useless. But I know Jesus Christ. That is the only important thing. He is my leader, and he is really special to me now. I have left every other way, and I only follow him now.

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* **3:5** Acts 23:6; 26:5; Romans 11:1 * **3:6** Acts 8:3; 22:4; 26:9-11

I reckon all those other things are rubbish, and I have chucked them away, so that I can join up with Jesus Christ, 9 and belong to him properly. I have stopped trying to follow that Jewish law to get God to say that I'm all right. Instead of that, I trust in Jesus Christ, and that is the reason why God will say that I'm all right. God makes us right because we believe in Jesus. 10 And I really want to know Jesus Christ properly. And I want God's power to be in my life, the same power he used to make Jesus alive again. And I even want to share the pain that Jesus got. I will even let his enemies kill me, like they killed him. 11 Then later, God will make me alive again, one way or another.

Try hard to be like Jesus

12 I'm not saying that I have already done all that. I'm not saying that I'm properly good now. But, you see, Jesus Christ picked me to be one of his people, so I'm trying hard to be the sort of person that he wants me to be. 13 Friends, I don't reckon I'm all that good yet, but I keep on looking ahead. I'm like a man running in a race. I forget what I did in the past, and I think about what God wants me to do later. 14 I keep trying to be like Jesus, so that God will take me up to properly join up with Jesus. That will be my prize.

15 And all of us have to think like that. That will show that we are spiritually strong now and live properly for Jesus. But if you think differently about anything, God will help you, and he will show you the right way. 16 We started to learn about the way God wants us to live, so we have to keep on living his way and keep on doing the things he taught us to do. That is the most important thing for all of us to do.

Live the right way, like Paul did

17 My Christian friends, you know how I live, so you all have to try to live the same way. And look around at each other, and see the way you all live. Look at those people that live the same way as I live, and you do the same.* 18 You see, there are a lot of people that don't live the right way. I have often told you this before, and now I'm telling you the same thing again. When I think about it, I get so sad that I cry. There are people that reckon they are Christians, but they are really enemies of Jesus Christ. They live in a way that shows they are against the good things that Jesus died for on the cross. 19 They don't listen to God. They listen to their own bodies, and they do bad things so that their bodies feel good. They do those bad things, but they don't feel shame. Instead, they think they are smart. They only think about the things that belong to this world. And in the end God will finish them up for ever.

20 But we belong to heaven. That is our real home. And we are waiting for our leader, Jesus Christ, to come back from heaven. He is the one that saves us, and we really want him to come back. 21 He will change these weak bodies that we have now, and he will make them into new bodies. They will be like the wonderful body that he has now. Jesus can do that because he is really powerful. He is so powerful that he can be the boss over everything.

Chapter 4

1 So think about all that, my Christian friends, and keep on following our leader Jesus. And keep on trusting him properly. I love you very much, and I really want to see you again. You make me very happy, and it is like you are the prize that I get for winning a race.

* **3:17** 1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1

Don't argue with each other

2 Now I just want to talk to Yuwodia and
Sintiki. I ask you 2 women very strongly
to stop arguing with each other, and to
try to think the same way as each other.
Remember, you both belong to our leader
Jesus. 3 And now I'm talking to my other
good friend there. Listen, my friend, you
worked hard with me, and you always tried
to follow Jesus properly. Now I want you
to help those 2 women to be friends with
each other. They both worked hard to tell
people the good news about Jesus. They
worked with me and Clement and some
other Christians. God wrote the names of all
those Christians in his special book called
the book of life, where he writes the name of
every person that will live with him for ever.

Jesus can make you happy and quiet inside

4 Now I'm talking to all of you Christians.
You belong to our leader, Jesus, so always
be happy. This is important, so I'm saying
it again, "Be happy." 5 Always be easy with
people, and be nice to them, so that everyone
will see how good you are. Remember that
our leader, Jesus, will come back soon.
6 Don't worry about anything, but pray to
God and ask him for everything you need.
And always thank God for what he has
already done. 7 Then God will get you to
feel happy and quiet inside yourselves. You
belong to Jesus Christ, and he will do that
to look after your minds, so that you will
think properly. Nobody knows how God does
it, but he can do it.

Think about good things

8 And one more thing, my Christian friends.
Keep thinking about the things that are true,
and the things that people should respect.
Keep thinking about the things that are
right, and good, and lovely. Think about
things that everyone reckons are really good.
Think about the things that we can thank
God for. 9 And remember, when I was with
you, I taught you the right things to do. You
agreed with me about those things. And you
know the things that I said, and the things
that I did when I was with you. Well, keep
on doing all those things. Then God will be
with you, and he will get you to feel happy
and quiet inside yourselves.

The Christians at Philippi wanted to help Paul, and that made him happy

10 Now I will tell you how things are going
with me here. I'm really happy, thanks to our
leader Jesus. I know that you were worried
about me here in jail, and you wanted to
send something to help me, but at first you
couldn't do it. Then later, you found a way
to send me something, and that made me
happy. It shows that you are still thinking
about me.

11 I'm not saying this because I need
anything. I have learned to be happy, no
matter what happens to me. 12 I know what
it is like to need things, and I know what it
is like to have a lot of things. I have learned
this secret, to be happy all the time no
matter what happens. Sometimes I can eat
plenty of food, and sometimes I go hungry.
But it doesn't matter, I can be happy anyway.
Sometimes I have everything I need, and
sometimes I haven't got anything. But it
doesn't matter, I can be happy anyway. 13 You
see, Jesus Christ makes me strong, so I can
do all these things. 14 And you have been
very good to me. I have been getting trouble,
but you remembered me, and you helped
me a lot.

The Christians at Philippi do good things, so God is happy with them

15 Remember the time when I first came to
tell you the good news about Jesus. Then I
left your country, called Macedonia, and I

went to tell other people this story. You know, you were the only Christian church that gave me something to help me do that.* 16 And when I was in the town called Thessalonica, I needed money, you mob kept on sending me money and things, to help me.*

17 I'm not telling you this to get you to send me more things. But I want you to keep on doing good things like that, so that God will be happy about you. He will add those good things to the list of all the good things you have done, and one day, he will pay you for it all.

Give to God, and he will give you everything you need

18 But right now I have everything I need, and even more than I need. You are so good to me. You gave lots of money and things to Epafroditus to bring to me. But you didn't only give them to me. You gave them to God. They are the right sort of gift, a really nice one, so he is very happy.* 19 You know, God looks after me, and he will look after you too. You belong to Jesus Christ, and God will give you everything you need. He is really rich and powerful. So he can give you everything you need.

20 He is our God and our father. Everybody has to always say that he is very great, for ever and ever. That's right.

The end of Paul's letter

21 Say *hello* to all God's people there that belong to Jesus Christ. The Christians that are with me here say *hello* to you. 22 All of God's people say *hello* to you. There are some Christians here that live in the house that belongs to the really big government boss, and they say a special *hello* to you.

23 I pray that our leader, Jesus Christ, will keep on being really good to all of you.

From Paul

* **4:15** 2 Corinthians 11:9 * **4:16** Acts 17:1 * **4:18** Exodus 29:18

The letter that Paul wrote to the Christians at Colossae

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **Colossians**)*

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of countries and lots of towns to tell people about Jesus. Epafras heard Paul's message, and he believed in Jesus. Then Epafras went to the town called Colossae, to tell the people there about Jesus. Colossae was in the country that is now called Turkey. About 1,100 years later some enemy soldiers broke Colossae down, and today there are just stones and rubbish at that place in Turkey.

At the time when Paul wrote this letter, the Roman people were the bosses over lots of nations. The Roman bosses didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus, so they grabbed him and put him in jail. Epafras visited him there in jail and told him about the Christians at Colossae. He also told Paul that some people were teaching them lies. So Paul wrote this letter to the Christians at Colossae, to tell them the true message so that they would not believe those lying teachers. He was still in jail when he wrote this letter.

This letter has good messages for us today. We have to take notice of those messages that Paul wrote to the Christians at Colossae.

Chapter 1

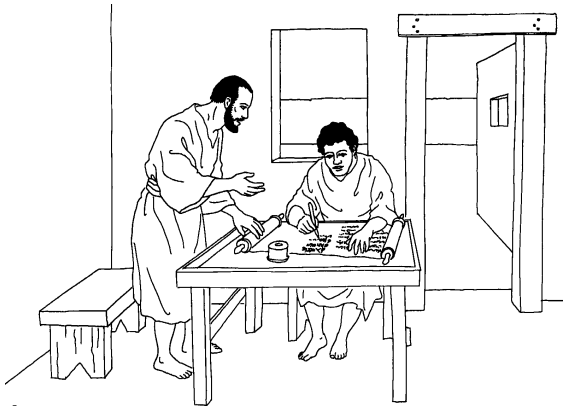
1 I'm Paul, and this letter is from me. And Timothy is helping me write it too. God made me Jesus Christ's special worker.

2 We are writing this letter to God's people that live at Colossae. You joined up with Jesus Christ, and you keep on trusting him, so you are like brothers and sisters to us.

We are asking God our father to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

People at Colossae believed the good news about Jesus

3-5 People tell us good things about you, so now, every time we pray for you, we always say *thank you* to God for you. He is the father of our leader Jesus Christ. You heard the true message about Jesus, and you believed



This letter is from Paul, he told Timothy what to write

it. Now you are really sure that God will give you the good things that he promised. You know that he is keeping them safe for you in heaven. So you keep on believing in Jesus Christ, and you keep on loving all God's people. That is what people tell us about you.

6 And other people everywhere are hearing that same true message that you heard about Jesus. And they are believing in Jesus and doing good things too.

7 Epafras told you the message about Jesus. He works for Jesus Christ, just like we do, and we love him very much. You see, we couldn't go and tell you the message about Jesus, but he went instead of us. He is a good man. You can always believe what he tells you. *

8 After that, Epafras came back here, and he told us about you. He said that the Holy Spirit now helps you to love everybody.

Paul prayed for the new Christians

9 Yes, Epafras told us about you, and so now we pray for you all the time. We ask God to help you to know what he wants you to do. And we pray that he will help you to understand spiritual things properly, and think about them properly. 10 Then you will live the way that our leader, Jesus, wants you to live, and you will do lots of good things that will make him happy. And you will know God better and better all the time.

11 And we ask God to use his great power to make you strong, so that you will stay strong for him and you will not give up. And if people give you trouble, we pray that you will not worry or get upset. And we ask him to make you happy all the time. 12 And we want you to always say *thank you* to God, our father. He brought you into his family so that you will get the good things that he promised to give to his people. Then you will live with him in his good place.

God's son died to set us free

13-14 You know, the boss over the bad spirits always used to push us to do bad things. It's like we were in a bad place, where he is the boss. But God sent his son, Jesus, to get us out of that place. He took the payback for us, so that now God will not punish us. He set us free from that bad boss, and now we belong to the family of God's son. God loves his son Jesus very much. *

15-16 Nobody can see God. But God's son, Jesus, is just like God, and he showed people what God is like. You see, Jesus was there with God a long time ago, and he worked with God to make everything. They made all the things in heaven, and all the things on the earth. They made the things we can see, and the things we can't see. They made all the spirits, even the spirit bosses that we can't see. God worked with his son to make everything, so that now everything has to respect God's son. Jesus is God's son, and he is the boss over everything. 17 He was there at first, before anything else, and now he holds everything together, everything everywhere, and he keeps it all working properly.

18 Jesus is the leader of all God's people, and God's people are the church. It's like God's people are a body, and Jesus is their head. He is the church's leader. He was the first one to ever die and then come back to life and keep on living. So he is really great. He is greater than anyone else, and greater than anything else, anywhere. *

19 At the time when God's son became a man, God lived in him properly. God was happy to live in him. 20 God used him to get everything to come back to himself. God's son bled and died on the cross, so that now

* **1:7** Colossians 4:12; Philemon 1:23 * **1:13-14** Ephesians 1:7 * **1:18** Ephesians 1:22-23

everything can stop being God's enemies, and become God's friends again. Some of those things are in heaven, and some of them are on the earth, but Jesus died on the cross, so that they can all come back to God. *

God is a friend of people that trust Jesus

21 And I'm talking about you too. At first you were not God's friends. You were his enemies. You always thought in a bad way, and then you did bad things. 22 But God sent Jesus Christ to live as a man, in a human body, and then he let people kill Jesus's body. When Jesus died, he took the payback for the bad things you did, so you can be friends with God. It's like he washed you of those bad things, so you are properly good and clean inside. So at the time when God will judge everyone, he will see that you are clean and he will not blame you, he will say that you are not guilty.

23 If you stay strong, God will do that for you. You have to always remember the good news that you heard about Jesus, so that you keep on trusting him and know that he will save you. You see, God got his workers to tell people everywhere that Jesus died to save us. It is really good news. And I, Paul, am one of God's workers now. My job is to tell people that good news.

Paul helped God's people no matter what trouble he got

24 Yes, I tell people the message about Jesus. Some people don't like it, and they give me trouble. But that doesn't matter, that message helps people that believe it. You believe it, so it helps you. So I am happy, and I keep on telling it. You know that Jesus Christ got a lot of trouble. In the same way, I get a lot of trouble. But I want to keep on helping his people. They are the church. They are like the body of Jesus Christ. 25 And God gets me to work for his people, so I do this to help you. My job is to tell you God's word, and help you understand it properly.

26 At first, God didn't let anyone know what he planned to do. He kept that plan a secret for a really long time. But now he is showing it to his people. 27 God wants his people to know that plan. He planned to use Jesus to save people that are not Jews, as well as people that are Jews. And now he is doing that, so it is really great for people that are not Jews. Yes, Jesus Christ lives in you, and he lives in everybody that trusts him, so you can be sure that later on God will make you great.

28 So we tell everyone about Jesus Christ. We teach them to follow Jesus and do what he says. You see, God helped us to understand those things properly, and we want everyone to join up with Jesus Christ, and to become really good Christians. And God will see that they are really good. 29 So I work really hard to do that. It is hard work, but Jesus Christ gives me his power, and he makes me strong.

Chapter 2

Paul worked hard for Christian people

1 I want you to know that I work very hard for you Christians at Colossae, and also for the Christians at that other town near you called Laodicea. And I work hard for lots of other Christians that have never met me. 2 I'm working like this to help you be strong, so that all of you will be joined together by loving each other. You see, I want you to know and properly understand God's plan to use Jesus Christ to save people. Then you will be really sure about it, and that will make

* **1:20** Ephesians 2:16

you really happy. 3 You see, Jesus knows everything, and he understands everything. He is the only one that can get us to think properly, so that we understand what is true. That is really good for us. 4 I'm telling you these things so that you will not listen to people that teach lies. They might talk in a way that sounds good, but they are liars.

5 You know, I'm not there with you right now, that is, my body is not there. But I think about you a lot. And I'm happy about you. You all work together as a group, and you all keep on trusting Jesus Christ properly.

We have to keep on living Jesus's way

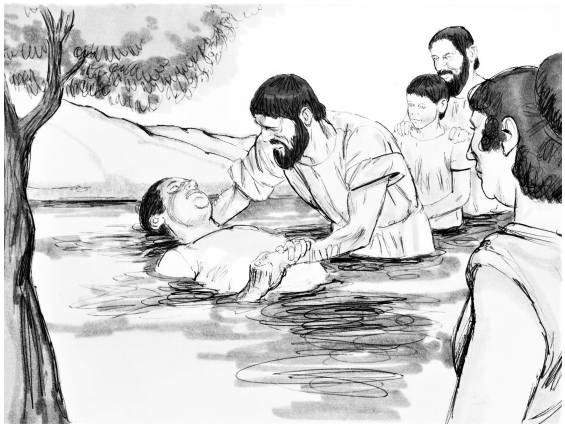
6 You believe in Jesus Christ now, and you let him be your boss. That's good. Keep living his way. 7 Keep on believing that message about Jesus Christ, and keep on getting to know him better all the time. Keep on strongly believing the things that we taught you. And always thank God very much for everything.

Don't believe any message about God that did not come from Jesus Christ

8 Some people might try to make you believe some ideas about God that are wrong. Those ideas didn't come from Jesus Christ, but they came from bad spirits, and from the people of this world. People taught those ideas to their kids, and to their grand-kids. But those ideas are not true. They might sound good, but they are tricky lies. Be careful. Don't believe them.

9 Listen. God himself lives in Jesus Christ. Jesus has a body and God lives in that body, so that Jesus is properly God. 10 And you are joined to Jesus Christ, so God is in you too. He gives you everything that you need to live the right way. And Jesus is the winner over all the other spirit bosses.

11 You know that the Jewish people do a young man operation on their baby boys. Well, when you joined on to Jesus, God did something like that to you. He didn't cut away a part of your body, but it was like he did an operation on your spirit. He cut away a bad part from your spirit. That was the bad part that made you want to do bad things. 12 You know, after you became a Christian, the church leaders baptised you. You went into the water, then you came up out of it. In that ceremony, it's like you did what Jesus did. He died, and it's like that bad part of your spirit died. And God made him alive again, and he came up out of the grave. And now you believe that God has strong power, and your spirit is joined to Jesus, so God's power makes your spirit alive too, just like he made Jesus alive again. *



Church leaders baptised new Christians

God finished up the power of all the bad spirits

13-14 You did bad things before. Your spirits still had that bad part that made you go wrong. It is like your spirits were dead. I will use picture talk to show you what I mean. Whenever you did bad things, it is like somebody wrote it down on paper so

* **2:12** Romans 6:4

they could blame you later. But God let them blame Jesus instead of you, and then God chucked that paper away. It is like he nailed that paper to the cross when he let people nail Jesus there. And then God made your spirits alive again, just like he made Jesus alive again. Now he doesn't blame you for the bad things you did.*

15 God did that, and he finished up the power of all the bad spirit mob. He was even stronger than the most powerful spirit bosses. He finished up their power when Jesus died on the cross. He shamed them, and he showed everyone that he is the winner over all those bad spirits.

You don't have to follow laws that people make up

16 You know, some people make up laws, and they reckon that if you want to make God happy, you have to follow those laws. But remember what I just said. God is already happy with you. So don't listen to anyone that says you are wrong if you don't follow their laws. Don't take any notice of them. They might have laws about things you can't eat or drink. Or they might have laws about some ceremonies on special days, or laws about the time of a new moon, or laws about a special day for rest.

17 God gave the Jewish people laws about those things, but they are not for us now. It is like this, and I'm using picture talk again now. Sometimes you see a shadow moving along, and you know that somebody is coming. Well, God gave them those laws, but those laws are just like a shadow. They are not the real person. The real person is Jesus Christ. And now he has come to us, so we don't need to look at that shadow any more. That is, we don't need to follow those laws any more.

18 There are some people that tell lies and say, "God has shown us special things." Those people think up their own ideas, and that makes them feel smart. But they tell you that they are not smart, and then they tell you to show respect to God's angel messengers, as if those angels are God. But they are trying to trick you. Don't take any notice of those people, and don't believe those lies. 19 They are trying to have a church without Jesus.

You see, God set the church up like this. Jesus is the head, and his people are his body. Jesus holds his people together just like a body has joints and ligament strings that hold it together. And God makes the church grow, just like he makes bodies grow.*

20 Remember that you are joined to Jesus Christ. It is like you died with him when he died. You don't belong to this world any more, so you don't have to follow the laws that the people of this world make up about God. 21 They have laws like, "Don't use that thing," and, "Don't eat that," and, "Don't touch that thing." 22 Those laws just come from people, not from God, so you don't have to take any notice of them. Those laws are just about things that wear out when people use them.

23 Those laws might sound like they are good, but they are useless. They get people to do things that hurt their bodies, and then they think they are good, and they think it makes God happy. But even when people try to follow those laws, they still can't stop themselves from going wrong. Their bodies still make them want to do bad things, and then they do those bad things. So those laws are useless.

Chapter 3

Think about heaven, and live God's way

1-3 You see, you have new life now from

* **2:13-14** Ephesians 2:1-5 * **2:19** Ephesians 4:16

Jesus Christ. He is up in heaven now, sitting with God, at God's right-hand side.* He is a powerful boss there with God. Remember that Jesus died, then God made him alive again, and God lifted him up from the grave. Well, you believe in Jesus now, so you have to be better than you used to be. It is like you died with him, and then God made you alive again, and now you live for Jesus. He is in heaven now, so you always have to think about doing good things that belong to heaven. Don't think about doing bad things that belong to this earth. You are joined to Jesus Christ now, and he is joined to God. The people of this world can't see that yet, 4 but when Jesus comes back, everyone will see him, and they will see that he is great. And they will see you too, and you will be great too.

Do what is right, don't do what is wrong

5 So now you have to stop doing bad things. If that bad part inside you wants you to do something bad, don't do it. It's like you have to kill that old bad part inside you. Don't listen to it. Don't sleep with anyone that is not your wife or your husband, as if you are married to them. And don't think bad, dirty thoughts. Don't think about doing bad things. Don't be greedy, wanting lots of money and things. Greedy people respect money and things more than they respect God. 6 You know, some people will not do what God says, and he will be angry with those people, and he will punish them.

7 At one time, you lived the wrong way, and you did bad things like that. 8 But now, don't do these bad things any more. Don't get angry easily. Don't go around angry and yelling at people. Don't hate people or think about giving them trouble. Don't talk in a bad way about people, or tell lies about them. Don't talk in a dirty way. 9 Don't lie to each other. You see, you believed in Jesus, and you stopped living that old way. You stopped doing bad things.* 10 You are now living a new way. God made you a new person, and he is helping you to know him properly. He is the one that made you, and now he is making you more like himself.* 11 You are a new person now. It doesn't matter if you are a Jew or not, or if they did a young man operation on you or not. It doesn't matter if you are from another country, or even if you are from a wild tribe. It doesn't matter if you are a prisoner, or a free person. This is what matters, Jesus Christ lives inside all of his people. He is really great.

Live God's way

12 You see, God loves you. He picked you to be his own special people. So you have to live a new way for him. You have to be good to other people. You have to feel sorry for people that have trouble and try to help them. Don't think that you are more important than other people. You have to be easy on other people, and don't get angry with them, even if they give you trouble.* 13 Don't get upset with each other. If somebody does something bad to you, don't do payback to them. Remember that God doesn't do payback to you, for the bad things that you do. So don't do payback to other people.* 14 And you really have to love each other properly. When you love each other, it is like you properly join yourselves to each other. 15 Jesus Christ wants you to all live together in a quiet way, so let him make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves, so that you think the right way. That's how you can let him control you.

And think about the good things that God

* **3:1-3** Psalm 110:1 * **3:9** Ephesians 4:22 * **3:10** Genesis 1:26; Ephesians 4:24 * **3:12** Ephesians 4:2
* **3:13** Ephesians 4:32

does for you, and always say *thank you* to him for them.

16 And always think about the message that came from Jesus Christ, so that you follow it all the time. Talk to each other about Jesus's message, and help each other to follow it properly. Think about it the right way. If anyone starts to get it wrong, straighten each other out. Remember that God is really good to you, and always be ready to thank him by singing to him with hymns and songs that the Holy Spirit gives you.* 17 Do everything the way our leader, Jesus, wants you to do it, and talk the way he wants you to talk. And always thank God, our father, for the good things that Jesus does for us.

Treat each other the right way

Husbands and wives

18 You women that are wives, you have to think about what your husbands want, and agree with them. That is the right way to follow our leader Jesus.*

19 Yes, and you men that are husbands, you have to do your part too. You have to love your wives properly, and don't ever be hard on them.*

Kids and parents

20 And now I am talking to you kids. You always have to do whatever your mothers and fathers want. Our leader, Jesus, is happy when you do that.*

21 And now I am talking to you fathers. Don't be hard on your kids. Don't make them get angry with you, or they might stop trying to be good.*

Workers and bosses

22 And now I am talking to you people that have to work all the time for other people, like you are their prisoners. Make sure you always do whatever your bosses want. And don't only work hard when they can see you, to make them think you are good. But also work hard when they can't see you. Remember our leader, Jesus, can see you all the time, so respect him, and respect your bosses as you do your job. 23 Work as if you are working for our leader, Jesus, not for a normal human being. So work hard, and be happy about it. 24 Yes, you are working for our leader, Jesus Christ, and remember that later on he will pay you properly, just like he promised us.* 25 But if you do what is wrong, God will do payback to you for the wrong things you do. God judges each person the same way, no matter who that person is.*

Chapter 4

1 And now I am talking to you bosses that own your workers, like they are your prisoners. You have to give your workers a fair go. You have to look after them properly and give them what is right for them. Remember, you have a boss too. He is God, in heaven.*

Pray to God all the time

2 Now I'm talking to all of you. Keep on praying to God, and keep on asking him to help you. Keep your minds properly awake while you pray. Don't give up easily. And also thank God for the good things he does for you. 3 And pray for us too. Ask God to make a way for us to tell more people about Jesus Christ. We want to clearly tell them the message about God's plan to use Jesus to save them. You know, I told that message to some people, and they didn't like it, so they put me in jail. 4 But I still have to tell more people about Jesus. So I want you

* **3:16** Ephesians 5:19-20 * **3:18** Ephesians 5:22; 1 Peter 3:1 * **3:19** Ephesians 5:25; 1 Peter 3:7 * **3:20** Ephesians 6:1
* **3:21** Ephesians 6:4 * **3:22-24** Ephesians 6:5-8 * **3:25** Deuteronomy 10:17; Ephesians 6:9 * **4:1** Ephesians 6:9

to ask God to help me make this message clear to them.

Help other people to believe in Jesus

5 And you too, whenever you are with people that don't believe in Jesus, if you can tell them about him, you have to do it. Be sensible in how you live with those people.* 6 And talk to them in a good way, to get them interested in your message. And be ready to answer their questions.

The end of Paul's letter

7-8 All right, I'm not going to write much more in this letter. I will give it to Tikicus to take to you. He is a Christian friend that we love. He works for our leader, Jesus, just like I do, and he always works really well. When he gets to you mob there, he will tell you all the news about us. And he will help you to feel brave, and to trust Jesus more.* 9 And I'm sending Onesimus with him. You know Onesimus. He is one of your mob, and he is another strong Christian friend that we love. Those 2 men will tell you all about everything that is going on here.*

10 Do you remember Aristarkus? He is here with me in jail. He says *hello* to you. And Mark too, he says *hello* to you. He is a cousin of Barnabas. And like I told you before, if he comes to visit you, tell him, "Good to see you, Mark."* 11 And there is another man here that says *hello* to you. His name is Jesus, but we call him Justus. He says *hello* to you too. Those men are the only Jews that are working with me here. They are helping me get more people to come into God's family, and they make this job much more easy for me.

12 And Epafras is another one of your mob that is here with me. He says *hello* to you too. He works for Jesus too, and he is always praying strongly for you. He prays that you will keep on trusting God, and that you will properly know everything that God wants you to do.* 13 I can tell you truly that he works very hard for you, and for the Christians that live in the towns called Laodicea and Hirapolis.

14 Our good friend Luke, the doctor, says *hello* to you too, and so does Demas.*

15 And I want you to say *hello* from me to all the Christians at Laodicea. And say *hello* from me to Nimfa, and to the Christians that meet in her house.

16 After you mob at Colossae read this letter, send it to the church people at Laodicea, so that they can read it too. And I sent another letter to that Laodicea mob a little while ago, so after they have read it, make sure you get it from them and read it too.

17 Now here is a special message from me to Arkipus. Tell him, "Our leader, Jesus, gave you a job, so keep on doing it, until you finish it properly."*

Paul signed this letter

18 *This is me, Paul, writing these words now with my own hand. I got somebody else to write all the words up to here, but I want you to be sure that this letter is really from me, so from here on it is me writing it. I'm saying hello to you mob there at Colossae.*

Remember that I am in jail here, and pray for me.

I'm asking God to be very good to you.

From Paul

* **4:5** Ephesians 5:16 * **4:7-8** Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21-22; 2 Timothy 4:12 * **4:9** Philemon 1:10-12
* **4:10** Acts 12:12, 25; 13:13; 15:37-39; 19:29; 27:2; Philemon 1:24 * **4:12** Colossians 1:7; Philemon 1:23
* **4:14** 2 Timothy 4:10-11; Philemon 1:24 * **4:17** Philemon 1:2

The 1st letter that Paul wrote to the Christians at Thessalonica

(The book in the Holy Bible called 1 Thessalonians)

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 20 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of countries and lots of towns to tell people about Jesus. One of those towns was Thessalonica (see Acts 17:1-9). It was a big town in the country called Greece, where the Greek people come from, and it is still there today. Sometimes people now call that town Salonica.

When Paul went to Thessalonica some people believed in Jesus and became Christians, but others didn't like what he was saying, and they made trouble for him. So he could not stay there very long. Soon after that he sent his friend Timothy back to Thessalonica to find out how those new Christians were going, and to help them be strong for Jesus. After Timothy came back and told him how they were going, Paul wrote them this letter. Paul's 2 friends, Silas and Timothy, they helped him write this letter. This was the 1st letter that Paul wrote to them. He wrote them another letter about 6 months later.

In this letter Paul wrote about the time when Jesus will come back from heaven, and he said other important things too. So today we have to take notice of what Paul wrote to the Christians at Thessalonica.

Chapter 1

1 I am Paul, and this letter is from me. Silas and Timothy are here with me, and they are helping me write this letter.

We are sending this letter to you Christians that are in God's church, in the town called Thessalonica. You belong to God our father and to Jesus Christ our leader.

We are asking God and Jesus to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves. *

People at Thessalonica properly believed in Jesus

2 We pray for you mob all the time, and we always thank God for you. 3 Whenever we talk about you to God, our father, we remember the good things that you do. You properly believe in Jesus Christ, and you love him very much, so you do those good things. And you love other people too, so you work hard to help them. You are really sure that our leader, Jesus Christ, will

* **1:1** Acts 17:1



This is what Thessalonica town looks like now

come back for you, so you keep on following him, no matter what other people do to you.

4 Christian friends, we know that God loves you, and he picked you to be his own people. 5 Remember the time when we told you the good news about Jesus. We told you the message with our words, but the Holy Spirit made us sure that we were telling the true story, and he gave us his power to show you that God was with us. And remember the sort of people we were at the time when we were with you there. We showed you the good way to live. 6 So you changed the way you live, and you lived the same way that we lived, like the way that Jesus, our leader, lived. You believed the message about Jesus, and the Holy Spirit made you really happy. Other people gave you a lot of trouble, but you were happy anyway.* 7 You showed all the other Christians there in Macedonia country the right way to live. And you did that too for the Christians in the country to the south of you, called Akaya.

8-9 And now people in lots of places have heard about Jesus. You see, other people told them about you. They told them that you listened to us when we came to your town, and that you turned away from the gods that are not real, and that now you only work for the true God, the one that is properly alive. And it's not only the people in Macedonia and Akaya that have heard that story. Everywhere we go we find people that tell us about you, so we know that story has gone around to lots of places. We don't have to tell anyone about you. They have already heard the story. 10 And they say that you are waiting for God's son to come back from heaven. His son is Jesus. Jesus died, but God made him alive again. And you know, God will judge everybody one day. Everybody has done bad things, and that makes God angry. But Jesus will save his people, so God will not be angry with you, and he will not be angry with us.

Chapter 2

Paul asked the Christians at Thessalonica to remember the time he visited them

1 Christian friends, you know that it was good that we went to your town and told you

* **1:6** Acts 17:5-9

God's message. It wasn't a waste of our time, because you believed that message. 2 And you know that before we came to you, we told God's message to the people in Philippi. Some of those Philippi people got really cheeky to us, and they beat us up. After that, we came to your town, and God made us brave, so we told God's message to you too. We didn't get frightened of the cheeky people that tried to stop us.* 3 You see, we only told you true things. We told you the good news so that you can believe God's message. We were not trying to trick you. We were not trying to get you to believe things that are not true. 4 No way. You see, it was God that sent us. He knew us, and he trusted us to tell people his message. So we only say what he wants us to say. We don't try to make people happy. We only try to make God happy. 5 And when we talked to you, we didn't say nice things about you, so that you will like us. We didn't make a secret plan to get you to give us things. God knows that. 6 And we didn't try to get anyone to say good things about us. We didn't want you or anyone else to do that.

7 God made us Jesus's special workers, and he sent us to you. But we didn't say, "We are Jesus's special workers, so we are your bosses, and you have to do what we say." No, we didn't talk like that. We were like little kids with you. We talked easy to you. We were good to you, like a mother taking care of her kids. 8 We loved you so much that we told you the good news about Jesus. And more than that, we were ready to do anything to help you.

9 Christian friends, remember what we did when we were there with you. We worked to get money, and while we did that, we told you the good news from God. We worked a lot to get enough money to look after ourselves. We didn't only work in the day time, but we worked at night time too. So you didn't have to give us anything. 10 While we were with you mob, we only did things that made God happy. We did things that are good and right. You know that, and God knows it too. 11 And you know that we treated each one of you the same way a father treats his own kids. 12 We taught you, and we helped you to be brave and strong. And we told you very strongly to do things that make God happy. You see, God is the one that picked you to be in his own family, and you will be really great with him.

People at Thessalonica believed God's message

13 And we always thank God for the way you listened to us. We told you God's message, and you knew that it wasn't only a message from people. You believed that we told you words from God, and that it was God's message. And you were right. It is God's word. And now that you believe that word, it helps you grow strong for him.

14 And, Christian friends, your countrymen gave you a lot of trouble after you believed in Jesus. You know, the same thing happened to the Christians in the churches in Judea country. They believed in Jesus, and their Jewish countrymen gave them a lot of trouble too.* 15 That Jewish mob didn't want to believe God, and they made trouble for Jesus. You see, a long time ago, it was the Jewish mob that killed the men that told God's messages, and it was the Jewish mob that killed our leader Jesus too. And it was the same for us. Wherever we told people about Jesus, the Jewish mob chased us out of those places. They make God angry. They work against everyone.* 16 They try to stop us telling everyone that God can save people

* **2:2** Acts 16:19-24; 17:1-9 * **2:14** Acts 17:5 * **2:15** Acts 9:23, 29; 13:45, 50; 14:2, 5, 19; 17:5, 13; 18:12

that are not Jewish. That Jewish mob did a lot of bad things in the past, and they are also doing those bad things now, so they make God angry, and he is going to punish them.

Paul wanted to go back and visit the Thessalonica people

17 Look, Christian friends, we never wanted to leave you mob, but we had to. But it was only for a little while, and we kept on thinking about you, and we really wanted to go back to you. 18 I, Paul, tried to go back lots of times, but Satan, the boss over the bad spirits, he stopped me every time. 19-20 Listen. One day our leader, Jesus, will come back, and he will ask us about the things we did. Then we will tell him about how we got you mob to trust him. And you will be there with us on that day, so we will be really happy. We are like athletes that run in a race and win the prize, because after Jesus comes back, he will tell us that we did a good job with you, and that will be like a prize for us.

Chapter 3

Paul sent Timothy to the Christians at Thessalonica

1-2 But back at the time just after we left you, we worried about you for a while. We didn't know if you kept on trusting Jesus or not. We tried to go back to find out about you, but we couldn't do it. And we couldn't wait to get some news about you. So we reckoned, "We'll send Timothy by himself, and we'll stay here in this city called Athens and wait for him to come back." Timothy is like our brother. He works with us for God, telling people the good news about Jesus Christ.

We sent Timothy to you so that he could help you to be strong and to trust Jesus better. 3 We knew that people would give you trouble, and we didn't want any of you to stop following Jesus. You yourselves know that you get trouble for following Jesus. 4 This is what we told you when we were still with you, we said, "Some people will give you trouble." And soon that happened, just like we said.

5 And I really worried about you. I thought, "You Christians in Thessalonica are very new Christians. Maybe the boss over the bad spirits gave you too much trouble. Maybe he tricked you, so that you don't trust Jesus any more. Maybe we worked for nothing there in Thessalonica." That's what I was thinking, but I didn't really know the true story. And when I couldn't wait any longer, I had to send Timothy to find out the true story about you.

Timothy came back with good news

6 And now Timothy has just come back to us, and he brought us good news about you. He told us that you still believe in Jesus Christ, and you still love God, and you still love other people. He said that every time you remember us, it makes you happy, and you want to see us again, just as much as we want to see you again. That is the story Timothy told us.* 7 We heard that news about you, our Christian friends, and we were very happy. After we heard it, we got braver and stronger for God. It doesn't matter to us if people give us trouble and hit us. You still trust Jesus, so we are happy. 8 We heard that you strongly believe in our leader, Jesus, and now we feel properly alive again. 9 You make us so happy that we pray to God and thank him for you. We can't thank him enough. 10 We are always praying to God, both in the day time and at night time, and we are strongly asking him to let us visit you again. There are still some

* **3:6** Acts 18:5

things we need to tell you about Jesus so that you can trust him even more.

Paul wanted God to help the Christians at Thessalonica

11 Yes, we want God, our father, and Jesus, our leader, to help us come to you. 12 And we want Jesus to get you to love each other and to love other people, even more than you do now. We want you to love people just as much as we love you. 13 We want Jesus to make you properly good and clean inside. You see, one day Jesus, our leader, will come back, and all his people will be with him. And then we will all meet God our father, and God will see that we are properly good and clean inside, so he will be happy with us, and he will not have to blame us for doing anything wrong.

Chapter 4

God wants Christians to live the right way

1 There is one more thing we want to tell you, our Christian friends. You know, we taught you about the right way to live, to make God happy. And you have been living that way. That's good. But we want you to live like that even more. 2 You know the things that we told you to do. Our leader, Jesus, got us to tell you those things.

3 This is what God wants. He wants you to be properly good and to keep away from everything that is wrong. If somebody is not your own wife or husband, don't sleep with them as if you are married to them. 4 Every one of you has to learn how to control your own body in a way that is clean and good. 5 Don't be like people that don't know God. They just want to sleep with anybody and do the wrong thing with them. That is what they want to do, and they are always thinking about it. They don't try to stop themselves. Don't be like that. 6 None of you men can ever sleep with a woman that is not your own wife. If you do that, you are doing a bad thing to her husband. He is the only person that can sleep with her, so don't cheat him out of that. Don't do that bad thing to another Christian, or to anyone else. God is the one that will punish you if you do that. We told you about that when we were with you, and we mean it. 7 God picked us to be his people, but he didn't pick us to be people that do bad and dirty things, like sleeping with somebody else's wife or husband. He picked us to be people that keep away from everything that is bad. 8 That rule doesn't come from people, it comes from God. So anyone that doesn't listen to that rule, is not listening to God. And remember, God is the one that gives you his Holy Spirit, and his spirit is really good.

9 I don't need to write to you about how you have to love other Christians. God himself taught you to love each other. 10 Yes, you love all the Christians in every place in your country, called Macedonia. But we ask you strongly, friends, to love each other more and more.

11 Try to live the way we told you to when we were with you. Try to live in a quiet way, and don't make any trouble for anyone. Don't mess up the things that other people are doing, or try to boss them around. And don't be lazy, but work to get enough money to buy whatever you need. 12 Then you will not have to ask other people for things. If you live like that, the people that don't know God will see that you are good, and they will respect you.

Christians will go up to meet Jesus while he is coming back

13 Christian friends, we are going to tell you now about people that have already died. We don't want you to be sad when you think about them. Other people, that don't believe

in Jesus, they don't know what will happen to them after they die. So when their friends die, they get really sad. But if our Christian friends die, we don't have to be really sad like those other people. Listen, we want you to understand this properly. 14 You see, we believe that Jesus died, and after that, God made him alive again. So we also believe that when Jesus comes back to this earth, all the Christians that already died will come back with him. Jesus will bring them all back with him. 15 You see, this is the message that Jesus, our leader, told us, and we tell this same message to you. Those of us that are still alive when Jesus comes back, we will not go and meet him before the Christians that already died. 16 It will happen like this. Our leader, Jesus himself, will come down from heaven, and while he is coming, everyone will hear him call out, and they will hear the voice of the boss angel, and they will hear the sound of God's trumpet. Then, first of all, those people that belonged to Jesus Christ and already died, they will come back to life. 17 After that, God will get those of us Christians that are still alive at that time, and he will take us up into the clouds with the Christians that already died, and we will all meet Jesus, our leader, way up in the air. And so, after that, we will be with Jesus all the time, for ever.* 18 So think about this message, and talk to each other about it, and help each other to stay strong, so that you are not sad when your Christian friends die.

Chapter 5

Christians have to be ready for Jesus to come back

1 And now, Christian friends, think about the time when Jesus will come back. We don't need to write to you about times and dates. 2 You already know about that day when our leader, Jesus, will come back. You know it will come suddenly, and people will get a big shock. They will not be ready for it, like nobody is ready for a robber to come in the night to steal things.* 3 You know, people will be saying, "We are safe. There's no trouble here." But then that big trouble will come really quickly, and they will not be ready for it. God will use that big trouble to punish them. It will be like what happens when a woman has a baby, she suddenly gets pain, and then her baby starts to come, and nobody can stop it. That big trouble will be just like that. It will come to people suddenly, and they will not get away from it.

4 But, Christian friends, you aren't like other people that don't listen to what God says. It is like they are living in the dark all the time. When that trouble day comes, you will not get a shock, like people do when a robber comes to steal their things at night. 5 You listen to what God says. It's like you belong to the light, and you belong to the day time. You aren't people that belong to the night time or the dark. 6 So don't be like other people that aren't ready for Jesus to come back, like they are asleep. Instead, you have to think properly about what is happening, like people that are awake. 7 You know, night time is the time when people go to sleep, or maybe they get drunk, so they can't think properly. 8 But we belong to the day time, so we have to think properly. We have to keep on loving God and trusting him to save us. When we do that, it will make us strong for God, like when soldiers put on special clothes made out of iron, to stop the enemy from hurting them.*

9-10 You see, God picked us to save us, not to get angry with us. Our leader, Jesus

* **4:15-17** 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 * **5:2** Matthew 24:43; Luke 12:39; 2 Peter 3:10 * **5:8** Isaiah 59:17; Ephesians 6:13-17

Christ, died for us, so now God can save us and give us new life. After Jesus comes back, we will live with him for ever. Maybe we will die before he comes, or maybe we will still be alive. It will not matter, because God will give us all new life, and we will all live with Jesus for ever. 11 So then, tell those things to each other, and help each other to become stronger for God, not sad and weak. And yes, I know that you are doing that already.

Some things to do and some things not to do

12 Now, Christian friends, here are a few more things we really want you to do.

– Respect the people among you that work hard for God. They lead you, his people, and teach you how to live the right way. 13 They work for God, so respect them, and love them a lot.
– And don't argue with each other.
– 14 And the next thing, friends, tell lazy people that they have to work.
– And if somebody is frightened, talk to them in a way that helps them to be brave.
– And help anybody that is weak.
– And don't get angry with anyone, keep on trying to help them.
– 15 If somebody does something bad to you, don't try to do payback to them, but always try to be good to each other and to everyone else too.

16 And we want you to do these things too.

– Always be happy.
– 17 Be ready to pray to God at any time.
– 18 Always thank God, no matter what happens to you.

You see, you belong to Jesus Christ, so God wants you to do those things. 19 And we want you to do some more things too.

– Don't stop God's spirit working in you.
– 20 Don't rubbish God's messages, 21 but listen carefully when anyone tells you a message from God. Think carefully about everything they say, and find out if it really comes from God. Then, if it is right, be careful to remember it and to do those good things. 22 But if it is wrong, or if it tells you to do a bad thing, don't do it. Keep away from every sort of bad thing, and don't listen to messages that don't come from God.

The end of this letter

23 God is the one that helps people to be happy and quiet inside themselves. I want that for you, and I'm asking God himself to clean you properly inside, so that you will be his special people. I want God to help you be properly good in every way, with your body, and your spirit, and also that part inside you that thinks and that gives you your feelings. Yes, God can clean you and help you be properly good, so that at the time when our leader, Jesus Christ, comes back, God will not blame you for doing anything wrong. 24 Yes, God will make you properly clean inside. He picked you to be his people, and he always does what he promised to do.

25 And now, my Christian friends, I'm asking you to pray for us. 26 And whenever you meet other Christians, show them that you know they are special, and that you are happy to see them.

27 Now listen. I want you to promise me that you will read this letter to all the Christians there. And our leader, Jesus, will be listening to you promise that.

28 And now I ask our leader, Jesus Christ, to be with you and to be very good to you.

From Paul

The 2nd letter that Paul wrote to the Christians at Thessalonica

(The book in the Holy Bible called 2 Thessalonians)

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 20 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

After Jesus went back to heaven, God sent Paul to lots of countries and lots of towns to tell people about Jesus. One of those towns was Thessalonica (see Acts 17:1-9). It was a big town in the country called Greece, where the Greek people come from, and it is still there today. Sometimes people now call that town Salonica.

Paul wrote his 1st letter to the Christians at Thessalonica soon after he left there. Then about 6 months later, Paul heard that there were people making trouble for those new Christians at Thessalonica and telling them that Jesus already came back from heaven. So Paul wrote this 2nd letter to them, to tell them the true story about what will happen on the earth before Jesus comes back.

Paul said a lot of important things in this letter, so today we have to take notice of what he wrote to the Christians at Thessalonica.

Chapter 1

1 I am Paul, and this letter is from me. Silas and Timothy are here with me, and they are helping me write this letter.

We are sending this letter to you Christians that are in God's church, in the town called Thessalonica. You belong to God our father and to Jesus Christ our leader. *

2 We are asking God our father, and Jesus Christ our leader, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

Paul thanked God for the Christians at Thessalonica

3 Christian friends, we know that you are learning to trust God more and more, and you are loving each other more and more. So we have to thank God for you all the time. 4 And whenever we visit God's people in the churches in other places, we tell them all about you. We tell them that you keep on believing in Jesus, no matter how much trouble people give you, and no matter how much they hurt you.

Jesus will come back, and God will judge people properly

5 You keep on believing in Jesus, and that shows us that God always judges people the right way. It is right for you to be in God's family, because you keep on believing in

* **1:1** Acts 17:1

Jesus, no matter how much trouble people give you. 6 God is a good and fair judge, and in the end, he will do payback to those people. He will give them trouble, just like they gave you trouble. 7 And he will let you rest and be happy, without any trouble.

He will do that for you, and for us too, when Jesus, our leader, comes back. Everyone will see him come from heaven with a big mob of his strong angel messengers, 8 and with a lot of fire. They will punish all those people that don't want to know God. Those people don't listen to the good story about Jesus, and they don't do what he says. 9 God will go on punishing them for ever. He will properly ruin them. He will shut them out so they can never come near our leader Jesus. They will never see how really great and powerful he is. *

10 All that will happen on the day when Jesus will come back to the earth. His own people will show what great things he has done for them, and they will really respect him. And you are his people, so you will be there when he comes back. You believed what we told you about Jesus, so you will be in that mob of his people.

God can work powerfully in Christians

11 So we always pray for you. God picked you to be his own people, and he wants his mob to be good people, so we ask God to keep making you better people. You believe in Jesus, and you want to do good things, so we pray that God will work powerfully in you, and we pray that he will give you the power to do all those good things that you want to do. 12 We ask God to do that, so that people will see how he works in you, and then they will really respect our leader, Jesus, and they will say good things about him. And we want you to be so good that Jesus will be happy with you too. We are asking those 2, God and our leader Jesus Christ, to be really good to you.

Chapter 2

Don't listen to people that reckon Jesus came back already

1 Now we want to tell you a bit more about how our leader, Jesus Christ, will come back to the earth, and the time when he will bring us all together to be with him. Christian friends, we are telling you this. * 2 Don't listen to people that reckon his time has already come, and Jesus has already come back. They are wrong. We don't want you to get upset easily or frightened by those people. They might lie and say that they heard one of God's men say that, or that somebody wrote it in a report, or they might even reckon that we wrote it in a letter. 3 Don't listen to them. Don't let anyone trick you like that.

A really bad man will come before Jesus comes back

You see, it will be like this. There are some things that will happen first, and after that, Jesus will come back. A lot of people will turn against God, and then a really bad man will show himself to everyone. He will never do anything that God wants. He will be the sort of man that God wants to properly finish up. 4 He will reckon that he is better than God. He will fight against God, and against everything else that people think is a god. He will fight against everything that people respect in a spiritual way. He will even go into God's ceremony house and sit down there, and tell everyone that he is God. *

* **1:9** Isaiah 2:10 * **2:1** 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 * **2:4** Ezekiel 28:2; Daniel 11:36

Something is holding back that bad man

5 Do you remember me talking about that
when I was with you there in your town?
6 You already know something about this
man. You know that he wants to start doing
his bad things now, but somebody is holding
him back. But at the right time, God will let
everyone see that bad man. 7 You know, there
is a secret power already working in the
world. It is trying to get people to go against
God and to break his laws. But somebody is
fighting against that power and stopping it
from doing that, and he will keep stopping it
until God takes him away. 8 Then that really
bad man will come with that power, and he
will show himself to everyone. That bad man
never does anything that God wants. But
then later, Jesus our leader will come and
kill him. Jesus will just talk, and his words
will kill that man. Jesus will finish him up
when he comes with power.*

That really bad man will trick people

9 You see, when that bad man will come,
Satan, the boss over the bad spirits, will
give some of his power to that bad man. So
that bad man will come, and he will do really
clever things with Satan's power. Those
things will give people a big shock. They will
think that he has good power, and they will
believe him, but they will be wrong.* 10 He
will trick those people. They will think, "He
is doing powerful things, so he is right," but
he will really be doing very bad things with
Satan's power. You know, there are some
people that don't like the true message about
Jesus. They don't believe it. Those people will
not let God save them. They are the people
that this really bad man will trick. So in the
end, God will finish up those people.

11 You see, they will not believe the true
message, so God will let somebody properly
trick them, and they will believe that bad
man's lies. 12 They are people that like to
do bad things, and they will not believe
the true message about Jesus. So God will
judge them, and he will say they are guilty.

Keep on properly trusting Jesus

13-14 But, Christian friends, we thank God that
you are not in that mob. Right from the start,
God picked you to be the ones that he will
save. And he put his Holy Spirit into you,
to save you. We told you the true message
about Jesus, and you believed it. It is like
God called to you, at that time, to come and
join his mob. And now God's spirit works in
you all the time to change you into God's
special people. And God will make you great,
like our leader Jesus Christ.

15 So then, Christian friends, you have to
keep strong and keep on properly trusting
Jesus. Keep on believing the things that we
taught you. You see, Jesus taught us those
things, and later we taught them to you. We
told you those things when we were there
with you, and after that, we wrote letters to
you to tell you more. Now keep on believing
those things.

16 And we pray to our leader Jesus Christ
himself, and we also pray to God our father.
God loves us, and he is very good to us. He
helps us to be strong, and to be brave, for ever.
He tells us that we are his people, for sure.
17 So we ask him to help you to be strong, and
brave too, so that you keep on doing good
things, and keep on saying good things.

Chapter 3

Paul asked the Christians at Thessalonica to pray for him

1 And, Christian friends, there is one more
thing we want to ask you to do. Please pray

* **2:8** Isaiah 11:4 * **2:9** Matthew 24:24

for us. Ask God to help us tell a lot more people about Jesus. We want them to hear that message soon, and we want them to believe it, just like you did. 2 You know, there are some people that never believe the good news about Jesus, and some very bad people that want to give us trouble. Ask God to keep us safe from them.

Jesus will keep you safe

3 But Jesus, our leader, is always good to us, and he always does what he promised to do. He will help you to keep on trusting him strongly. He will keep you safe from that really bad one, the boss over the bad spirits, so that he can't touch you. 4 You see, God helps us know for sure about you. We reckon that you are doing the things that we told you to do, and we reckon that you will keep on doing them. 5 We want Jesus Christ, our leader, to help you understand more about God, and to understand that he really loves you. And we want him to help you to keep going strong, just like Jesus Christ kept going strong when he was here on the earth.

Don't be lazy

6-7 Listen, Christian friends, Jesus Christ, our leader, wants us to tell you this. If anyone says they are a Christian, but they sit down and never want to do any work, you have to keep away from that person. Remember when we were with you. Think about what we were like. We didn't sit around doing nothing. And we told you, "Don't be lazy." We want you to live the way we lived when we were with you. 8 We worked very hard, not only in the day time, but at night time too, so that we could get enough money to look after ourselves. We always paid for the food you gave us. You didn't have to find money to look after us.

No work, no food

9 You know, God says that if somebody tells people the good news about Jesus, it is all right for that person to ask for the things they need. But we didn't do that. We didn't ask you for anything. You see, we wanted to show you the right way for a Christian to live. 10 Remember what we told you about people that don't want to work. We told you not to give them food. We said, "If they will not do any work, don't give them any food."

Get a job so you can buy your own food

11 You see, somebody told us that there are some lazy people there with you that never want to do any work. They just go around talking about people in a bad way and messing up other people's lives. 12 So we write this to those lazy people. Our leader, Jesus Christ, wants us to strongly tell them this. They have to change the way they live. They have to settle down and get a job, so that they can buy their own food to eat.

13 But to you other Christian friends we say this, keep on doing good things all the time, and always be happy to do them.

Try to straighten out those people that go wrong

14 We are writing this letter to tell you the right way to live. If some people will not do what we say in this letter, tell everyone about them, and don't be their close friends. Then they will feel shame. 15 But don't be their enemies. Instead, talk to them like they are your brothers or sisters, and try to straighten them out.

The end of the letter

16 We will finish this letter now. You know, our leader, Jesus, he is the one that can make people feel quiet and happy inside themselves. Well, we pray that he will do

that for you all the time, and that he will be with you all the time.

Paul signed this letter

17 *This is me, Paul, writing this bit now. I'm saying hello to you, and I am writing it with my own hand, so everyone can be sure that this letter is really from me. I do this at the end of all my letters.* 18 *I pray that Jesus Christ, our leader, will keep on being really good to all of you.*

From Paul

The 1st letter that Paul wrote to Timothy

(The book in the Holy Bible called 1 Timothy)

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of countries to tell people about Jesus. Timothy was a young man in one of those countries. He heard what Paul said, and he believed in Jesus. After that, he went with Paul and helped him do his work (see Acts 16:1-3). At a town called Ephesus, Paul told Timothy to stay there and look after the church, while Paul went to other places. So Timothy was the pastor of the church in Ephesus.

At that time, the Roman people were the bosses over a lot of other nations. They didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus, so they grabbed him and put him in jail. Paul wrote this letter while he was in jail in the big city called Rome.

This is the 1st letter that Paul wrote to Timothy, and it has important messages for us Christians today, especially for ministers and pastors. It can help church leaders work out how to properly look after the people in their churches.

Chapter 1

1-2 Dear Timothy,

I am Paul, and this letter is from me. God picked me to be Jesus Christ's special worker. Those 2, God and Jesus, they told me to do this work. God is the one that will save us, and we can be sure that Jesus will always look after us. They gave me this job, to tell everybody this message about them.

Timothy, I told you about Jesus, and you really believed in him, so now I love you like you are my own son. I pray to God our father, and to Jesus Christ our leader, that they will show you that they love you. I am asking them to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourself. *

Some people teach the wrong message

3-4 Remember when we were in Ephesus, and I left that town to go to Macedonia country. At that time, I told you to stay there in Ephesus. There were some people there that were teaching the wrong message, and I wanted you to stay there and straighten them out. Those people think a lot about old time stories that are not true, and they think about the lists of names of people in their families, and then they use those stories and lists of names to teach lies to people. Anybody that listens to them just gets into useless arguments. People shouldn't do that, but instead they have to learn about God, and the way he works. They have to learn to

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* **1:1-2** Acts 16:1

believe in God and to do whatever he wants. So I want you to tell those lying teachers to stop teaching those lies.

5 You see, you have to teach people to do what is right, and to believe in God properly, and to never do bad things. Then they will properly love each other all the time. We want people to follow the things that we teach, so that they live that way. 6 But those lying teachers don't do that. They go all wrong. They just talk about useless things all the time. 7 They reckon they teach the law that God gave to Moses, and they want everybody to respect them. They talk strongly, like they know all about that law, and they think they are always right. But really, they are all mixed up. They don't understand that law properly, and they don't know what they are talking about.

8 We all know that the law that God gave to Moses is good, so long as people teach it the right way. 9 We have to remember that God gave that law to punish the people that do bad things, not the people that do good things. That law is there to stop bad people, and cheeky people, and people that forget about God and everything that belongs to God. It is there to stop people that want to kill their own father or mother, and people that want to murder other people. 10 That law is there to stop those people that just want to sleep with anybody, and do with them what married people do together. It is there to stop men that want to sleep with other men, as if they are women. It is there to stop people that grab other people to make them prisoners and force them to work for no pay. It is there to stop those people that trick other people by lying to them. That law is there to stop all those sorts of bad things that people do if they don't listen to God's word. 11 They do all sorts of bad things. But if we think about that good story about Jesus, we know all those things are wrong. And I go and tell that good story about Jesus to everybody. That's my job. Our wonderful God gave me this job.

Jesus picked Paul to be an example

12 I really want to thank our leader Jesus Christ. He makes me strong enough to do this job. He thought I will do this work properly, so he picked me out to do it for him, and I thank him for that. 13-14 I used to be really cheeky to Jesus Christ before I ever believed in him. I used to say bad things about Jesus, and I used to make trouble for anybody that believed in Jesus. I didn't know the true story about Jesus at that time, so I didn't believe in him. But God felt sorry for me, and he was really good to me. He let me turn around and join up with Jesus Christ, and now Jesus helps me to trust God, and he helps me to love everybody. *

15 You sometimes hear people say this, "Jesus Christ came into this world to save bad people, to make them into better people." That is very true, and everybody has to believe it. And it tells the story about me too. I was really bad. I was worse than anybody else. 16 But Jesus wanted to show everybody that he will wait for people, and he will save anyone that believes in him, even really bad people. So he picked me to be an example. I was really bad, but he felt sorry for me, and he waited for me to believe in him. So now everybody can know that Jesus is waiting, and he wants everybody to believe in him, no matter if they are really bad. If they believe in him, he will save them, and they will live with him for ever.

17 That shows that God is really great. He is the biggest boss, and he lives for ever, even

* **1:13-14** Acts 8:3; 9:4-5

though nobody can see him. He is the only one that is God. Everybody has to really praise him and say he is great, and they have to do that for ever and ever. That's right.

18 Timothy, you are like a son to me, so I'm telling you to do these things. Remember that the Holy Spirit told the Christians there a message about you, some time ago. Well, you have to think about that message, so that you can stand up against things that are wrong, like a soldier that stands up and fights against an enemy. 19 You have to keep on believing God's word and keep on doing the right thing, so that you will never feel bad about the things you do. Some people heard about God, but they didn't try to go the right way, and now they don't believe in God any more. 20 Those 2 men, Hymenayus and Alexander, they are like that. So I asked God to let Satan punish those 2 men. Satan is the boss over the bad spirits, and I asked God to let him punish those 2 men so that they will learn not to tell lies about God.

Chapter 2

Church meetings

1 I'm writing now about your church meetings. The first thing I want to tell you is that you have to pray for all sorts of people. Ask God to help people that have problems. Tell him all about them, and ask him to help them. Always thank God too, for everything that he does for people. 2 Pray for the bosses over your nation, both the big bosses and those other bosses that work for them. Ask God to help them run the nation the right way, so that we can live happy and quiet lives, and so that we can respect God properly, and live his way. 3 If we pray for everybody like that, we make God happy. He is the one that saves us, 4 and he wants to save everybody. He wants everybody to know the true message about Jesus.

5 You see, there is only one God, and there is only one man that can stand between God and us people, to bring us back to God and ask him not to punish us. That man is Jesus Christ. 6 He let people kill him. When he died, he took the payback for everybody, so that now God can save anybody. He died like that at just the right time to show everybody that God really wants to save them. 7 And God has picked me to be Jesus's special worker, to go and tell people his word. What I'm saying now is really true. I'm not lying. He picked me to go to those people that are not Jewish, and to tell them that God will save them too. *

Men that pray

8 So in your meetings at every place, I want this sort of men to pray, men that always want to make God happy. I don't want them to be angry, or argue with others.

Women in church meetings

9 And in your meetings, I want the women to dress properly and sensibly. They can't dress in a way that makes men look at them. They can't think about the fancy clothes they will wear, or their fancy hairdo, or the jewels that they want to wear, like gold or pearls. Those things are not important. * 10 This is more important. They have to do good things for other people, so that everyone will see that they are women that really know God. 11 Women have to listen to the teacher in a meeting, and not argue with the teacher.

12 I don't let women teach men or be men's bosses in spiritual things. They just have to be quiet. 13 You see, God made people a long time ago, and he made the man first. His name was Adam. After that, he made the

* **2:7** 2 Timothy 1:11 * **2:9** 1 Peter 3:3

woman. Her name was Eve.* 14 And then that
snake came to trick them, but he didn't trick
Adam. He tricked Eve, and she went wrong
first.* 15 But God will save women from big
trouble. He worked it out for them to become
mothers, and that makes them important. So
if they keep on believing in him, and loving
people, and if they really respect God, and
if they keep on being sensible, God will
save them.

Chapter 3

The leaders of God's people

1 I'm writing about church leaders now. You
sometimes hear people say, "If anybody
wants to be the person that leads God's
people, that's a very important job that they
want to do." And that's right. So you have
to be very careful about the person you pick
to be a leader. 2 A church leader has to be
this sort of man,

– He has to be a really good man, so
that nobody can ever say that he
does bad things.
– He can only have one wife, and he
can't sleep with any other woman,
like a husband sleeps with his wife.
– He has to have good sense and do
things properly.
– He can't be the sort of man that lets
himself go and then does wild things.
– He has to be friendly to other people,
even if he doesn't know them.
– He has to be good at teaching people.
– 3 He can't be a drunken man, or a
man that gets into fights.
– He has to be a quiet man that is not
hard on people.
– He can't be a man that loves money.
– 4-5 He has to look after his own family
properly, then you will know that he
can look after God's people too. If
his kids respect him, and if they do
whatever he tells them to do, that
shows that he is the right sort of
man.
– 6 He has to be a man that has been a
Christian for a long time, not a new
Christian. A new Christian might
start to think he is smart, and God
might have to throw him out, like he
threw the devil out after the devil
thought he was smart. That devil is
now the boss over the bad spirits.
– 7 He has to be a man that everybody
says is a good man. Even people
that are not Christians have to say
that he is good. If they know that
he is a good man, they will respect
him. The devil always tries to make
Christian leaders go wrong so that
he can shame them. It is like the
devil has a trap and tries to catch
them in it, but he can't catch a man
that is always good.

The people that help the leaders

8 It is the same too for the people that are
helpers in the church.

– They have to be really good honest
people.
– They can't be people that get drunk.
– They can't be greedy, wanting lots of
money and things.
– 9 They have to really believe the
things that God has shown us. And
they have to always do the right
thing, so that they will not feel bad
about what they do.
– 10 You need to try them out before
you make them church helpers, so
first give them some little jobs to do,
and if they do them properly, and if

* **2:13** Genesis 2:7, 21-22 * **2:14** Genesis 3:1-6

nobody complains about them, then you can make them helpers in the church.
– [11] Their wives have to be like them, good women that nobody complains about.
– Their wives can't be the sort of women that say bad things about other people.
– Their wives can't be the sort of women that let themselves go and then do wild things.
– Their wives have to be honest about everything.
– [12] A church helper can only have one wife, and he can't sleep with any other woman, like a man sleeps with his wife.
– He has to be the sort of man that looks after his wife and kids properly, as well as all the people that live in his house.

[13] If church helpers do their job properly, everybody will say that they are good people, and God will be happy with them too. Then they will not be too frightened to tell anybody that they believe in Jesus Christ.

God's true word

[14] I want to come and see you soon, but I'm writing this letter to you now [15] so that you will know the way we have to do things in the church. You know, we are God's family, and his family is his church. God is always alive, and the people in his church always have to keep on teaching his true word. You know how a house is held up by the big posts that are set in concrete. Well, we people in God's church, we are like those posts. We are holding up God's true word, so we have to teach it properly.

[16] God shows us something about Jesus that is really true, and nobody can argue with it. He shows us that Jesus is really great,



We always have to keep on teaching God's true word

He came in a man's body for people to see,
but the Holy Spirit showed us that he was really from God.
And God's angel messengers saw him too.
The people that believed in him told other people everywhere about him.
They even went to other countries to tell people about him, and people all over the world believed in him.
And God took him up into heaven.

Chapter 4

Some people teach lies

[1] The Holy Spirit tells us clearly about things that will happen in the last days of this world. He says that some people will stop believing the true word from God. Instead, they will believe lies that come from bad spirits. Those bad spirits will trick them, and they will believe those lies. [2] And some of them will teach those lies to other people. They tell everybody they are good people, but really, they are bad. And they never feel bad about the bad things they do. [3-5] They tell people, "You can't marry anyone. It is

wrong." And they tell people, "There are some sorts of food you can't eat. You just have to leave it alone." Those things that they say are not true. God tells us in his book that he made everything good. That means that he made all food good. We believe that word and know it is true, so we don't have to leave any sort of food alone. Instead, we can just thank him for it and eat it. God's word says that all food is good, so we pray to him and thank him for it, and then it is all right for us to eat it.

You have to be a good worker for Jesus

6 So teach those things to all the Christians. If you do that, you will be a good worker for Jesus Christ. You believe God's word and follow the things it says, and when you do that, you feed your spirit with God's word to make yourself strong. 7 Don't take any notice of those silly stories that are not true, stories that lie about God. But instead, train yourself to respect God and take notice of him. 8-9 You sometimes hear people say, "If we train our bodies, we will get fit so that we can play sport and live better lives, and that is good for us now. But if we train our spirits to respect God and take notice of him, we will not only live better lives now, but we will live a lot better in the life that will come after we die, just like God promised us. That is a lot better for us." Well, those words are true, and everybody has to follow that message. 10 We know it is true, so we work hard for God, and we are sure that he will give us a better life after we die. We are sure about God. He is alive, and he wants to save everybody, and he really will save all the people that believe in him.

11 So teach everybody these things, and tell them that they have to follow these words. 12 If some people think you are too young to be their leader, don't worry. You live the right way yourself, and that will show them that you are a good leader. Then they will see the way a Christian has to live. So talk in the right way, and talk about the right things. And do everything the right way. And love people. And believe strongly in Jesus. And always do what is right. Then everyone will see that you live right, and they will not think you are too young. 13 So keep going until I get there. Make sure you read God's book in your meetings. Teach them that true message, and tell them how to do what it says.

14 Always remember that God gave you special power at the time when the church leaders laid their hands on you and prayed for you. The Holy Spirit gave them a special word about you at that time. So keep on using the power that God gave you.

15 Think hard about these things that I am telling you, and always do them, so that everybody will see that you are getting better all the time. 16 Be careful to live properly, and to teach the right things. You have to keep on doing those things, so that God will save both you and the people that listen to you.

Chapter 5

Treat church people with respect

1 If ever people in the church there go wrong, and if you have to straighten them out, be careful to respect them while you do it. If you talk to an old man, don't talk to him in an angry way, but talk easy to him, like he is your father. If it is a young man, talk to him like he is your brother. 2 Or if it is an old woman, talk to her like she is your mother. Or if it is a young woman, respect her and talk to her like she is your sister.

Look after widows that haven't got anybody to help them

3 If there are any widows in the church that haven't got any family to look after them,

then the church has to look after them. 4 But if a widow has family, that is, if she has some kids or grand-kids that are old enough to look after her, then they have to do that. It is not the church's job. Those younger people have to remember that they were kids once, and the woman that looked after them at that time is now a widow, so now it is their job to look after her. If we do that, God is happy with us.

5 But some widows are all alone and haven't got any family to look after them. Some of those widows trust God to take care of them. They keep on praying and asking God for whatever they need. 6 But other widows don't think about God. They only want to have fun. They might think they are alive, but really, their spirits are dead.

7-8 If people don't take care of their own family or their own relatives, they are not doing the thing that Jesus wants us to do. They are worse than the people that say they don't believe in Jesus at all. Tell everybody in the church this message so that other people will not try to blame them.

9 So you can make up a list. Write down the names of all the widows that the church has to help. But only put a widow on the list if she is over 60 years old, and only if she always stayed with her husband and never went off with another man. 10 She has to be the sort of woman that everybody respects because she always did good things for people. She has to be a woman that brought her kids up properly. She has to be a woman that always gave strangers food and a place to sleep. She has to be a woman that did all sorts of things to help God's people. She has to be a woman that always helped people in trouble and was always ready to do good things.

11 But if a widow is still a young woman, she still really wants to have a husband, so later she will want to stop doing things for Jesus, and she will want to marry somebody. So don't write her name on that list. 12 You know, when she asked the church to help her, she promised to work for the church, so if she stops working for the church, it means that she is breaking that promise, and God might punish her for that. 13 Even if she doesn't marry again, she still might get lazy. Instead of doing good things, she might just go around to people's houses and talk to them about other people, and she might talk about things that she shouldn't talk about.

14 So I'm saying this to young widows. Don't try to get on to the church's list, but instead, go ahead and marry somebody, and have kids, and look after your family. If you do that, our enemy will not have any reason to say bad things about us. 15 You see, some young widows already went away from God, and now they follow Satan, the boss over the bad spirits.

16 And, you know, some widows have relatives that can look after them. If a Christian woman has a relative that is a widow, she has to do that for her. She can't ask the church to do it. Then the church can look after those other widows that haven't got any family. They are the widows that really need help.

Church leaders are important

17 Everybody has to respect those people that lead the church properly, and the church has to pay them properly, especially the people that work hard to teach God's word to other people. 18 God says this in his book,

> "If you get an animal to work for
> you, you have to let that animal eat
> something while it works."*

* **5:18** Deuteronomy 25:4

And he also says,

"It is right for workers to get their pay."*

Well, it is like that too with the church leaders. They work for the church, so the church has to pay them properly.

19 And you know, church leaders can go wrong too. But if somebody blames a church leader for something, don't believe them unless there are 2 or 3 people that tell the same story about that leader. Then you have to find out if that story is true.* 20 If that leader really did do something bad, then you have to shame him. You have to talk to him to try to straighten him out, and do it in front of everybody in the church. Then everyone will take notice and be too frightened to do bad things themselves. 21 And as you do that, you have to treat everybody the same way. You know, God sees everything I'm writing here, and so does Jesus Christ, and so do God's angel messengers. They know everything that I am telling you now. I'm saying that you can't treat your family and friends any better than anybody else.

22 If ever you need to pick somebody to be a church leader, pick somebody that has been a Christian for a long time, not somebody that is a new Christian. It is like this. If the person you pick starts to go wrong, everyone will blame you as well as blaming that person. So pick somebody that you know is really good, so that you don't get yourself mixed up with something that is wrong.

23 By the way, I know that you are often sick in the belly, so you have to mix a little bit of wine into the water you drink. Don't just drink water on its own.

24-25 If you need to pick a new leader, remember this. There are some people that do bad things out in the open so that we soon hear about them, and we all know that they are no good before we even meet them. But there are also other people that hide the bad things they do so that nobody can see them, and it takes some time before we find out that they are bad people. In the same way, some people do good things out in the open so that everybody sees them, while other people hide the good things they do so that nobody can see them. But it doesn't matter. Sooner or later everybody will find out about them, and everybody will know that they are good people.

Chapter 6

Workers and bosses

1 I'm writing now about Christians that have to work all the time for somebody else. They have to really respect their bosses. If they don't, people that are not Christians will rubbish God and say that he gets us to teach things that are wrong. 2 If a worker's boss is a Christian, that worker can't think like this, "My boss is my Christian brother so I can be lazy." No, that boss believes in Jesus, and that boss loves Jesus too, so the worker has to work harder for that boss.

You have to teach people those things, and tell them to live that way.

Some people teach the wrong things

3 Some people teach things that are wrong. They teach things that are different from the good things that our leader, Jesus Christ, taught. He taught things that help people live in a way that makes God happy. 4 But the people that teach something different are wrong. Those people don't really understand anything. They just want everyone to think they are important. They want to make trouble and get people to have arguments about words. If people start to

* **5:18** Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:15; Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7 * **5:19** Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15

argue, then they start to get jealous of each other. They think bad things, and they say bad things about each other. 5 Then they keep on arguing with each other. You see, they listened to those wrong teachers and those teachers tricked them. Those wrong teachers made them think the wrong way, so they don't really know the true message. They think that if they follow God's way they will get a lot of money, but they are wrong.

Don't be greedy for money

6-8 It is like this. At the time we were born, we didn't bring any money with us into this life. And when we die, we can't take any money with us. So while we live in this life, if we have enough food and clothes, we can be really happy. So now, if you follow God's way, and if you don't try to get a lot of money for yourself, you will be very happy, and you will get a lot out of life. 9 But people that try to get lots of money, they let the devil trick them. The devil is the boss over the bad spirits. He gets those people to want things so much that they will do anything to get them. That's how they fall into the devil's trap. They do silly things, and bad things too. The devil really wrecks them. 10 If you love money a lot, you will do all sorts of bad things to get it. Some people went wrong like that. They wanted a lot of money, so they stopped believing in Jesus, and they got themselves into lots of trouble, and now they are really sad.

Live the right way

11 But Timothy, you belong to God. So you've got to keep away from all those bad things that I just told you about. Instead, you've got to try to do the right thing all the time, and try to do things that make God happy, and try to trust him more, and try to love people better, and try to keep going when things are tough, and try to be easy on other people, not hard on them. Those are the things you have to try to do all the time. 12 It's like we are in a big fight against the devil and all his bad spirit mob. He wants us to go wrong and stop believing in Jesus. But Jesus gives us really good life that goes on for ever, so we have to keep on trusting Jesus for that life, and then we will win the fight against that bad spirit mob. Remember the time that you first believed in Jesus, and you told a lot of people about it. That was the time he called you to follow him, and to get that life that goes on for ever. So now keep on believing in Jesus, and keep on following him so that you keep on living that good life for ever.

Paul wanted Timothy to do everything in this letter

13-14 You know about God. He makes things live. And you know about Jesus. People took him to Pontius Pilate, and he told that boss the true story about himself. * Well, God is watching us now, and Jesus is listening to us. So I want you to promise me this one thing with both of them listening to you. I want you to promise me that you will do everything that I'm telling you to do in this letter. Promise me that you will do it all properly, so that nobody can say you did it wrong. And keep on doing it until we see Jesus Christ come back again.

15 God will bring Jesus back at the right time. God is the only really big boss. He is the really big boss over everybody. He is the really big boss over all other big bosses. He is the biggest boss over every other boss. 16 He is the only one that never dies, but he goes on and on for ever. He lives in light that is so bright that nobody can go near him.

* **6:13-14** John 18:37

Nobody ever saw him, and nobody can see him now. We have to really respect him all the time, and we have to remember that he is really powerful. Yes, that's right.

17 There are some people that have a lot of money and a lot of things. You have to tell them that they can't think that they are smart just because they are rich. They still have to pray to God, and they have to trust him for everything they really need. They can't trust their money. But they have to trust God. He gives us everything we need to be happy. So we have to trust him, not trust money. 18 So tell them to use their money to do good things for other people. Tell them to be ready to give it to people that need it. 19 If they do that, they will really be giving it to God, and he will keep it for them for later on, after they die. In that way, they will get a good start in their new life. That is the really good life.

20 All right, Timothy, God gave you his good message, so you have to look after it properly. Make sure nobody changes it around. There are some people that talk a lot in a stupid way, and they say bad things about God. Don't listen to them. They might reckon they know all about it, and they might say that you are wrong, but really, they are the ones that are wrong. 21 Some people followed them, and now those people have stopped believing in Jesus.

That's all for now. I'm asking God to be really good to all you mob there.

From Paul

The 2nd letter that Paul wrote to Timothy

(The book in the Holy Bible called 2 Timothy)

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy about 2,000 years ago, more than 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of countries to tell people about Jesus. Timothy heard what Paul said, and he believed in Jesus. After that, he went with Paul and helped him do his work (see Acts 16:1-3). At a town called Ephesus, Paul told Timothy to stay and be the pastor of the church there.

At that time, the Roman people were the bosses over lots of nations. They didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus, so they grabbed him, and they put him in jail, in Rome. Paul wrote this 2nd letter to Timothy from jail. Paul knew that the Roman bosses were going to kill him, and he wanted to see Timothy again before he died.

Paul wrote this 2nd letter to Timothy a few years after he wrote the 1st letter to Timothy.

This letter has important messages for us Christians today, especially for ministers and pastors. It can help church leaders work out how to properly look after the people in their churches.

Chapter 1

1-2 Dear Timothy,

I am Paul, and this letter is from me. God picked me out to be Jesus Christ's special worker. He gave me this job, to tell other people that they can believe in Jesus, and then they will live with God for ever. God promises to do that for us.

Timothy, I love you like you are my own son. I pray to God our father, and to Jesus Christ our leader, that they will show you that they love you. I am asking them to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourself.

Keep using the power God gave you

3 I thank God for you, Timothy, and I pray for you all the time, in the day time and also at night. I work for God, and I really want to work properly for him so that I always feel good about it. (My father wanted to work for God properly too, and so did my grand-father, and my family that lived a long time ago.) 4 I remember that you cried the last time we left each other, so now I really want to see you again so that I will be happy. 5 I also remember that you really believe in Jesus. First your grand-mother Lois believed in him, then your mother Eunice believed in him. And I know that you believe in Jesus now too, just like they do.*

6 Remember the time that I laid my hands on you and prayed for you. God's spirit gave you special power at that time. Well, now I

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* **1:5** Acts 16:1

want you to remember that, and you have to keep on using that power in your work for God. If you have not used it for a while, you need to start using it again. 7God's spirit in us doesn't make us frightened, but he helps us be strong so that we do great things, and he helps us love people, and he helps us control ourselves.

8You have to tell people about our leader Jesus. Don't feel shame about that. And don't feel shame about me because I'm in jail. I'm here because I told people about Jesus. But don't worry. Just go ahead anyway and tell people about our leader Jesus. And then maybe some people might make trouble for you, just like they made trouble for me. But God will make you strong, and you will not worry about that trouble. 9It is God that saved us, and he picked us to be his own specially good people. We didn't do anything to get him to like us, but he was good to us anyway. He sent Jesus Christ to come and save us. God planned all that a long time ago, even before time started, 10and now he makes it clear for us all to see. Jesus came to save people, so that if they believe the good news about him, they will not stay dead after they die, but they will live for ever.

11And God gave me this job, to tell everyone that good story, and to teach everyone that Jesus can save them.* 12So I tell everyone about him. Those people that don't like Jesus, they make trouble for me. But I know God, and I believe in him, so I don't feel shame when I get that trouble. I know that he will look after me right up until the day when Jesus will come back.

13-14Whenever you teach people, you have to make sure that you tell them the same true message that I told you before. Don't let anyone get you to change it into a wrong message. That message is something really special, and you really have to look after it properly. The Holy Spirit lives in us, and he will help you look after it properly. So you have to make sure you keep on believing in Jesus Christ, and keep on loving people just like he does. You are joined to him now, so you can do that.

15You probably know about the people that came here from Asia. They all left me now. Even Figelus and Hermogenes left me. It is like they don't want to know me any more. 16-18But Onesiforus wasn't like that. He came here to Rome and looked everywhere for me. And when he found me here in jail, he didn't feel shame. He often came and cheered me up. So I pray that Jesus, our leader, will be really good to his family. And you already know about that time that he was over there in Ephesus with me, and he helped me in lots of ways. One day our leader will judge everyone, and I pray that he will be good to Onesiforus and his family on that day.

Chapter 2

Good workers for Jesus Christ

1So Timothy, you are like my own son now. I want you to be strong. And if you always stay joined up to Jesus Christ, you can do that. You see, he is always good to you, and he will help you.

2You heard me tell those true things about Jesus to lots of people, so you have to teach those things to more people. Pick good people that everyone respects, then teach them those things, so that they can go to other people and teach them those same things.

3Remember that you belong to Jesus Christ. You are like his soldier. If soldiers get hurt, they don't stop fighting. They just forget their pain and keep going. Well, you have

* **1:11** 1 Timothy 2:7

to be like that now. If people see that you belong to Jesus, and then they hurt you, you just have to forget it and keep going, just like a good soldier, and like other good Christians.

4 And you know that soldiers don't get other jobs while they are in the army. They just work for their army captain and try to make him happy. Well, just like that, Jesus is your captain, so you have to just do the things that Jesus wants you to do, and don't get mixed up with anything that he doesn't want.

5 And you are also like a sportsman. You know that sportsmen have to follow the rules of their game. If they don't, they can't win. Well, just like that, you have to follow the rules that God set down, so that in the end God will tell you that you won.

6 And I will use another picture story, about a gardener. He works hard, and then he is the first person to eat the food he grows in the garden. Well, like that gardener, if you work hard for God, he will quickly pay you.

7 Now think about those things that I just told you, and Jesus, our leader, will help you to properly understand them all.

8 So if people make trouble for you, just remember that they made trouble for Jesus Christ. He was born into the family of David, the man that was the big boss a long time ago. But people gave Jesus a lot of trouble, and they killed him. But then God made him alive again. That is the good news that I always tell people about Jesus. 9 But some of them don't like me telling everybody that message, so they make trouble for me. They even treat me like a criminal. They tied me up and put me here in this jail. But nobody can tie up God's word or keep it in jail. Anyone out there now can still go around and tell people God's message. 10 So I reckon it's all right for me to stay here in jail so that other people will hear that message and believe in Jesus. They are the people that God picked out. He will save them and make them great, and they will live happy with him for ever. 11 Listen to these things that you sometimes hear Christians say. They are very true. They say,

"If we follow Jesus and stop doing bad things, it is like we die with him, and so we don't do anything bad any more, and then later we will live with him.

12 If we follow him and people give us trouble, and if we keep on following him and don't let that trouble stop us, then we will become important leaders with him.

Or if we say that we don't know him, then later, he will say that he doesn't know us. *

13 But if we break our promise to him, that is different. He is not like us. He can never break his promise to us. He will always do what is right. That's the sort of person he is."

The sort of worker God likes

14 So talk to your mob there, and don't let them forget about those things. Tell them not to argue with anyone about words. Let them know that God is listening as you tell them that. If they argue like that, nobody wins, and anyone that listens to those arguments gets all messed up in the end.

15 Try your best to be the sort of teacher that God likes. He likes teachers that teach the true message, and that help people understand it properly. That's how you have to work for God. 16 Stay away from people that teach useless stories that give God no respect, because if somebody talks like that, they just push people away from God.

* **2:12** Matthew 10:33; Luke 12:9

17 Their message is like a bad sore on a man
that will not heal, and in the end it kills him.
Those 2 men, Hymenayus and Filetus, they
are bad teachers like that. 18 They say that
God already raised up the dead people and
made them alive again. But their message is
wrong. Some people listened to them, and
now these people don't believe in Jesus any
more.
19 But God gave us the true word that can't
ever change. It is like a solid slab of concrete
that builders put a house on. And it is like
they wrote some words in that concrete. It
is like they wrote this,

"God knows those people that belong
to him,"

And like they also wrote,

"If anyone says that they belong to
God, they have to stop doing bad
things."

So God's people have to live that way. *
20 Let me use another picture story. In a big
house there are lots of things that people use
all the time. Some of those things are really
special, like gold bowls and silver spoons,
and people use those things for good clean
jobs. But for dirty jobs, they use pots made
from the ground, or from wood. 21 Well, it
is like that too with people that belong to
God. If you stop doing bad things, you are
like gold things or silver things, and God will
use you for the good jobs. You will live in
a clean way, and you will be ready for God
to use you any way he wants to.
22 Lots of young people just follow their
own feelings, and then they do bad things.
But you have to keep away from anything
like that. Keep away from anything that will
push you into doing something bad. Instead
of that, you have to try to do good things,
and always trust God, and love people, and
don't fight anyone. Some people live like
that. They pray to God, and they only want
to do good things. Well, make those people
your good friends, and you live like that too.
23 But you can't argue about stupid things
that are not important. If you argue like that,
you might get into a fight. 24 And anyone
that works for God can't get into fights,
but they have to be good to everybody. So
don't get angry with people that give you
trouble. You have to teach people in a good
way. 25-26 If somebody doesn't agree with the
true message, you have to straighten them
out, but do it quietly, in an easy way. You
know, the devil, the boss over the bad spirits,
he tries to trick people. It is like he sets a
trap for them. He catches people in his trap,
then he makes them do whatever he wants
them to do. But if you teach people properly,
they can wake up, then God will help them
turn around, and he will get them to think
straight, and they will understand that true
message, and God will get them out of the
devil's trap.

Chapter 3

Bad people in the last days

1 You have to understand this. In the last
days of this world, things will be tough
for people. 2 Most people will only love
themselves, and they will love money. They
will think that they are smart, and they will
tell everyone they are smart. They will say
bad things about other people. They will
never do what their parents tell them to do.
They will never thank anyone for anything.
They will not respect things that belong to
God. 3 They will be hard and cruel. They
will remember the wrong things that other
people do, and they will do payback to them.
They will get wild easily, and they will never
control themselves. They will always hate

* **2:19** Numbers 16:5

everything that is good. 4 They will turn against their friends. They will do stupid things that will make problems for other people, but they will not care. They will think they are really good, but they are not. They will not love God, but instead they will only love to have fun. 5 They will reckon they respect God, but they will reckon that he hasn't got any power. So I'm telling you, keep right away from those people.

6-7 They are the sort of people that trick some women that are stupid. They find women that always do anything they feel like doing, women that really went wrong, women that know that they did lots of bad things. That sort of woman is always ready to listen to a teacher that has a new idea, but they can never understand the true message. Those bad men get those women to let them into their homes, then they trick them with their talk, until the women really believe them. 8-9 Those men have sick and dirty minds, and they don't really believe in God. Think about the story from a long time ago, that story about Jannes and Jambres. They stood up against Moses and argued with him. In the end God killed those 2 men, and everyone saw that they were fools, and that they were wrong. Well, those tricky men are just like those 2 men that lived a long time ago. Those tricky men stand up and argue against anyone that tells the true message, but in the end everyone will know that they are fools, and that they are wrong. *

10 But Timothy, you are very different from them. You believe the message I always teach, and you know the good way I always live. You know that I don't get angry when I get trouble, and I keep on loving people. You know that I believe really strongly in Jesus, and you agree with me about the things I live for. 11 You know that bad people in some towns gave me a lot of trouble. They did that at Antioch, and at Iconium, and at Listra.

You know that they hurt me a lot at those places. But Jesus, our leader, saved me from them, and they didn't kill me. *

People that make trouble

12 And it is always like that. If you belong to Jesus Christ and want to live God's way, bad people will always make trouble for you. 13 And those bad liars will get worse and worse. They will go on tricking people, and just like that, other people will trick them too.

14 But as for you, we taught you lots of things about God, and now you really believe those things. And you know us. We only teach the true message, so you know that those things we taught you are true. So keep on believing and following our message. 15 And remember that a long time ago you were a kid, and your mother taught you things from God's book, and that gave you enough sense to believe in Jesus Christ. Now you believe in him, and he saves you. 16 Everything in God's book comes from God himself. It was God that sent the message to people to write down, and God uses it now to teach us his true word, and he uses it to get us to understand the things that are wrong with our lives, and he uses it to fix us up, and he uses it to teach us to do the things that are right. * 17 That's how God properly trains his workers. He uses the words in his book to teach them, so they can do all those good things that he wants them to do.

Chapter 4

Keep on telling people God's word

1 You know, Jesus Christ will come back, and he will judge everyone. He will judge

* **3:8-9** Exodus 7:11 * **3:11** Acts 13:14—14:20 * **3:16** 2 Peter 1:20-21

everyone that is alive at that time, and everyone that is already dead. So listen to what I'm telling you now. God and Jesus Christ are also listening to what I'm saying. It is this. 2 You've got to tell people God's word. You have to be ready to tell it at any time, no matter if it seems to be the right time or not. Teach it carefully to people, and be ready to wait for them to understand it. If they are going wrong, show them the right way to live, and help them to live that way. If they are going the right way, say good words to them to help them to keep going strong.

3 You see, people are getting less interested in true stories. One day, they will not listen to good people that teach the true message, but instead they will listen to somebody that says strange things. And they will find teachers that will just say whatever people want to hear. 4 Those people will stop listening to the true story, and instead they will listen to stories that are all lies. 5 Don't be like those people. You have to control yourself all the time, no matter what happens to you. If they get tough on you, don't get upset, just keep going. You have to keep on telling people the good news about Jesus, and you have to finish all the work that he gave you to do.

6 As for me, the time has come for me to leave my life here on earth, so I will die some time soon. I will give my life to God. 7 I did my job properly, and I finished all the work God gave me to do. I always told the true message about Jesus. I'm like a man that runs a long race and keeps going hard right up to the finish line. 8 I followed Jesus all the way, and very soon he will give me a prize, like a sportsman gets a medal after he wins. Jesus will make me properly good, that will be my prize. Jesus, our leader, is a fair judge, and he has got that prize ready to give me on the day that he comes back. And not just to me. He will give that prize to everybody that wants him to come back again, he will make them all properly good.

Paul wanted Timothy to come to him

9 Timothy, please come and see me as soon as you can. 10-12 Almost all my friends went away to somewhere else. Demas just likes the things of this life, so he left me and went to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia country, and Titus went to Dalmatia country. And I told Tikicus to go to Ephesus. Only Luke is here with me now. If Mark was here, he could help me a lot in my work, so get him and bring him with you.* 13 You will probably go through Troas as you come to me here. When I was in Troas, I left a coat there with Carpus. So I want you to get that coat and bring it with you. And bring my books too. I especially want those leather books.*

14 Remember that man called Alexander, that makes things out of metal. He gave me a lot of trouble, and he really hurt me. But I will leave it to our leader, Jesus, to punish him for that.* 15 You look out for him too. He doesn't like the message we tell people about God, and he will try to do anything to stop us.

16 And here, in this city, when they took me to court that first time, and I tried to tell the judge my story, nobody else said anything to back me up. They all left me. I hope God will not punish them for that. 17 But God stood there beside me, and he made me strong, so that I could tell his message properly to everybody in that court. Those people there were not Jews, so maybe that was the first time they heard about God. In the end the

* **4:10-12** Acts 20:4; Galatians 2:3; Ephesians 6:21-22; Colossians 4:7-8, 14; 2 Corinthians 8:23; Titus 1:4; Philemon 1:24
* **4:13** Acts 20:6 * **4:14** 1 Timothy 1:20; Psalm 62:12; Romans 2:6

judge didn't sentence me to death, so they didn't give me to the lions to eat. 18 And God will always look after me, no matter what bad things people do to try to hurt me, and he will take me up into heaven to be with him in his family. Everybody has to praise him and say that he is great, for ever and ever. Yes, that's right.

The last words Paul wrote

19 Now I want you to say *hello* from me to Aquila and Priscilla. And say *hello* also to Onesiforus and everyone at his place. *

20 And I'll tell you about 2 of the men that were with me. Erastus is not with me now, he stayed in Corinth. And Trofimus was with me at Miletus, but he got sick, so I had to leave him there until he gets better. *

21 By the way, I want you to try to get here before the cold weather time comes.

All the Christians here say *hello* to you, especially Yubulus, Pudens, Linus and Claudia.

22 That's all. I pray that our leader, Jesus, will be with your spirit, and that he will be really good to you.

From Paul

* **4:19** Acts 18:2; 2 Timothy 1:16-17 * **4:20** Acts 19:22; Romans 16:23; Acts 20:4; 21:29

The letter that Paul wrote to Titus

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **Titus**)*

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter to Titus about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of countries to tell people about Jesus. Titus was a young man that went with Paul to the island called Crete, near the country called Greece. Then Paul got ready to go to another place, but he asked Titus to stay at Crete to help the new Christians there.

In this letter Paul told Titus things that helped him be a good Christian leader. This letter has important messages for us Christians today, especially for ministers and pastors. It can help church leaders work out how to properly look after the people in their churches.

Chapter 1

1 Dear Titus,

I am Paul, and this letter is from me. I work for God, and I am one of Jesus Christ's special workers. God sent me to teach people about Jesus Christ, and to help his people believe in him more. And he sent me to help people understand his message better. Then they will know what they have to do to make God happy.

2 A long time ago, before God made anything, he promised that his people will live with him for ever. And God doesn't lie. His promise is still true, and it stops his people from worrying about what will happen after they die. 3 At first, people didn't know what God promised, but now he says that it is the right time for them to hear his message, and he helps them understand it. God gave me that message, and he told me to tell it to other people. God is the one that saves us.

4 Titus, you and me, we both believe the same things about God, so you are like my own son. I am asking God our father, and Jesus Christ, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourself. You know, Jesus saves us.*

Pick good people to be church leaders

5 Titus, remember when I was with the Christians on that island called Crete, some things there were not right. So I asked you to stay there and try to fix those things. I also told you to pick good leaders to look after the Christians in all the towns on Crete.

6 Now I want to tell you what church leaders have to be like.* They have to be really good people, so that nobody can say anything bad about them. A church leader can only have one wife, and he can't sleep with any other woman, like a husband sleeps with his wife. His kids have to believe in

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* **1:4** 2 Corinthians 8:23; Galatians 2:3; 2 Timothy 4:10 * **1:6** 1 Timothy 3:2-7

God, and they have to do the right things and not get into trouble. His kids have to do what he says.

7 Church leaders are in charge of God's work on earth, so they have to be really good people, and then nobody will say anything bad about them. Whenever you pick people to be church leaders,

– Don't pick people that think they are better than everyone else.
– Don't pick people that get angry too easily.
– Don't pick people that drink a lot of grog.
– Don't pick people that get into fights.
– Don't pick greedy people, that want lots of money and things.

8 Church leaders have to be like this,

– They have to let visitors stay in their houses.
– They have to really want to do good things.
– They have to control themselves.
– They have to be sensible.
– They have to do what is right.
– They have to do things that make God happy.
– They have to be strong for Jesus.

9 And they have to keep on believing God's message about Jesus, the message that we told you. That will help a leader teach true and right things to the people. And then that will help the people to believe in Jesus more strongly. Some people say, "That message isn't true." But it is true, and a good leader can show those people that they are wrong.

Stop people from teaching wrong things

10 You see, there are lots of people that don't do what God says. They talk about a lot of things that don't matter. They also try to trick people. They want people to believe what they say. They are the people that say that we Christians have to follow all the Jewish laws to get God to save us. 11 Those people teach things that are wrong. They trick whole families. And they only do that to get money from people. So you have to stop them.

12 Remember what one of Crete's own teachers said, a long time ago. He said,

"People from Crete are always lying.
They are bad, like cheeky animals.
They are lazy, and they eat too much food."

13 The things that teacher said are still true. You have to talk straight to those bad teachers and tell them that they are doing the wrong thing, so that they will properly believe the true message about Jesus. 14 They have to stop believing in the old stories that people made up. And they have to stop listening to rules from the Jewish people and rules from people that have stopped going God's way. Those rules are just people's rules. They are not God's rules.

15 You know, if people just want to follow God's way, they don't have to worry about people's rules. They are clean inside, so everything is all right for them. But nothing is all right for people that don't want to follow God's way. They can only think in a bad way. They don't know what is right and what is wrong. 16 Those bad people say that they know God, but they do the bad things that God hates. So those people show that they don't really know God. They shame themselves. They don't do what God says. They can't do anything good.

Chapter 2

Teach Christians to do the right thing

1 But Titus, you have to teach people the properly good things, so they will live the right way.

2 You have to teach the older men to control themselves. They have to do good things so

that people will respect them. They have to keep on believing in Jesus strongly. They have to love other people. And, if they get trouble, they have to never give up following Jesus.

3 You also have to teach the older women to do the things that make God happy. Tell them not to say bad things about people, and not to drink a lot of grog, but they have to teach people good things. 4 Then the old women can teach the young women to love their husbands and their kids, 5 and to control themselves, and to only sleep with their own husbands, and not to do what married people do together with anybody else. And they can teach them to work hard at home, and to do good things, and to think about what their husbands want and agree with them. So people will see the things that the young women do, and they will not be able to say anything bad about God's message.

6 You also have to teach the young men to control themselves. 7 You too, you have to always do good things. Then the young men will see you, and they will do good things too. You always have to teach the true message, and remember, your job is important. 8 The message you teach has to be right, so that nobody can rubbish it. Then your enemies can't say anything bad about you. Anyone that says bad things about you will shame themselves.

9 And now I want to talk about workers and their bosses. Workers have to do what their bosses say. They have to make their bosses happy. Tell them, "Don't talk back to your boss, 10 and don't ever steal from your boss, but show your boss that they can always trust you." Then people will say that those workers are good. And people will respect that message from God about Jesus, and they will want to know more about him.

We are God's own people, so we have to do things that make God happy

11 It's like this. God has shown us that he is very good to us. He made a way to save everybody. 12 He teaches us to say *no* to the bad things of this world. He tells us not to live a wild life. He tells us to control ourselves. He tells us to do good things that make him happy. 13 He tells us to do these things now, while we wait for Jesus Christ to come back. He is our God, and he is the one that saves us. He will come back, and he will show everybody in the world that he is really great. Then we will be very happy.

14 Jesus died to save us from all the bad things of this world. He did that to change us into his own special people, like he properly cleaned us inside, and now we don't want to do anything bad, but we only want to do good things. *

15 So you have to teach these things to all the Christians there, and teach them in a strong way. Tell the Christians to keep going strong for Jesus. And if they do anything wrong, tell them to stop it. Make sure they take notice of you.

Chapter 3

Christians have to live properly

1 Tell the Christians there to remember what we taught them, that they have to follow the government's rules. They have to follow the rules of all the government bosses, and they always have to be ready to do good things. 2 And tell them not to say bad things about other people. They have to be happy with each other, and not fight or argue. They have to go easy on other people.

3 You know, we were like that before we believed in Jesus. We did silly things too. We didn't do what God told us to do. People

* **2:14** Psalm 130:8; Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 4:20; 7:6; 14:2; 1 Peter 2:9

tricked us, and we believed things that were not true. And we wanted to do all sorts of bad things. We couldn't stop ourselves. If anybody had a lot of things, we wanted those things for ourselves, and we were angry with those people. We hated people, and people hated us.

4 But then God did something to help us. He showed us how much he loves us. 5 God saved us, but he didn't save us because we did good things. No. He saved us because he felt really sorry for us. Then his Holy Spirit washed us so that we are really clean inside, and he made us like we got born again as new people. 6 You see, God sent Jesus Christ to die for us and save us, and then he properly filled us with his Holy Spirit. 7 God was very good to us, and he did all that for us. So now we are his friends, we are in his family, and we are sure that we will live with him for ever. So we can be very happy.

8 That is all very true. I want you to teach those things strongly. I want you to be sure that people understand those things. Then the people that believe God's message will think more about doing good things. And those good things will help everyone.

9 But make sure you don't argue with people about silly things. You know, some people argue about family groups from a long time ago. They argue about all sorts of old rules. Don't do that. It's a waste of time. It doesn't get you anywhere.

10 Some people teach things that are different from God's true message. They get Christians to fight with each other, so you have to tell those people to stop. You might even have to tell them 2 times. And if they don't stop after you tell them 2 times, then leave them and don't have anything more to do with them. 11 Those people don't believe God's true message. They know that the things they do are wrong, but they keep on doing them anyway. They will not change.

Paul wanted to see Titus again

12 And now, Titus, I want to tell you about some people that are with me here. Artemas and Tikicus are here now, and I will send one of them to help you. After he gets there, please try to come and meet me at Nicopolis town. I will stay there in the next cold weather time. *

13 And you know Zenas, the lawyer, and his mate, Apollos. Those 2 men will be leaving your place soon to go on a trip. Please help them as much as you can. Make sure they have everything they need for their trip. *
14 And teach our people to do good things like that all the time. They have to help anybody that really needs things. When they do that, they will be doing something good with their lives.

15 All right, I'm going to finish my letter here. Everybody here with me says *hello* to you, and please say *hello* to the people there that love us and that believe God's true message.

I pray that God will be very good to you.

From Paul

* **3:12** Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21-22; Colossians 4:7-8; 2 Timothy 4:12 * **3:13** Acts 18:24; 1 Corinthians 16:12

The letter that Paul wrote to Philemon

*(The book in the Holy Bible called **Philemon**)*

About this letter

Paul wrote this letter to Philemon about 2,000 years ago, more than 20 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

After Jesus went back to heaven, God sent Paul to lots of countries to tell people about Jesus. Philemon was in one of those countries. He heard what Paul said, and he believed in Jesus. After that, Paul went to other places to tell more people about Jesus.

At that time, the Roman people were the bosses over all the countries where Paul went. They didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus, so they grabbed him and put him in jail. Paul wrote this letter while he was in jail.

In those days there were some people that had to work for no pay. They were like prisoners, but they were not in jail. They lived with the boss they worked for, and they were not allowed to go away from them. They were called slaves. *You see, if somebody borrowed money, and if they didn't pay it back, they had to be a slave of the person they borrowed that money from. Or if the Roman soldiers caught some of their enemies, they might force them to be slaves.*

Onesimus was a slave of Philemon, but one day Onesimus left him and ran away. After that, Onesimus heard Paul talk about Jesus, and he believed in Jesus. Then Paul told him, "You have to go back to your boss, Philemon." Philemon was a Christian too. So Paul wrote this letter for Onesimus to take with him, to give to Philemon.

Paul wrote this letter to Philemon, but we can learn from what Paul said to him.

Chapter 1

Dear Philemon,

1 I am Paul, and this letter is from me. I work for Jesus Christ. The bosses didn't like me doing that, so they put me in jail. Our friend Timothy is here too. He is helping me write this letter.

We are writing to you, Philemon. You work for Jesus, just like we do, and you are our good friend. 2 And we are also writing this to our friend Afia, and to our friend Arkipus. He is like a soldier for Jesus, just like me and Timothy. And we are also writing this to all you Christians there in the church that meets at Philemon's place. *

3 I am asking God our father, and Jesus Christ our leader, to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

Paul thanked God for Philemon

4-5 People tell me good things about you,

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* **1:2** Colossians 4:17

Philemon. They say that you believe in our leader, Jesus, and you love all God's people, so whenever I pray for you, I always thank God for you. 6 I ask God to help you know more about all the good things that Jesus Christ gives us after we join with him, and I ask God to help you tell other people about him, and tell them what you believe. That is what I pray for you. 7 I know, my friend, that you have been good to God's people. You have helped them, and you have made them happy. I know that you love Jesus and you love all God's people. That makes me very happy, and it makes me want to keep on working for God.

Paul asked Philemon to help Onesimus

8 So I'm asking you to do something for me. You know, Jesus Christ says that I can talk strong to you, like a boss, and I can tell you straight what you've got to do, but I will not talk to you like that. I'm not telling you to do it, I'm asking you to do it. 9 You see, I love you a lot.

You know me, Paul, and you know that I'm an old man. I work for Jesus Christ, so the bosses here put me in jail. 10 And I'm asking you to do something for this man here. He is like my own kid. I told him about Jesus while I was here in prison, and now he believes in Jesus. I'm talking about Onesimus. * 11 You see, he used to work for you some time ago, but he didn't help you. But now he can help both of us, you and me.

12 I love Onesimus so much that he is like a part of me. But I'm sending him back to you. 13 You see, I told the people here the good news about Jesus, and the bosses didn't like me doing that, so they put me in jail. And I know that you can't come here to help me, so I want to keep Onesimus here, to help me instead of you helping me. 14 But first I have to ask you about it. I don't want to do anything unless you agree. I don't want to force you to do anything. It's better if you, yourself, want to do it.

15 Maybe God let Onesimus leave you for a short time so that now you can have him back for ever. 16 You can have him back again now, but not just as a work-man that you don't have to pay. Now he can be something much better than your work-man. He can be like your brother, and you can love him. I love Onesimus very much, but you will love him even more than I do. You see, he is your work-man, but you will like him more than a boss likes his work-men, because he is also your brother. You and he both belong to our leader, Jesus, so he is your brother, and you will love him a lot.

17 Remember that I'm your friend, and we do things together. If you reckon I'm your friend, be happy to see Onesimus when he comes back to you, and be good to him, just like you are happy to see me, and you are good to me whenever I visit you. 18 If Onesimus did something wrong to you while he worked for you, I will fix it up for you. If he has to pay you some money, I will pay that money for him. 19 *This is me, Paul, writing this with my own hand so you can be sure I mean it, I will pay that money back to you.* But remember you already got a lot from me. I told you about Jesus, and he gave you real life.

20 Yes, my friend, you and me, we both belong to our leader, Jesus Christ, so I really want you to help me. Then I will feel really happy. 21 Yes, I'm sure that you will always do what I ask you, so I'm writing to you like this. And I know that you will do even more than I ask you.

* **1:10** Colossians 4:9

The end of Paul's letter

22 Now I will tell you a bit about myself. I know that you mob are praying for me at this time, so I reckon they will soon let me go out of this jail. Then I will come and visit you again. So get a place ready for me to live in while I stay with you.

23 Do you remember Epafras? He belongs to Jesus Christ, so they put him in jail here with me. He says *hello* to you.*

24 And remember Mark, Aristarkus, Demas and Luke. They work with me here, and they say *hello* to you too.*

25 I ask our leader, Jesus Christ, to be very good to you, and to be with your spirit too.

From Paul

* **1:23** Colossians 1:7; 4:12 * **1:24** Acts 12:12, 25; 13:13; 15:37-39; 19:29; 27:2; Colossians 4:10, 14; 2 Timothy 4:10-11

The letter that James wrote

(The book in the Holy Bible called James)

About this letter

James wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 20 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and now it is in the Holy Bible.

James was one of Jesus's brothers, and after Jesus went back to heaven, James became a leader in the church in Jerusalem (see Mark 6:2-3; Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; 1 Corinthians 15:7; Galatians 1:19; 2:9, 12-13).

James wrote this letter to the Christians in other churches to tell them how to be good Christians and live properly for Jesus.

These messages are very important for us today, just like they were for the Christians at that time.

Chapter 1

1 I am James. I work for God and for our leader Jesus Christ. I am writing this letter to all God's people that live in lots of places everywhere in the world. I hope you are all good and happy. *

If you get trouble

2 Listen, my Christian friends, you might get a lot of trouble sometimes. You might get different sorts of trouble. But don't get upset about it. No, you can be happy about it, 3 because it will make you strong for God. You see, if you get trouble, and if you keep on trusting God, then you will become really strong for God, and you will stay strong, even if more trouble comes. 4 Then, after you learn to do that properly, you will be really strong. You will not miss out on any of those things that make you a good Christian.

Ask God to help you do the right thing

5 So if you want to properly understand what is the right thing to do, and if you want to learn how to be strong when you get trouble, just ask God to help you. He will not be angry with you. He is happy when you ask him for help like that, and he will help you and make you think properly. He will make you think the right way so that you will do the right thing. 6 But whenever you ask him, you have to believe that he will answer you. Don't think, "Maybe he will not listen to me." No, don't think like that. Anybody that thinks like that can't stay strong. They are like a bit of dry grass. The wind just blows it around and it goes anywhere. 7-8 If you are like that, it is like you are thinking 2 ways at the same time, and you will not be sure about anything. If you are like that, you can't think that God will help you at all.

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* **1:1** Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; Acts 15:13; Galatians 1:19

Poor people and rich people

9 If Christians haven't got much money, or if
people don't think they are important, they
can be happy, because God thinks they are
important. 10 But the Christians that are rich
can be happy too, because they know that
they are not important. They know that
they need God, and that he will save them.
You see, money can't make people happy,
and it can't stop people from dying. People
are like flowers that grow in the bush. 11 At
first they look good, but later the sun gets
hot and those little flowers die, and they
don't look good any more. That is a picture
of people. Rich people might keep working
to get more money, but they will still die,
and then they will not have that money
any more. *

Keep on believing

12 If God lets people test you, to see if you
trust him properly, don't give up trusting
him. After God sees that you keep on
trusting him, he will give you new life, so
that you will live with him for ever. He
promised to do that for everybody that
loves him.

What makes us do wrong things?

13 Whenever you feel like you want to do
something that is wrong, don't blame
God and say that he is pushing you to do
something wrong. No way. God never pushes
anybody to do wrong things, and nobody
can trick God to make him do something
wrong. 14-15 We do it to ourselves. Whenever
we think about things we want for ourselves,
and we don't think about things God wants
us to do, we just trick ourselves. Then we
go ahead and do wrong things. You know,
if we keep on doing those bad things, we
will die.

God is good to us

16 Don't let anybody trick you, my Christian
friends. 17 Everything that is really good
comes from God in heaven. He made the
sun, and the moon, and the stars, up there
in the sky that give us light. You know, they
move around, and they make shadows that
move and change around. But God does not
change, like those things. He never changes
at all, not even a little bit. He always gives
us good things. *

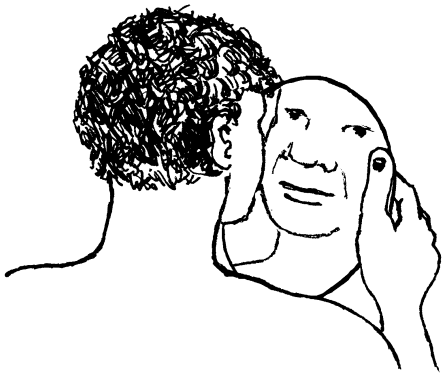
18 He wanted us to be in his own family,
so he sent his true word to us. And when
we believed that word it was like we were
born all over again. That's how he made us
his really special people.

Listen to God and do everything he says

19 Listen, my Christian friends, you have
to be ready to listen to other people, and
you have to stop and think before you say
anything yourself. Stop and think before
you get angry. 20 If you are angry, you can't
do the good things that God wants you to
do. 21 So you have to stop doing all those
things that are dirty and wrong. You have
to listen properly to the word from God,
that he put right inside you, and you have
to do what it says. Don't think that you are
so good that you don't need God's word. No.
You have to do what it says, then that word
will save you.

22 And don't just listen to that word from
God, but you have to do everything it says
too. If you don't do the things it says, you
will just trick yourself. 23-24 Don't be like a
man that looks at his face in a mirror, but
then he just walks away, and he forgets
about it. He doesn't do anything to make
himself look any better. Well, if you hear
God's word, but you don't do the things it
says, you are just like that man, because you

* **1:10-11** Isaiah 40:6-7 * **1:17** 1 Samuel 15:29



A man looking at his face in a mirror

forget that word, and you don't do anything to make yourself any better. 25 Don't be like that. You have to listen to God's word and keep on thinking about it. Don't forget it, but do everything it says. That word will make you free, so that you will do everything God wants. And God will make you really happy whenever you do the things he wants you to do.

26 You might go to church and think you are really good, but if you can't stop yourself from saying bad things, you are really just tricking yourself, and going to church for nothing. 27 And God also wants you to look after people that need help. He wants you to look after people that haven't got any money to buy food, like kids that haven't got a mother or a father, or women whose husbands have died. If you do that sort of thing, God will be happy with you. But God will not be happy with you if you just look after yourself, like the people that belong to this world do.

Chapter 2

Be good to all sorts of people

1 Listen, my Christian friends, you know that our leader Jesus Christ is really great, and you believe in him. So you have to be good to everybody. You have to treat everybody the same way. 2 Suppose one man comes to your meeting wearing really pretty clothes and gold rings on his fingers, and another poor man comes wearing old rubbish clothes. 3-4 Maybe you look at the man with pretty clothes and think to yourself, "He has got a lot of money." So you are good to him, and you say to him, "Here is a really good seat for you." But you are hard on the poor man, and you say to him, "You can stand over there," or you say, "You can sit on the ground." If you are like that, you make yourself like a bad judge, and that is wrong. Don't think that way about people. You have to be good to everybody, people that have money, and people that don't have money.

5 Listen to me, my good Christian friends. God picks out poor people, and he helps them to trust him properly. He promises to give them a good place in his family. He promises that to everybody that loves him. In the end those poor people will be really rich. 6 So, if you rubbish poor people, you are wrong. Think about this. Who is hard on you? What people take you to court? Do poor people do that, or rich people? Rich people do it. 7 And they talk against Jesus Christ. You belong to Jesus Christ, but they rubbish him.

8 You know, there is a really important law in God's book. It says,

> "Love other people, just like you love yourself."

If you do that, you are doing the right thing.* 9 But if you are good to some people but hard on other people, you are doing the wrong thing. You are not following that law. 10 Now think about God's laws. If you don't follow all of God's laws, you are guilty. Suppose one man does everything in those laws except

* **2:8** Leviticus 19:18

that he breaks one law, that man is guilty. Suppose another man breaks all those laws, he is guilty too. They are both guilty. 11 It is like this. One of God's laws is,

"Don't sleep with anyone that is not your wife or your husband, as if you are married to them."

And another law is,

"Don't kill anybody."

Suppose you didn't sleep with the wrong person, but you did kill somebody, you are guilty anyway, because you didn't follow all of God's laws. *

12 God will judge us, and he will use the law that tells us to love other people. So before you say anything, and before you do anything, you have to think about that law from God. That is the law that makes us free so that we can do whatever is right. 13 Later on, God will judge you. And if you don't feel sorry for other people now, then God will not feel sorry for you. But if you feel sorry for them now, and if you are good to them, God will feel sorry for you later on, when he judges you, and he will be good to you. You see, people that are sorry for other people don't have to worry about God judging them.

Believe in Jesus and do the right things too

14 My Christian friends, it is no good for you to say that you believe in Jesus Christ if you don't do the things that he wants you to do. If you reckon you believe, but you don't do the things he wants, you can't think that God will save you. 15 If there is another Christian that is hungry and needs food, and is cold and needs some clothes, 16 you can't just talk to them and not give them anything. You can't just say, "Don't worry. I hope you get something to eat, and I hope you get some clothes to wear." You see, if you don't do anything to help them, you don't do any good at all. 17 So if you reckon that you believe in Jesus Christ, but you don't do the good things that he wants you to do, I reckon your talk isn't true. It is useless. It will get you no-where.

18 Maybe you reckon, "Some people can believe in Jesus, and other people can do the good things that Jesus says to do." I answer you like this, "If you don't do the things that Jesus says, you can't show me that you believe in him. But whenever I do the good things he tells me to do, I show you that I do believe in him." 19 You believe that there is only one God. That's good, but even the bad spirits believe that. They believe that there is only one God, and if they think about him, they get really frightened of him. They get so frightened that they shake.

20-23 If you don't do the things that Jesus says, it is no good to say that you believe in him. If you don't know much, and if you want to argue with me, just think about the story of Abraham, our grand-father that lived a long time ago. God told Abraham to give him his son Isaac. To do that, Abraham had to kill Isaac, and burn his body on a table made of stones. Abraham believed that somehow God would make it end up all right, so he started to do that hard thing that God said. He was going to kill Isaac. But just then, God told him to stop. You see, God says this in his book,

"Abraham believed what God said, so God was really happy with him, and told him, 'You believe me, so now I'm saying you are properly good, like you never did anything wrong.' " *

And that is how it happened.

In another place it says that Abraham not only believed God, but he also did that hard

* **2:11** Exodus 20:13-14; Deuteronomy 5:17-18 * **2:20-23** Genesis 15:6; 2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8

thing God told him to do, so Abraham was a friend of God. 24 We can learn from that story about Abraham. If people believe God so much that they do whatever he says, like Abraham did, then God will say they are all right. But he will not say that to people that don't do what he says, even if they reckon they believe in God.

25 And think about that story about Rahab. She was a bad woman that used to sleep with any man that paid her money, like he was her husband. But one day, Israel's enemies were looking for 2 men from Israel, and those 2 men asked Rahab to help them. So she hid them in her house until their enemies went past, and then she told them which way to run to get away. She helped those 2 men, so God was happy with her. Later on, a lot of Israel soldiers attacked that town, but God saved Rahab, and they didn't kill her.*

26 It is like this. If a person's body doesn't breathe, it is no good. That person is dead. In the same way, if you say you believe in Jesus, but you don't do the things God wants you to do, you are no good as a Christian. It is like you are dead.



Rahab helped the 2 men climb out the window and told them which way to run

Chapter 3

Teachers need to be careful and teach properly

1-2 My Christian friends, don't all of you try to be teachers of God's word. Only the right people can do that. You see, God will judge us all, and if you teach people something that is wrong, God might punish you a lot. It is like this, all of us make mistakes, and we get trouble from those mistakes. But if we teach people, and if we make a mistake so that we teach them something that is wrong, we will get really big trouble from that. It is hard for us to control our tongues so that we say everything properly. If you can control your tongue, you are properly good, and you can control all of your body.

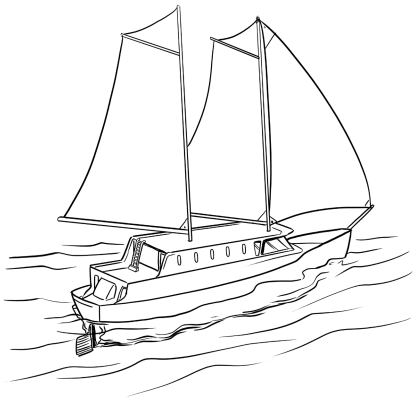
3 Think about the people that ride horses. They put a little bit of iron in the horse's mouth, and they tie ropes to it, then they use that bit of iron to turn the whole horse around, and they steer it wherever they want it to go.



People use a little bit of iron in a horse's mouth to turn the horse

4 And think about ships. They are like that too. A ship is very big, but its driver can use the little rudder at the back to steer it

* **2:25** Joshua 2:1-21; Hebrews 11:31



People can steer a big ship with a little rudder

around. Even if strong winds want to blow it one way, that driver can steer it another way using that little rudder. 5 Well, those are pictures of our tongues. Our tongues are only little, like that bit of iron and that little rudder. Yes, our tongues are little, but if we use them to talk up big and tell people that we are really good, they will do a lot of damage.

Think about fire. A very little spark can start a fire, and then it can burn up a lot of bush. 6 In the same way each of us has a little tongue, and it is like a little spark of fire inside us. It can say really bad things, and tell lies, and then that can make the rest of our bodies bad. Our tongues can make everything in our lives go wrong, like a spark of fire can make a big bush fire. The devil, the boss over the bad spirits from hell, he makes us say those bad things. It is like he uses our tongues to start that fire, and it grows like a bush fire, and it gets us into a lot of trouble. 7 People can control all sorts of wild animals, and birds, and snakes, and fish. They can make them quiet and train them to do whatever their boss wants them to do. 8 But nobody can control their own tongue properly. It is always saying bad things and hurting people, like it has poison in it, just like a cheeky snake.

9 Sometimes we use our tongue to tell God that he is our good father, and sometimes we use it to swear at people. But remember, God made people to be like himself. * 10 Both good things and bad things come out of our mouths. But, my Christian friends, that's not right. 11-12 Do you ever find fresh water and salt water coming from the same water-hole? No, it is never like that. And you never find 2 sorts of fruit on one tree. So our mouths shouldn't say 2 sorts of things. We shouldn't say good things and bad things with the same mouth.

Think God's way, not the devil's way

13 Do you reckon that you can think properly, and do you reckon that you know if something is right or wrong? If you do, you have to show everybody that you think properly by quietly doing good things for other people. If you do those good things, and if you don't tell anybody about it, you are thinking properly. 14-15 But if you only think about things that are good for yourself, and if you are jealous of other people, and if you hate other people, you are not thinking God's way. That's the devil's way. He is the boss over the bad spirits. You can't hide the way you think by telling lies about it, and by saying that you are really good. 16 You see, sometimes people get jealous of each other, and sometimes they only do things to make themselves happy, and they don't think about anyone else. Whenever that happens, those people start fighting each other, and they get into all sorts of trouble.

17 But whenever we think God's way, we are like this,

– We keep away from doing anything bad.

* **3:9** Genesis 1:26

– We want to make other people happy, and we want to help them to be friends with each other.
– We are easy on other people, not hard.
– We listen to people and let them get a fair go.
– We feel sorry for people that have problems, and we do everything we can to help them.
– We are fair to everybody. We don't treat some people good and other people like they are rubbish.
– We don't pretend that we are better than we really are.

18 Whenever somebody teaches people to live the right way, like that, those other people stop fighting each other, and they start to be good to each other.

Chapter 4

Let God be your boss, not the devil

1 Why do you always fight and argue with each other? I'll tell you why. It is because you only think about things that you want for yourself, to make yourself happy, and you don't care about anyone else. So you fight everyone else to get the things you want. 2 You think you really want something a lot, and if you can't get it, you argue and fight for it. You try to work out ways to trick people, or maybe even kill people, just to get something you want. But you don't ask God for it, and that's why you don't get it. 3 And even if you do ask God for something, he doesn't listen to you. He knows that you are just thinking about yourself. He knows you just want to make yourself happy, and you don't care about anybody else, so he doesn't give you that thing you want.

4 If you are like that, it shows that you left God. You stopped following him and joined the other people in the world that hate God. They are God's enemies. So if you join up with people like that, you make yourself God's enemy. You ran away from God. You are just like a woman that leaves her husband and runs away with another man.

5 God says something important about this in his book. He says that he put his Holy Spirit in us, and he says that if we leave him and follow some other way, his spirit gets really upset. 6 And remember that God is really good to us. His book says this too,

"God is against people that think they are great,
but he is good to people that know they are not great."*

7 So listen to God, and follow him, and do what he says. Fight back against the devil, the boss over the bad spirits. Whenever he tries to get you to go wrong, just tell him to be quiet, and don't listen to him. Then he will leave you, and he will run away from you. 8 But when you trust God, you go close to him, and when you do that, he will come close to you, and he will help you. So you have to stop doing bad things. Don't even think about doing bad things. Don't think that maybe you will go the right way, or maybe the wrong way. No, forget the wrong way, and just go the right way. 9 Stop laughing about the bad things you did. Cry about them instead. You went wrong, so be sad, not happy. 10 Tell God that you are sorry. Tell him that you know that you are weak, and that you are not important. If you do that, he will tell you that you are important, and he will make you strong.

Don't make yourself the judge of other people

11 My Christian friends, don't say bad things about each other or rubbish each other. If you rubbish other people, it is like you reckon you are their judge. But God's law

* **4:6** Proverbs 3:34

says that you have to love other people, so if you rubbish them, you are really saying that you think God's law is wrong. But you are not a judge, so you can't say that God's law is wrong. Your job is to do whatever God's law says. 12 God made his law, and he is the only judge. He is the only one that can blame anybody. He can save somebody, or he can kill somebody. But you can't do that. You are not God, so you can't make yourself a judge and rubbish other people.

Don't talk up big about something you want to do

13 Listen. Some of you talk like this, you say, "Tomorrow we will go to that town over there, and we will buy things for a little bit of money, and then we will sell them for a lot of money. We will keep on doing that for a year. That's how we will get plenty of money to keep for ourselves." 14 You talk like that. You say, "Tomorrow," but you don't know what will happen tomorrow. Will you still be alive tomorrow? You know, your life is like a puff of smoke, it doesn't last long. You are alive today, but maybe tomorrow you will die. *

15-16 So don't talk up big about something you will do tomorrow, but instead you have to talk like this, "If God wants us to, we will keep on living, and we will go and do that thing." It is wrong to forget God and talk up big about something before you do it.

17 You see, if you know the right thing to do, but you don't do it, it is just the same for you as if you did something wrong.

Chapter 5

God will punish people that cheat to make themselves rich

1 Now I'm talking to rich people that cheated people to get money for themselves. You mob listen to me. You are going to get big trouble, so you can start to cry right now, and you can be really sad. 2-3 All your money and clothes, and those things you got for yourself, they will all become useless. They will rot away. Or they will rust away. Or white ants will eat them. God will see that rusty rotten mess, and he will say that you are too greedy, and he will punish you with big trouble. It will be like a fire burning up your body. You thought you could keep all that stuff for a long time, but you will not have it for very long. * 4 You cheated to get that money. You got men to work on your farm, and they cut down the food crop that grew there, and they brought all that food to you. But you didn't pay them for that work. You sent them away with no pay. Then they cried about it, and our God heard them. He is very strong, and he can see that you cheated them. God can see their money. It is still in your pocket. So God will make big trouble for you. *

5-6 While you lived here on this earth, you killed good people that couldn't fight back. You lied and said they were guilty, and then you killed them. While you were doing that, you got everything you wanted, and you had plenty to eat. You are fat now, but look out. God will kill you. Think about a farmer and his cow. He feeds that cow a lot of grass and makes it fat, then he kills it to get some meat. Well, that is a picture of you. You are fat now, but God will kill you.

Christians, don't give up

7-8 Now I'm talking to you Christian people. You have to wait for our leader, Jesus, to come back, so don't give up. Think about farmers. They plant their food crops, and then they just wait for the rain to come and make the plants grow, so that in the end,

* **4:14** Proverbs 27:1 * **5:2-3** Matthew 6:19 * **5:4** Deuteronomy 24:14-15

the farmers will get lots of food from those plants. Well, you have to wait, just like they do. Don't give up. Our leader, Jesus, will come back soon.

9 My Christian friends, don't complain about each other, or God will judge you and say that you are wrong. He is the big judge, and he is coming soon. He is nearly here already.

10 My Christian friends, remember the stories from a long time ago. Think about the people that told God's messages to people. They kept going, even if people didn't believe them, and if people gave them a lot of trouble. 11 They didn't give up, so now we respect them, and we say they were good people. Remember the story about Job. He was a good man, but he got a lot of trouble. But he kept on following God, and in the end, God made everything good for him. So we know that God always feels sorry for his people when they get trouble, and he will be very good to them. *

12 And there is another thing that I want to say, my friends, and it is very important. Whenever you promise something, don't say, "God is the boss over heaven and earth, and if I don't do what I promise, he will punish me." Don't say anything like that. You see, if you say that, and then don't do what you promised, then God will say that you are guilty. So just tell the true story. Say *yes* when that is true, or *no* when that is true, and don't say anything more. *

This is how to pray

13 Have any of you got trouble? You have to keep on praying about it. Or are any of you happy? You can sing to God to say *thank you* to him and to tell everybody that God is really good. 14 Are any of you sick? You have to ask the leaders of the church to come to you and pray for you. They can ask for Jesus's power to make you better, and they can put some olive oil on you while they pray. * 15 Whenever somebody prays and really trusts God to make a sick person better, God will do what they are asking him to do. Jesus, our leader, will make that sick person good again. And if they got sick because they did something wrong, God will not punish them any more for doing that bad thing.

16 So whenever you go wrong and do bad things, don't try to say that you are still good. No. Tell each other the true story about the bad things that you did. Then you can pray for each other, so that God can make you good again. Whenever a good person prays to God about something, then God uses his power and does whatever that good person asks for. 17 Think about the story about Elijah. He was just a person, like us, but he prayed and asked God to stop the rain, and God did that. It didn't rain at all for the next 3½ years. * 18 Then Elijah asked God to send rain again, and God did that. A lot of rain came down, and then the food plants started to grow again. *

19-20 Listen, my Christian friends, suppose a Christian starts to forget about God's true words, and that person goes the wrong way. And suppose somebody else talks to them and gets them to come back to the right way. Then God will go easy on the person that went the wrong way. He will not punish them for all the bad things they did, and he will not finish them up for ever. You see, the person that gets them to come back does a lot of good. So that is the sort of thing you have to do. *

From James

* **5:11** Job 1:21-22; 2:10; Psalm 103:8 * **5:12** Matthew 5:34-37 * **5:14** Mark 6:13 * **5:17** 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1
* **5:18** 1 Kings 18:42-45 * **5:19-20** Proverbs 10:12; 1 Peter 4:8

The 1st letter that Peter wrote

(The book in the Holy Bible called 1 Peter)

About this letter

Peter was one of Jesus's 12 special workers. He went everywhere with Jesus and knew him well.

Peter wrote 2 letters that are now in the Holy Bible. This is the 1st letter. He wrote it about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven. He sent it to Christians that lived in lots of different places.

At that time there were people that kept on making trouble for Christians. Some people were hurting the Christians, and some were even killing them. Lots of Christians were very frightened and sad.

Peter wanted those Christians to be brave, not frightened. So he wrote this letter to help them be strong and happy. He didn't want them to stop following Jesus. He got them to remember that God is great and always takes good care of his people.

Peter didn't want those Christians to listen to anyone that was teaching things that were wrong. Peter knew that Jesus will come back again, and he wanted those Christians to be ready for him.

These words that Peter wrote to them have very important messages for all of us Christians.

Chapter 1

1 I am Peter, and this letter is from me. I am one of Jesus Christ's special workers.

I'm sending this letter to you people that God picked to be in his family. I'm sending it to you Christians in a lot of different places, called Pontus, and Galatia, and Capadoshia, and Asia, and Bithinia. You had to leave your homes, and now you live in those places.

2 A long time ago, God, our father, knew you, and he picked you to be in his family. His spirit picked you out from other people to make you his special people. You listened to Jesus's words, and you did whatever he said. Jesus died and his blood came out, and it is like God put that blood of Jesus on you to make you clean.

I'm asking God to be properly good to you, and to make you feel really happy and quiet inside yourselves.

God keeps good things for us

3 God is very good to us. We went wrong, but he feels sorry for us, and he is good to us. Now he puts new life in us, like we get born all over again. Jesus died, but God brought him back to life. From that we know that God will save us too. So let us thank God, the father of our leader, Jesus, and say that he is really good. 4 We are his family, so he will give us a lot of good things. He has them all ready in heaven for us, so now we just wait for those things. God looks after them all there for us in heaven. They will never rot or get dirty there, and nobody can ever mess them up. 5 God has a lot of power, and he looks after us, all of us that trust him.

He will look after us until the last day. Then he will show everyone that he saved us.

6 So think about all that, and you will get really happy. You might get different sorts of trouble now, and you might be sad for a little while, but think about the things that will happen later, and you will be really happy. In the end God will save you from those troubles.

7 You know about gold. It is very special. People put that gold into a fire to make it really clean. The fire makes it better, it burns away all the rubbish that isn't real gold. But even gold will not last for ever. It belongs to this world. Now think about the troubles that come to us. They make us better because they show that we really trust God. If we keep on trusting him, God will say, "You are very special to me. You are much more special to me than gold." So keep on trusting God, and after Jesus comes again, God will talk to you like that, and he will make you important.

8-9 You never saw Jesus, but you love him. You can't see him now, but you trust him. You are trusting God, and he is saving you, so you are really happy. You are so happy you can't properly say how happy you are.

10-11 A long time ago, the men that brought God's messages told people about God. They said that he is good, and that he saves us. At that time, they wanted to find out more about God saving people, so they carefully tried to find out more about the man that God promised to send to save people, called the Christ. The spirit of Jesus Christ was in them and showed them that at first the Christ was going get big trouble, and he was going to die. But after that, God would make him really important. So they wanted to know who the Christ was and when he was going to come. 12 His spirit told them that the message wasn't for themselves, but it was for you. That all happened a long time ago, and now God's people have told you that good message about Jesus. The Holy Spirit from heaven gave them power to talk to you.

This is all very wonderful. Even God's angels in heaven don't know all about the things that God does to save people, and they want to find out more.

Stay away from things that are bad

13 So you have to think about it more clearly and be careful about everything you do. Keep waiting for Jesus to come, and get ready for him. God will show him to everybody, and he will be very good to you at that time.

14 In the past, you didn't know that God was good. So at that time you did all the bad things you wanted to do. But now you are God's kids. So you have to stop doing those bad things, 15 and you have to be properly good and right, just like God. He picked you for himself. So you have to be good, just like him.

16 You see, God's book says this,

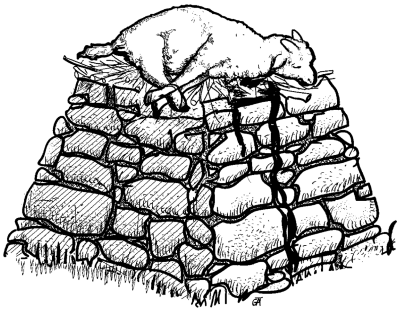
> "God is properly good, and he keeps away from everything that is bad, so you have to be like that too, you have to be properly good, and you have to keep away from everything that is bad."*

17 You know that God is our father, and you pray to him. He looks at everything we do, and he treats us in a fair way. So you have to properly respect God now. You don't belong to this world, you are only living here for a little while, but later you will live with God.

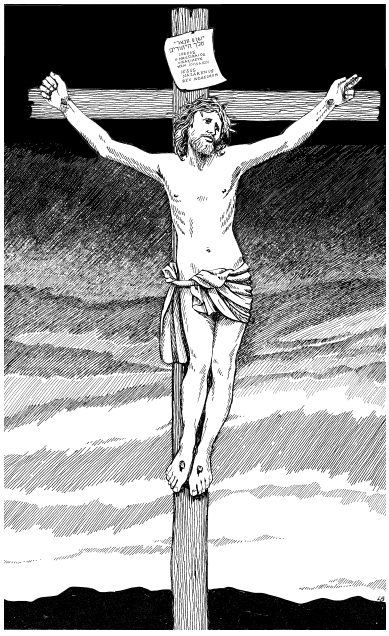
18 Your grand-parents and elders tried to teach you the way to live, but they didn't teach you God's way. That old way was useless, and you weren't free. But God has saved you from that wrong way. He paid a lot

* **1:16** Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2

to set you free from that old way. Sometimes people pay money to get somebody out of prison and let them go free. But money doesn't last for ever. 19 So God didn't pay money to set you free. He did more than that. I'll tell you the price he paid for you. You know the old Jewish ceremonies. You know that they pick a young sheep that has nothing wrong with it, and they kill it to give it to God. Well, that is a picture of Jesus. There was nothing wrong with him, and he never did anything wrong. But people killed him. He bled and died for you. That is the price God paid to set you free, and it is better than money, it lasts for ever. You see, you belong to God now.



People used to kill a young sheep, to give it to God



People killed Jesus, he died to set us free

20-21 A long time ago, before God made the world, he picked Jesus to set you free. Then, later, Jesus came into the world. And now you know about him. You know that he died for you, and so you believe in God too. After Jesus died, God made him alive again, and God made him very great and gave him a lot of power. Now you can trust God and wait for everything he promised you.

22 You listened to the true message from God, and you did everything he said in that message. Then God cleaned up your lives and you stopped doing bad things. So now you love each other. Well, keep on loving each other very much. 23 God gave you new life. It's not like the life you got from your mother and father. That life will end. But when you listened properly to God's message, he gave you new life, like you got born again. Your new life will not end, because God's word will never finish up. It lives for ever.

24 God says this in his book,

"All people are like grass with pretty flowers,
they are beautiful for some time, but then they die.
25 But God's word will never die, it will last for ever."*

And that is the message about Jesus that God's people told you.

Chapter 2

God's word makes you grow

1 So clean up your lives and stop doing bad things. Don't tell lies, but tell the straight and true story. Don't say you are good if

* **1:24-25** Isaiah 40:6-8

you are not. Stop being jealous of other people, don't hate them because they have something that you don't have. And don't rubbish another person. 2 Instead, you have to keep learning more of God's word. Think about little babies. They always want milk. It makes them grow and get strong. Well, they are a picture of you Christians. You have to keep wanting more of God's word, and it will make you believe more strongly, and then God will save you. 3 You already know that Jesus Christ is really good to you, so you have to live his way.*

We are joined to Jesus

4 I will tell you a picture story about how people build a house out of stone. At first they put one good stone in its place. That stone is the important one. They join all the other stones together on to this important stone. Well, that is a picture of Jesus Christ and us. He is like that most important stone. Other people didn't want him, but God picked him to be the most important one. So come to Jesus, and join up with him. 5 Just like stones join together to make a house, you join up with Jesus to make a special house for God, so he will live with you. And Jesus will help you do good things and make God happy, just like the men that look after God's ceremonies gave him good things to show him respect and make him happy. 6 You see, God says this in his book,

> "Look, I picked out a person that is very special to me.
> He is like that most important stone.
> And I put him among my people in my special city called Jerusalem.
> And if you trust him, you will always know that you are going the right way, and he will save you."

That's what God said.*

7 And you mob do that. You trust Jesus. You know that he is important. But people that don't trust him don't know that he is important. God says this about them in his book,

> "Some work-men built a house out of stones, but the work-men thought one of the stones was rubbish, so they chucked it away.
> They were wrong. That stone was properly good, and now God made it the most important stone of all."*

8 God says this about Jesus too, in his book,

> "He will be like a stone that people trip over,
> so that they fall down and hurt themselves."*

You see, people that don't trust in Jesus, they go wrong and stop following God. It's like they fall down and hurt themselves. They go wrong because they don't listen to God's word, and they don't do what it says. You know, God planned all that trouble for them a long time ago.

9 But you are the people God picked out for himself. Together you work for him, like the men that looked after his ceremonies. You are his own family. God called you away from doing bad things, so you can do good things. It is like you used to live in the dark so that nobody could see you do bad things there, but now he called you away from that to live in his good light. So let's tell everyone that God is really great and really good.* 10 At one time you were not God's family, but now, you are his family. At one time you didn't understand that God is very good, but now you know that he is. He felt sorry for you, and he was very good to you. He saved you.*

* **2:3** Psalm 34:8 * **2:6** Isaiah 28:16 * **2:7** Psalm 118:22 * **2:8** Isaiah 8:14
* **2:9** Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 43:20-21; Deuteronomy 4:20; 7:6; 14:2; Titus 2:14; Isaiah 9:2 * **2:10** Hosea 2:23

Keep on doing whatever is right and good

11 My friends, you belong to God. You don't
belong to this world. Right now you are like
strangers here in this world. So I'm telling
you this really strongly. Sometimes you will
really want to do something bad, like the
people that belong to this world do, but you
have to be strong and leave it. You will think,
"I really want to do that bad thing," but then
you will think, "My spirit is telling me that
it is the wrong thing to do." So you've got
to leave it. 12 You live in the same place with
people that don't follow Jesus. So you have
to make up your mind to always do things
that are good. Sometimes people might tell
lies and blame you and say you have done
wrong. But if you always keep on doing
whatever is right, they will see that you do
good things. Later, after God comes to judge
everybody, they will remember the good
things you did, and they will respect him.

Do what government leaders say

13 Our leader, Jesus, wants you to listen to
your community leaders and government
leaders, and do what they say. You have
to do that for the biggest government boss,
14 and do it too for the other bosses, like
police and judges. The biggest boss gave
them those jobs, to punish anyone that does
wrong. They also know about the people that
do the right things, and they tell everybody
that those people are good.

15 God wants you to live the right way, and
if you do that, nobody will have anything
bad to say against you. Those people that
want to blame you for no reason or tell
lies about you, they will not be able to say
anything.

16 You know that you are free from that
old Jewish law, but that doesn't mean that
you can do things that are wrong. You
belong to God, and you work for him, so you
have to do whatever is right. 17 You have to
respect everyone. And love other Christians
a lot. And thank God and respect him for
being good and great. And respect the big
government boss too.

Be like Jesus

18-19 Some of you are workers that belong
to your bosses. Maybe your boss is good to
you, or maybe your boss is hard on you. It
doesn't matter. You have to listen carefully
to your boss anyway and do what your boss
tells you. Sometimes you don't do anything
wrong, but your boss makes trouble for you
or hits you because you are following Jesus.
You have to respect your boss anyway and
take it quietly. Don't try to do payback to
your boss. Then God will be pleased with
you, and he will say that you are good. 20 But
if you do something wrong and your boss
hits you, and if you take it quietly, that is
just the way it goes. Everyone knows you
did something wrong, so nobody will say
that you are good for taking it quietly. But
sometimes somebody might punish you
for doing something good. You have to be
like Jesus and take it quietly. If you do that,
then God will say that you are good. 21 Jesus
Christ did nothing wrong, but people hurt
him and killed him. And God wants you to
be like Jesus, and to live the same way that
he lived.

22 God says this in his book,

"He never did anything bad,
he never lied or tried to trick anyone."*

23 People rubbished him, but he didn't
rubbish them back. They hit him with whips,
but he didn't talk to them in a bad way. No,
he trusted God. God is the one that judges
fairly.* 24 Jesus never did anything bad, but
he died instead of us there on the cross.

* **2:22** Isaiah 53:9 * **2:23** Isaiah 53:7

He took the payback for the bad things that we did. He died so that we can stop doing bad things, so that instead, we will do the right things. Jesus let them hurt him so that God can make us clean on the inside. It's like we are sick, but God can make us better.* 25 Before that, you were going the wrong way and getting lost like sheep. But now you have come to Jesus, and he looks after you and shows you the right way to live, just like a man looks after his sheep.*

Chapter 3

This is about wives and husbands

1 Now I'm talking to you women that are married. You have to think about what your husbands want and agree with them. Some husbands don't do what God's word says, but if they see you living right, they will want to come to God. You don't have to say a word, you just have to live right. 2 They will see that you are really good and that you listen properly to God.

3-4 You women will be really beautiful if you live in a quiet way, and don't try to be important. If you are beautiful inside like that, you will stay beautiful for ever, even after you get old. But if you just do things like colour your hair and do it up, or if you have gold rings and necklaces, or if you have pretty clothes, you might think you are beautiful, but those things don't last for ever. So be quiet inside yourselves, and don't try to be important. God really wants you to be beautiful that way.* 5 A long time ago, the women that really trusted God were like that. They thought about what their husbands wanted and agreed with them. 6 Remember Sarah, a woman that lived a long time ago. She listened to her husband, Abraham, and she did what he wanted. She called him, "My good boss." So always do what is right, and don't be frightened of anyone. Then you will be like grand-daughters of Sarah.*

7 And you men that are married, you have to do your part too. You have to respect your wives and take good care of them. Their bodies aren't strong like yours. But all of you are God's people, so God gave them life, just the same as he gave you life. So remember that, and be good to them and respect them. Then God will hear your prayers.

If people make trouble for you

8 Now all of you listen to this too. Remember that you are all in the same family, so you have to think the same way about what is right. And you have to care for each other properly. Don't think you are great. Try to understand how other people are feeling and be good to them. 9 If somebody rubbishes you, don't rubbish them back. If somebody does wrong to you, don't do payback to them. Instead of that, you have to ask God to be good to them. God picked you to be in his family and to live like that. And if you are good to people like that, God will be good to you too. 10 God says this in his book,

"If you want to live well and be happy,
don't say bad things about other
people,
and don't lie to them.
11 Turn away from doing bad things,
and do good things.
Don't fight with people or make trouble.
Try very hard to live happily with
other people.
12 God looks after people that live the
right way,
and he listens carefully to what they
ask him.
But God punishes people that do bad
things."*

* **2:24** Isaiah 53:5 * **2:25** Isaiah 53:6 * **3:3-4** 1 Timothy 2:9 * **3:6** Genesis 18:12 * **3:10-12** Psalm 34:12-16

13 So if you want to do good, nobody will
want to punish you. 14 But sometimes, even if
you do what's right, some people will make
trouble for you. If that happens, don't be
frightened of them and don't worry about
anything they might do to you, because God
will be very good to you. *

15 Always remember that Jesus Christ is the
really important one. He is your good leader,
so listen to him. People might say to you,
"Tell us, why are you sure that God will do
good things for you?" So you always have
to be ready to help them understand why
you are sure. 16 Tell them clearly, and respect
them as you talk to them. Make sure you
always live the right way, so you don't feel
shame. Some people rubbish Christians, but
if they see you doing the right things, they
will feel shame about themselves.

17 If you do something wrong, and then
people give you trouble, that's fair enough.
But it is much better to do good things, even
if people give you trouble for doing those
good things. 18 All of us have done wrong
things, so we should die, but Jesus Christ
died instead of us. He took the payback for
the bad things we did. He never did anything
wrong himself, but he died instead of us, so
that we can go to God and become his family.
Jesus died just once, but God remembers it
for ever. People killed Jesus, but God's spirit
made him alive again.

19 Then Jesus went and talked to the spirits
that are locked up like prisoners. 20 A long
time ago, they didn't listen to God, and
they didn't do the things God told them to
do. That was at the time when Noah lived.
God waited at that time, he didn't punish
anyone yet. God waited, and Noah built
that big boat. Only 8 people got into that
boat. Then God sent a very big rain. Water
covered everything, and everyone drowned.
God saved only those 8 people that were
in the boat. * 21 That water is a picture of
the baptism ceremony. Like the time our
Christian leaders put us under the water
to baptise us. They didn't do that to wash
the dirt off the outside of us. No. It's like
that water washed the shame from inside
us. When we asked those leaders to baptise
us, we asked God to make us clean on the
inside, so that we will not feel shame any
more. So God saves us and gives us new
life. Yes, we can have new life because,
after Jesus died, he came back to life again.
22 Jesus is now in heaven with God in the
most important place, at God's right-hand
side. All the angels, and all the bad spirits,
and all the bosses everywhere, they haven't
got as much power as Jesus. No. He is the
strongest one anywhere. He has more power
than all of them.

Chapter 4

Live like God wants

1 Remember that Jesus Christ got trouble
while he lived on earth. Well, you will get
trouble too, so get ready for it and don't get
upset about it. If you get trouble because you
belong to Jesus, that shows that you want
to live God's way and don't do bad things
any more. 2 It shows that you want to do the
things that God wants. So whenever you
want to do something bad, you have to turn
away from it and live God's way.

3 In the past you did lots of wrong things.
You lived like people that didn't know God.
You just did whatever bad things you wanted
to do. You slept with people that you were
not married to, and you did with them what
a husband and wife do together. You got
drunk. You went to wild parties. You showed
respect for statues that people made. That

* **3:14** Matthew 5:10; Isaiah 8:12-13 * **3:20** Genesis 6:1—7:24

was really bad. But you don't do those bad things now. 4 Some of your friends keep on doing lots of bad things, and they don't care about it. But you say, "No," and you don't do those bad things with them. So they are surprised, and they rubbish you. 5 But they will have to face God. He is ready to be their judge. He will judge everyone, people that are still living and people that are dead. He will ask them about the bad things they did, and they will have to answer him. 6 That is the reason why we told the good news about Jesus to people that are dead now. We told them the good news, then later their bodies died, like all people have to die because they did bad things. But we wanted them to trust in Jesus, so that at the time when God judges everyone, he will make them alive again, and they will live with him for ever.

Do good things for each other

7 You know, God will finish up everything soon. So now you have to think clearly, and be careful about everything you do, so that you can talk to God properly when you pray. 8 And this is the most important thing you've got to do, you've got to keep on loving each other very much. Even if somebody does something bad to you, you have to love them, and be good to them anyway, and don't do payback to them.* 9 If there are other Christians that need food or a place to stay, then share your home with them and don't complain to anyone about it.

10 God has given each one of you different ways to do good for each other. He has given you the power to do them, so you have to do them properly. 11 If you can tell stories to people, then tell them God's story, and tell it clearly. If you can help other people, then let God make you strong so you can help them properly. Do everything properly so that when people see it, they might say that God is really great. If they know that you follow Jesus, they might thank God for sending Jesus to us. Jesus has really great power now, and he will have that power for ever. That's true.

We all get troubles

12 My friends, you are following Jesus, and from that you are getting trouble. Don't be surprised about it. God lets you get that trouble to show that you really trust Jesus. 13 You are getting trouble just like Jesus got trouble, so be happy. Don't be sad. Then on the day that Jesus comes back and shows everyone that he is really great, you will be very happy. 14 Maybe people are making fun of you because you follow Jesus. But don't worry, it shows that God is happy with you, and that God's spirit is with you. His spirit is great and has a lot of power.

15 You know that people that do wrong things get trouble. Don't be like them. Don't kill another person. Don't steal things. Don't make trouble for other people. Don't do wrong things like that.

16 But if people give you trouble because you follow Jesus, don't feel shame. No. Just thank God that you belong to Jesus.

17 It is time now for God to start judging everybody. He will be good to some people, and he will give trouble to other people. He will judge his own people first. They might get some trouble now, but it will not last for ever. But later, he will judge the people that didn't want to listen to his good story. He will be really hard on them, he will give them lots of trouble. 18 God says this in his book,

"People that live right will get some
troubles,
but God will save them.

* **4:8** Proverbs 10:12

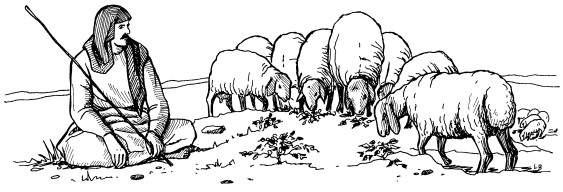
But what about those people that do
bad things
and never listen to God?
God will not save them.
He will punish them."*
19 So if God lets you Christians get trouble,
keep on trusting him, and keep on doing
whatever is right. He made you, and he
promised to save you, and he does everything
that he promises to do, so you can trust him
to do that.

Chapter 5

This is a message for Christian leaders

1 Now I'm talking to you Christian leaders. I
am a leader too, and I was with Jesus Christ,
and I saw him get trouble. I saw people
blame him by telling lies, and I saw them
kill him. But, later, he will show everyone
that he is great, and I will be there too, and
I will be happy there with him.

2 You church leaders have to look after
God's people. God gave you the job to look
after them, so you have to do it properly, like
a man with sheep looks after them properly.
God wants you leaders to be happy while you
do that job. Don't just do it because you think
you have to, or because you want money. Do
it because you want to help God's people.*
3 Don't be bossy. Instead, show them how
to follow Jesus. You have to follow Jesus
properly, so they will see the way you follow
him, and they will follow him properly too.



People used to always stay with their sheep to look after them

4 Then, later, Jesus will come back, and he
will be happy with your work, and he will
make you great, for ever. He is the leader
of all of us, and he looks after us properly.

This is a message for young people

5 Listen, you young people, it is like this. You
have to listen carefully to your Christian
leaders. Don't think you are great or more
important than other people. Think about
what God says in his book. He says,

"God is against people that think they
are great,
but he is good to people that know
they are not great."*

This is a message for everyone

6 God is great and powerful, so remember
that you are not important at all. Wait
for him, and at the right time, he will get
everybody to respect you.* 7 God loves you,
and he is looking after you, so tell him about
everything that makes you sad, or angry,
or worried, and trust him to look after you
properly.

8 You have to think clearly and watch out
for your enemy, the devil. He is the boss over
all the bad spirits, and he is going around
looking for people to trick. He is like a wild
animal that is going around and looking
for somebody to kill and eat. 9 Don't listen
to him, but fight back against him. Trust
Jesus properly, and keep on trusting him.
Remember, you are not alone. All over the
world your Christian friends are getting
trouble, just like you are. They follow Jesus,
so bad people give them trouble too.

10 But trouble doesn't last for ever. After
you have trouble for a short time, God will
be good to you. He will make everything
right for you and make you properly strong
for him. He picked you to join you up with

* **4:18** Proverbs 11:31 * **5:2** John 21:15-17 * **5:5** Proverbs 3:34 * **5:6** Matthew 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14

Jesus Christ. He did that so that, in the end, you will be very great with Jesus for ever.
11 God is very powerful now, and he will keep on being very powerful for ever. That's true.

About this letter

12 This is just a short letter to you. Silas helped me write it. He is our good Christian friend, and he follows Jesus properly. I want you to be happy and strong, so I'm writing this letter to you. And I want you to remember that God is very good, so keep on thinking about how good he is. Then you will keep on trusting him.*

Hello from other Christians

13 The people in the church here, in this city that we sometimes call Babylon, they say *hello* to you. God has made them his family, just like you. And do you remember Mark? He is here with me, and he is like a son to me. He says *hello* to you too.*

14 Whenever you meet together, show that you are happy to see each other, because you love each other.

I ask God to make all you Christians happy and quiet inside yourselves.

From Peter

* **5:12** Acts 15:22, 40 * **5:13** Acts 12:12, 25; 13:13; 15:37-39; Colossians 4:10; Philemon 1:24

The 2nd letter that Peter wrote

(The book in the Holy Bible called 2 Peter)

About this letter

Peter was one of Jesus's 12 special workers. He went everywhere with Jesus and knew him well.

Peter wrote 2 letters that are now in the Holy Bible. This is the 2nd letter. He wrote it about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven.

In this letter Peter told Christians how to become strong for Jesus. And he told them about people that reckon they were saying God's words, but they were lying. And he wrote about what it will be like in the last days of this world, before God finishes it up.

These words that Peter wrote have very important messages for all of us Christians.

Chapter 1

1 I am Peter, and this letter is from me. My other name is Simon. I work for Jesus Christ. I am one of his special workers.

You people believe in Jesus Christ, just like I do, so I'm writing this letter to you. Jesus helps us trust him, and that is really special for us. Jesus Christ is God, and he saves us. He is always right, and he is always fair.

2 You already know God, and our leader Jesus, so I pray that you will know them better every day. And I'm asking God to be properly good to you, and to make you really happy and quiet inside yourselves.

God helps us live the right way

3 You know, God is really powerful. He is very great, and very good too. He picked us out to be his own people, so we can get to know him properly. And he gives us everything we need to live the right way. 4 And he promised us some very important things, and they are very special to us. He promised that we can think the way he thinks, so that we become really good people. He says that we can get away from bad things. We are not like the people that belong to this world. They want to do bad things, then they go and do those bad things, and they become bad people. But God says that we can get away from all that.

5 So think about what I am saying, and you will know that you have to be as good as you can. You believe in Christ, and you have to keep trying to live his way all the time. This is what you have to do,

– you always have to try to do what is right, and you have to try to know God better,
– 6-7 and you have to learn to control yourselves too,
– and you have to learn to keep going strong, no matter what happens,
– and you have to be good to each other too, so that you will make God happy,
– and you have to love other Christians like they are your own brothers

and sisters, and you have to love everybody else too.

8 If you keep on living like that more and more, you will get to know our leader, Jesus Christ, better and better. And you will be a good worker that does a good job for him every time. 9 But if you don't live like that, it shows that you don't understand God's message properly. You are like blind people that can't see anything properly. It's like you forget about what God did for you. You used to do wrong things before, but God made you free from all that, and he made you clean inside yourselves. So don't forget that. Don't do wrong things again.

10 My Christian friends, try hard to do all those good things. God picked you to be his own people, and whenever you do those good things, you show everybody that you really are God's people. If you do those things, you will never turn away from God. 11 Then God will be very happy with you, and he will make sure you live with him for ever. You will be in Jesus Christ's family. He is our leader, and he saves us.

Don't forget this message

12 I will keep on telling you about these things, even though you already know them, and you know that they are true. I will keep on telling you about them anyway. 13 I reckon it's good for me to remind you about these things, and I will keep on doing it while I'm still alive in this body, so that you will keep on thinking about these things and you will not forget them.

14 Our leader, Jesus Christ, told me that soon I will die. He will take me out of this body. 15 But while I'm still alive in this body, I will do everything I can to keep on telling you these things, so that after I die, you will always remember them.

Peter saw that Jesus Christ is really great

16 Remember the story we told you about our leader, Jesus Christ. That was the true story. We didn't make up smart stories to tell you. We told you that Jesus is powerful, and that he will come back here to this earth again. We saw for ourselves that Jesus is very great, and we told you everything we saw. 17-18 It happened like this. Me and 2 other followers of Jesus, we went with him up on to a special mountain, and God the father, he showed us that Jesus is very great and powerful. God told us this, he said, "This is my son. I love him very much, and I'm very happy with him." Yes, we ourselves heard the voice of our great God. He talked to us from heaven, and he told us that message. *

The messages in God's book are true

19 So now we can be really sure about the messages that are in God's book. We can be sure that they are true. A long time ago, God told his men to write those words in his book. You have to think carefully about those messages. They can help us understand the true story about God, like a light helps us see things in the night. Those messages will keep on helping you until Jesus comes back and he helps you know God properly. Then it will be like Jesus is a really bright light that shows us everything clearly, like the really bright star that shines in the morning, and then the sun comes up. 20 You see, those men that wrote those words a long time ago, they didn't think up their own stories. 21 No. They didn't write down their own ideas. The Holy Spirit worked inside them and told them God's messages. Those words came from God, and they wrote them down in his book. *

* **1:17-18** Matthew 17:1-5; Mark 9:2-7; Luke 9:28-35 * **1:21** 2 Timothy 3:16

Chapter 2

Look out, some people teach lies

1 In God's book we read about his people a long time ago. Sometimes some liars started to teach God's people things that were wrong. They reckoned they were saying God's words, but they were lying. And the same sort of thing will happen now. There will be people among you that will teach things that are wrong. If you listen to them, you will go wrong, and it will be bad for you. Those people will even turn against Jesus. He is our leader, and he died to save them. And one day soon, God will punish them for that wrong thing they do. 2 Those liars will teach people to do bad things, and a lot of people will listen to them and do those bad and dirty things. And if people that are not Christians see that, they will rubbish God and his true way.

3 Those lying teachers only want your money. So they will tell you tricky lies to get you to give them money. A long time ago, God said that he will punish them, and he is ready to do that. One day, he will properly finish up those liars.

God saves people that live his way

4 Think about these stories from a long time ago. At one time, some of God's angel messengers did the wrong thing. They didn't do what God told them to do, so God punished them. He threw them down into the dark hole called hell. He is keeping them there now, and later he will judge them.

5 At another time, the people in the world did lots of bad things and didn't live God's way. There was only one man that lived the right way. His name was Noah. He tried to tell all the other people to live God's way too, but they didn't listen to him. So God sent a big flood of water and drowned all those bad people. But he kept Noah safe, and he kept the 7 other people in his family safe too.*

6-8 Then later, the people in the towns called Sodom and Gomorrah did really bad things. But there was one man there that lived the right way. His name was Lot. He saw all the bad things that they did, and he got really upset. Every day, he heard them, and he saw them do really bad and dirty things, and he got really upset. He was so sad that he felt sick. Then God judged those bad people in those towns, and he properly punished them. He burned up those towns, and he burned up all the people in them. They were just piles of ashes after that. But God saved Lot. God didn't burn him up. You see, God did that to show everybody that he will punish bad people that will not listen to him.*

9 Those stories show us that God knows how to save his people. They are the people that listen properly to him and live his way, and he saves them from trouble. But when the day comes for him to judge everyone, he will punish people that don't live the right way. 10 Yes, God will really punish people that do dirty things. They think about wrong ways to get their bodies to feel good, then they do those bad things. They reckon they don't have to listen to any boss, not even God. So God will properly punish those bad people, even more than he will punish other bad people.

Lying teachers are like animals

Those lying teachers think they are better than everyone else, and they think they can do anything they want to. They even rubbish strong spirits. 11 Not even God's angel messengers do that. Angels are much stronger than the other spirits, but whenever

* **2:5** Genesis 6:1—7:24 * **2:6-8** Genesis 19:24

angels stand in front of God, they don't talk against those other spirits or tell God to punish them.

12 But those lying teachers are like animals that don't think at all, like the animals that people catch and kill. Those teachers rubbish things they don't understand, and they will end up dead, just like those stupid animals. 13 They do a lot of things that hurt other people, so God will hurt them. He will do payback to them. They think it's fun to do any bad thing that they want to do, even in the day-light. And whenever you Christians have dinner together, they join in with you, and they laugh about their lies and the bad things they do. Now think about a white shirt. If it just has a few dirty spots on it, people say that the whole shirt is dirty. Well, you good people are like that white shirt, and those people are like the dirty spots on it. There are only a few of them, but they do bad things, and they shame all of you. 14 They are always looking for a woman to sleep with, like a man sleeps with his wife. They do bad things, and they keep looking for more bad things to do. If somebody doesn't strongly trust Christ, those people will trick that person and get them to go wrong. They are really greedy, wanting lots of money and things. They are the sort of people that God says he will properly punish. 15-16 They left the right way and went the wrong way. They stopped doing good things, and now they do bad things. Remember the story about Balaam, the son of Beyor. He loved money so much that he did bad things to get it. Then God made a donkey talk to him with a man's voice. It told him he was going wrong, and it stopped him from being even more stupid. Those people are just like Balaam. They are stupid, and they go the wrong way, just like Balaam did. *

God will punish lying teachers

17 Those lying teachers are useless. You know that a dry water-hole is useless, and so is a cloud that doesn't bring any rain. The wind just blows it away. That mob are just like that, they are useless too. God has got a place for those liars. It is a really dark, sad place, and he is going to put them in it and keep them there. 18-19 That mob teach with words that sound good, but they are useless. They say we are free now, so we can do anything we like. They say that it is all right to do bad things. That is what they teach, but it is wrong.

You know, there are some people that used to go wrong, but then they turned around and started to go right. But now those liars are tricking them and getting them to go wrong again. Those liars tell them that they can do any bad things they like, to get their bodies to feel good. Those liars promise to free people, but they themselves are not free. They can't stop themselves from doing bad and dirty things. It's like this. If somebody can't stop themselves from doing something, that thing is their boss and they have to work for it. So it's like those bad things are their boss. They are not free.

20 Jesus Christ is our leader, and he is the one that saves us. At one time, those liars knew Jesus, and he helped them get away from the dirty things that the people in this world do. But now they are leaving him, and they are getting mixed up again with those bad things. Those bad things are now their boss, and they are worse off now than before. 21 God will punish everyone that goes the wrong way. He will even punish people that never knew the right way. But these people knew the right way, and then they turned back and went the wrong way, so God will punish them more than those others.

* **2:15-16** Numbers 22:4-35

22 People sometimes say these true words,
"A dog gets sick and vomits up its food, but
then it comes back and eats that same food
again." And people also say, "You can wash
the mud off a pig, but then it goes back and
rolls on the muddy ground again." Those
words tell us about those lying teachers.
Those teachers are just like that dog and
that pig, they turned back to the bad things
again. *

Chapter 3

God will judge everybody one day

1 My friends, this is now my 2nd letter that
I'm writing to you. Both of these letters are
to help you remember things. I want you to
think properly about these things. 2 I want
you to remember the words from God that
his men wrote a long time ago, and the
words from Jesus that his special workers
told you. They told you the things that God
wants you to do. Jesus is our leader, and
he saves us.

3 And this is very important, so I want you
to understand it. These days are the last
days of this world, and now some people
will come and laugh at you, and they will
say that you are stupid. Those people always
do any bad thing they feel like doing. They
laugh at God's true story. * 4 They will say,
"Jesus promised to come back, but where
is he? He didn't come back. He said that
powerful things will happen to this world,
and he said that he will come back, and that
God will finish up the world. But nothing
has happened. Some of our Christian leaders
have already died, but none of those things
have happened. Everything just keeps going
the same, just like from the time God made
everything."

5 Those people know the true story, but
they don't want to remember it. They forget
that God does lots of powerful things in
this world. They forget that a long time ago,
God only said words to make the sky and
the earth. God said one word to make the
sky, and then he said another word to make
the land, and to lift that land up out of the
water. * 6 Then later, God used a big flood of
water to finish up everybody in the world
at that time. * 7 And now God is saying his
word again in the same way. He is telling the
sky and the earth that he will judge them,
and he will burn them with fire, and finish
them up. That will be the day when God
will judge everybody, and he will finish up
all the bad people.

8 But, my friends, don't forget this one thing
about God. He can use time in a different
way. God can make one day be like 1,000
years, and he can make 1,000 years be like
one day. * 9 God is not slow to do the things
that he promised to do. Some people think
that he is being slow, but no, he is quietly
waiting for you people. He doesn't want
anyone to die for ever. He wants everyone
to turn around. He wants them to stop
doing bad things and turn to him. 10 But
one day our leader, Jesus, will come back,
and everybody will get a shock. You know
how people get a shock if a robber comes
while they are asleep and steals their things?
Listen, Jesus Christ will come back suddenly,
and people will get a big shock like that. The
sky will go away with a very loud noise, and
it will not be there any more. Fire will burn
up everything in it. And God will finish up
all the earth and everything on it. *

11 Think about it. God will finish up
everything like that. Then think about
yourselves. You've got to be really good

* **2:22** Proverbs 26:11 * **3:3** Jude 1:18 * **3:5** Genesis 1:6-9 * **3:6** Genesis 7:21 * **3:8** Psalm 90:4
* **3:10** Matthew 24:43; Luke 12:39; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; Revelation 16:15

people. You have to live God's way, to make him happy. 12 You want Jesus to come back soon, so while you are waiting for that day, make sure you live that good way, so that he will come soon. Then, on that day, God will finish up everything. He will burn up the sky, and everything in it will melt away in that fire. 13 But don't worry. God promised to make a new sky and new earth for us. Everyone in that new place will be good. They will always live the right way and do good things. Yes, we are waiting for God to do that.*

14 So now, my friends, while you are waiting for that to happen, try hard to always do good things, so that God will not blame you for doing wrong things. And don't get angry with anyone and don't fight, then when God looks at you, he will not see any trouble between you and anyone else. 15 Think about this. Jesus, our leader, is waiting. He wants to save people, so he is waiting for them. He is giving them time to turn back to him. But later, he will come back.

You know our Christian friend Paul. Well, God helped him to understand about these things, 16 and he writes about them in all his letters. Some things in his letters are hard to understand. Some people don't know much about God, and they are not sure about the things they believe. They talk about Paul's letters the wrong way. They turn Paul's words around so that they say something that is wrong. And they do that with other words in God's book too. When they do that, they make things bad for themselves, and in the end God will punish them.

17 But, my friends, you know these things already. So be very careful. Don't believe the lies that those bad people say. Don't let them lead you away from God. If you listen to them, you might stop being sure about the true things. 18 Don't do that. You have to believe that our leader, Jesus Christ, will be good to you, and you have to believe it more and more. He is the one that saves us. You have to know him better and better all the time.

Everyone has to say that Jesus Christ is very great and good. Everyone has to always say that, now and for ever. That's right.

From Peter

* **3:13** Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; Revelation 21:1

The letter that Jude wrote

(The book in the Holy Bible called Jude)

About this letter

Jude wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and now it is in the Holy Bible.

At that time, the name Jude *and the name* Judas *were 2 ways of saying the same name. The man that wrote this letter was probably Jesus's brother Judas (see Mark 6:2-3), but he might have been one of Jesus's special workers called Judas (see John 14:22; Acts 1:13).*

Jude wrote this letter to tell the Christians about some people that reckoned they were saying God's words, but they were lying. Jude told the Christians to be very careful of them, and to keep on living God's way.

These words that Jude wrote have very important messages for all of us Christians.

Chapter 1

1 This letter is from me, Jude. I work for
Jesus Christ. And I'm a brother of James. I'm
writing this letter to you people that God
loves. God is your father. He picked you to
be his people. He helps you stay strong for
Jesus, until he comes back. *

2 God is very good to you, and I pray that
he will keep on being good to you more and
more. I pray that he will keep on feeling
sorry for you, and will help you be really
happy and quiet inside yourselves. And I
pray that he will keep on loving you very
much.

Lying teachers try to trick people

3 You are my very good friends. I really want
to tell you about how God has saved us all,
but instead I reckon I have to write about
something else. You see, we are God's own
people, and he gave us a true message that
he will not change. You have to try really
hard to keep God's true message safe. You
can't let anyone stop you doing what that
message says.

4 I talk like this because there are some
bad people that secretly came into your
group. That mob don't want to do the things
that God wants. Instead, they do all the bad
things that they want to do. They reckon it
is all right to do those bad things. They say,
"God is good to us, so he lets us do these bad
things." Whenever they say that, they are
really trying to change God's true message.
And they are turning away from Jesus, our
only true boss. But God says in his book that
he will punish those bad people.

Old stories from God's book show us that God punishes bad people

5 I want you to remember what I told you
before. Remember that God brought the

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* **1:1** Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3

people of Israel out from the country called Egypt. God saved those people then. But later, some of the people didn't believe in him, and he killed them.*

6 And think about the stories about the angels, God's spirit messengers. Some of them didn't want to do what God told them. They took power that God didn't give them. They left their proper place in heaven. So God tied them up for ever and put them in a dark place. God will keep them there until the great day. Then God will judge everyone on that day.

7 Also, don't forget the story about the towns called Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other towns around there. The people that lived there did bad things, like those bad angels. They always wanted to sleep with somebody, like husbands sleep with their wives, so they did that with people they were not married to, and they did it in all sorts of ways that were dirty and wrong. God is punishing those people now. He put them into the fire that doesn't stop burning. That shows us how much he will punish people that do bad things like that.*

8 Those lying teachers are doing the same bad things. They say that God showed them things in their dreams, so they do bad things with their bodies. They rubbish God and don't respect his power. And they say bad things about God's beautiful angels.

9 Michael is one of those angels. He is very powerful. But he didn't say bad things about the devil, the boss over the bad spirits. A long time ago, Michael argued with the devil about which one of them can get Moses's body. But Michael didn't think that he was so important that he could say bad words to the devil. Instead, he said to the devil, "God will tell you that you are wrong."*

10 But that liar mob say bad words about anything they don't understand. They are like animals that can't think properly. They just think about what makes their bodies feel good, and so they do bad things. And those things will wreck them. 11 Very bad things will happen to that mob of lying teachers.

Do you know the stories about Cain, Balaam, and Korah? Cain killed his brother Abel. Balaam really wanted money and did bad things to get it. And Korah turned against God. God punished those men, Cain, Balaam, and Korah. Now that liar mob are doing the same wrong things, and God will punish them too.*

The lying teachers can wreck you

12 You Christians love God, and you love each other, so you sometimes have dinner together. Those lying teachers come to those dinners. But they only come to eat and drink. They don't respect God, and they don't care about people. They only think about themselves. They are really dangerous. You know about rocks in the sea. You know that boats have to keep away from them, or they will wreck the boats. That mob are like those rocks to you. Keep away from them, or they will wreck you. They are useless. They are



If boats don't keep away from rocks, the rocks will wreck them

* **1:5** Exodus 12:51; Numbers 14:29-30 * **1:7** Genesis 19:1-24 * **1:9** Deuteronomy 34:6; Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Zechariah 3:2; Revelation 12:7 * **1:11** Genesis 4:3-8; Numbers 22:1-35; 16:1-35

like clouds that don't have any rain. Those clouds are useless, and the wind just moves them along. Those lying teachers never do anything good. They are like trees that don't have fruit, even when it is the right time for fruit. Those trees are properly useless, so people pull them out of the ground.



People pull useless trees out of the ground

13 And those lying teachers are like a storm in the sea. The water washes around, and a lot of rubbish comes up to the top of the sea. That rubbish is like a picture of all the bad, dirty things that mob does. And those lying teachers are like stars that moved away from their proper place in the sky. Those lying teachers don't do the things God wants them to do. So God made a dark, black place for them, and he will put them there, and they will stay there for ever.

14 Remember the man called Enok. He lived a long time ago, not long after the first man, Adam. He said, "God will come with thousands and thousands of his own good angels, 15 and he will be the judge of everybody. God will punish all the bad people that don't respect him. They did bad things against God, so God will punish them. They said rubbish things about God, so God will punish them." He said those things about those lying teachers a long time ago.*

16 That mob are always complaining and saying that they aren't happy with things. They are always saying that other people have done things wrong. But they do all the bad things they want to do. They say very good things about themselves and tell everybody they are important. But they only say good things about other people when they want to get something from them.

Things that Christians have to do

17 But, my friends, you have to remember what Jesus Christ's special workers said. They talked about what will happen later. 18 They said, "In the last times, some people will laugh at God, and they will laugh at Christians. They will only think about the bad things they want for themselves, and they will do whatever bad things they want to do."* 19 That liar mob don't have God's spirit inside them. They trick you and get you to argue with each other. They break you up into different groups. They let all the things that belong to this world control their lives, and they do whatever they want to do.

20 But, my friends, I know that you believe the message that comes from God himself. And you have to do everything that you can do to believe it more and more strongly. You have to help each other to believe this message. And you have to let God's spirit show you how to pray. 21 Always remember that God loves you, and live for him while you wait for our leader Jesus Christ to come back. He feels very sorry for you, and he is good to you, so he will let you live with him for ever.

Help people trust God

22 Some people aren't sure if God's message is true. You have to feel sorry for those people and be good to them. You have to try to help them. 23 And some people are turning

* **1:14-15** Genesis 5:18, 21-24 * **1:18** 2 Peter 3:3

away from God and doing bad things. If they turn away and don't come back to God, he will punish them in the fire. So you have to try to stop those people from turning away from God. Then you will save them, like you will pull them out of that fire. Some of them do a lot of bad things, and they get a lot of trouble. You have to feel sorry for those people and try to help them. But be careful. Stay away from the bad things that they do. Those bad things are like dirt on their clothes. So be careful to keep away from them, just like you are careful not to touch dirty clothes.

God is great and powerful

24 All right, I'll finish my letter now. God can keep you safe so that you don't go the wrong way. He can make you good and clean inside yourself, so that there aren't any bad parts in you. Yes, one day, he will make you properly good, so that he can bring you close to himself. You will come near to the beautiful light that shines from him. He is very great and good, and you will stand with him. And you will be very, very happy.

25 He is the only God. He gets our leader, Jesus Christ, to save us. So everyone has to always thank him and remember how great he is. He has all power. Everyone has to do whatever he says. He always had that power. He had it right from the start of time. And he will have all that power for ever. That is true.

From Jude

More information about this translation

Purpose and translation philosophy

The Plain English Version (PEV) is an English translation of the Bible designed for Indigenous Australians whose first language is an Indigenous language. Its purpose is to convey the meaning of the original Scripture in English that is easy to understand and natural for them. We have, as much as possible, limited its grammar, semantic and rhetorical features to those common in Aboriginal languages, and its vocabulary to the English that is most widely used.

We have applied the principles of *meaning-based* translation, wherein we have sought to convey the same meaning that the original authors conveyed to the original readers. That means not just considering individual words, but also the message of the whole passage.

To comprehend our philosophy, imagine the author of a passage to be an Indigenous man in Arnhem Land writing to Indigenous people in Central Australia. How would he word the same message to them? We have aimed to word the PEV the same way.

The wording of the PEV was decided in consultation with many Indigenous people whose first language is an Aboriginal language, and our exegesis was checked by accredited consultants who gave approval for publication only after it was adjusted to their satisfaction.

Main differences between the PEV and Standard English versions

Linguistic features: below is a list of modifications made to conform as much as possible to the linguistic features of most Aboriginal languages.

– Minimised *passive voice*, substituting active voice with the actor indicated, even when this was not done in the original text. E.g. Acts 16:30 NIV 'what must I do to be saved?'; PEV 'what can I do so that God will save me?'

– Minimised *abstract nouns* by using verbs and adjectives instead. E.g. 1 Pet 1:3 NIV 'a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead'; PEV 'Jesus died, but God brought him back to life. From that we know that God will save us too.' There are however a few abstract nouns that are found in many Aboriginal languages, including words for *life* and *trouble*, so we don't avoid using them in the PEV.

– Minimised *past perfect tense* (also called *pluperfect*) which English uses to switch back in time. Aboriginal languages have no equivalent for this. We have indicated the time switch-back in words. E.g. 1 Sam 1:5 NIV 'the LORD had closed her womb'; PEV 'You see, before this time, God stopped her from having kids.'

– Avoided the use of *gerunds*. E.g. 1 Tim 4:13 NIV 'devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture'; PEV 'Make sure you read God's book in your meetings.'

On the sentence level:

– Minimised use of *subordinate clauses*. E.g. Phil 2:5-7 NIV 'In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider

equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness'; PEV 'You have to think the same way that Jesus Christ thought. He was the same as God. He was just as important as God. But he didn't reckon that he had to keep on being important, like God is. Instead, he left all that, and he made himself like a nobody. He was born into this world, and looked like other human beings. He was a man living here. And he worked hard to help people.'

On the discourse level:

– Events usually re-arranged into *chronological order*, for example, the original of Mark 6:14-29 begins with people discussing the supernatural power behind Jesus' miracles, then it backtracks several times to explain why Herod had killed John the Baptist. The PEV re-arranges the whole passage, starting with 'This is the story about what happened to John, the man that baptised people. The big boss over that country was Herod, and his brother was Philip. Philip's wife's name was Herodias…' From there it states the events in chronological order, ending with '…some people reckoned, "Jesus is really John the Baptiser. God made John alive again, and God gave him power to do great things." Herod heard those stories, and he said, "I got my soldiers to cut John's head off, but this man, Jesus, he has to be John the Baptiser. I reckon God made him alive again." '

– *Logical sequence* sometimes re-arranged. Since many Australian languages favour the word order of *reason-result* rather than *result-reason* we have followed that order in our translation wherever feasible. E.g. Rom 1:19 NIV 'what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them'; PEV 'God clearly shows everybody enough for us to understand the true story about him. Everybody knows about him.'

– *Transitional wording* supplied where the original suddenly shifts topic or focus. E.g. 2 Tim 4 at the junction of v.15 and v.16, NIV '[15] You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message. [16] At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me'; PEV (transitional wording italicised) '[15] You look out for him too. He doesn't like the message we tell people about God, and he will try to do anything to stop us. [16] *And here, in this city, when they took me to court that first time*, and I tried to tell the judge my story, nobody else said anything to back me up. They all left me.'

– The words *now* and *then* only used as time orienting adverbs. They are commonly used in standard English as discourse level conjunctions, but some of our audience find them confusing when used as conjunctions. E.g. Rom 3:19 NIV 'Now we know that …'; PEV 'You know, it's like this.'

Semantic and rhetorical features: below are some semantic and rhetorical features modified to be understandable and natural for speakers of Aboriginal languages.

– *Implicit and background information* made explicit in cases where it would have been known by the original audience, but not by some of our target audience, and is necessary for correct understanding of the passage. E.g. Mark 14:27-28 NIV ' "You will all fall away," Jesus told them, "for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." '; PEV 'Jesus…said, "All you mob will run away and leave me. A long time ago, God got one of his men to write about this in his book. He wrote, 'God will knock down the man that looks after the sheep and all his sheep

will run away.' He wrote those words about me. I will die, like he wrote about that man, and you will all run away. But after that, God will make me alive again. Then I will go ahead of you to Galilee country, and I will wait for you there." '

– *Figurative speech* can add 'punch' to an expression, but when translated literally it is often obscure, and sometimes seriously misunderstood by people whose first language does not have the same figures. So in this translation, the actual meaning of a figure is conveyed, and the picture words are included only if they are helpful. Below are three of the more common types of figurative speech.
  • *Metaphors*. E.g. 2 Tim 4:7 NIV 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith'; PEV 'I did my job properly, and I finished all the work God gave me to do. I always told the true message about Jesus. I'm like a man that runs a long race and keeps going hard right up to the finish line.' Note that the literal 'fight' is not included. A misunderstanding of such a figure could lead to serious consequences. The apostle Paul often uses the Greek *sarx*, (literally 'meat/flesh/body'), as a metaphor meaning 'sinful human nature'. We usually render this as 'that old part of us that makes us do wrong', or something similar. E.g. Rom 7:5 NIV 'For when we were in the realm of the flesh…'; PEV 'You know, we all have a bad part in us that wants us to do bad things. And at first, when we didn't believe in Jesus…'
  • *Personification*. E.g. Rom 5:21 NIV 'sin reigned in death'; PEV 'It was like this. We couldn't stop ourselves doing bad things, so we all had to die.'
  • *Rhetorical questions* have either been turned into statements that convey the same underlying meaning, or answered explicitly. E.g. Rom 10:15 NIV 'And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?'; PEV 'somebody has to send those messengers to go and tell the people about Jesus.' Or Matt 7:9 NIV 'Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone?'; PEV 'If your son asks you for some bread, will you give him a stone? No way.'
– *General instruction* given in third person changed to second person, this being more common in Aboriginal languages. E.g. Mark 4:9 NIV 'Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.' PEV 'You've got ears, so you have to listen to me properly, and take notice of my words.'
– *Indirect speech* often replaced by direct quotation. E.g. Mark 8:7 NIV 'he gave thanks for them'; PEV 'he said, "Thank you God for these fish." '

Vocabulary: modified to conform to what is commonly understood by the target audience.
– Avoided words that are not widely known by the audience. Often a more widely known synonym is used. E.g. instead of 'speak', it has 'say', 'talk' or 'tell'. Sometimes a descriptive phrase is used. E.g. instead of 'obey', it has 'do what *someone* says'.
– Adjusted the spelling of unfamiliar names to make them easier for the audience to sound out. E.g. instead of 'Enoch', it has 'Enok'.
– In cases where the original has masculine gender but is addressing both genders, gender-neutral language is used. E.g. Rom 15:30 ESV 'I appeal to you, brothers…'; PEV 'My Christian friends, I really want you…'
– Where the original has weights, measures, and currency used at the time and place of its writing, the equivalent in denominations known to our audience is used. E.g. Mark 6:37 ESV 'Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth'; PEV 'That will cost thousands of dollars.'

– Standard English uses the words *who, when, where, what, why* and *how* both to ask questions and to introduce descriptions. However poorer readers are confused when they are used in the latter way, so we have minimised that use. E.g. Gen 14:13 NIV 'A man who had escaped came and reported this to Abram'; PEV 'A man got away…and he went and told Abram.'
– Below is a list of biblical terms, and how they have been rendered.

Plain English rendering of biblical terms

Below is a table of frequently occurring biblical terms in Standard English showing how we have usually translated them in plain English. There is some variation to these renderings throughout the text, each case being adapted to fit its context, so a range of plain English renderings is sometimes given below, and sometimes a combination of them is used in the text.

angel: God's angel messenger
anoint: put olive oil on
apostle: Jesus's special worker
baptise: take through a special washing ceremony
blaspheme: say bad things about, talk against, rubbish
bless (God as agent): be good to, give to, make happy, help
bless (person as agent): ask God to help/be good to, say that God is good
chief priest: boss of the Jewish ceremonies
Christ/Messiah: the man that God promised to send, called the Christ
circumcision: young man operation
covenant: agree to, agreement, promise
crucify: nail to a cross
demon/devil/unclean spirit: bad spirit
disciples: Jesus's followers
forgive: not do payback, not punish, say not guilty, let it go
Gentile: not a Jew, not Jewish
glorify: make really great, show to be really great, say that *someone* is really great, say good things about *someone*, thank God for *something*
glorious: beautiful, bright, great and good, wise and good
glory: very great thing, something that is really good, something to feel happy about
gospel: God's good news, God's good story, God's good message
grace: God is good to *someone* (sometimes include, 'even when *that person* didn't do anything good')
heaven (of God's home): heaven
heaven (of physical realm): sky
heaven (euphemism for God): God
hell: bad place called hell
high priest: big boss of the Jewish ceremonies
holy: belonging to God, special, really good
Holy Spirit: Holy Spirit, God's spirit
idol: statue that people think is a god
in Christ: joined to Jesus, belonging to Jesus
king: big boss
Kingdom of God/Heaven: God's family, people that belong to God
lawyer: Jewish law man
Levite: man that helped in the Jewish ceremonies
LORD: God
Lord (of deity): God
lord (not of deity): boss
lord (as vocative): sir
oath: promise
parable: picture story
Pharisees: the Pharisee mob that were strong for the Jewish law
priest: leader of the Jewish ceremonies
prophet: person that tells God's messages
reconcile: get *someone* to be friends with *someone* again, stop *people* being enemies

redeem: take the payback for, set free, pay for and set free, save
repent: stop doing bad things, turn to God, turn to follow Jesus, turn around and live God's way, be sorry
resurrect: come alive again, come back to life, God makes *someone* alive again
righteous: do what is right, live the right way, live straight, do good things, do what God wants, not do wrong, good, really good, fair
Sabbath: Jewish rest day
sacrifice: give *animal* to God to show him respect, kill the *animal* and burn it to give it God
Sadducees: the mob called the Sadducees (sometimes include, 'that believed that after people die, they will never come alive again')
saints: God's people, God's own people, God's special people, Christians
sanctify: make God's own special people, make properly good, make clean, give *oneself* to God to do his work
Satan: Satan, the boss over the bad spirits
scribe: Jewish law teacher
scriptures: God's book
sin: do bad things, go wrong, go against God
sign (miracle): do great things, do powerful things (sometimes include, 'to show *something*')
Son of Man: God's special man from heaven
synagogue: Jewish meeting house
temple: God's ceremony house
tempt: test, trick, try to get to do bad things, push to do wrong, get to go wrong
worship: show respect to

Note:

Some Greek words, and the English words commonly used as their equivalents, have a primary meaning but are also used in a way that has nothing in common with that primary meaning. We have translated such words to convey the overall meaning of the text where they are used. There are too many to include here, but a few of the more prominent ones are mentioned below:

in is primarily a locative but is also used to indicate relationship or connection. We have handled some of the common cases thus:
in Christ: joined to Jesus, belonging to Jesus
in the name of: with *someone's* power, (believe) in *someone*, (sent) by *someone*, (teach) about *someone*, (speak) *someone's* message, (baptise) to show they follow *someone*, to show they belong to *someone*
do something *in love*: love (as a verb)

now has the primary meaning of 'at this time' but it is also used as a discourse level conjunction, and is treated as such in our translation of those cases.

then has the primary meaning of 'next in sequence', but it is also used as a discourse level conjunction, and is treated as such in our translation of those cases.

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