



**Holy Bible** *personal compact*

*God's plan for you . . . live it! Breathe it! Shout it!*



Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.  
Carol Stream, Illinois



New Living  
Translation®

SECOND EDITION

Visit Tyndale's exciting Web site at [www.tyndale.com](http://www.tyndale.com).

Additional reference material copyright © 1999 by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.

This Bible is an edition of the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation.

*Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004 by Tyndale Charitable Trust. All rights reserved.

The text of the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, may be quoted in any form (written, visual, electronic, or audio) up to and inclusive of five hundred (500) verses without express written permission of the publisher, provided that the verses quoted do not account for more than 25 percent of the work in which they are quoted, and provided that a complete book of the Bible is not quoted.

When the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, is quoted, one of the following credit lines must appear on the copyright page or title page of the work:

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

When quotations from the NLT text are used in nonsalable media, such as church bulletins, orders of service, newsletters, transparencies, or similar media, a complete copyright notice is not required, but the initials *NLT* must appear at the end of each quotation.

Quotations in excess of five hundred (500) verses or 25 percent of the work, or other permission requests, must be approved in writing by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Send requests by e-mail to: [permission@tyndale.com](mailto:permission@tyndale.com) or call 630-668-8300, ext. 8817.

Publication of any commentary or other Bible reference work produced for commercial sale that uses the New Living Translation requires written permission for use of the NLT text.

*TYNDALE*, *New Living Translation*, *NLT*, the New Living Translation logo, and *LeatherLike* are registered trademarks of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

*TuTone* is a trademark of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

---

### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

ISBN-13: 978-1-4143-0928-6

ISBN-10: 1-4143-0928-7 Hardcover

ISBN-13: 978-1-4143-0929-3

ISBN-10: 1-4143-0929-5 Softcover

ISBN-13: 978-1-4143-1386-3

ISBN-10: 1-4143-1386-1 LeatherLike Princess

ISBN-13: 978-1-4143-1387-0

ISBN-10: 1-4143-1387-X LeatherLike Sword

ISBN-13: 978-1-4143-0930-9

ISBN-10: 1-4143-0930-9 LeatherLike Magenta/Pink

ISBN-13: 978-1-4143-0931-6

ISBN-10: 1-4143-0931-7 LeatherLike Blue/Brown

---

Printed in Italy

13 12 11 10 09 08 07

11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Tyndale House Publishers and Wycliffe Bible Translators share the vision for an understandable, accurate translation of the Bible for every person in the world. Each sale of the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, benefits Wycliffe Bible Translators. Wycliffe is working with partners around the world to accomplish Vision 2025—an initiative to start a Bible translation program in every language group that needs it by the year 2025.



# Contents

---

---

<b>What Is the Bible?</b> .....	A7
The Message of the Bible .....	A8
How to Read the Bible .....	A8
<b>The Bible Talks about Life</b> .....	A11
<b>The Bible Talks about Relationships</b> .....	A31
<b>The Bible Talks about Hot Topics</b> .....	A43
<b>The Bible Talks about the Future</b> .....	A55
<b>The Bible Talks about Faith</b> .....	A63
<b>Salvation through Jesus Christ</b> .....	A85
<b>Growing in Faith</b> .....	A89
<b>A Note to Readers</b> .....	A91
<b>Introduction to the NLT</b> .....	A93
<b>NLT Bible Translation Team</b> .....	A101

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis .....	3	2 Chronicles .....	374	Daniel .....	749
Exodus .....	50	Ezra .....	406	Hosea .....	763
Leviticus .....	89	Nehemiah .....	416	Joel .....	773
Numbers .....	117	Esther .....	430	Amos .....	777
Deuteronomy .....	156	Job .....	437	Obadiah .....	785
Joshua .....	189	Psalms .....	466	Jonah .....	787
Judges .....	211	Proverbs .....	541	Micah .....	789
Ruth .....	233	Ecclesiastes .....	568	Nahum .....	795
1 Samuel .....	236	Song of Songs .....	575	Habakkuk .....	798
2 Samuel .....	264	Isaiah .....	580	Zephaniah .....	801
1 Kings .....	289	Jeremiah .....	641	Haggai .....	804
2 Kings .....	317	Lamentations .....	698	Zechariah .....	806
1 Chronicles .....	345	Ezekiel .....	704	Malachi .....	815

## **THE NEW TESTAMENT**

Matthew . . . . .	821	Ephesians . . . . .	1003	Hebrews . . . . .	1030
Mark . . . . .	853	Philippians . . . . .	1008	James . . . . .	1041
Luke . . . . .	873	Colossians . . . . .	1012	1 Peter . . . . .	1045
John . . . . .	907	1 Thessalonians . . . . .	1015	2 Peter . . . . .	1049
Acts . . . . .	931	2 Thessalonians . . . . .	1018	1 John . . . . .	1052
Romans . . . . .	962	1 Timothy . . . . .	1020	2 John . . . . .	1056
1 Corinthians . . . . .	976	2 Timothy . . . . .	1024	3 John . . . . .	1057
2 Corinthians . . . . .	989	Titus . . . . .	1027	Jude . . . . .	1058
Galatians . . . . .	998	Philemon . . . . .	1029	Revelation . . . . .	1060

<b>Great Chapters of the Bible . . . . .</b>	<b>1077</b>
<b>Great Stories of the Bible . . . . .</b>	<b>1079</b>
<b>Great Verses of the Bible to Memorize . . . . .</b>	<b>1081</b>
<b>Bible Reading Plan . . . . .</b>	<b>1085</b>

## **ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF BIBLE BOOKS**

Acts . . . . .	931	James . . . . .	1041	Nehemiah . . . . .	416
Amos . . . . .	777	Jeremiah . . . . .	641	Numbers . . . . .	117
1 Chronicles . . . . .	345	Job . . . . .	437	Obadiah . . . . .	785
2 Chronicles . . . . .	374	Joel . . . . .	773	1 Peter . . . . .	1045
Colossians . . . . .	1017	John . . . . .	907	2 Peter . . . . .	1049
1 Corinthians . . . . .	976	1 John . . . . .	1052	Philemon . . . . .	1029
2 Corinthians . . . . .	989	2 John . . . . .	1056	Philippians . . . . .	1008
Daniel . . . . .	749	3 John . . . . .	1057	Proverbs . . . . .	541
Deuteronomy . . . . .	156	Jonah . . . . .	787	Psalms . . . . .	466
Ecclesiastes . . . . .	568	Joshua . . . . .	189	Revelation . . . . .	1060
Ephesians . . . . .	1003	Jude . . . . .	1058	Romans . . . . .	962
Esther . . . . .	430	Judges . . . . .	211	Ruth . . . . .	233
Exodus . . . . .	50	1 Kings . . . . .	289	1 Samuel . . . . .	236
Ezekiel . . . . .	704	2 Kings . . . . .	317	2 Samuel . . . . .	264
Ezra . . . . .	406	Lamentations . . . . .	698	Song of Songs . . . . .	575
Galatians . . . . .	998	Leviticus . . . . .	89	1 Thessalonians . . . . .	1015
Genesis . . . . .	3	Luke . . . . .	873	2 Thessalonians . . . . .	1018
Habakkuk . . . . .	798	Malachi . . . . .	815	1 Timothy . . . . .	1020
Haggai . . . . .	804	Mark . . . . .	853	2 Timothy . . . . .	1024
Hebrews . . . . .	1030	Matthew . . . . .	821	Titus . . . . .	1027
Hosea . . . . .	763	Micah . . . . .	789	Zechariah . . . . .	806
Isaiah . . . . .	580	Nahum . . . . .	795	Zephaniah . . . . .	801



# ***What Is the Bible?***

---

Do you have questions about life, friends, family, God, or your future? If so, the Bible is for you!

What is the Bible? It is the world's all-time best seller. It is the most read book in history! Many thousands of people just like you find their lives more meaningful because of the message in the Bible. People in all parts of the world turn to it to find answers.

You won't believe all the problems and questions the Bible can help you with. Things such as:

**Does God really care about me?**

**What does God expect of me?**

**Could I really make a difference in the world?**

**Is it really possible to live forever?**

**Is there really a hell? Is heaven for real?**

**Does God really listen when we pray?**

**What should I do with my life?**

But the Bible is more than an answer book to turn to when the pressures of life are overwhelming. It is really a library of books. It's filled with stories about real people. It has great poetry and beautiful songs. It has prophecies and promises. But most important, it is the true story of God's visiting our earth through his Son, Jesus Christ.

As you read about him, you will discover the most terrific friend you could ever have—someone who's around twenty-four hours a day, any time you need him! Read the Bible. It could be the most important and life-changing step you will ever take.

## ***The Message of the Bible***

The Bible begins by telling how the eternal God created the world and everything in it. He gave people a beautiful place to live and supplied everything they needed. Best of all, he was their friend.

That glorious beginning, however, was ruined when people disobeyed God and plunged into rebellion and sin. This broke humanity's relationship with God and brought judgment and death to the earth, its creatures, and humanity itself. Even so, God did not abandon his disobedient creatures; he set out to reclaim fallen people, much as a shepherd sets out to restore lost sheep to the fold.

The Old Testament provides many references to a special individual who would provide salvation for his people. That special individual, the Messiah, was not to be merely a man, however. The Messiah was to be "Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14, page 586), which in Hebrew means "God is with us." The Messiah would be both God and man, and those prophecies were fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

When Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sin, he also removed all guilt produced by that sin and restored the broken relationship between God and humanity. Further, he lives today and speaks continually to God on our behalf. "He is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him" (Hebrews 7:25, page 1034). He gives eternal life to all who trust in him (see "Salvation through Jesus Christ," page A85).

## ***How to Read the Bible***

Eventually, you will want to read every word of the Bible. However, you don't have to read straight through from the beginning. Since the Bible is a library of books, you can begin almost anywhere.

To help you begin, some of the subjects talked about in the Bible are listed on the following pages: Life, Relationships, Hot Topics, the Future, and Faith. Scan through these topics and find the questions or statements you're wondering about. There you'll find out how the Bible can help you.

You can also begin by following the Bible reading plan, which begins on page 1085. This approach will help you gain an understanding of the Bible's major themes and important lessons. Before you know it, you'll see the relevance of God's Word to your daily life.



## ***The Bible Talks about Life***

---

---

My purpose is to give them  
a rich and satisfying life.

John 10:10

anger

**I lose my temper easily.**

*Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.*

JAMES 1:19

When do you get mad? When someone hurts you or doesn't listen to you? Is it okay to get mad? James says anger doesn't make anything right—that you should be patient and listen to what the other person has to say first, before you speak. Instead of focusing on how you've been hurt or why you're right, it's better to focus on being patient and loving others. Temper tantrums don't solve anything—but persistent, patient love overcomes everything! Other verses that talk about dealing with anger are Genesis 4:6-7 (page 5), 1 Corinthians 13:5 (page 985), and Ephesians 4:31-32 (page 1005).

appearance

**I'm not good-looking.**

*People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*

1 SAMUEL 16:7

When people judge you by your hair, face, or clothing, they may overlook you if you don't stack up to the latest model. Fortunately, God judges by faith and character, not by appearances. *Real* good looks depend on your heart attitude, not on what you look like on the outside. What are you doing to improve your



heart attitude? Other verses that talk about your worth to God are Zechariah 3:3-4 (page 807), Malachi 3:17 (page 817), Luke 12:6-7 (page 890), and 1 Peter 3:3-5 (page 1047).

## attitudes

### **I dislike one of my teachers.**

*Get rid of all bitterness. . . . Instead, be kind to each other.*

EPHESIANS 4:31-32

Sure, teachers can be unlikable sometimes (so can other people!). But thinking angry thoughts about them won't help. What kind of attitude will you choose to have? Whether you like them or not, you should always treat people the way God treats you—with kindness and forgiveness—and you should treat teachers with the respect their position deserves (see Romans 13:1, page 972; 1 Peter 2:13-17, page 1046). If you stay angry, you'll only hurt yourself in the long run. Other verses about attitudes are Genesis 4:6-7 (page 5), Matthew 5:2-12 (page 824), and Philippians 4:4-7 (page 1010).

## boasting

### **Is it all right to boast when I do something great?**

*If you want to boast, boast only about the LORD.*

2 CORINTHIANS 10:17

It's normal to be proud of your accomplishments. If you just scored a goal or got an A, you want to share it with the world! You want others to share your joy. But if you continue to "rub it in," that's boasting, and it crosses the line into pride—and God doesn't think very highly of pride. Instead of boasting about what you've done, boast about what *God* has done. Then God will boast about you! Other verses that talk about boasting and pride are Genesis 11:4 (page 10), Habakkuk 2:4 (page 798), 1 Corinthians 4:7 (page 978), and Galatians 6:14 (page 1002).



## ***The Bible Talks about Relationships***

---

Let love be your highest goal!

1 Corinthians 14:1

compassion

**My friend is hurting. What should I do?**

*Four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat. They couldn't bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, so they dug a hole through the roof above his head.*

MARK 2:3-4

When you notice that someone is hurting, do you act? Or do you hang back, not sure what to do or say? The paralyzed man's friends brought him to Jesus, who could help him. Whether your friend is hurting physically, emotionally, or spiritually, he or she needs your help. So be compassionate—and bring your friend to Jesus! Other verses that talk about being compassionate are Romans 12:15 (page 972), 2 Corinthians 1:6-7 (page 989), and Galatians 6:2-3 (page 1002).

criticizing others

**Sometimes I judge or criticize others.**

*Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you.*

LUKE 6:37

It's so easy to pick on other people—while excusing your own faults. But did you know that we often criticize others for doing the same things we do? Instead of criticizing others, forgive them—just as Christ forgave you (see Col. 3:13). The next time you open your mouth to judge someone, remember what Christ did for you. Then take a look at yourself. Do you need to change something? For

other verses about criticism, read Matthew 7:1-2 (page 826), Romans 4:10 (page 965), and James 4:11-12 (page 1043).

## family

### **I don't get along with my family.**

*Abram said to Lot, "Let's not allow this conflict to come between us or our herdsmen. After all, we are close relatives!"*

GENESIS 13:8

Every family fights, but home doesn't have to be a war zone. Abram and Lot were traveling together, but the land couldn't support both of their large families along with all their animals. So instead of letting the arguments continue, Abram (who was older and deserved first choice) let Lot pick his land first. If you want to show true love to others, put their wishes first, even if it means sometimes not getting what you want. Other verses that talk about family problems and how to solve them are Genesis 37:9-11 (page 35), Luke 15:28-30 (page 894), Romans 15:5 (page 974), 1 Corinthians 1:10 (page 976), and Galatians 5:25-26 (page 1002). And if you want to be a good influence on your family, read 1 Corinthians 2:14 (page 977) and 1 Peter 3:1-2 (page 1047).

## forgiving others

### **He or she hurt me badly. Should I give him or her a second chance?**

*My love will know no bounds, for my anger will be gone forever.*

HOSEA 14:4

The story of Hosea and his sinful wife, Gomer, is the story of God and his sinful people, Israel. Although the people sinned, God gave them a second chance (in fact, *many* second chances throughout the Old Testament!). He forgave—and forgot. And he asks you to do the same thing: forgive and forget. Forgiving and forgetting doesn't mean you should continue taking abuse from a hurtful, abusive person. But it does mean being forgiving toward people. Do you give others that second chance? Other verses about forgiv-



## ***The Bible Talks about Hot Topics***

---

---

The LORD is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes. He is close to those who trust in him.

Nahum 1:7

### **abortion**

**I'm considering having an abortion.**

*Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him.*

PSALM 127:3

You didn't plan on getting pregnant; it "just happened." And all the sorries in the world won't change the fact that you now have a baby inside you. You don't know what to do. Abortion seems like the easy way out because then nobody will know. But you will—and God will. And God says *all* children are special, even if you didn't plan them. So choose to give your child life, and trust God to help you through any difficulty. Other verses that talk about the value of human life are Genesis 9:6 (page 9), Psalm 139:13-18 (page 536), and Jeremiah 1:5 (page 641).

### **abuse**

**I'm being abused. Is it my fault?**

*The LORD replies, "I have seen violence done to the helpless, and I have heard the groans of the poor. Now I will rise up to rescue them, as they have longed for me to do."*

PSALM 12:5

If you're being abused, it's not your fault. Just as the poor and the helpless were not to blame for their oppressors' actions, you are not to blame for being abused. God hates it when anybody (whether it's a relative or a stranger) takes advantage of you. God will judge that person for that sin someday. But in the meantime,

you don't have to be alone—ask an adult you trust for help. Other verses that will help you deal with abuse are 1 Samuel 12:22 (page 245), Psalm 147:3 (page 539), Romans 13:10 (page 973), and 1 Peter 5:7 (page 1048).

## cheating

### **I'm tempted to copy someone's paper.**

*Cursed is the cheat.*

MALACHI 1:14

*It's just one test, you think to yourself. It won't hurt anybody.* But God says you should never cheat. He knows that what you do about the "little" things shows what you'll do about the big things. If he can't trust you with the small stuff, how can you handle more responsibility? God calls you to be completely honest—always. It may make this one little test harder, but it'll make your whole life better! Other verses about God's perspective on cheating and honesty include Proverbs 11:1 (page 548) and Luke 16:10 (page 895).

## creation

### **Where did we come from?**

*When God created human beings, he made them to be like himself. . . . He blessed them and called them "human."*

GENESIS 5:1-2

The purpose of the creation account in the Bible is to tell us about God's greatness. God purposefully created man and woman in his own image. People were not created by a random act of nature, but rather by a loving act of God. When you look at the majestic mountains, great oceans, or endless heavens, remember that all of these were created by God—and people were created in his image. Other verses that talk about your creation are Genesis 1:27 (page 3), Genesis 2:3-7 (page 4), Colossians 1:16 (page 1012), and 1 Timothy 4:4 (page 1021).



## ***The Bible Talks about the Future***

---

I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.

Ephesians 1:18

### death

**I'm afraid of dying.**

*Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me.*

PSALM 23:4

Death is frightening because you can't stop it. Everyone will die sometime. Only one person can walk with you through death's "dark valley" and bring you safely to the other side—God, who can give you everlasting life. Walk each day with Jesus, and live your life fully one day at a time. Other verses about death and dying are Deuteronomy 30:19–20 (page 183), Psalm 89:48 (page 512), Daniel 12:2 (page 762), Romans 6:23 (page 966), 1 Corinthians 15:20–23 (page 987), and 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17 (page 1016).

### decisions

**I need to make a decision. What steps should I take?**

*Intelligent people are always ready to learn. Their ears are open for knowledge.*

PROVERBS 18:15

In order to make good decisions, make sure you get the facts first. Gather as much information as you can. Listen to others' ideas. Be sure to talk to God about your decision, and ask him for wisdom. Taking these steps doesn't guarantee you'll always be right, but

the chances are better. No one is perfect—we all make mistakes. The important thing is to learn from them. Other verses that talk about decision making are Psalm 25:4 (page 476), Proverbs 12:15 (page 550), Jeremiah 10:23–24 (page 653), and 2 Corinthians 1:17–19 (page 989).

## the end of the world

### **What if the world ends?**

*The stars of the sky fell to the earth like green figs falling from a tree shaken by a strong wind. The sky was rolled up like a scroll, and all of the mountains and islands were moved from their places.*

REVELATION 6:12–14

It's not *if* the world will end, it's *when*. The present earth won't last forever, because God will destroy it when the time is right. But he also promises that he'll create a new one (see chapters 21–22 for a sneak peek). We don't know exactly what it'll be like, but we do know that those who trust God will live there forever. Will you be there? Other verses that talk about the end of the world are Hebrews 12:26–28 (page 1039), 1 Peter 4:7 (page 1048), 1 John 2:17–18 (page 1053), and Revelation 21:1 (page 1073).

## eternal life

### **Is it really possible to live forever?**

*They will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.*

MATTHEW 25:46

Everyone will live forever; it's just a question of where. Do you want to live forever in blessing—or in punishment? If you don't believe Jesus Christ, God's Son, died for your sins, you'll go to hell (a place of eternal punishment) when you die. But if you've accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you'll live forever in heaven with him! Choose life, and enjoy the blessings of eternity. Other verses that talk about eternal life are John 3:16 (page 909), John



## ***The Bible Talks about Faith***

---

---

Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:7

### abilities

#### **What if I'm not good at anything?**

*A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.*

1 CORINTHIANS 12:7

But you are! God gives everyone special abilities—and if you're a Christian, the Holy Spirit has given you abilities that you can use to build up Christ's body, the church. So figure out what you're good at. Ask friends or trusted adults for clues (your parents probably know you as well as anyone). And then, when you know what you're good at, do it! You'll be a great help to the body of Christ. Other verses talking about abilities are Matthew 25:14–30 (page 847) and Romans 12:6–11 (page 972).

#### **I'm young. What can I do for God?**

*Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers.*

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

Don't think of your age as a handicap. God uses all sorts of people to make a difference in the world—through what they say and what they do. If you live so others can see Christ's love and goodness in you, God will use you—regardless of your age. Other verses to read are Jeremiah 1:6 (page 641) and 1 Peter 4:10–11 (page 1048).



## angels

### **Do I have a guardian angel?**

*He will order his angels to protect you wherever you go.*

PSALM 91:11

Angels do guard and protect you, but they're not cute, babylike creatures who sit on your shoulder. You can't command them to do whatever you want. An angel's role is to watch over believers. You can thank God that he has assigned angels to watch over you, and you can trust God to take care of you wherever you go. Other passages that talk about angels are Hebrews 1:13-14 (page 1030) and Hebrews 13:2 (page 1039).

## the Bible

### **Why do Christians talk about memorizing the Bible?**

*I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*

PSALM 119:11

The Bible is God's inspired word. God guided the writers to record just what he wanted to say. The Bible is our guidebook (telling us how to live), our textbook (teaching us what to believe), our spotlight (showing us what God is like), and our shield (protecting us from sin). God has an important message for you—the Bible. You should read it, commit it to memory, and obey it. For other verses on the value of the Bible and of memorizing it, turn to Matthew 5:17-19 (page 824), Ephesians 6:17 (page 1007), 2 Timothy 3:14-17 (page 1025), Hebrews 4:12-13 (page 1032), and 2 Peter 1:16-21 (page 1049).

### **Why is it so important to study the Bible?**

*We have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets. You must pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a lamp shining in a dark place.*

2 PETER 1:19



## ***Salvation through Jesus Christ***

---

DO YOU FEEL that something's missing in your life? that you really don't know what you're living for? As much as you try, nothing seems to fill that "heart hole."

Then here's some great news: God is waiting to fill that hole in your life, to give you a new reason for living. He created you, and he thinks you're incredibly *SPECIAL and ONE OF A KIND*. Because he's the Creator of the world, he's very powerful. But he loves you *so much* that he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die in your place for your sins. John 3:16 (page 909) says,

God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

Jesus' death is what makes a personal relationship with God possible!

God *longs* for you to accept that sacrifice and become part of his family. He wants you to be happy and at PEACE. If you accept him, he'll send the Holy Spirit to help you, guide you, and live in your heart forever so that you'll make wise choices every day. You won't have to worry about death, either. When you die, you'll go to heaven! You'll get to live with Jesus forever—in a place where there are **no tears, no trouble, ever!**

### **Acknowledge that sin has separated you from God.**

Before Adam and Eve sinned (see Genesis 2–3, pages 4–5), they had a good relationship with God. But after they sinned by disobeying God, their close relationship with God was destroyed, and they later died because of their sin.

The Bible says everyone is sinful: "No one is righteous—not even one. . . . For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's

glorious standard" (Romans 3:10, 23, page 964). You also have disobeyed God, so you, too, will die. God's Word says, "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23, page 966). This means that unless something is done, you'll spend eternity in hell, separated from God. See also Matthew 25:41, 46, page 848; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, page 1018; and Revelation 20:11-15, page 1073.

No one deserves eternal life with God in heaven, and no one can do enough good to *earn* this life (see Ephesians 2:8-9, page 1004). Instead, God wants you to recognize that you are sinful and to turn to him in trust.

### **Realize that God has solved the problem of sin.**

God doesn't want you to spend eternity in hell, separated from him. He wants you to enjoy life with him forever. So he paid the penalty your sins require. Romans 4:25 (page 965) says, "He [Jesus] was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God." Jesus died in your place and took the penalty of your sins. "God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners" (Romans 5:8, page 965; see also Isaiah 53:1-12, page 628). You don't have to be in hell and separated from God forever. "God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:21, page 992). When you put your trust in Jesus Christ to save you, he gives you eternal life with him.

### **Turn away from your sin, and turn to God.**

Putting your faith in God for salvation means you're turning away from your old sinful nature and turning to God to receive forgiveness. "If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness" (1 John 1:8-9, page 1052).

When you turn away from sin, you must also turn to God. "Let all the world look to me for salvation! For I am God; there is no other" (Isaiah 45:22, page 621). God has done everything we need to have eternal life with him forever. Jesus Christ has taken

away the penalty of your sin, and if you trust in him, you'll live forever with him. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying" (John 11:25, page 919). His resurrection from the dead proves this is true. "God will raise us from the dead by his power, just as he raised our Lord from the dead" (1 Corinthians 6:14, page 979). But you must trust him. Here's a short prayer you can pray to help you put your faith in God:

*Father God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, to die and rise from the dead. I confess I've sinned against you. Thank you that Christ paid the penalty for my sins. I put my trust in you as Savior and Lord. I give you my life. Thank you for giving me eternal life through Jesus Christ. Help me to live for you during the rest of my life on earth. In the name of Jesus, my Savior and Lord, I pray. Amen.*

Once you trust Jesus as your Savior, God wipes out all your sin, like an eraser on a chalkboard. You're made perfect in his sight: "He has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault" (Colossians 1:22, page 1012).

But it doesn't stop there. "You must continue to believe this truth and stand firmly in it. Don't drift away from the assurance you received when you heard the Good News" (Colossians 1:23, page 1012). Life at times will be tough, and you may still sin from time to time. But putting your faith in Jesus means you choose to leave your old lifestyle behind. Instead of living to please yourself and others, you live to please God. As you study the Bible, learn more about Jesus, and obey God's commands, he'll help you in your new life! *You'll never be alone again.*



## ***Growing in Faith***

---

### **Read and study your Bible.**

The Bible you have in your hands is God's own word (see 2 Timothy 3:14-17, page 1025, and 2 Peter 1:16-21, page 1049). This means the best way to get to know God better and grow in your faith in him is to read and study the Bible! God wants us to know his word thoroughly so that we can be mature and strong in our faith in him. That's why we recommend that you spend time every day reading and studying your Bible. It's God's personal "letter" to you!

### **Pray (talk to God) every day.**

When you pray, you are sharing your heart and life with God. God is listening! He wants to hear about everything you feel and experience. Prayer will help you become closer to God and learn how to trust in him no matter what is going on in your life. Whatever you are going through, tell God about it. Express your trust with words, and thank him for everything that happens. Tell him about your pains and your struggles. Nothing is too "normal" or too "personal" for prayer. When you open your heart and life to God in this way, you'll find he'll become very close to you! He'll walk beside you through everything.

### **Spend time with other Christians, and worship together.**

When you put your trust in God to save you through Jesus Christ, you become a new person, and you join a very large family! Every Christian is a member of God's family, the "body" of Christ. One of the best ways for you to grow in your faith is to get to know other Christians, to study the Bible with them, and to worship and pray to God with them. This is how God's family grows together as one body.

### **Share your faith with others.**

As God's children, we have the privilege of telling others about what God has done for us and what he can do for them (Isaiah

52:7, page 627). God wants us to tell others about God so that they can have an opportunity to put their trust in him for salvation, too. "Has the LORD redeemed you? Then speak out!" (Psalm 107:2, page 521). "Tell everyone about the amazing things he does" (Psalm 96:3, page 514). Not everyone will listen, but some will, and it's a great joy to see others come to God by faith. "There is joy in the presence of God's angels when even one sinner repents" (Luke 15:10, page 894).

# Matthew

## *The Ancestors of Jesus the Messiah*

**1** This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David\* and of Abraham:

- <sup>2</sup> Abraham was the father of Isaac.  
Isaac was the father of Jacob.  
Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.
- <sup>3</sup> Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was Tamar).  
Perez was the father of Hezron.  
Hezron was the father of Ram.\*
- <sup>4</sup> Ram was the father of Amminadab.  
Amminadab was the father of Nahshon.  
Nahshon was the father of Salmon.
- <sup>5</sup> Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab).  
Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth).  
Obed was the father of Jesse.
- <sup>6</sup> Jesse was the father of King David.  
David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah).
- <sup>7</sup> Solomon was the father of Rehoboam.  
Rehoboam was the father of Abijah.  
Abijah was the father of Asa.\*
- <sup>8</sup> Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat.  
Jehoshaphat was the father of Jehoram.\*  
Jehoram was the father\* of Uzziah.
- <sup>9</sup> Uzziah was the father of Jotham.  
Jotham was the father of Ahaz.  
Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah.
- <sup>10</sup> Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh.  
Manasseh was the father of Amon.\*  
Amon was the father of Josiah.
- <sup>11</sup> Josiah was the father of Jehoiachin\* and his brothers (born at the time of the exile to Babylon).
- <sup>12</sup> After the Babylonian exile:  
Jehoiachin was the father of Shealtiel.

Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel.

<sup>13</sup> Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud.

Abiud was the father of Eliakim.

Eliakim was the father of Azor.

<sup>14</sup> Azor was the father of Zadok.

Zadok was the father of Akim.

Akim was the father of Eliud.

<sup>15</sup> Eliud was the father of Eleazar.

Eleazar was the father of Matthan.

Matthan was the father of Jacob.

<sup>16</sup> Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.

Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah.

<sup>17</sup>All those listed above include fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen from the Babylonian exile to the Messiah.

## *The Birth of Jesus the Messiah*

<sup>18</sup>This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement\* quietly.

<sup>20</sup>As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus,\* for he will save his people from their sins."

<sup>22</sup>All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

<sup>23</sup> "Look! The virgin will conceive a child!  
She will give birth to a son,  
and they will call him Immanuel,\*  
which means 'God is with us.'"

1:1 Greek *Jesus the Messiah, son of David*. 1:3 Greek *Aram*, a variant spelling of Ram; also in 1:4. See 1 Chr 2:9-10.  
1:7 Greek *Asaph*, a variant spelling of Asa; also in 1:8. See 1 Chr 3:10. 1:8a Greek *Joram*, a variant spelling of Jehoram;  
also in 1:8b. See 1 Kgs 22:50 and note at 1 Chr 3:11. 1:8b Or *ancestor*; also in 1:11. 1:10 Greek *Amos*, a variant spelling  
of Amon; also in 1:10b. See 1 Chr 3:14. 1:11 Greek *Jecmiah*, a variant spelling of Jehoiachin; also in 1:12. See 2 Kgs 24:6  
and note at 1 Chr 3:16. 1:19 Greek to *divorce her*. 1:21 *Jesus* means "The LORD saves." 1:23 Isa 7:14; 8:8, 10  
(Greek version).

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. <sup>25</sup>But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

### *Visitors from the East*

**2** Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men\* from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, <sup>2</sup>“Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose,\* and we have come to worship him.”

<sup>3</sup>King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

<sup>5</sup>“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote:

<sup>6</sup> ‘And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities\* of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.’\*”

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

<sup>9</sup>After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! <sup>11</sup>They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

<sup>12</sup>When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

### *The Escape to Egypt*

<sup>13</sup>After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his

mother,” the angel said. “Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

<sup>14</sup>That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, <sup>15</sup>and they stayed there until Herod’s death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: “I called my Son out of Egypt.”\*

<sup>16</sup>Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men’s report of the star’s first appearance. <sup>17</sup>Herod’s brutal action fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup> “A cry was heard in Ramah— weeping and great mourning. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted, for they are dead.”\*

### *The Return to Nazareth*

<sup>19</sup>When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. <sup>20</sup>“Get up!” the angel said. “Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead.”

<sup>21</sup>So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. <sup>22</sup>But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod’s son Archelaus, he was afraid to go there. Then, after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

### *John the Baptist Prepares the Way*

**3** In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, <sup>2</sup>“Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.\*” <sup>3</sup>The prophet Isaiah was speaking about John when he said,

“He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the LORD’s coming! Clear the road for him!’”\*

<sup>4</sup>John’s clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out

2:1 Or royal astrologers; Greek reads magi; also in 2:7, 16. 2:2 Or star in the east. 2:6a Greek the rulers. 2:6b Mic 5:2; 2 Sam 5:2. 2:15 Hos 11:1. 2:18 Jer 31:15. 3:2 Or has come, or is coming soon. 3:3 Isa 40:3 (Greek version).



to see and hear John. <sup>6</sup>And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

<sup>7</sup>But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to watch him baptize,\* he denounced them. "You brood of snakes!" he exclaimed. "Who warned you to flee God's coming wrath?<sup>8</sup> Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. <sup>9</sup>Don't just say to each other, 'We're safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.' That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones.

<sup>10</sup>Even now the ax of God's judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup>"I baptize with\* water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.\*

<sup>12</sup>He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire."

### *The Baptism of Jesus*

<sup>13</sup>Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. <sup>14</sup>But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?"

<sup>15</sup>But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.\*" So John agreed to baptize him.

<sup>16</sup>After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened\* and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. <sup>17</sup>And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

### *The Temptation of Jesus*

**4** Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. <sup>2</sup>For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry.

<sup>3</sup>During that time the devil\* came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread."

<sup>4</sup>But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say,

'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'\*"

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, <sup>6</sup>and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say,

'He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.'\*"

<sup>7</sup>Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the LORD your God.'\*"

<sup>8</sup>Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup>"I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me."

<sup>10</sup>"Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say,

'You must worship the LORD your God and serve only him.'\*"

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

### *The Ministry of Jesus Begins*

<sup>12</sup>When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he left Judea and returned to Galilee.

<sup>13</sup>He went first to Nazareth, then left there and moved to Capernaum, beside the Sea of Galilee, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. <sup>14</sup>This fulfilled what God said through the prophet Isaiah:

<sup>15</sup> "In the land of Zebulun and of Naphtali, beside the sea, beyond the Jordan River, in Galilee where so many Gentiles live, <sup>16</sup> the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. And for those who lived in the land where death casts its shadow, a light has shined.\*\*"

<sup>17</sup>From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.\*"

### *The First Disciples*

<sup>18</sup>One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—

3:7 Or coming to be baptized. 3:11a Or in. 3:11b Or in the Holy Spirit and in fire. 3:15 Or for we must fulfill all righteousness. 3:16 Some manuscripts read opened to him. 4:3 Greek the tempter. 4:4 Deut 8:3. 4:6 Ps 91:11-12. 4:7 Deut 6:16. 4:10 Deut 6:13. 4:15-16 Isa 9:1-2 (Greek version). 4:17 Or has come, or is coming soon.

throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. <sup>19</sup>Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!” <sup>20</sup>And they left their nets at once and followed him.

<sup>21</sup>A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. <sup>22</sup>They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind.

### *Crowds Follow Jesus*

<sup>23</sup>Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. <sup>24</sup>News about him spread as far as Syria, and people soon began bringing to him all who were sick. And whatever their sickness or disease, or if they were demon possessed or epileptic or paralyzed—he healed them all. <sup>25</sup>Large crowds followed him wherever he went—people from Galilee, the Ten Towns,\* Jerusalem, from all over Judea, and from east of the Jordan River.

### *The Sermon on the Mount*

**5** One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, <sup>2</sup>and he began to teach them.

### *The Beatitudes*

- <sup>3</sup> “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,\* for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
- <sup>4</sup> God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- <sup>5</sup> God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.
- <sup>6</sup> God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,\* for they will be satisfied.
- <sup>7</sup> God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- <sup>8</sup> God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.
- <sup>9</sup> God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.
- <sup>10</sup> God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

<sup>11</sup>“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you\* and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. <sup>12</sup>Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

### *Teaching about Salt and Light*

<sup>13</sup>“You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

<sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

### *Teaching about the Law*

<sup>17</sup>“Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. <sup>18</sup>I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. <sup>19</sup>So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God’s laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

<sup>20</sup>“But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

### *Teaching about Anger*

<sup>21</sup>“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’\* <sup>22</sup>But I say, if you are even angry with someone,\* you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot,\* you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone,\* you are in danger of the fires of hell.\*

<sup>23</sup>“So if you are presenting a sacrifice\* at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

4:25 Greek Decapolis. 5:3 Greek poor in spirit. 5:6 Or for righteousness. 5:11 Some manuscripts omit and lie about you. 5:21 Exod 20:13; Deut 5:17. 5:22a Some manuscripts add without cause. 5:22b Greek uses an Aramaic term of contempt: If you say to your brother, ‘Raca.’ 5:22c Greek if you say, ‘You fool.’ 5:22d Greek Gehenna; also in 5:29, 30. 5:23 Greek gift; also in 5:24.

<sup>25</sup>“When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup>And if that happens, you surely won’t be free again until you have paid the last penny.\*”

#### Teaching about Adultery

<sup>27</sup>“You have heard the commandment that says, ‘You must not commit adultery.’\* <sup>28</sup>But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup>So if your eye—even your good eye\*—causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup>And if your hand—even your stronger hand\*—causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

#### Teaching about Divorce

<sup>31</sup>“You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’\* <sup>32</sup>But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.

#### Teaching about Vows

<sup>33</sup>“You have also heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the LORD.’\* <sup>34</sup>But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, ‘By heaven!’ because heaven is God’s throne. <sup>35</sup>And do not say, ‘By the earth!’ because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, ‘By Jerusalem!’ for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup>Do not even say, ‘By my head!’ for you can’t turn one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>Just say a simple, ‘Yes, I will,’ or ‘No, I won’t.’ Anything beyond this is from the evil one.

#### Teaching about Revenge

<sup>38</sup>“You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’\* <sup>39</sup>But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also.

<sup>40</sup>If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. <sup>41</sup>If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile,\* carry it two miles. <sup>42</sup>Give to those who ask, and don’t turn away from those who want to borrow.

#### Teaching about Love for Enemies

<sup>43</sup>“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’\* and hate your enemy. <sup>44</sup>But I say, love your enemies!\* Pray for those who persecute you! <sup>45</sup>In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. <sup>46</sup>If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. <sup>47</sup>If you are kind only to your friends,\* how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. <sup>48</sup>But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

#### Teaching about Giving to the Needy

**6** “Watch out! Don’t do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. <sup>3</sup>But when you give to someone in need, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. <sup>4</sup>Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

#### Teaching about Prayer and Fasting

<sup>5</sup>“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. <sup>6</sup>But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

<sup>7</sup>“When you pray, don’t babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. <sup>8</sup>Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! <sup>9</sup>Pray like this:

5:26 Greek the last *kodrantēs* (i.e., quadrans). 5:27 Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18. 5:29 Greek your right eye.

5:30 Greek your right hand. 5:31 Deut 24:1. 5:33 Num 30:2. 5:38 Greek the law that says: ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21. 5:41 Greek *milion* (4,854 feet or 1,478 meters).

5:43 Lev 19:18. 5:44 Some manuscripts add *Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who hate you.* Compare Luke 6:27-28. 5:47 Greek your brothers.

Our Father in heaven,  
 may your name be kept holy.

<sup>10</sup> May your Kingdom come soon.  
 May your will be done on earth,  
 as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup> Give us today the food we need,\*

<sup>12</sup> and forgive us our sins,  
 as we have forgiven those who sin  
 against us.

<sup>13</sup> And don't let us yield to temptation,\*  
 but rescue us from the evil one.\*

<sup>14</sup>If you forgive those who sin against you,  
 your heavenly Father will forgive you. <sup>15</sup>But if  
 you refuse to forgive others, your Father will  
 not forgive your sins.

<sup>16</sup>And when you fast, don't make it obvi-  
 ous, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look  
 miserable and disheveled so people will ad-  
 mire them for their fasting. I tell you the  
 truth, that is the only reward they will ever  
 get. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, comb your hair and  
 wash your face. <sup>18</sup>Then no one will notice that  
 you are fasting, except your Father, who  
 knows what you do in private. And your Fa-  
 ther, who sees everything, will reward you.

#### Teaching about Money and Possessions

<sup>19</sup>Don't store up treasures here on earth,  
 where moths eat them and rust destroys  
 them, and where thieves break in and steal.  
<sup>20</sup>Store your treasures in heaven, where  
 moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves  
 do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>Wherever your  
 treasure is, there the desires of your heart will  
 also be.

<sup>22</sup>Your eye is a lamp that provides light for  
 your body. When your eye is good, your whole  
 body is filled with light. <sup>23</sup>But when your eye is  
 bad, your whole body is filled with darkness.  
 And if the light you think you have is actually  
 darkness, how deep that darkness is!

<sup>24</sup>No one can serve two masters. For you  
 will hate one and love the other; you will be  
 devoted to one and despise the other. You  
 cannot serve both God and money.

<sup>25</sup>That is why I tell you not to worry about  
 everyday life—whether you have enough  
 food and drink, or enough clothes to wear.  
 Isn't life more than food, and your body more  
 than clothing? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds. They don't  
 plant or harvest or store food in barns, for  
 your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't  
 you far more valuable to him than they are?

<sup>27</sup>Can all your worries add a single moment to  
 your life?

<sup>28</sup>And why worry about your clothing?  
 Look at the lilies of the field and how they  
 grow. They don't work or make their cloth-  
 ing, <sup>29</sup>yet Solomon in all his glory was not  
 dressed as beautifully as they are. <sup>30</sup>And if  
 God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that  
 are here today and thrown into the fire  
 tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why  
 do you have so little faith?

<sup>31</sup>So don't worry about these things, say-  
 ing, 'What will we eat? What will we drink?  
 What will we wear?' <sup>32</sup>These things dominate  
 the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heav-  
 enly Father already knows all your needs.  
<sup>33</sup>Seek the Kingdom of God\* above all else,  
 and live righteously, and he will give you  
 everything you need.

<sup>34</sup>So don't worry about tomorrow, for to-  
 morrow will bring its own worries. Today's  
 trouble is enough for today.

#### Do Not Judge Others

**7** "Do not judge others, and you will not be  
 judged. <sup>2</sup>For you will be treated as you  
 treat others.\* The standard you use in judg-  
 ing is the standard by which you will be  
 judged.\*

<sup>3</sup>And why worry about a speck in your  
 friend's eye\* when you have a log in your own?  
<sup>4</sup>How can you think of saying to your friend,\*  
 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your  
 eye,' when you can't see past the log in your  
 own eye? <sup>5</sup>Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in  
 your own eye; then you will see well enough to  
 deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

<sup>6</sup>Don't waste what is holy on people who  
 are unholy.\* Don't throw your pearls to pigs!  
 They will trample the pearls, then turn and  
 attack you.

#### Effective Prayer

<sup>7</sup>Keep on asking, and you will receive what you  
 ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find.  
 Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened  
 to you. <sup>8</sup>For everyone who asks, receives. Every-  
 one who seeks, finds. And to everyone who  
 knocks, the door will be opened.

<sup>9</sup>You parents—if your children ask for a  
 loaf of bread, do you give them a stone in-  
 stead? <sup>10</sup>Or if they ask for a fish, do you give  
 them a snake? Of course not! <sup>11</sup>So if you sin-

6:11 Or Give us today our food for the day; or Give us today our food for tomorrow. 6:13a Or And keep us from being tested.

6:13b Or from evil. Some manuscripts add For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

6:33 Some manuscripts do not include of God. 7:2a Or For God will judge you as you judge others. 7:2b Or The measure you give will be the measure you get back. 7:3 Greek your brother's eye; also in 7:5. 7:4 Greek your brother.

7:6 Greek Don't give the sacred to dogs.

ful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

### *The Golden Rule*

<sup>12</sup>“Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

### *The Narrow Gate*

<sup>13</sup>“You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell\* is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. <sup>14</sup>But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.

### *The Tree and Its Fruit*

<sup>15</sup>“Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. <sup>16</sup>You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup>A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. <sup>19</sup>So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup>Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

### *True Disciples*

<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. <sup>22</sup>On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ <sup>23</sup>But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

### *Building on a Solid Foundation*

<sup>24</sup>“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. <sup>25</sup>Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. <sup>26</sup>But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. <sup>27</sup>When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

<sup>28</sup>When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, <sup>29</sup>for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.

### *Jesus Heals a Man with Leprosy*

**8** Large crowds followed Jesus as he came down the mountainside. <sup>2</sup>Suddenly, a man with leprosy approached him and knelt before him. “Lord,” the man said, “if you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean.”

<sup>3</sup>Jesus reached out and touched him. “I am willing,” he said. “Be healed!” And instantly the leprosy disappeared. <sup>4</sup>Then Jesus said to him, “Don’t tell anyone about this. Instead, go to the priest and let him examine you. Take along the offering required in the law of Moses for those who have been healed of leprosy.\* This will be a public testimony that you have been cleansed.”

### *The Faith of a Roman Officer*

<sup>5</sup>When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer\* came and pleaded with him, <sup>6</sup>“Lord, my young servant\* lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain.”

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.”

<sup>8</sup>But the officer said, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. <sup>9</sup>I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, ‘Go,’ and they go, or ‘Come,’ and they come. And if I say to my slaves, ‘Do this,’ they do it.”

<sup>10</sup>When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, “I tell you the truth, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel! <sup>11</sup>And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. <sup>12</sup>But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

<sup>13</sup>Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, “Go back home. Because you believed, it has happened.” And the young servant was healed that same hour.

### *Jesus Heals Many People*

<sup>14</sup>When Jesus arrived at Peter’s house, Peter’s mother-in-law was sick in bed with a high

7:13 Greek *The road that leads to destruction.* 8:4 See Lev 14:2-32. 8:5 Greek a *centurion*; similarly in 8:8, 13. 8:6 Or *child*; also in 8:13.