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Modern Matthew

Good News for Today

College Edition

Modern Matthew

**The Gospel of Matthew as
translated by**

Dr. Firpo Carr, PhD

Modern Matthew: Good News for Today—College Edition

Author: Dr. Firpo Carr, PhD

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About the Author (Relevant background)

After getting his feet wet with audited courses in biblical Hebrew and biblical Greek in the mid-1970s at the Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, California, the next several decades would see Firpo Carr taking a deeper dive into biblical scholarship, including obtaining a graduate degree from seminary, as well as experiencing other milestones:

1990s

1990a - Television Program: *IBM and the Sacred Scrolls*, TV Network: Continental Cablevision (later, Media One), Channel: 47. Location: Paramount, California. Audience: Local (greater Los Angeles area). Host(s): Jill Linder, University of Redlands. Subject Matter: Dead Sea Scrolls.

1990b - Newspaper: *Los Angeles Times*, Saturday, August 4, 1990. Section: "Southern California File" (photograph of Carr included. Article by John Dart, Religious Writer:

"It is unlikely that someone raised in a South-Central Los Angeles housing project would have this privilege," said Firpo W. Carr of Hawthorne. But Carr, 35, on leave from his customer service post with IBM, departed this week for a second visit to a Leningrad library to photographically record selected pages of documents important in studies of religious texts.

The facility is the Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library, where a team from USC and the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center in Claremont two months ago photographed all 1,000 pages of the Leningrad Codex, the oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Bible.

Negotiation to photograph that codex and other works in the vast collection, which have been rarely accessible to Western scholars, were begun years ago by the Claremont center.

Carr was able to get first crack at the codex in early 1989 after striking up a friendship with the library's manuscript section director, Viktor Lebedev. The American photographed 20 pages of the document, but the purposes and procedures differ from the Claremont-USC project. Carr is using an IBM system called Audio/Visual Connection, which holds promise for instructional and research uses.

Karie Masterson, a programmer/analyst with the UCLA Humanities Computing Facility, has been working with Carr. "We will take the videotape he gets, connect a television and VCR to a computer, then grab frames of the pages from the television and save them on hard disks," she said. The photographed images then can be viewed on a computer screen along with transliterations and translations of the same page to aid students and scholars. Because the images are put into computerized form, they could be transmitted over phone lines to other study centers as well.

Masterson said that among the manuscripts being filmed by Carr for UCLA is a partial copy of the Egyptian Book of the Dead held by the Leningrad library. In his six days at the library, Carr will also be photographing a 1,074-year-old partial manuscript of the Hebrew Bible and filling various scholarly requests, such as recording documents on church councils for medieval specialists at Stanford University.

With studies in ancient languages and a doctorate in computer science from Pacific Western University, Carr established his Scholar Technological Institute of Research in Hawthorne in hopes of introducing both scholars and lay people to techniques in the field.

1991a - Television Program: *Pacesetters*. TV Network: KTLA Audience: Local (greater Los Angeles area). Host(s): Ray Gonzales. Subject Matter: *The Divine Name Controversy (Vol. 1)*. Location: TV Studio, Hollywood, California Channel: 5. Book Featured: *The Divine Name Controversy, (Vol. 1)* Solo panelist: Firpo Carr.

1991b - Television Program: *Prime9News*. TV Network: KCAL Audience: Local, National. Host(s): Pamela Harvey and David Jackson. Date: September 27, 1991. Subject Matter: Dead Sea Scrolls. Location: Paramount Studios, Hollywood, California. Channel: 9 Los Angeles, California. Book Featured: *The Divine Name Controversy (Vol. 1)*. Duration: 5 minutes. (Note: Channel 9 is a CNN affiliate. The Huntington Library in San Marino, California, had announced that the photographic copies of the Dead Sea Scrolls would be release to the world.)

1992a - Television Program: *Mysteries of the Ancient World Television Program: Ancient Secrets of the Bible*. TV Network: FOX TV. Audience: Global. Host(s): Dennis Weaver (actor). Subject Matter: Solving ancient mysteries of the Bible. Location: Hollywood. Channel: 11, Los Angeles, California. (Note: This two-hour special program featured scholars, authors, experts, scientists, and archeologists from around the world and aired during the sweeps.)

1992b - Television Program: *Today's Religion*. TV Network: KCBS TV. Audience: Local (greater Los Angeles area). Host(s): Truman Jacques. Subject Matter: Dead Sea Scrolls. Location: TV Studio, Hollywood. Channel: 2, Los Angeles, California. Book Featured: *The Divine Name Controversy (Vol. 1)*. Duration: 30 minutes. (Other panelists: Prof. John C. Trever. Priest Michael La Foon of St. Mark's Antioch

Church in Irvine, California. Dr. Ziony Zevit of the University of Judaism.)

1992c - Journal: *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Volume 18 Number 5. September/October 1992. Title (BARlines): "Firpo W. Carr Was First," by Herschel Shanks, Editor, Staff Writer:

The BAS-published book *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Forty Years* contains a color plate (5) and a black-and-white photo (p. 67) from the Leningrad Codex, dating to about 1008, the second oldest Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible. Bruce and Kenneth Zuckerman of West Semitic Research were properly credited as the photographers of those pictures, but we incorrectly identified them as the first to make these photographs available outside Russia.

Actually Firpo W. Carr of Scholar Technological Institute of Research, Inc., in 1989 was the first foreigner to gain access to and photograph a number of items from the collection in the Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) state library. At the time Carr photographed, in color, the carpet page from the Leningrad Codex, preceding the Zuckermans by over a year in providing such photographs to the West.

1994a - Relevant religious courses that Firpo Carr taught while during his nearly 30-year stint with the University of Phoenix, as well as related courses, that embellished Firpo's knowledge and translation skills:

REL/133 WORLD RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS I

Content: This course provides a survey of the major historical developments, structural cosmology, symbolic interpretation, and values of

Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Shintoism.

REL/134 WORLD RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS II

Content: This course provides a survey of the major historical developments, structural cosmology, symbolic interpretation, and values of the Judaic, Christian, and Islamic religious traditions.

HUM/115 CRITICAL THINKING IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Content: Students learn how to think critically, focusing on developing the necessary tools and skills to analyze problems, make decisions, and formulate well-supported points of view on key academic, social, and professional issues.

PSY/110 PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING

The course introduces theories and concepts in psychology that will foster academic success and provide students with opportunities to synthesize and apply that knowledge.

1994b - Television Program: *Mysteries of the Ancient World*. Audience: Global. Host(s): Darren McGaven (actor). Director: Doug Campbell. Subject Matter: Ancient mysteries surrounding the Pyramids of Egypt, Nostradamus, the Bermuda Triangle and the Shroud of Turin. Type: Documentary. Audience: Global. Location: Hollywood.

1998a - Television Program: *Ancient Secrets of the Bible: Moses' Ten Commandments: Tablets from God?* Type: Documentary. Audience: Global. Studio: Blackboard Entertainment. Date: August 24, 1998 (VHS). Subject Matter: Shroud of Turin, evidence of Christ's resurrection.

1998b - Publisher's Preface for Publication of *Lenin-gradensis* [Codex Leningrad B19a, or Leningrad Codex], a "facsimile edition of *Lenin-gradensis*, the oldest complete Hebrew Bible in the world."

Firpo Carr of IBM, who had worked with Bruce Zuckerman on a couple of projects and knew Leningrad and the Library, made a friend of the Director of Oriental Manuscripts in the Library, Victor Lebedev, and talked with him about our intentions. Carr returned to assure us.

Regrettably, this acknowledgement was removed from the new edition of *Lenin-gradensis*, due to anti-Black racism (see [Racism in Bible Scholarship: Dr. Firpo Carr and ancient Afro-Hebrew Manuscripts in the Soviet Union - YouTube](#)), and is currently out of print.

1998c - Director: Timothy J. Nelson. Date: November 10, 1998 (VHS). Subject Matter: Moses' Ten Commandments on stone tablets. Television Program: *Ancient Secrets of the Bible: Shroud of Turin—Fraud or Evidence of Christ's Resurrection*.

2000s

2001-2002 - Mt. Saint Mary's University (formerly Mt. Saint Mary's College), Chalon Campus. Position: Instructor. Courses: Computers/Information Technology. Mission Statement:

Mount Saint Mary's University offers a dynamic learning experience in the liberal arts and sciences to a diverse student body. As a Catholic university primarily for women, we are dedicated to providing a superior

education enhanced by an emphasis on building leadership skills and fostering a spirit to serve others.

2007 - Television Program: *Ancient Secrets of the Bible: What do the Dead Sea Scrolls Tell Us?* Type: Documentary Audience: Global. Director: David Priest. Writer: Joseph Meier. Subject Matter: Dead Sea Scrolls.

2009 - Firpo Carr, coauthor of the article “Jehovah’s Witnesses” in the two-volume encyclopedia set, *African American Religious Culture*.

2010s

2013-2018 - Firpo Carr, Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology, School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Department of Psychology, Northcentral University (NCU). Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).

2018 - Firpo Carr’s dissertation (NCU), “Exploring Surgeons’ Attitudes and Behaviors Toward the Bloodless Policy and Emergency Treatment of Jehovah’s Witnesses Relative to Patient-Centered Care and Evidence-Based Medicine: A Multiple-Case Study.”

2019 - Degree: Master of Arts in Urban Ministry (MAUM) Degree completion: October 16, 2019. Accreditation: Grand Canyon University has been fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) since 1968.

GCU is also authorized in Arizona by the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), among several others. College of Theology Grand Canyon Theological Seminary (GCTS). Accreditation: Grand Canyon Theological Seminary

at Grand Canyon University is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools.

2020s

2021 - (August 2021). *Black Bible Manuscripts: Why the Bible Isn't the White Man's Book*, by Dr. Firpo Carr. Book Description:

Surprisingly, all 5 billion Bibles translated in whole or in part into nearly 3,000 languages sprang from Black African manuscripts. The oldest Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts, the oldest Greek New Testament manuscripts, and the oldest Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament (called the Septuagint), are all African documents.

After 25 years of preparation, Firpo releases the latest in his string of books. He is the only one who could have written it with such ferocity.

A number of fragments among the world-famous Dead Sea Scrolls are African documents. In fact, the oldest document among the Dead Sea Scrolls is an African manuscript. Carr brings a unique perspective since he personally worked extensively with Prof. Dr. John C. Trever, the late Bible scholar who was the first Westerner to discover the Dead Sea Scrolls and announce their existence to the world.

Only a handful of scholars around the world were exposed to what was at the time the 2,000-year-old unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls. Carr was not only one of these but was the only Black man to have done so. As a Man of Color, he was able to see through a set of lenses different from those of his colleagues.

He was accorded the privilege of being in the "inner circle" since he was the first person ever to take color photographs of the oldest most complete version of the

Hebrew Old Testament in the form of the 1,000-year-old Codex Leningrad B19a, located at the time in the Soviet Union, now Russian Federation. His daring adventures there made international news.

Amazingly, the Greek New Testament was “officially” cataloged in Africa in the fourth century CE. However, in the early centuries after Christ’s death, distinguished African-born Christian historians, writers, and theologians like Origen, Athanasius (who was derisively called a “black dwarf”), and St. Augustine confirmed that the 27 books of the Greek New Testament had already been assembled and collectively recognized by the first-century Christian community at large.

Godly, honorable, White translators who risked their lives are descriptively called “Snowballs in Hell” in the third section of this book. And what of the Black Christians who were contemporaries of the Bible translating martyrs?

These and other long-overlooked and forgotten persons of African descent—peppering all strata of European society—are discussed in detail in this unparalleled piece of literature.

2022 - “ETHICS ‘Surgeon Anxiety and Jehovah’s Witness Patients: Determining the Effects of Educational Intervention.’” Author Information: Carr, Firpo W PhD, MAUM, MAM, BS. *Journal of the American College of Surgeons* 235(5):p S20-S21, November 2022. | DOI: 10.1097/01.XCS.0000895780.11897.92

2023a - Dr. Firpo Carr’s dissertation garners global interest. Royalties awarded:

Congratulations! We are excited to inform you that your work is being accessed by other researchers and libraries around the world. As a result of their interest in

your work you have earned a royalty payment from purchases of your dissertation or thesis through ProQuest in all formats, including downloads, print, and microfilm. (ProQuest: Part of Clarivate, March 27, 2023)

2023b - Dr. Firpo Carr releases the new hard cover revised version of *Modern Matthew: Good News for Today—College Edition*. A free downloadable copy can be found on the home page of his website www.firpocarr.com.

Introduction

Modern Matthew: Good News for Today—College Edition is the first holistic version of Matthew’s Gospel designed to appeal to the heart by way of intellect.

Modern Matthew is occasionally peppered with endnote commentary (sometimes comprehensive), so one might even be tempted to call it a “Seminary Edition.”

There are over 150 pages of endnotes tying the biblical text to collegiate studies.

While the stellar, traditional, much-needed “Study Bible” or “Reference Edition” will continue to occupy its long-held irreplaceable spot on the shelf—focusing as it does on illuminating background material and cross-references—*Modern Matthew* engages the reader with secular proclivities with an interest in subjects studied on a college or university level.

For example, *Modern Matthew* relates Jesus’ words to such fields as law, medicine, science, technology, oceanography, microbiology, cryonics, and even cloud computing, to name a few. Additionally, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin are put under a microscope.

Also, *Modern Matthew* frequently uses contractions such as “doesn’t” and “couldn’t” to facilitate textual flow. However, it also utilizes “does not” and “could not.” These context-sensitive approaches are a break from convention, further evidence that it is not a traditional translation.

Aside from being what may well be the first holistic version of the Gospel, *Modern Matthew* is the first “*epictil*” translation, with “*epictil*” being an acronym for emotional, paraphrase, intuitive, cultural, thought, intellectual, and literal.

EMOTIONAL TRANSLATION: The emotions of Bible writers invariably factor into their accounts. This is no less so with

Matthew. Such feelings do not contradict the accuracy of the original language, nor do they disrupt the flow.

God Himself displays emotion throughout Scripture.

A sincere effort has been made to design *Modern Matthew* to accentuate Jesus' emotions and the emotions of the characters in the Gospel account, all tintured with Matthew's own feelings as he relates Jesus' story in a way that connects with the reader and stirs their emotions.

PARAPHRASE TRANSLATION: Paraphrasing expresses the same message with different or even *fewer words* to achieve greater clarity. Where deemed appropriate, passages are paraphrased in *Modern Matthew* to avoid the rigidity of a literal translation.

INTUITIVE TRANSLATION: After studying words, phrases, and clauses in Matthew's Gospel in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, an attempt is made to sense the rhythm and cadence of the text of his approach. This translator intuitively and instinctively endeavored to detect Matthew's underlying writing style in translating *Modern Matthew*.

CULTURAL TRANSLATION: In *Modern Matthew*, the various cultures under the rule of the Roman Empire that were contemporary with the time of Christ and the apostles all coalesce into a blossoming diversity. Adding the trendy U.S. English ingredient makes for a rich, flavorful translation.

THOUGHT TRANSLATION: Unlike paraphrasing, which uses *fewer words* (as noted above), a thought translation often uses *more words* to get the point across.

Where there may be relatively few words in the Greek text, this translator employs a more robust version of those words in *Modern Matthew* to get the *thought* across.

INTELLECTUAL TRANSLATION: Lying inconspicuously below English translations of the Gospel of Matthew is a wealth of Greek words that form the basis of sophisticated terms and expressions in various disciplines offered in colleges.

These intellectually stimulating words populate copious endnotes in *Modern Matthew*, where, in many cases, the present commentator takes a deep dive into their etymological significance as it relates to present-day usage in diverse fields.

LITERAL TRANSLATION: In some instances, throughout *Modern Matthew*, well enough is left alone by simply making a direct, literal translation from Greek to English. Indeed, sometimes less is more, mainly where the English equivalent of the Greek word is virtually the same.

But *epictil* or not, was the Gospel of Matthew the first to be written? And if so, did Matthew himself write it? Did he first write it in Hebrew?

These questions and others will be answered further below. But first, just how popular is the Gospel of Matthew?

MULTIPLE MATTHEWS IN MANY LANGUAGES

As shown in Appendix B, “Medieval Manuscripts to Modern Versions of Matthew’s Gospel,” translations of the Gospel of Matthew have historically received their share of attention.

This is no less so today, in more contemporary times.

Although the present author was instructed to steer clear of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, published by Jehovah’s Witnesses, when he attended and graduated from seminary, the Witnesses have accomplished an unmatched feat with respect to translations of the Gospel of Matthew.

For example, 16 months after the release of the present translation, *Modern Matthew: Good News for Today—College Edition*, on January 7, 2012,* a surge of translations of

* [Modern Matthew: Good News for Today: College Edition: Carr, Firpo: 9781461181873: Amazon.com: Books](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B009231873)

Matthew’s Gospel in multiple languages, starting with Japanese (discussed below), erupted from Jehovah’s Witnesses.

In some cases, the Gospel of Matthew, as published by the Witnesses, is the first book of the Bible produced in a given language.

This author is not aware of any other religious, educational, or scholarly institution that has produced the Gospel of Matthew in multiple contemporary languages on the same scale as Jehovah’s Witnesses.*

Starting with the Japanese version of Matthew’s Gospel, released on April 28, 2013, the stream of different language versions has continued at a hefty pace, as shown by this chronological listing:

1. 4/28/2013: [A Surprise Gift for Japan | Study \(jw.org\)](#) “At a special meeting held in Nagoya, Japan, on April 28, 2013, Anthony Morris of the Governing Body surprised the audience with a thrilling announcement—the release of a new publication in Japanese entitled *The Bible—The Gospel According to Matthew*. The over 210,000 present in person or via Webcast responded with prolonged applause.
“Reprinted from the *New World Translation* in Japanese, this 128-page edition of Matthew’s Gospel is unique. Brother Morris explained that it was designed ‘to meet the needs of the Japanese field.’”
2. 4/22/2018: [Gospels of Matthew and John Now Available in Peruvian Sign Language on JW.ORG](#)
3. 5/19/2018: [New World Translation Released in Ecuadorian Sign Language and Nepali \(jw.org\)](#)
4. 8/31/2018: [New World Translation Released in South African Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)

*While many other Bible translations are referenced throughout this volume, in the Introduction, where no translation has been designated, the *New World Translation* is the default.

5. 12/16/2018: [New World Translation in Kabiye and in Spanish Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)
6. 1/12/2019: [New World Translation in British Sign Language, Isoko, Yoruba, Cebuano, Waray-Waray \(jw.org\)](#) “The book of Matthew from the *New World Translation* was released in British Sign Language.”
7. 12/13/2019: [New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures Released in Argentinean Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#) “starting with the book of Matthew.”
8. 11/17/2020: [The Book of Matthew Released in Gitonga and Ronga \(jw.org\)](#)
9. 1/24/2021: [Jehovah’s Witnesses Release Book of Matthew in Zimbabwe Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)
10. 2/27/2021: [Jehovah’s Witnesses Reach Translation Milestone With Bible Release in Mozambique \(jw.org\)](#)
11. 8/8/2021: [Book of Matthew Released in Malawi Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)
12. 9/25/2021: [Book of Matthew Released in the Hmong Language \(jw.org\)](#)
13. 10/30/2021: [First Bible Books Released in Venezuelan Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)
14. 12/18/2021: [Books of Matthew and John Released in German Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)
15. 2/19/2022: [Book of Matthew Released in French Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)
16. 3/27/2022: [The Bible—The Gospel According to Matthew Released in Konkani \(Roman\) \(jw.org\)](#)
17. 5/29/2022: [Book of Matthew Released in the Fon Language \(jw.org\)](#)
18. 5/29/2022: [Books of Matthew and Mark Released in Indonesian Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)
19. 9/5/2022: [Book of Matthew Released in Kabuverdianu \(jw.org\)](#)
20. 10/9/2022: [Book of Matthew Released in the Punjabi \(Shahmukhi\) Language \(jw.org\)](#)

21. 12/9/2022a [*Chokwe*]: [Bible Books of Matthew and Acts Released in Chokwe and Ibinda Languages \(jw.org\)](#)
22. 12/9/2022b [*Ibinda*]: [Bible Books of Matthew and Acts Released in Chokwe and Ibinda Languages \(jw.org\)](#)
23. 1/18/2023: [Book of Matthew Released in Romany \(Macedonia\) \(jw.org\)](#)
24. 3/10/2023: Book of Matthew in Ndonga of Namibia, Africa, [Bible Translations Released in South Africa \(jw.org\)](#)
25. 4/23/2023: [Book of Matthew Released in Chinese Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#)
26. 5/27/2023: [Book of Matthew Released in Romany \(Eastern Slovakia\) \(jw.org\)](#)
27. 5/28/2023: [Book of Matthew Released in Assamese \(jw.org\)](#)
28. 6/30/2023: [Book of Matthew Released in Mingrelian \(jw.org\)](#).
The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew is the first Bible book published in the Mingrelian language and is available in both printed and electronic formats.
29. 7/1/2023: [Book of Matthew Released in Zambian Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#). This is the first Bible book ever to be released in Zambian Sign Language.
30. 7/2/2023: [The Book of Matthew Released in Kurdish Kurmanji and Kurdish Kurmanji \(Caucasus\) \(jw.org\)](#). [KURDISH KURMANJI]
As per the website, “Kurdish Kurmanji and Kurdish Kurmanji (Caucasus) [see No. 30 below] are similar languages but can differ in grammar and sentence structure. Additionally, while some words are spelled the same in both languages, they can have different meanings.”
Regarding the release of the Kurdish Kurmanji translation, the website states: “Brother Dirk Ciupek, a member of the Central Europe Branch Committee, released the book of Matthew in Kurdish Kurmanji during a program that was held at the Central Europe branch office in Selters, Germany.”
31. 7/2/2023: [The Book of Matthew Released in Kurdish Kurmanji and Kurdish Kurmanji \(Caucasus\) \(jw.org\)](#). [KURDISH KURMANJI (Caucasus)] In connection with the release of the Kurdish

Kurmanji (Caucasus) translation (see No. 29 above for details related to the release of the closely related Kurdish Kurmanj translation), the website notes:

“At a program held in Tbilisi, Georgia, Brother Levani Kopaliani, a member of the Georgia Branch Committee, released the book of Matthew in Kurdish Kurmanji (Caucasus). Brothers and sisters in Aparan and Yerevan, Armenia, tied in via videoconference.”

32. 7/7/2023: [First Four Books of the Christian Greek Scriptures Released in Nahuatl \(Huasteca\) \(jw.org\)](#). MATTHEW’S GOSPEL IS THE FIRST OF THE FOUR GOSPELS IN THIS NEW RELEASE [emphasis supplied]. The website states:

“While other Bible translations are available in Nahuatl (Huasteca), they do not contain Jehovah’s name. Additionally, the language used is often difficult to understand. One translator remarked: ‘Using other Bible translations was like looking into a foggy mirror. With this new translation, that mirror is crystal clear. Now, instead of simply trying to understand the text, readers can give more time to meditating on the meaning of God’s Word. What a gift from Jehovah!’”
33. 7/9/2023: [Book of Matthew Released in Mozambican Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#). “This is the first Bible book ever to be released in Mozambican Sign Language.”
34. 7/23/2023a [Sidama]: [Book of Matthew Released in Sidama and Wolaita \(jw.org\)](#). “On July 23, 2023, Brother Lemma Koyra, a member of the Ethiopia Branch Committee, released digital versions of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in the Sidama and Wolaita languages.”
35. 7/23/2023b [Wolaita]: [Book of Matthew Released in Sidama and Wolaita \(jw.org\)](#). “On July 23, 2023, Brother Lemma Koyra, a member of the Ethiopia Branch Committee, released digital versions of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in the Sidama and Wolaita languages.”
36. 8/13/2023: [Book of Matthew Released in Phimbi \(jw.org\)](#). “On August 13, 2023, Brother Charles Fonseca, a member of the

Mozambique Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in the Phimbi language. This is the first Bible book ever to be published in Phimbi. Phimbi is primarily spoken in the western part of the Mozambican province of Tete, close to the Zambia border.”

37. 8/13/2023. [The Four Gospels Released in the Aukan Language \(jw.org\)](#). On August 13, 2023, Brother Roy Zeeman, a member of the Suriname Branch Committee, released the Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Aukan language. There were 2,713 people in attendance at the special meeting held at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses in the city of Paramaribo, Suriname. An additional 691 were tied in via live stream at a Kingdom Hall in Cayenne, French Guiana, and several other locations.

All four Gospels were immediately available in digital format. In addition, printed copies of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* were available. The remaining three Gospels will be available in print when the entire *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* is released in Aukan.

38. 8/25/2023. [First Four Books of the New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures Released in Low German \(jw.org\)](#). “On August 25, 2023, Brother Robert Batko, a member of the Central America Branch Committee, released the first four books of the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* in Low German....

“All four Gospels were immediately available in digital and audio formats. In addition, printed copies of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* were distributed.”

39. 9/2/2023a [Basque]. [The Good News According to Matthew and Acts of Apostles Released in Three Languages in Spain \(jw.org\)](#). “On September 2, 2023, Jehovah’s Witnesses released *The Good News According to Matthew* and *Acts of Apostles* in three languages: Basque, Galician, and Valencian....

“Following the releases, these Bible books were immediately available for download in digital formats in all three languages.

When all the books of the Christian Greek Scriptures have been translated, printed versions will be released. ...

“This is the first time a portion of the *New World Translation* has been made available in Basque. ...

“The first Bible translation in Valencian appeared at the beginning of the 15th century. ‘Until now, Jehovah’s name has never appeared in a Bible in Valencian,’ observed one brother. ‘I am excited to show Valencian-speaking people Bible verses containing Jehovah’s name.’”

40. 9/2/2023b [Galician]. [The Good News According to Matthew and Acts of Apostles Released in Three Languages in Spain \(jw.org\)](#). “On September 2, 2023, Jehovah’s Witnesses released *The Good News According to Matthew* and *Acts of Apostles* in three languages: Basque, Galician, and Valencian.”
41. 9/2/2023c [Valencian]: [The Good News According to Matthew and Acts of Apostles Released in Three Languages in Spain \(jw.org\)](#). “On September 2, 2023, Jehovah’s Witnesses released *The Good News According to Matthew* and *Acts of Apostles* in three languages: Basque, Galician, and Valencian.”
42. 9/3/2023 [Chin (Hakha)] and 9/10/2023. [Book of Matthew Released in Chin \(Hakha\) and Mizo \(jw.org\)](#). “On two consecutive weekends, members of the Myanmar Branch Committee released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in two local languages. On September 3, 2023, Brother Sai Hlua released it in Chin (Hakha). Then, on September 10, Brother Clifton Ludlow released it in Mizo. ...
“After the program, printed copies of the release [in Chin (Hakha)] were distributed to those in attendance. The release was also made available in digital and audio formats. ...
“The program announcing the release [of the Mizo translation] was recorded in advance and shown at two Kingdom Halls in Myanmar. After the talk, the 173 in attendance received printed copies of the release, which was also made available for download in digital and audio formats.

“Mizo, formerly known as Lushei, is spoken mainly in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and the Indian state of Mizoram. Worldwide, the language is spoken by about 1.3 million people.”

43. 9/3/2023 and 9/10/2023 [Mizo]. [Book of Matthew Released in Chin \(Hakha\) and Mizo \(jw.org\)](#). “On two consecutive weekends, members of the Myanmar Branch Committee released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in two local languages. On September 3, 2023, Brother Sai Hlua released it in Chin (Hakha). Then, on September 10, Brother Clifton Ludlow released it in Mizo.
44. 9/22/2023. [The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew Released in Lolo \(jw.org\)](#). “On September 22, 2023, Brother Charles Fonseca, a member of the Mozambique Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Lolo.
- “The release was announced to the 3,680 attendees gathered in Sapemo, in the Mozambican province of Zambezia, during the 2023 ‘Exercise Patience’! Regional Convention.
- “Those in attendance received printed copies of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. Digital and audio formats were also made available for download.”
45. 9/23/2023. [Books of Matthew and Acts Released in Angolan Sign Language \(jw.org\)](#). “At a special program held on September 23, 2023, Brother Johannes De Jager, a member of the Angola Branch Committee, announced the release of the Bible books of Matthew and Acts of Apostles in Angolan Sign Language (LAS). ...This is the first time that any books of the Bible have been translated into LAS.”
46. 10/29/2023. [The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew Released in the Chopi Language](#). “On October 29, 2023, *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* was released in the Chopi language during a special meeting held in Quissico, Mozambique. Brother Marcelo Santos, a member of the Mozambique Branch Committee, released the book of Matthew in Chopi to an audience of 460. Those in attendance received printed copies of the release. Digital and audio formats were also made available for download.”
47. 11/10/2023. [Book of Matthew Released in Nicobarese](#). “On November 10, 2023, *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* was released in the Nicobarese language to an audience of 180 at the “Exercise Patience”! Regional

Convention in the city of Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. The book was immediately available in digital format. Printed versions will be made available in the near future.”

48. 1/7/2024. [The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew Released in Yacouba](#). “On January 7, 2024, Brother Jules Bazié, a member of the Côte d’Ivoire Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Yacouba during a special program held in Man, Côte d’Ivoire. In total, 302 attended the program in person and 257 tied in via videoconference. Digital and audio editions of the release were immediately made available. A printed edition will be made available in the near future.”
49. 1/7/2024a. [Tandroy] [The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew Released in Three Languages in Madagascar](#). “On January 7, 2024, *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* was released in the Tandroy, Tankarana, and Vezo languages. A special program was held in the region of Madagascar where each language is commonly spoken. Those in attendance received printed copies of the new release. The releases were also made available for download in digital format.
“Brother Paul Rahajanirina, a member of the Madagascar Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Tandroy to an audience of 442 gathered at a Kingdom Hall in the city of Ambovombe. Additionally, 681 tied in to the program via videoconference. Currently, 662 brothers and sisters serve in 25 Tandroy-speaking congregations and groups throughout Madagascar.”
50. 1/7/2024b. [Tankarana] [The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew Released in Three Languages in Madagascar](#). “Brother Rolland Rafalibera, a member of the Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Tankarana. This release was announced during a special program held at an Assembly Hall in the city of Antsiranana. A total of 904 brothers and sisters attended in person, with another 1,218 tying into the program via videoconference. Over 1,000 brothers and sisters serve in 28 Tankarana-speaking congregations and groups in Madagascar.”

51. 1/7/2024c. [Vezo] [The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew Released in Three Languages in Madagascar](#). “*The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Vezo was released by Brother Christopher Thomas, a member of the Branch Committee, during a special program held at a Kingdom Hall in the city of Toliara. Some 1,290 brothers and sisters attended in person, and 305 tied in via videoconference. In total, 706 brothers and sisters serve in 20 Vezo-speaking congregations and groups.”
52. 6/9/2024. [Guadeloupean Creole] [Six Bibles Released Worldwide in June 2024](#). “On June 9, 2024, Brother Jeffrey Winder, a member of the Governing Body, released the Bible books of Matthew and Mark in Guadeloupean Creole during the concluding talk of the 2024 “Declare the Good News!” Special Convention in Baie-Mahault, Guadeloupe. In total, 8,602 were in attendance at the convention. An additional 5,588 tied in to the program via videoconference. Those in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*.”
53. 6/28/2024a. [Fante] [Six Bibles Released Worldwide in June 2024](#). “On June 28, 2024, Brother Freeman Abbey, a member of the Ghana Branch Committee, released the Bible book of Matthew in the Fante language during the 2024 “Declare the Good News!” Regional Convention program held at the Takoradi Assembly Hall in Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana. A total of 1,230 brothers and sisters attended the program in person. An additional 2,022 tied in to the program via videoconference. Those in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. The release also was immediately made available for download in digital format on jw.org and in the JW Library app.”
54. 6/28/2024b. [Ngangela] [Six Bibles Released Worldwide in June 2024](#). “On June 28, 2024, Brother Johannes De Jager, a member of the Angola Branch Committee, released the Bible books of Matthew, Luke, and Acts in Ngangela. The release was announced to the 450 in attendance at the 2024 “Declare the Good News!” Regional Convention in Menongue, Angola. Those in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. All three Bible books were immediately made available for download in digital format on jw.org and in the JW Library app.”
55. 6/30/2024. [Ngabere] [Six Bibles Released Worldwide in June 2024](#). “On June 30, 2024, Brother Carlos Martinez, a member of the

Central America Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Ngabere during a prerecorded program that was streamed to several Kingdom Halls throughout Costa Rica and Panama. The 2,032 in attendance at these locations received a printed copy of the book of Matthew following the announcement. The digital edition was immediately made available for download on jw.org and in the JW Library app.”

56. 7/19/2024. [Quiche] [Ten Bibles Released Worldwide in July 2024](#). “On July 19, 2024, Brother José Torres, a member of the Central America Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in the Quiche language. The announcement was made during the 2024 “Declare the Good News!” Regional Convention in San Lucas Sacatepéquez, Guatemala. All 405 in attendance received a printed copy of the release. It was also immediately made available for download in digital format on jw.org and in the JW Library app.
57. 7/28/2024a. [**Makhuwa-Meetto**] [Ten Bibles Released Worldwide in July 2024](#). “On July 28, 2024, a special meeting was held at the Estádio Nacional do Zimpeto in Maputo, Mozambique. A total of 26,025 attended the program in person. An additional 64,570 tied in via videoconference from 16 locations.
“At that meeting, Brother Fleegle released several translations, which were immediately made available in print and digital format. He released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in the **Makhuwa-Meetto**, Makhuwa-Shirima, and Nsenga (Mozambique) languages.”
58. 7/28/2024b. [**Makhuwa-Shirima**] [Ten Bibles Released Worldwide in July 2024](#). “On July 28, 2024, a special meeting was held at the Estádio Nacional do Zimpeto in Maputo, Mozambique. A total of 26,025 attended the program in person. An additional 64,570 tied in via videoconference from 16 locations.
“At that meeting, Brother Fleegle released several translations, which were immediately made available in print and digital format. He released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in the Makhuwa-Meetto, **Makhuwa-Shirima**, and Nsenga (Mozambique) languages.”
59. 7/28/2024c. [**Nsenga (Mozambique)**] [Ten Bibles Released Worldwide in July 2024](#). “On July 28, 2024, a special meeting

was held at the Estádio Nacional do Zimpeto in Maputo, Mozambique. A total of 26,025 attended the program in person. An additional 64,570 tied in via videoconference from 16 locations.

“At that meeting, Brother Fleegle released several translations, which were immediately made available in print and digital format. He released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in the Makuwa-Meetto, Makuwa-Shirima, and **Nsenga (Mozambique)** languages.”

60. 9/6/2024. [Seven Bibles Released Worldwide in September 2024](#). “On September 6, 2024, Brother Frederick Nyende, a member of the Uganda Branch Committee, released the Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in Rutoro. The announcement was made during the 2024 ‘Declare the Good News!’ Regional Convention in Hoima, Uganda. All 928 people in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. Additionally, all four Bible books were immediately made available for download on jw.org and in the JW Library app.”
61. 9/8/2024a. [Uighur (Arabic)]. [Seven Bibles Released Worldwide in September 2024](#). “On September 8, 2024, the release of the book of Matthew in the **Uighur (Arabic)** and Uighur (Cyrillic) scripts was announced at a special meeting held at the Kazakhstan branch office in Almaty, Kazakhstan. A total of 483 were in attendance. The book of Matthew was immediately made available for download on jw.org and in the JW Library app in both Uighur (Arabic) and Uighur (Cyrillic).”
62. 9/8/2024. [**Uighur (Cyrillic)**] [Seven Bibles Released Worldwide in September 2024](#). “On September 8, 2024, the release of the book of Matthew in the Uighur (Arabic) and **Uighur (Cyrillic)** scripts was announced at a special meeting held at the Kazakhstan branch office in Almaty, Kazakhstan. A total of 483 were in attendance. The book of Matthew was immediately made available for download on jw.org and in the JW Library app in both Uighur (Arabic) and Uighur (Cyrillic).”
63. 9/13/2024. [Seven Bibles Released Worldwide in September 2024](#). “On September 13, 2024, Brother Moses Oundo, a member of the Uganda Branch Committee, released the Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in Lhukonzo to the 925 present at the 2024 ‘Declare the Good News!’ Regional Convention in Bwera, Uganda. All in attendance received a

printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. Additionally, all four Gospel accounts were immediately made available for download on jw.org and in the JW Library app.”

64. 9/15/2024. [Seven Bibles Released Worldwide in September 2024](#). “On September 15, 2024, Brother Jethro Barclay, a member of the Liberia Branch Committee, released the Bible books of Matthew and Mark in Liberian English during a special program originating from an Assembly Hall in Johnsonville, Liberia. In all, 1,176 people attended the special program in person. Additionally, approval was given for all the Liberian English-language congregations throughout the country to tie in to the program via videoconference. Both Bible books were immediately made available for download in digital and audio formats on jw.org and in the JW Library app. A print edition of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* will soon be made available.”
65. 9/20/2024. [Seven Bibles Released Worldwide in September 2024](#). “On September 20, 2024, Brother Lázaro González, a member of the Central America Branch Committee, released the Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in Nahuatl (Guerrero) during the first day of the 2024 ‘Declare the Good News!’ Regional Convention held at the Chilpancingo Assembly Hall in Guerrero, Mexico. A total of 769 people were in attendance for the release. Additionally, the 742 attendees at a regional convention in Tlapa de Comonfort, Mexico, tied in to the program via videoconference. All in attendance at each location received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*, and all four Gospel accounts were immediately made available for download on jw.org and in the JW Library app.”
66. 2/9/2025a. [Abua]. [Bible Books Released in Multiple Nigerian Languages](#). “On February 9, 2025, a special meeting was held at the Nigeria branch office in Igieduma. A total of 1,143 attended the program in person, and an additional 579,436 tied in to the program via videoconference from Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls throughout the branch territory.
“At that meeting, Brother Samuel Olanrewaju, a member of the Nigeria Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* and the book of Mark in **Abua**, Gokana, Hausa, Khana, and Okpe. Those in attendance who speak one of these five languages received a printed copy of the book of Matthew.”

67. 2/9/2025b. [**Gokana**]. [Bible Books Released in Multiple Nigerian Languages](#). “At that meeting, Brother Samuel Olanrewaju, a member of the Nigeria Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* and the book of Mark in Abua, **Gokana**, Hausa, Khana, and Okpe. Those in attendance who speak one of these five languages received a printed copy of the book of Matthew.”
68. 2/9/2025c. [**Hausa**]. [Bible Books Released in Multiple Nigerian Languages](#). “At that meeting, Brother Samuel Olanrewaju, a member of the Nigeria Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* and the book of Mark in Abua, Gokana, **Hausa**, Khana, and Okpe. Those in attendance who speak one of these five languages received a printed copy of the book of Matthew.”
69. 2/9/2025d. [**Khana**]. [Bible Books Released in Multiple Nigerian Languages](#). “At that meeting, Brother Samuel Olanrewaju, a member of the Nigeria Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* and the book of Mark in Abua, Gokana, Hausa, **Khana**, and Okpe. Those in attendance who speak one of these five languages received a printed copy of the book of Matthew.”
70. 2/9/2025e. [**Okpe**]. [Bible Books Released in Multiple Nigerian Languages](#). “At that meeting, Brother Samuel Olanrewaju, a member of the Nigeria Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* and the book of Mark in Abua, Gokana, Hausa, Khana, and **Okpe**. Those in attendance who speak one of these five languages received a printed copy of the book of Matthew.”
71. 7/4/2025. [Bible Books Released in 14 Languages During July 2025](#). “On July 4, 2025, Brother Delphin Kavusa, a member of the Congo (Kinshasa) Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* as well as the Bible books of Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and Philippians in Lari. The release of these nine Bible books was announced to an audience of 1,022 at the 2025 ‘Pure Worship’ Regional Convention in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo. Everyone in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. All nine Bible books were immediately made available for download from jw.org and in the JW Library app.”
72. 7/11/2025a. [**Cinamwanga**] [Bible Books Released in 14 Languages During July 2025](#). “On July 11, 2025, Brother Kena Kunda, a

member of the Zambia Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* as well as the Bible books of Mark, Luke, and John in Cinamwanga. The release was announced to an audience of 1,134 people gathered for the first day of the 2025 “Pure Worship” Regional Convention in Isoka, Zambia. Printed copies of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* were distributed to all in attendance. All four Bible books were immediately made available for download in audio and digital formats from jw.org and in the JW Library app.”

73. 7/11/2025b. [**Kokola**] [Bible Books Released in 14 Languages During July 2025](#). “On July 11, 2025, Brother Marcelo Santos, a member of the Mozambique Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* as well as the Bible books of Mark, Luke, and John in Kokola. The release was announced during the 2025 ‘Pure Worship’ Regional Convention at the Liciro Assembly Hall in the district of Milange. All 1,445 in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. Additionally, all four Bible books were immediately made available for download from jw.org and in the JW Library app.”
74. 7/18/2025a. [**Lendu**] [Bible Books Released in 14 Languages During July 2025](#). “On July 18, 2025, Brother Patrik Weiss, a member of the Congo (Kinshasa) Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* and the Bible books of Mark, Luke, John, Romans, and Philippians in Lendu. The release of these Bible books was announced to 477 people gathered to attend the 2025 ‘Pure Worship’ Regional Convention at the ITU Bunia Lumumba Yambi-Yaya Assembly Hall in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Those in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. Additionally, all the releases were immediately made available for download from jw.org and in the JW Library app.”
75. 7/18/2025b. [**Nsenga (Zambia)**] [Bible Books Released in 14 Languages During July 2025](#). “On July 18, 2025, Brother John Musuba, a member of the Zambia Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Nsenga (Zambia). An audience of 2,165 was present for the announcement during the first day of the 2025 ‘Pure Worship’ Regional Convention in Petauke, Zambia. Those in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. The release was also immediately made available for

download from jw.org and in the JW Library app.”

76. 8/8/2025. [Bible Books Released in 13 Languages During August 2025](#) “On August 8, 2025, Brother Adrian Fernandez, a member of the Central America Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* as well as the Bible books of Mark and Luke in Mixe (North Central). The release was announced to the 448 in attendance for the first day of the 2025 “Pure Worship” Regional Convention in Santa Lucía del Camino, Oaxaca, Mexico.

“Printed copies of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* were distributed to those in attendance. All the releases were immediately made available for download in digital formats from jw.org and in the JW Library app, as were audio recordings of the books of Matthew and Mark.

“These are the first books of the Bible ever to be translated into Mixe (North Central). Among the approximately 139,000 people who speak this language are 463 brothers and sisters currently serving in 11 Mixe (North Central)-language congregations throughout Mexico.”

77. 8/22/2025a. [**Acholi**] [Bible Books Released in 13 Languages During August 2025](#) “On August 22, 2025, Brother Martin Lowum, a member of the Uganda Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Acholi.

The release was announced to the 804 present for the opening day of the 2025 ‘Pure Worship’ Regional Convention in Lira, Uganda. All present received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. The release was also immediately made available for download from jw.org and in the JW Library app.

“An estimated two million people speak Acholi in Uganda. Although a complete translation of the Bible in the language exists, it does not include God’s personal name, Jehovah. Our 214 Acholi-speaking brothers and sisters are now delighted to have a translation of the book of Matthew that restores Jehovah’s name to its proper place.”

78. 8/22/2025b. [**Garifuna**] [Bible Books Released in 13 Languages During August 2025](#) “On August 22, 2025, Brother Joel Izaguirre, a member of the Central America Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Garifuna. The release was announced during the

2025 'Pure Worship' Regional Convention in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Printed copies of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* were distributed to the 281 in attendance. Additionally, the release was immediately made available for download from jw.org and in the JW Library app.

79. 8/22/2025c. [Jula] [Bible Books Released in 13 Languages During August 2025](#) "On August 22, 2025, Brother Souleymane Ouédraogo, a member of the West Africa Branch Committee, released *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* in Jula. The release was announced to the 317 present for the 2025 'Pure Worship' Regional Convention in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso. Another 51 tied in to the program via videoconference. All in attendance received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*. The release was also immediately made available for download from jw.org and in the JW Library app.
80. 8/31/2025. [Bible Books Released in 13 Languages During August 2025](#) "On August 31, 2025d, a special meeting was held in Paramaribo, Suriname. A total of 2,699 attended the program in person, with an additional 9,619 tied in via videoconference. During the program, Brother Geoffrey Jackson, a member of the Governing Body, released ... *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew* ... in Saramaccan ... Those in attendance who speak Saramaccan received a printed copy of *The Bible—The Good News According to Matthew*."

As of this printing, seven languages are noted above in which the Gospel of Matthew is the first Bible book to be introduced in that language.

Listed alphabetically, they are: (1) Angolan Sign Language [#45], (2) Mingrelian [#28], (3) Mixe (North Central) [#76]. (4) Mozambican Sign Language [#33], (5) Phimbi [#36], (6) Venezuelan Sign Language, (7) Zambian Sign Language [#29],

MATTHEW'S GOSPEL: THE BOOK THAT BINDS

If all the books of the Bible were individually strewn about in a burning house and the owner could only save one, it would be in their best interest to fight through the flames of the raging inferno and grab the Gospel of Mat-

threw post haste.

Why?

Because it is the catalyst book, the gateway or swing book from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) to the Christian Greek Scriptures (New Testament).*

In other words, Matthew's Gospel is the spine that binds all the books of what is commonly known as the Old Testament with each of those of the popularly known New Testament.

Put yet another way, the Gospel of Matthew is the single multifaceted thread that stitches the Hebrew Scriptures into the Christian Greek Scriptures.

While all Scripture is inspired, the Gospel of Matthew is arguably the most pivotal book in the divine library.

When Jesus fulfilled the Hebrew Scriptures upon his death, resurrection, and ascension in 33 CE (or A.D.), and

* Throughout this publication, the expressions "Hebrew Scriptures," "Old Testament," and occasionally "Hebrew Bible" are all used interchangeably. Likewise, "Christian Greek Scriptures" and "New Testament" are transposable. This "mirror" or "reflective" nomenclature in Modern Mathew is another break from tradition.

Matthew thereafter wrote the inspired book bearing his name probably in 38 CE (this date is discussed in more detail below), his Gospel subsequently served for several years as the only document on earth that contained the message of the good news about Jesus Christ.

Significantly, the apostle Paul may well have carried the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew or the Greek translation—or both—along with codices of Old Testament books with him.*

In other words, for decades until the writing of the next Gospel, the early Christian “Bible” consisted of the entire Hebrew Scriptures and the Gospel of Matthew.

More specifically, the book of Matthew constituted the New Testament—in its entirety—for decades.

Furthermore, as documented in Appendix A, “The Gospel of Matthew: Infrastructure for the Christian Greek Scriptures,” the Gospel of Matthew’s importance can be seen in its inescapable direct influence on every New Testament book—except for Philemon—written after that.

Matthew’s Gospel has reverberated throughout the ages down to our very day. As referenced above, an examination of Appendix B, “Medieval Manuscripts to Modern Versions of Matthew’s Gospel,” demonstrates this fact.

Arguing for it being the complete book, Genesis and Revelation intersect in Matthew. In Genesis, Paradise is lost, and in Revelation, it is regained.

Intriguingly, the Gospel of Matthew covers the prelapsarian period that led to Paradise being lost (Matthew 19:4-6; Genesis 2:24) as well as the regaining or restoration of Paradise (Matthew 5:5; Revelation 21:1-4).

* See 2 Timothy 4:13, where Paul asks Timothy to bring the apostle's *biblia* (Greek, βιβλία), that is, Bible "books" or "scrolls" in most translations, or "little books" of the Bible according to the *New World Translation*.

And although among the Johannine writings, the book of Revelation is positioned last in the Bible, the Gospel of John was most likely written two years after Revelation, making it the last canonical book.

Given this fact, the Gospels of Matthew and John combine to act as bookends for the rest of the Christian Greek Scriptures. One enters the New Testament through Matthew's Gospel and exits through John's.

Still, the conclusion that Matthew was the first to write his Gospel is not without controversy.

Some claim that the scholarly community generally casts Mark as the first of the Gospel writers to chronicle the life and times of Jesus Christ.

But what does the evidence show?

DID MATTHEW ACTUALLY WRITE HIS GOSPEL?

Some scholars do not accept as a foregone conclusion that Matthew wrote the Gospel bearing his name. After all, they argue, nowhere in the entire Gospel does he identify himself as such.

However, Papias (c. 60 - 130 CE)—recognized as a Greek Apostolic Father and Bishop of Hierapolis and who, according to Irenaeus, had known apostle John*—accepted Matthew as the writer of the Gospel of Matthew.

Papias casually credited Matthew as the writer of the Gospel of Matthew, which suggests general acceptance, and documented the following in discussing Matthew:

“He wrote the sayings in the Hebrew language [discussed in detail immediately below],” said Papias, “and each one interpreted them as best he could.”†

* [Papias | Biography, Apostolic Father, Writing, & Facts | Britannica](#)

† A Critical History of Christian Literature and Doctrine (Volume 1).

In the centuries following his comment, an impressive parade of post-Papias personalities concurred with him as they voiced no objection to quoting Matthew's Gospel:

Passages from Matthew are quoted by Justin Martyr, by the author of the letter to Diognetus (see in Otto's *Justin Martyr*, vol. ii), by Hegesippus, Irenæus, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Clement, Tertullian, and Origen.

It is not merely from the matter, but the manner of the quotations, from the calm appeal as to a settled authority, from the absence of all hints of doubt, that we regard it as proved that the book we possess had not been the subject of any sudden change.*

Indeed, in answering the question, "Who is the author of the Gospel of Matthew?" Britannica states:

It has traditionally been attributed to St. Matthew the evangelist, one of the 12 Apostles, described in the text as a tax collector (10:3).†

To be sure, "As regards the authorship, Christian tradition unanimously attributes the first Gospel to Matthew."‡

DID MATTHEW FIRST WRITE HIS GOSPEL IN HEBREW?

When asked, "In what language was the Book of Matthew written," the author(s) of one website answered:

It's hard to know for certain, but there are very good reasons to believe all four gospels were written in Greek. However, according to the earliest Christian tradition, Matthew was written in Hebrew.§

* McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia*, 1981 Reprint, Vol. V, page 895.

† [Gospel According to Matthew | Description, History, & Facts | Britannica](#)

‡ [Who wrote the Gospel of Matthew? - The Catholic Leader](#)

§ [In what language was the Book of Matthew written? - Christianity Stack Exchange](#)

Indeed, the testimony of a string of notable early church historians argues that Matthew first wrote his Gospel in Hebrew. Here are their own words.

Irenaeus: Irenaeus (130 CE - ?) nonchalantly quipped, around 180 CE, but with significance, “Matthew also issued a written gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect.”*

Papias: On the heels of Irenaeus’ words, Papias (c. 60 - 130 CE), quoted earlier, maintained that “Matthew compiled the sayings [of the Lord] in the Aramaic [Hebrew] language, and everyone translated them as well as he could”†

Origen: About a hundred years later, Origen, a native of Alexandria, Egypt, Africa (born c. 185, died c. 254 CE), who “was the most important theologian and biblical scholar of the early Greek church,”‡ wrote:

Among the four Gospels, which are the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven, I have learned by tradition that the first was written by Matthew, who was once a publican, but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, and it was prepared for the converts from Judaism and published in the Hebrew language.[§]

Eusebius: In the century after Origen lived came Eusebius of Caesarea, Palestine (born ? - died May 30, 339 CE), also known as Eusebius of Pamphilus. Specializing in the study of the Gospels, he said this about Matthew’s account of Jesus’ life and ministry:

* Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3:1:1 [c.175-185 A.D.]

† Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor, *Explanation of the Sayings of the Lord* [cited by Eusebius in *History of the Church* 3:39].

‡ [Origen | Early Christian Theologian & Scholar | Britannica](#)

§ *Commentaries on Matthew* [cited by Eusebius in *History of the Church* 6:25]. See also *Origen* circa 210 CE, quoted by Eusebius, *Church History*, Book 6, Chapter 25, Section 4, and "Eusebius of Caesarea, *Historia ecclesiastica*". *Perseus Digital Library*.

Matthew had begun by preaching to the Hebrews, and when he made up his mind to go to others too, he committed his own Gospel to writing in his native tongue [Aramaic], so that for those with whom he was no longer present the gap left by his departure was filled by what he wrote.*

Jerome: Finally, Catholic scholar Jerome (born c. 374, died 419/420 CE)[†]—whose full Latin name was Eusebius Hieronymus (pseudonym Sophronius), and whose life overlapped with Eusebius’—translated the Latin Vulgate (the entire Bible in Latin). He wrote in *De viris inlustribus* (Latin for “Concerning Illustrious Men”), chapter II:

Matthew, who is also Levi, and who from a publican came to be an apostle, first of all composed a Gospel of Christ in Judaea in the Hebrew language and characters for the benefit of those of the circumcision who had believed.[‡]

Jerome could speak with such certitude because not only did a copy of Mathew’s Hebrew Gospel survive until his day in the library in Caesarea in the fourth and fifth centuries CE, but he translated it and even quoted from it.[§]

Elsewhere in his writings, he directly spoke of “the Gospel in Hebrew letters which the Nazarenes use.”** Indeed, there were Christianized Jews who still only spoke and understood Hebrew when Matthew was alive (Acts 6:1).

* Eusebius himself declared that *History of the Church* 3:24 [inter 300-325]).

[†] [St. Jerome | Christian Scholar & Biblical Translator | Britannica](#)

[‡] Translation from the Latin text edited by E. C. Richardson and published in the series “Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur,” IndLeipzig, 1896, Vol. 14, pages 8, 9.

[§] *On Famous Men*, 2 & 3.

** *Against Pelagius* III, 2.

WHAT DATE FOR MATTHEW'S HEBREW GOSPEL?

There is a lack of scholarly consensus about when Matthew wrote the first Gospel in Hebrew.

Regarding the date of Matthew's Hebrew Gospel, the present author's seminary training taught him to consult a broad cross-section of materials to enhance his research, including material from religions whose beliefs don't align.

For example, in the article "An Introduction to the Gospels," one PBS show concludes:

About 15 years after Mark, in about the year 85 CE, the author known as Matthew composed his work.*

However, a Catholic publication counters:

There is ample evidence that it was indeed the apostle Matthew who wrote the first Gospel, that he wrote in Aramaic [synonymous with Hebrew], not Greek, and that he wrote it much earlier than 85 AD.†

Putting it at an even earlier date, the Australian Catholic Website *Catholic Identity* says:

Scripture scholars think that the Gospel of Matthew was written in the last part of the first century CE sometime after 70 CE. Matthew's intended audience was Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians who were familiar with Jewish culture, religious belief and religious practice.‡

The 1990 publication "*All Scripture is Inspired of God and Beneficial*," produced by Jehovah's Witnesses, reports an even earlier date listed by the previous three sources:

* [The Story Of The Storytellers - An Introduction To The Gospels | From Jesus To Christ | FRONTLINE | PBS.](#)

† [Who wrote the Gospel of Matthew? - The Catholic Leader](#)

‡ [Matthew 1: 18-25 - Announcement to Joseph \(bne.catholic.edu.au\)](#)

Matthew wrote his account in Palestine. The exact year is not known, but subscriptions at the end of some manuscripts (all later than the tenth century C.E.) say that it was 41 C.E. [Page 176, para. 6.]

In his book, *Many Infallible Proofs: Evidences for the Christian Faith* (1886), Arthur T. Pierson, D.D., gives us the earliest date yet for the writing of Matthew's Gospel:

The most careful and scholarly modern criticism puts the date of St. Matthew's record at about 38 A. D., and his record of this prophecy is the fullest, as well as the first. [Page 53.][†]

Compelling reasons exist for "38 A.D." If Matthew started writing his Gospel shortly after Jesus' resurrection (Matthew 28:5-20) in 33 CE, he would have finished it five to six years later in 38 CE. [†]

In writing his Gospel, Luke did not have the luxury of being an eyewitness to the historical events surrounding Jesus' life and ministry. Arguably written several decades after Matthew's Gospel, Luke explains at the very start of his Gospel:

Many have attempted to write about what had taken place among us. They received their information from those who had been eyewitnesses and servants of God's word from the beginning, and they passed it on to us. I,

* ["Many Infallible Proofs": The Evidences of Christianity, Or, The Written and ... - Arthur T. Pierson - Google Books](#)

[†] Matthew wrote: "So the guards accepted the bribe and said what they were told to say. Their story spread widely among the Jews, and they still tell it today" (Matthew 28:15, *New Living Translation*). This text indicates that Matthew's eyewitness contemporaries were numerous as the "story spread widely among the Jews" five or six years later, "today." (Compare also Matthew 27:8.)

too, have followed everything closely from the beginning (Luke 1:1-3a, *God's Word Translation*).

The pool of eyewitnesses that Luke may have had access to had dwindled considerably and likely dried up entirely by the time he documented his Gospel. This fact necessitated him having to consult secondary and tertiary sources.

Of course, above and beyond the resources available to him at the time, being under divine inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16) enabled Luke to "accurately" write his Gospel "in consecutive order" (Luke 1:3, *American Standard Version, New American Standard Bible 1995*).

The 38 CE date for Matthew's Gospel can be stated with a measure of certainty based indirectly on events that occurred in the book of Acts.

Luke, the writer of the Book of Acts, moves quickly from Pentecost 33 CE onward to Paul's conversion.

IF ACTS IS AN INDICATOR

Luke records that events move rapidly with the apostles at the start of the book of Acts, which may well indicate that Matthew wasted no time writing his Gospel.

There is good reason to believe that the first nine chapters of Acts happened within the span of about three weeks.

The above dates [see footnote link for dates referred to here in source article] consider the period of about a week as outlined in the text from Acts 1:15 to Acts 9:2, and then the approximately two weeks it would have taken Paul to travel to Damascus. (Acts 9:3-19)

Worthy of note is the fact that sabbaths are not mentioned in Acts chapters 1 through 9 as even these are not allowed to interrupt the fast-moving pace of events.

There can be no doubt about this one fact: With reference to the resurrected Jesus, Paul definitively says,

“last of all he appeared also to me.” (1 Corinthians 15:8) That appearance occurred dramatically at Acts 9:3-8.

That means, all the other appearances listed chronologically at 1 Corinthians 15:5-8, though not specified in Acts, happened before Acts chapter 9.*

Within the various scenarios of the first part of Acts, one gets a sense of the speed at which events took place and can see how it would relate to Matthew’s urgency in writing his Gospel.

The Sudden Outpouring of Holy Spirit

During the Festival of Pentecost 33 CE, the resurrected Jesus Christ “suddenly” poured out the promised holy spirit upon about 120 of his followers who had gathered in an upper room in Jerusalem, with Matthew among them (Acts 1:12-15; 2:2).

God’s spirit *immediately* energized recipients, moving them to action. Hence, the tone was set for Matthew to pen his Gospel post-haste.

“Suddenly,” “Immediately,” and Saul

When Saul, who later became the apostle Paul, headed for Damascus to arrest and imprison followers of Christ, “*suddenly*† a light from heaven flashed around him,” blinding him (Acts 9:3-9).

After becoming “filled with holy spirit,” the account says, “and *immediately* there fell from his eyes what looked like scales, and he recovered sight; and he rose and was baptized” (Acts 9:17-18). The influence of the holy spirit caused an immediate reaction.

* [The Disciples' Daunting Disbelief \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com)

† From this point to the end of this section, the “suddenly” and “immediately” in the quoted scripture have been italicized for emphasis.

But that was not the end of it.

“And [Paul] took food and gained strength. He got to be for some days with the disciples in Damascus, and *immediately* in the synagogues he began to preach Jesus, that this One is the Son of God” (Acts 9:19, 20).

Inspiration caused Paul to begin preaching “immediately,” just as inspiration likely caused Matthew to write his Gospel “immediately.”

The Spirit “Immediately” Assists Aeneas

Far from being sluggish, events move swiftly in Acts 9 as evidenced by the scene described in Acts 9:32-34, *New International Version*:

As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the Lord’s people who lived in Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. “Aeneas,” Peter said to him, “Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat.”
Immediately Aeneas got up.

Swept up in the momentum of the scenario, “*immediately* Aeneas got up.”

Therefore, if the fast-moving events in the first nine chapters of Acts are any indicator, Matthew was not lackadaisical when starting his Gospel in Hebrew.

The Spirit Immediately Moves Matthew?

Given the above examples, there can be no doubt that after being charged with holy spirit at Pentecost, Matthew moved quickly to write the Gospel bearing his name.

Since Pentecost occurred in the Jewish month of Sivan (May/June), Matthew could have possibly finished his Hebrew Gospel by year’s end of 33 CE and the Greek translation by 38 CE, as discussed earlier.

That this can be done can be seen by what Paul did. There were just several months separating Paul's first canonical letter to the Corinthians and his second. (Both were written in 55 CE.)

Therefore, it is not only conceivable that Matthew could do the same, but it is also well within the realm of probability.

WHY MATTHEWS' GOSPEL PREDATES MARK'S

Contrary to the preponderance of evidence presented here, the scholarly consensus is that Mark's Gospel was written before Matthew's.

For example, *Britannica* says that Mark's Gospel "is the shortest and the earliest of the four Gospels."^{*}

However, in addition to what has already been considered, further internal Scriptural support argues for Matthew writing his Gospel first, not only before the other three Gospel writers wrote theirs, but before any New Testament writer penned their portion of Scripture.

Matthew to the Jews

Matthew would naturally write his Gospel in Hebrew, as noted, since when giving ministerial instructions, Jesus told his apostles to "Go only to the Jewish nation of lost sheep" (Matthew 10:6, *Modern Matthew*).

Therefore, while on earth, Jesus and all his disciples—including Matthew, one of his 12 apostles—generally focused on looking for Hebrew-speaking[†] Jewish "lost sheep."

Matthew's Hebrew Gospel would readily find acceptance in rightly disposed Jews as it would serve as the latest

^{*} [Gospel According to Mark | Description, Authorship, & Facts | Britannica](#)

[†] See the extensive footnote for Matthew 26:63, "Son of God." Under "Son of God," locate "The 'I AM' Controversy," then "Written and Spoken Hebrew in the New Testament," after that, "(b) Jews in Jerusalem During Pentecost."

documented revelation from God to the wayward Jewish nation, an extension, as it were, of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Naturally, it would become the first Jewish holy book after the last book of the Hebrew Scriptures—the single book of Chronicles*—was written. Jews now would have the entire Bible, from Genesis to Matthew, in Hebrew.

Like Matthew, the apostles Peter and Paul recognized that the Jews would receive the good news first, just as Jesus had directed (Matthew 10:6).

After Pentecost, Peter told Jews in Jerusalem: “When God raised up his servant Jesus, he sent him *first* to you people of Israel, to bless you by turning each of you back from your sinful ways” (Acts 3:26, *New Living Translation*).

Not many years later, itinerant missionaries Paul and Barnabas declared to Jews at Pisidian Antioch: “It was necessary that we *first* preach the word of God to you Jews” (Acts 13:46, *NLT*).

Some years later still, in his letter to the Romans, Paul boldly wrote: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: *first* for the Jew, then for the Gentile” (Romans 1:16, *New International Version*).

It is doubtlessly for reason that Jews were to receive the message of the good news first that traveling Christian preachers sought out synagogues when entering various towns and cities, seeking Jews who were likely already familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures, as well as proselytes and Gentiles who happened to be on hand (Acts 13:14-16, 43; 14:1; 17:1-4, 10, 16, 17; 18:19; 19:1-10; 22:19).

* [The 24 Books of the Hebrew Bible • Torah.org](http://Torah.org)

Mark to the Romans

While Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience, Mark, on the other hand, composed his Gospel specifically for non-Jewish ethnic Roman converts to Christianity living in Rome, where he was most likely a resident.

Mark's explanations of Jewish customs and his translations of Aramaic [Hebrew] expressions suggest that he was writing for Gentile converts, probably especially for those converts living in Rome.*

Indeed, Mark makes explanatory comments on Jewish traditions, customs, and teachings with which non-Jewish readers, such as Roman Christians, might be unfamiliar with (Mark 2:18; 7:3, 4; 14:12; 15:42).

Other texts in Mark's Gospel provide even more unmistakable clues that Mark's audience was composed of Romans.

1. Dialectical Hebrew expressions are translated[†] (Mark 3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 14:36; 15:22, 34).
2. Palestinian geographic names and plant life are qualified with explanations (Mark 1:5, 13; 11:13; 13:3).
3. The value of Jewish coins is given in Roman money. (Mark 12:42, footnote).
4. More Latin words are used than in the other Gospels, examples being *speculator* (body guardsman), *praetorium* (governor's palace), and *centurion* (army officer), as in Mark 6:27; 15:16, 39.

* [Gospel According to Mark | Description, Authorship, & Facts | Britannica](#).

See also [Gospel of Mark - Biblical Studies - Oxford Bibliographies](#)

[†] Dialectical *Hebrew* is still *Hebrew*. See the extensive footnote for Matthew 26:63, "Son of God." Under "Son of God," locate "The 'I AM' Controversy," then "Written and Spoken Hebrew in the New Testament," after that, "(a) Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani."

Mark is generally thought to have written his Gospel between 60 - 70 CE,* but no later than 70 CE,† before the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and decimated its temple.

The Gospel of Mark was already in circulation among Christians by the middle of the second century. Its appearance in all the early catalogs of the Christian Greek Scriptures confirms its authenticity.

It is difficult to imagine that Mark would circumvent the divinely inspired pattern of presenting the message of the Gospel to Jews first, then Gentiles, in chronicling the ministry of Christ.

WAS PAUL FAMILIAR WITH MATTHEW'S GOSPEL?

Without a sufficient challenge, one could strongly assert that the apostle Paul unmistakably demonstrated a familiarity with Matthew's Hebrew Gospel for two main reasons: (1) It was the only Gospel available, and (2) Paul paraphrased information exclusive to Matthew's Gospel.

Paul and his soon-to-be traveling companion Barnabas were selected by holy spirit to embark on a missionary trip (Acts 13:1-5).

When examining their record of preaching, it becomes evident that Paul was explicitly acquainted with the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew.

Consider these six examples of Paul's coordinated references to Matthew's Gospel:

1. Paul mentioned events surrounding John's baptism of Jesus, as well as John's baptism of repentant Jews (Acts 13:23-26; Matthew 1:21; 3:1, 11; 10:6).

Neither was Paul there nor was he a believer at the time. Only Matthew mentions these events, as the other Gospels had yet to be written.

* [Gospel of Mark History, Summary & Facts | Study.com.](#)

† [The Gospel of Mark - NCEC.](#)

2. Paul discusses the trial, execution, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 13:27-31; Matthew 26:60; 27:22, 60; 28:6, 16), events that are clearly and exclusively (at the time) found in Matthew's account. Again, Paul was nowhere near becoming a disciple.

3. Paul and Barnabas preached to the Jews first (Acts 13:46; Romans 1:16; Matthew 10:6) as instructed by Jesus, according to Matthew's Gospel.

This fact is significant in that the Lord told Ananias in a vision that Paul was "a chosen vessel to me to bear my name to [1] the nations as well as [2] to kings and [3] the sons of Israel" (Acts 9:10-15).

Although the account does not state whether Ananias related this three-point vision to Paul or not, neophyte Paul did not adhere to the chronological order found therein.

Instead, he went by what Jesus instructed his disciples as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew and preached to the Jews *first*, thus suggesting that he and Barnabas may have had a copy of Matthew's Gospel (Matthew 10:6).

4. When Paul and Barnabas were persecuted in one city, they fled to another, just as Jesus had instructed in Matthew's account (Acts 14:6; Matthew 10:23).

5. Paul and Barnabas also paraphrased Jesus' words, as recorded exclusively by Matthew, regarding seasonal blessings (Acts 14:16, 17; Matthew 5:45).

6. And after "making quite a few disciples," Paul and Barnabas strengthened and encouraged the disciples "to remain in the faith and saying: 'We must enter into the celestial Kingdom-Government of God through many tribulations,'" just as Jesus had indicated according to Matthew's Gospel (Acts 14:21, 22; Matthew 10:38; 28:19, *Modern Matthew*).

While it cannot be stated dogmatically, one can be reasonably certain that the apostle Paul was familiar with the

first book of the Christian Pentateuch, the Gospel of Matthew.

THE CHRISTIAN PENTATEUCH

Some scholars believe that along with the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the book of Acts, written by Gospel writer Luke, qualifies as the fifth Gospel,^{*} primarily since Luke writes it to the same person (Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-2), and it centers on Jesus from the first to the last verses (Acts 1:1; 28:31). Collectively, all five Gospels comprise the Christian Pentateuch.

The first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. They serve as a basis for the remaining Hebrew Bible and are collectively known by several names, with “Torah” (a word originating in Hebrew) and “Pentateuch” (derived from Greek) being among them.

Correspondingly, the first five books of the Christian Greek Scriptures (New Testament) are Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts. These form the infrastructure of the rest of the books of the New Testament.[†]

The books of Genesis and Matthew have more in common than what meets the eye. Not only are they the first books of their respective sections of the Bible, but in the first verse of Matthew’s Greek Gospel (Matthew 1:1), we find that he uses a word based on the Greek word for “genesis” (γένεσις), subtly and publicly, acknowledging his Gospel’s unique position in what would become the New Testament.

^{*}[The Five Gospels: What Did Jesus Really Say? The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus: Funk, Robert W.: 9780060630409: Amazon.com: Books](#). see also [Gospels and Acts, 5 vols. \(New International Commentary on the New Testament | NICNT\) | Logos Bible Software](#).

[†] ([Chapter 21: The New Testament Pentateuch \(askelm.com\)](#)).

Through prophet Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, *Y^ehowah*' (Jehovah) foretold that someone like Moses would emerge from among God's people (Deuteronomy 18:18, 19). Like Moses, this person would be the mediator of a covenant, but it would be a different one, called the new covenant.

Jesus Christ proved to be the very prophet who also became the mediator of the "new covenant" (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8; 10:16)..

The nation of *natural* Israel was born by the completion of the Jewish Pentateuch (Exodus 19:1; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2; 9:16-20); the nation of *spiritual* Israel was born by the conclusion of the Christian Pentateuch (Luke 22:20; 2 Corinthians 3:6, 8, 9; Hebrews 8:10; 12:22-24; Galatians 6:15, 16; 3:26-28; Romans 2:28, 29).

Like the highly educated man Moses, who was the inspired writer of the Jewish Pentateuch (Acts 7:22), Matthew's education and training best suited him for writing the first book of the Christian Pentateuch.

Matthew was a publican, or tax collector, before he was called as one of the Lord's Apostles. Because of that profession, we can guess that he was well educated and knew how to read and write, probably in several languages, including Greek. He also knew arithmetic.*

This means that Matthew was at least one of two of the most educated of the original 12 apostles of Jesus (Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19, and Luke 6:13-16).

Judas Iscariot's business acumen, natural ability, and education were noteworthy as a faithful apostle of Jesus, given that Jesus selected him to handle the group's finances (John 12:6; Matthew 10:3).

* [Who Are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? \(churchofjesuschrist.org\)](http://churchofjesuschrist.org).

Curiously, Matthew was God-ordained to write the first Gospel despite being the seventh disciple of record chosen by Jesus (Mark 3:18; Luke 6:12-16).

The six before him were Peter, Andrew, John, James, Philip, and Nathaniel (John 1:35-51; Matthew 4:18-22; 9:9-13; Mark 1:16-20).

And just as Moses did not witness any of the events he recorded in the entire book of Genesis and the first part of Exodus (Exodus 1:1-2:10), neither did Matthew experience specific episodes—ones he chronicled as well as those he did not—that occurred during Jesus' ministry.

To demonstrate this fact, the following are examples of events that happened during Jesus' ministry before Matthew was recruited as a disciple:

- (1) Jesus turns water into wine (John 2:1-12).
- (2) Jesus makes whip and turns over moneychangers' tables (John 2:12-22).
- (3) Jesus teaches Nicodemus (John 2:23-3:21).
- (4) John the Baptist arrested and imprisoned (John 3:22-4:3).
- (5) Jesus preaches to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:3-43).
- (6) Jesus heals son of Herod's official (John 4:43-54).
- (7) Jesus teaches in his hometown synagogue (Luke 4:16-30).
- (8) Jesus performs various miracles in Capernaum (Mark 1:21-34; Matthew 8:14-17).
- (9) Jesus heals leper in Galilee (Luke 5:12-16).

Though not an eyewitness to these occasions, Matthew's Gospel is the Genesis of the Christian Pentateuch of the New Testament.

TEXTUAL CRITICS AND TRANSLATORS

The present translator is at a loss as to how he would improve upon the overall appraisal of textual criticism as expressed by translator David Stern in the introduction of the *Jewish New Testament* (1989):

There are more than five thousand ancient manuscripts of all or part of the New Testament, more than for any other document from antiquity.

Due to scribal errors and other factors they do not agree with each other at every point. Textual criticism, which sets out to determine the correct reading of a text from imperfect or disagreeing sources is far beyond the competence of most New Testament translators, including this one.

Fortunately there exist critical editions of the Greek text of the New Testament, wherein specialists have investigated, compared and judged the accuracy of the differing textual readings found in the manuscripts.

As stated, translators (including the present one) are not necessarily textual critics. Translators usually base their translations on the work of textual critics.

This translator is no different.

Modern Matthew, initially called *Carr's Christian Bible (CCB)* and then *Carr's Christian Translation (CCT)*, finds its inspiration in the works of textual critics and previous translators.

INTERNAL STRUCTURE

Headings and subheadings, as found in the five-level table of contents and throughout the main text, make for ease of use.

The *first* level is the chapter number. The *second* indicates the chapter number and how many verses it contains. The *third* is the subject title for any given number of verses in that chapter.

The *fourth* is the chapter number and verses associated with the subject title. And the *fifth* is the subheading highlighting the academic consideration of selected material in the main text.

Footnote Cross References

Cross-references, all linked to texts from the Hebrew Scriptures, appear in footnotes. Symbols (e.g., *, †, ‡, §) are used for multiple footnotes on the same page and re-start with each page.

There are well over four hundred numbered Scriptural cross-references in connection with the Hebrew Bible.

These represent the number of Hebrew Scripture texts directly quoted, referenced, or alluded to in some way, shape, form, or fashion. The format of these footnote cross-references is as follows:

- [#1]: The first [#1] appears under the footnote for “translates” at Matthew 1:23. The scripture quoted in this case is Isaiah 7:14.
- [#446] The last is in the footnote at Matthew 28:19 and is an apparent reference to Isaiah 64:8.

Footnotes: Torah Quotes

As discussed previously, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, or Torah, are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Modern Matthew attempts to keep track of quotes, references, or allusions to the Torah, as well as each separate book in the Torah, by using superscripted double number sets in footnotes. All Torah books are **bold** in SMALL CAPS.

For example, in replying to the Devil in Matthew 4:4, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3.

Since this happens to be the first quote, reference, or allusion from the Torah, the assigned endnote reads, “DEUTERONOMY¹⁽¹⁾ 8:3.”

The first superscripted “1” indicates this is the first quote from the book of Deuteronomy, whereas the parenthetical “(1),” also superscripted, means this is also the first quote from the Torah.

The footnote at Matthew 15:19 (randomly selected for this example) reads: “GENESIS⁸⁽⁶⁵⁾ 8:21 [#200].”

This means that Genesis 8:21 has either been quoted, referenced, or alluded to, and it is the eighth of such an occurrence from the book of Genesis, the 65th from the Torah, and the 200th overall from the entire Hebrew Bible.

Footnotes: Sermon on the Mount

Scriptural cross-references in the three chapters that contain Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (found in Matthew chapters 5-7 inclusive) have an additional feature, viz., a separate tally is made for quotes, references, or allusions to the Hebrew Scriptures.

For example, the endnote for Matthew 5:5 reads: “Psalms 37:11 [#15/1].”

This means it is the 15th overall quote, reference, or allusion to the Hebrew Bible but is the first (“/1”) such quote, reference, or allusion in the Sermon on the Mount.

When the Torah texts come into play, the previously described format is used in conjunction with the Sermon on the Mount format.

For instance, the first Torah text Scriptural reference (there are three) for the endnote at Matthew 5:21 reads: “GENESIS¹⁽⁴⁾ 9:6 [#24/10].”

This translates as follows: Genesis 9:6 is the first reference to the book of Genesis in the main text (thus the superscripted “1”); the fourth reference to the Torah in the

main text (hence the parenthetical 4); the 24th reference to the Hebrew Bible in the main text; and the 10th reference to the Hebrew Bible in the Sermon on the Mount. The final endnote cross-reference is at Matthew 7:29.

Endnotes

The fascinating content and meaningful symbols found in luminous endnotes contribute to *Modern Matthew* being a groundbreaking achievement.

These endnotes, of which there are several hundred, contain critical notes, etymology, background information, selected commentary, and more.

While the endnotes are, in some cases, voluminous and comprehensive, *Modern Matthew* does not pretend to have captured every interesting and titillating detail that connects the past with the present.

WIKIPEDIA

Although considering *Wikipedia* as a creditable reference source sparks controversy, the present author has concluded that it retains a measure of respectability and quotes the ubiquitous online encyclopedia when deemed preferable, suitable, and appropriate.

Reputable sources concur that *Wikipedia* has value. For example, in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.), under “Reference Examples” (Chapter 10), researchers are instructed:

“Cite the archived version of the page so that readers can retrieve the version you used. Access the archived version on *Wikipedia* by selecting ‘View history’ and then the time and date of the version you used. If a wiki does not provide permanent links to archived versions of the page, include the URL for the entry and the retrieval date” (p. 329).

Under the “File” tab in Microsoft Word, one can click “Get Add-ins” and then select “Wikipedia.” In an earlier version of Word, hovering the cursor over “Wikipedia” with the capital “W” icon under the “Insert” tab, the accompanying text reads:

Find and quote related information from Wikipedia. The Wikipedia app for Office helps you quickly access Wikipedia content from Office and simplifies the process of referencing texts and images.*

Even with these acknowledgments, this author is still cautious and circumspect when referencing *Wikipedia* in *Modern Matthew*.

THE HIGHEST EDUCATION

The Bible has influenced critical thinking and higher education more than any other book in history, and, as noted above, the Gospel of Matthew is arguably the most influential book in the Bible.

Perusing the table of contents in *Modern Matthew* may pique academic interest.

A closer examination of the book’s contents will no doubt convince one that the “College Edition” part of the title is indeed fully justified.

It may come as a surprise to some that this book, while not the first to do so, serves as a nexus for religion and science in the minds of some observers.

Historically, religion and science have been at odds with each other. One well-known preacher of two centuries ago echoed the concern of many of the faithful as he outlined the traditional clash between science and religion in both high school and college classrooms:

* In any version of Word, clicking on the “Help” tab and typing “Wikipedia” in the search box will yield instructions on how to select Wikipedia as an add-in.

Not only are the great Colleges and Seminaries undermining the faith of the better educated, but the Common School books, and especially those used in the High Schools, are similarly inculcating a distrust in the Bible, a contradiction of its teachings.

For a college graduate of to-day [*sic*] to declare his faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures would bring upon him the scorn of his companions—a scorn which few would court, or could endure.*

The present translator does not subscribe to the belief that conflict between true science and true religion is an inevitability.

In fact, they inescapably complement each other. Intellect need not interfere with invocation. There is no good reason why they should be mutually exclusive.

As it is, the very book that is the most popular and the most translated in history—to name just two of its milestones—is also the textbook that leads to the highest education.

This Biblical education, in turn, leads to eternal life on paradise earth that Adam and Eve enjoyed prelapsarian, something that has eluded the intellects of medical and social scientists for millennia. However, regarding man's intellect, the Bible says:

But we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us intellectual capacity that we may gain the knowledge of the true one. And we are in union with the true one, by means of his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and life everlasting (1 John 5:20, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, 1984).

* Pastor Charles Taze Russell, *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, the first volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*, 1886.

This translator hopes, at the risk of sounding immodest, that *Modern Mathew: Good News for Today—College Edition* is the Gospel of Matthew packaged as intended for our day and time and resonates with your heart, soul, spirit, and mind.

Chapter 1

MATTHEW 1:1-25

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

(Chapter 1, verses 1-17)

[ACADEMICS: Ancestry/Genealogy]

- (1) The following is a book of the **history**¹ of Jesus Christ, who was a descendant of David, whose ancestor, in turn, was Abraham:
- (2) Abraham fathered Isaac; Isaac fathered Jacob; Jacob fathered Judah and his **brothers**.²
- (3) Judah, [under peculiar circumstances] fathered both Perez and Zerah by the **would-be**³ harlot Tamar, his daughter-in-law; Perez fathered Hezron; Hezron fathered Ram.
- (4) Ram fathered Amminadab; Amminadab fathered Nahshon; Nahshon fathered Salmon.
- (5) Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab, the prostitute; Boaz fathered Obed by the saintly Ruth; Obed fathered Jesse.
- (6) Jesse fathered David [who became] king. David fathered Solomon through an adulterous relationship with the wife of his faithful foreign soldier, Uriah.
- (7) Solomon fathered Rehoboam; Rehoboam fathered Abijah; Abijah fathered Asa.
- (8) Asa fathered Jehoshaphat; Jehoshaphat fathered Jehoram; Jehoram fathered Uzziah.

- (9) Uzziah fathered Jotham; Jotham fathered Ahaz; Ahaz fathered Hezekiah.
- (10) Hezekiah fathered Manasseh; Manasseh fathered Amon; Amon fathered Josiah.
- (11) Josiah fathered Jeconiah and his brothers when the Israelites were forcibly deported to Babylon.
- (12) After the deportation, Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel; Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel.
- (13) Zerubbabel fathered Abiud; Abiud fathered Eliakim; Eliakim fathered Azor.
- (14) Azor fathered Zadok; Zadok fathered Achim; Achim fathered Eliud.
- (15) Eliud fathered Eleazar; Eleazar fathered Matthan; Matthan fathered Jacob.
- (16) Jacob fathered Joseph, who was intent on becoming the husband of Mary, who eventually gave birth to Jesus, otherwise known as the Christ.
- (17) There were fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the Babylonian deportation, and fourteen generations from the deportation to the Christ.

The Birth of Jesus Christ

(Chapter 1, verses 18-25)

[MEDICAL SCIENCE: Parthenogenesis/Obstetrics]

(18) These are the unusual events surrounding the **birth**⁴ of Jesus Christ.

While his mother Mary was engaged to **Joseph**,⁵ the unthinkable happened.

She became pregnant.

No, not by Joseph, nor by any other man for that matter.

It was **holy spirit**⁶ that impregnated her. This was before she and Joseph had ever officially married. **(19)** However, Joseph, considered by custom to be her husband unofficially, decided to divorce her (or, technically, break off the engagement) secretly to avoid humiliating her in public. He was a good man and didn't want to shame or embarrass her.

(20) After he contemplated these matters, something extraordinary happened. *Yehowah*^{**7} angel appeared to him in a dream, saying: "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to escort Mary home as your wife. It is true. Holy spirit has indeed impregnated her. **(21)** She is going to give birth to a son whose name must be **Jesus**,⁸ for he will save sinners from their sins."

(22) ALL THIS HAPPENED TO FULFILL WHAT *Yehowah*⁹ TOLD HIS PROPHET:¹⁰ **(23)** "Take note! The **virgin**¹¹ will become pregnant and have a son, and they will name him Immanuel," which **translates**^{†12} to, "**God Is With Us.**"¹³

(24) Then Joseph woke up and did what the angel of *Yehowah*¹⁴ had instructed, and he escorted his wife home.

(25) However, he didn't have sex with her until after the boy was born. When the child was born, Joseph dutifully called him Jesus.

* God's name in Hebrew is *Yehowah*['], commonly translated "Jehovah" in English. When the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek (*Septuagint* or *LXX*), the four Hebrew letters recognized as God's name (Tetragrammaton), appeared in the *LXX*. So, whether Matthew quoted the Hebrew text or the *LXX*, he used the divine name. A few hundred years after Matthew and the other Greek New Testament writers died, the Tetragrammaton was unjustifiably replaced with Greek characters as shown in Figures 1-3. See related endnote for the occurrence of *Yehowah*['] in Matthew 1:20 for more details.

† Vs. 23: Isaiah 7:14 [#1].



Figure 1: Hebrew characters for God's name in Hebrew manuscript

In this ancient Hebrew Nash Papyrus manuscript God's name appears seven times in the Old Testament books of Exodus and Deuteronomy. The manuscript is called the and is dated to at least 100 years (possibly 200 years) before the time of Christ. Matthew quoted from such a Hebrew manuscript. (See endnote for Matthew 1:20.)

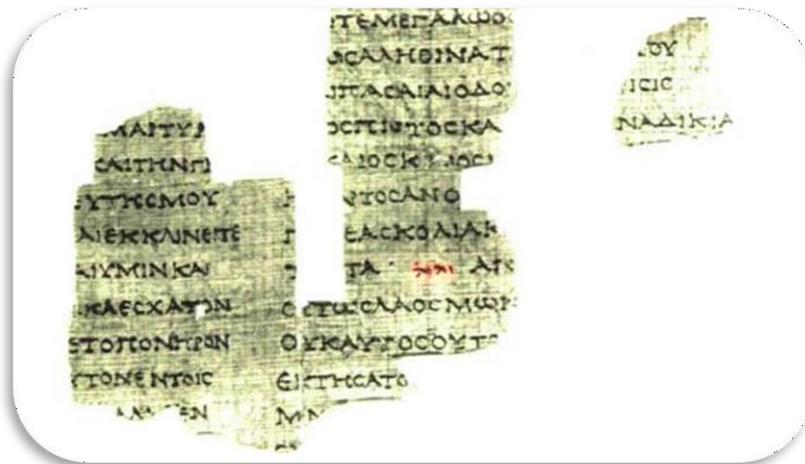


Figure 2: Hebrew letters for God's name in in a Greek manuscript

This Greek translation of the Hebrew text of Deuteronomy 18:15(16) contains God's name written in Hebrew characters during the time of Christ and New Testament Bible writers. Matthew no doubt quoted a manuscript such as this when he translated his Hebrew Gospel into Greek. (See endnote for Matthew 1:20.)



Figure 3: God's name replaced in Greek version of Hebrew Bible

A few hundred years after Greek New Testament writers died, God's name as represented by four Hebrew letters (the Tetragrammaton) was replaced with Greek characters that represent "Lord." The *New World Translation* is an example of a Bible version that restores God's name, for instance, in Acts 3:22 where Deuteronomy 18:15, which contains the Tetragrammaton, is quoted.

Researchers have constructed "a partial listing of [300] Bible translations and reference works [that include the Gospel of Matthew] that have used some form of the divine name (or some other way of indicating that the divine name is referred to) in what is commonly called the New Testament" (The Divine Name in the "New Testament" | NWT Study Bible (jw.org)).

Separately, there are over 120 "Languages and Dialects Containing the Divine Name in the Main Text of the Christian Greek Scriptures [New Testament, including Matthew's Gospel]" (The Divine Name in the Christian Greek Scriptures | NWT Study Bible (jw.org)). Additionally, "a number of languages and dialects use a form of the divine name in footnotes or in explanatory text," such as the Jewish New Testament by David Stern (1997).



Figure 4: Eastern scholars

See “Eastern scholars” endnotes.
(#s 15, 16) in Matthew 2:1.

[The Three Kings - Who Were the 3 Wise Men? \(learnreligions.com\)](http://learnreligions.com)



Figure 5: First-century scribe

See “scribes” endnote (#19) in Matthew 2:4.

[Writers of the Bible | NOVA | PBS](http://www.pbs.org/writersofthebible/)

Chapter 2

MATTHEW 2:1-23

Eastern Scholars

(Chapter 2, verses 1-6)

[NATURAL SCIENCES: Astronomy/Astrophysics]

(1) After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea during the reign of King Herod, **Eastern**¹⁵ **scholars**¹⁶ came to Jerusalem, (2) asking:

“Where is the **boy-king**¹⁷ of the Jews? We saw his **star**¹⁸ in the East and came to pay our respects.”

(3) King Herod (and the rest of the Jewish population in Jerusalem) was angered upon hearing their words.

(4) He summoned all the chief priests and **scribes**,¹⁹ probing and asking questions as to the whereabouts of Christ’s birthplace.

(5) “The Christ is to be born in Bethlehem of Judea,” they revealed. “We know this because the prophet of long ago **wrote**:²⁰

(6) ““Hey, Bethlehem of the Judean countryside, you’re no small fry when it comes to cities that are important to Judean governors. Why? Because you’ll produce a major governor who’ll direct my people, Israel.””*

Toddler Jesus

(Chapter 2, verses 7-12)

[MEDICAL SCIENCE: Pediatrics/Psychology/GPS]

(7) Then Herod, away from the people, secretly asked the Eastern scholars to establish the time of the star’s appearance.

(8) He sent them to Bethlehem with this order: “Search high and low for the **toddler**,²¹ and when you find him, let me

* Vs. 6: Micah 5:2. [#2].

know so that I,²² too, can **pay my respects**²³ to the **boy-king**.”²⁴

(9) As soon as the king finished with them, they left for Bethlehem. Why look there in the night sky!

The star they saw before in the east [the one they identified as the boy’s star] appeared again to them and led them to the **boy-king**.²⁵

(10) THEY WERE ELATED WHEN THEY SAW THE STAR AGAIN!

(11) IT HAD STOPPED OVER A SPECIFIC HOUSE,²⁶ at which point they entered the home and found the **boy-king**²⁷ and his mother inside.

They showed great honor by **bowing before**²⁸ the future king and, from their treasures, presented him with gifts, yes, gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

(12) However, they all had the same divine dream that warned them not to return to Herod, so they took a different route to their home country.

Escape to Africa

(Chapter 2, verses 13-15)

[LIBERAL ARTS: African History]

(13) After they left, **Yehowah’s**²⁹ angel again visited Joseph in a dream, saying: “Wake up and take **boy-king**³⁰ and his mother to Egypt, **Africa**.³¹ Sit tight there until you hear from me because Herod is going to be on a search-and-destroy mission as far as the **boy-king**³² is concerned. He wants to kill him.”

(14) Joseph woke right up and did exactly as the angel instructed. He took his family, the **boy-king**³³ and the young child’s mother, to Egypt, Africa.

(15) They all stayed there until Herod died. BY DOING SO, THEY ALSO FULFILLED **Yehowah’s**³⁴ WORDS THROUGH HIS

PROPHET,³⁵ which states: “I called my son out of [Africa], that is, Egypt.”*

Herod Commits Infanticide

(Chapter 2, verses 16-18)

[ACADEMICS: Infanticide]

(16) When the wickedly sly Herod realized that he had been outfoxed, he was so angry that he sent his soldiers to kill all **boys**³⁶ two years of age and under in Bethlehem.

From questioning the Eastern scholars, he figured that the boy Jesus was within this age range.

(17) This terrible occasion was foretold long ago by the prophet Jeremiah when he wrote:

(18) “A mysterious voice was heard in Ramah, moaning and much sobbing. It was Rachel openly grieving over her slaughtered children, and she refused to be comforted, for they had perished.”†

Joseph Returns to Israel

(Chapter 2, verses 19-23)

(19) When Herod finally died, **Yehowah's**³⁷ angel, as promised, came again to Joseph (who was still in Africa) in a dream (20) and said:

“Get up and take your family back to Israel, for the ones who wanted to kill the **boy-king**³⁸ are dead themselves.”

(21) Following the angel's directions, he got up and took his family, the **boy-king**,³⁹ and his mother, back to Israel.

(22) While on his way to Judea, he heard that King Herod's wicked son Archelaus had replaced him as ruler. This scared Joseph so much that he no longer considered

* Vs. 15: Hosea 11:1. [#3].

† Vs. 18: Jeremiah 31:15, 16 [#4].

Judea an option. On top of this, he was divinely warned in a dream [not to go to Judea], so he settled on the territory of Galilee, **(23)** where Jesus was to grow up in a city called Nazareth. THIS FULFILLED WHAT WAS SPOKEN THROUGH THE PROPHETS WHEN THEY SAID:⁴⁰ “He will be called a Nazarene.”⁴¹

Chapter 3

MATTHEW 3:1-17

John the Baptist Preaches

(Chapter 3, verses 1-6)

[PSYCHOLOGY: Paradigm Shift/SCIENCE:
Diet & Exercise/ ENTOMOLOGY]

(1) About thirty years later, **John the Baptist**⁴² preached in the Judean wilderness, **(2)** saying: “**Repent**,⁴³ for the celestial Kingdom-Government has approached.”

(3) John is the one Isaiah talked about when he said: “Listen up! Someone is calling out in the wilderness, ‘Make ready the pathway of *Y^ehowah*’,⁴⁴ all you people! Straighten out His routes.”⁴⁵

(4) John was unusual. He wore clothes made from camel hair and had a leather belt that fitted around his waist and part of his lower torso. He ate protein-rich insect locusts dipped in nutrition-rich wild honey.

(5) Despite his appearance, everybody came to see John, people from Jerusalem, the rest of Judea, and all the surrounding country of Jordan.

(6) They listened to him, confessed their sins against the Mosaic Law,⁴⁶ and were baptized in the Jordan River.



Figure 6: Repent (bowed head raised hand)

See “repent” (turnaround) in Matthew 3:2.

[Confession and Repentance--8 Ways to Talk About It \(churchleaders.com\)](https://www.churchleaders.com/Confession-and-Repentance--8-Ways-to-Talk-About-It)



Figure 7: Repent (metamorphosis)

See “repent” (transformation)
endnote (#43) in Matthew 3:2.

[How does a caterpillar turn into a butterfly? | Discover Wildlife](https://www.discoverwildlife.com/How-does-a-caterpillar-turn-into-a-butterfly/)



Figure 8: John the Baptist walking exercise

See Matthew 3:1-2.

[Why Walking is the Best Exercise - Motherly](#)



Figure 9: Protein-rich locust

See Matthew 3:4.

(Locusts and worms, cooked with olive oil. Photo: Reuters)

John Criticizes

(Chapter 3, verses 7-12)

[ACADEMICS: Lithography/

Science: Thermochemical Interaction]

(7) When he saw the pompous Pharisees and the self-righteous Sadducees coming to the baptism, he said to them:

“You children of poisonous snakes, who told you that it was possible to escape the coming wrath? (8) Don’t just say you repent, prove it by your actions!

(9) “And, please, don’t fool yourselves by saying, ‘We’re superior since Abraham, God’s special friend, is our father.’ I’m here to tell you that God can make children of Abraham out of anyone or anything—even these lifeless **stones!**⁴⁷

(10) “Also, as I speak, the ax is lying at the root of fruitless trees. Every tree, therefore, that does not produce fine fruit is chopped down and turned into firewood.

(11) “Because of your repentance, I use water to baptize all of you. But the coming One is stronger than me. I’m not worthy of removing his sullied sandals off his dusty feet. He’ll baptize you with **holy spirit**⁴⁸ and **fire**⁴⁹ instead of water!

(12) “He has winnowing shovel in hand, will completely clean his threshing floor and will collect his wheat into the storehouse. But the chaff he will burn with forever fire.”

John Baptizes Jesus

(Chapter 3, verses 13-17)

(13) Jesus traveled from Galilee to the Jordan River to John to be baptized by him.

(14) But John, [who had baptized so many], felt profoundly inadequate to baptize Jesus, saying: “Shouldn’t this be the other way around? I need to be baptized by you, and here you are coming to me?”

(15) Jesus said: “We’ll make an exception in this case. Let it happen this way for it suits all that is righteous.” So, John stopped protesting.

(16) After his baptism, Jesus quickly came up from the water. Look at the sky! The heavens parted, and from the opening, he saw God’s spirit coming down upon him in the form of a dove.

(17) Look again at the opening! A voice came from it and said: “This is my cherished Son! He has my full approval and complete support.”

Chapter 4

MATTHEW 4:1-25

Devil Tests Jesus

(Chapter 4, verses 1-11)

[ACADEMICS: Clinical Trials/Prototype

Testing/Extreme Sports/Cosmology/Hospitality]

(1) Then the spirit moved Jesus to strike out for the wilderness so that the **Devil**⁵⁰ could **test**⁵¹ him. (2) After fasting forty days and nights, Jesus naturally felt hungry.

(3) Detecting this, the Diabolical Tester approached him and mockingly challenged:

“If you’re truly **one of God’s sons**,⁵² [I couldn’t help but notice the fanfare and circus atmosphere surrounding your baptism], make a meal out of these **smooth stones that resemble loaves of round bread buns**.⁵³ Yes, turn them into high-quality loaves of filling bread.

“They already have the look; just change their molecular structure.”

(4) But Jesus replied: “In the Hebrew Scriptures (specifically the Torah) it is written: ‘Bread alone won’t keep **man**’⁵⁴

alive. He needs spiritual food from *Yehowah's*⁵⁵ mouth to survive."^{*56}

(5) Then the Devil, without any resistance from Jesus, somehow transported them to the highest point of the temple in Jerusalem (6) and then said to him:

"If you're truly **one of God's sons**,⁵⁷ jump! **Go for it!**⁵⁸ After all, to quote the Hebrew Scriptures as you have, Moses also wrote: 'God will command his angels to catch you in mid-air so that your feet won't even touch the ground.'"[†]

(7) Jesus retorted:

"Moses also wrote, 'You must not challenge *Yehowah*'⁵⁹ your God by trying to test his almighty powers."[‡]

(8) Again, intent on defeating Jesus, the Devil transferred both to a **very high mountain**⁶⁰ and displayed, in full color, a panoramic vision of all the glorious beauty and magnificence of the kingdoms of the **world**.⁶¹

Then the Devil said to Jesus as the latter observed these:

(9) "It's all yours—everything—if you do the following: Fall in prostration and commit an act of worship to me."

(10) This infuriated Jesus: "Get out of my sight, **Satan!**⁶² For the last time, the Hebrew Scriptures say,

"*'Yehowah'*,⁶³ your God, is the only God you must ever worship. He's the only one who must be given **special attention in a worshipful way**.⁶⁴"[§]

(11) After that thrashing, the Devil left him and, whoa, look at that! Angels appeared and began **ministering**⁶⁵ to Jesus by serving him food and water and encouraging him.

* Vs. 4: Deuteronomy 8:3¹⁽¹⁾ [#10].

† Vs. 6: Psalms. 91:11-12 [#11].

‡ Vs. 7: **Deuteronomy** 6:16²⁽²⁾ [#12].

§ Vs. 10: **Deuteronomy** ³⁽⁵⁾ 10:20 [#13].

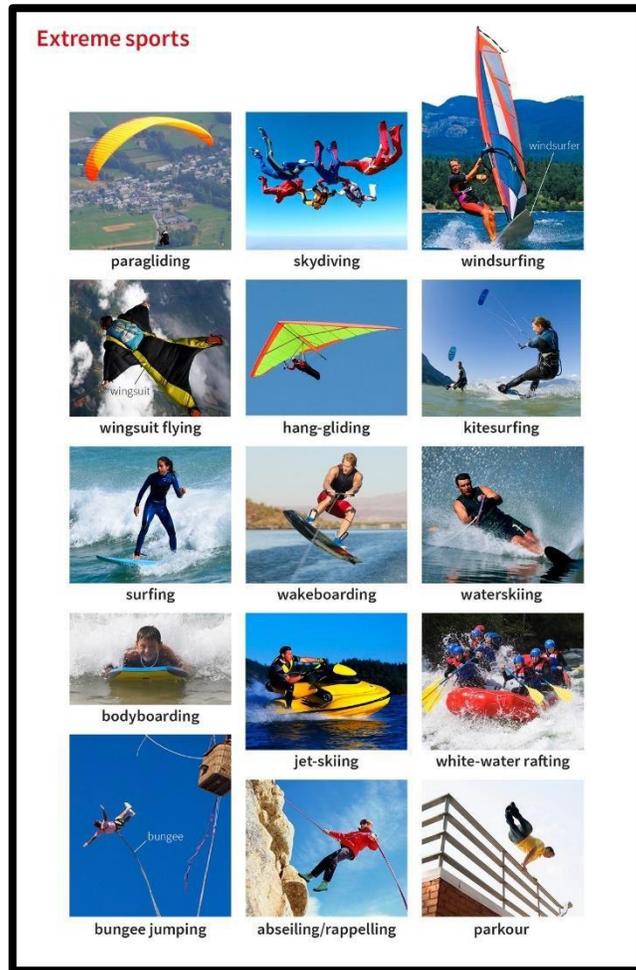


Figure 10: Extreme sports.

“Go for it!” (Matthew 4:6): Engaging in high-risk high-altitude death-defying extreme sports is Devil-inspired. It is also summarized in the collective motto, “Go for it!” The Devil dared Jesus, hence the expression, “daredevil.” (See endnote #58 for more discussion.) (Picture credit: OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com)



Figure 11: Photosynthesis

See “light” endnote (#67) in Matthew 4:15.

[The Balanced Chemical Equation for Photosynthesis \(thoughtco.com\)](http://thoughtco.com)

(Photo credit: Frank Kraemer/Getty Images)

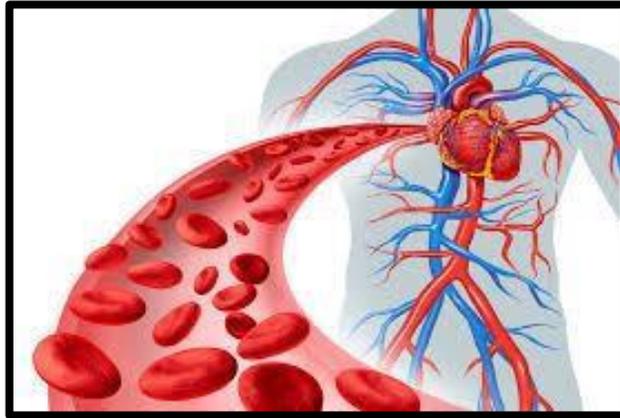


Figure 12: Hematology

See “Sea” endnote (#68) Matthew 4:18.

[Hematology | Medicine related to blood disease For PCD Franchise \(mkmedicine.in\)](http://mkmedicine.in)

Jesus Starts Ministry

(Chapter 4, verses 12-17)

[LIBERAL ARTS: Photography/
LIFE SCIENCES: Photosynthesis]

(12) Word reached Jesus that John the Baptist had been arrested, so he returned to Galilee.

(13) Further, after leaving Nazareth, where he grew up, he relocated to Capernaum, right next to the sea in the areas of Zebulun and Naphtali.

(14) THESE MOVES WERE ALL IN FULFILLMENT OF WHAT THE PROPHET ISAIAH WROTE:⁶⁶

(15) “Lands of Zebulun and Naphtali! Yes, the ones by the sea path on the other side of the Jordan. Galilee of the nations!

(16) The people sitting in the dark all saw a powerful **light**,⁶⁷ and as for the ones sitting under the shadow of a dark cloud, light flashed upon them.”*

(17) From then on, for the first time early in his career, Jesus started to preach and say: “Repent, all of you, because the celestial Kingdom-Government has approached.”

First Four Disciples

(Chapter 4, verses 18-22)

[MEDICAL SCIENCE: Hematology]

(18) As he walked near the shore of the **Sea**⁶⁸ of Galilee, he saw several professional fishermen, among them **two**⁶⁹ brothers named Simon (also known as Peter) and Andrew.

They were lowering their fishing net into the water when (19) he called them: “Come join me, and instead of catching and taking the lives of fish, I’ll show you how to catch and save the lives of men.”

* Vs. 16: Isaiah 9:1-2 [#14].

(20) They dropped their nets where they stood and followed Jesus.

(21) Further along the sea path, he saw another set of siblings, James, and his brother John, both sons of Zebedee.

They were in the boat with their father repairing nets when Jesus called them.

(22) They, too, immediately followed Jesus, leaving their father in the boat.

Jesus Heals the Sick

(Chapter 4, verses 23-25)

[LIBERAL ARTS: Didactic Learning/
Evangelism/HOLISTIC THERAPY/PSYCHIATRY]

(23) Then Jesus traveled all over Galilee, **teaching**⁷⁰ in the **synagogues**⁷¹ and preaching the **good news**⁷² of God's celestial Kingdom-Government. He went about completely **curing**⁷³ every kind of disease and **sickness**.⁷⁴

(24) The Syrians received news about him and brought him all their sick, people suffering from every disease imaginable; those tormented by demons, violent **lunatics**⁷⁵ (or those with severe mental illnesses), and even people who were **paralyzed**.⁷⁶

The type of disorder didn't matter. His therapy was thorough, and his **cure**⁷⁷ complete.

(25) Because of this, scores of people from Galilee, the Ten Cities region, Jerusalem, Judea, and those from the other side of the Jordan followed him.



Figure 13: Ancient Greek therapies

See “curing” (Greek, *therapeuó* (θεραπεύω)) endnote (#71) in Matthew 4:23. Jesus’ cures were permanent and far outperformed Greek and Roman therapies in every way.

[Ancient Greek Medicine: Who Was Hippocrates And What Was The Hippocratic Oath? | HistoryExtra](#)



Figure 14: Full moon (“lunatic”)

See “lunatics” endnote (#75) and its relation to “wolfman” and the full moon in Matthew 4:24.

[What is it about a full moon that makes people do crazy things and commit crimes? | Science Questions with Surprising Answers \(wtamu.edu\)](#)

Chapter 5

MATTHEW 5:1-48

Godly Serenity & Cheerful Contentment

(Chapter 5, verses 1-12)

[LIBERAL ARTS: Open-Air

Lecture/Self-Help/Inner Peace]

(1) Jesus retreated to the mountain after seeing the crowds. When he sat down, the disciples approached him, (2) at which time he commenced teaching them, saying:

(3) “Those who recognize their spiritual need have godly serenity and are cheerfully content since they’ve embraced the celestial Kingdom-Government.

(4) “Since those in emotional pain know they’ll be comforted, they’re eventually cheerfully content and have godly serenity.

(5) “Those who are docile and even-tempered have godly serenity and are cheerfully content since they are destined to inherit an earthly paradise.*

(6) “Those who have a healthy appetite for good things and are thirsting for righteousness[†] are cheerfully content and have godly serenity since their desire will be satisfied, and their thirst quenched.

(7) “The compassionate are cheerfully content and have godly serenity since they, too, will be shown compassion.

(8) “Those whose hearts are pure and undiluted[‡] have godly serenity and are cheerfully content. They will see God.

* Vs. 5: Psalm 37:11 [#15/1].

† Vs. 6: Isaiah 55:1 [#16/2].

‡ Vs. 8: Psalms 24:4 [#17/3]; Psalms 73:1 [#18/4]; Proverbs 22:11 [#19/5].

(9) “Those who are composed and peaceable have godly serenity and are cheerfully content since they will be identified as ‘God’s sons.’

(10) “Those who have been victims of religious persecution have godly serenity and are cheerfully content since the celestial Kingdom-Government is practically theirs already.

(11) “You have godly serenity when others condemn and persecute you; when they spread horrendous lies about you and use all types of hurtful words against you, all because you align yourselves with my teachings. Through it all, you maintain your cheerful contentment.

(12) “Be happy and jump for joy; a tremendous heavenly reward awaits you. Yes, count yourselves in good company since the prophets of yesteryear were likewise persecuted.*

Light of the World

(Chapter 5, verses 13-16)

[LIBERAL ARTS: Culinary Arts/Feng Shui
/SCIENCE: Ergonomics]

(13) “The earth has salt, and you are that salt. But salt that is not salty is no good. Since the saltiness of salt cannot be restored, it is cast outside and trampled.

(14) “The world has light. You are that light.† [You cannot help but be noticed!] It’s like a city, full of light, built atop a mountain. You can’t miss it!

(15) “When people light a lamp in a dark house, they don’t set it under a piece of furniture. The house would still be dark if they did! No, they leave it in the open to illuminate the entire place.⁷⁸

* Vs. 12: 2 Chronicles 36:16 [#20/6].

† Vs. 14: Isaiah 514 [#21/7].



Figure 15: Feng shui

See “sea” endnote #78 in Matthew 5:15.
[7 Feng Shui Tips for Your Home \(mydomaine.com\)](http://mydomaine.com)



Figure 16: Ergonomics

See “works” endnote (#79) in Matthew 5:16.
[What is Ergonomics? | JR Ergonomics](http://JR Ergonomics)

(16) “Likewise, let your light shine in the open before all men that they may observe your fine **works**⁷⁹ and give glory to your heavenly Father.

Mosaic Law Fulfilled

(Chapter 5, verses 17-20)

[ACADEMICS: Teaching]

(17) “Don’t get the wrong impression of why I have come. I’m here to satisfy the requirements of—not to destroy—the Mosaic Law⁸⁰ and the Prophets.

(18) “In fact, heaven and earth would disappear before even the **minutest letter**⁸¹ or a character’s **smallest stroke**⁸² of the Mosaic Law goes unfulfilled.*

(19) “And if anyone breaks or teaches others to break even the very least of these commandments, he will, correspondingly, be labeled the very ‘least’ one in the celestial Kingdom-Government.

“Conversely, if anyone lives by and teaches these commandments, he will be recognized as ‘great’ in the celestial Kingdom-Government of God.

(20) “I’m telling you if your righteousness doesn’t overflow more than the righteousness of the **scribes**⁸³ and Pharisees, you can forget about entering that very real celestial Kingdom-Government.

Litigation

(Chapter 5, verses 21-22)

[ACADEMICS: Psychology/LEGAL AFFAIRS: Litigation]

(21) “I know you heard of the command our ancestors received, ‘You must not murder.’[†] If anyone commits a murder,

* Vs. 18: Isaiah 40:8 [#22/8]; Isaiah 55:11 [#23/9].

† Vs. 21: **Genesis**¹⁽⁴⁾ 9:6 [#24/10]; **Exodus**¹⁽⁵⁾ 20:13 [#25/11]; **Deuteronomy**⁴⁽⁶⁾ 5:17 [#26/12].

he'll have to answer for his illegal action in the *earthly* court of justice.'

(22) "But I have more to say than that. Everyone who continues to harbor murderous anger toward his brother must answer for this morally illegal act in the *Celestial* court of justice.

"In fact, whoever even addresses his brother with an appallingly unmentionable word will be accountable to that same *Heavenly Supreme Court*. And whoever says, 'Just die, you damned **fool!**'⁸⁴ (or anything like this) he can forget it.

"The *Heavenly Supreme Court* holds the one who said that responsible and sentences him to eternal death as represented by the symbolic fiery **Gehenna**.⁸⁵

Settle Matters Before They Escalate

(Chapter 5, verses 23-26)

(23) "If you happen to be going to the altar with your gift[†] and you recall that your brother is upset with you, (24) stop. Leave your gift right there in front of the altar and go find your brother to make peace with him.

"After you have accomplished your mission, come back and then offer up your gift to God.

(25) "Don't take forever to do this! Settle issues with your culpable brother, who is now your **adversary at law**,⁸⁶ right away! It could be that an out-of-court settlement can be reached if you talk things out.

* Vs. 22: 2 Kings 23:10 [#27/13]; Jeremiah 7:31 [#28:14].

† Vs. 23: **Deuteronomy** ⁵⁽⁷⁾ 9:16-17 [#29/15].



Figure 17: Settlement conference

See Matthew 5:23-25.

[How to Win a Settlement Conference | Legal Beagle](#)



Figure 18: Judge with gavel

See “complaint” endnote (#86) in Matthew 5:25.

[Long Island judge who sent profane emails should be fired: commission \(nypost.com\)](#)



Figure 19: Gynecologist with patient

See “woman” endnote (#87) in Matthew 5:28a.
[General Gynecology Program \(massgeneral.org\)](http://massgeneral.org)



Figure 20: Cardiologist

See “heart” endnote (#88) in Matthew 5:28b.
[10 Signs It’s Time to See a Cardiologist | Northwestern Medicine](#)



Figure 21: Ophthalmology (exam)

See “eye” endnote (#90) in Matthew 5:29.
[Ophthalmology Services & Information | UCLA Health](#)



Figure 22: Warning: Adult Content

See “fornication” endnote (#94) in Matthew 5:32.
[Parental guide - Why Pornography is Bad for Kids? \(wondershare.com\)](#)

“On the other hand, you could be the culpable one, and the judgment could be against you. What happens, then? The judge finds you guilty, turns you over to the bailiff, and the bailiff escorts you to prison!

(26) “I’m telling you: You’ll rot in prison until you come up with every penny of the money!

Heart Adultery

(Chapter 5, verses 27-32)

[MEDICAL SCIENCE: Gynecology/Cardiology/ Ophthalmology
/Radical Amputation/ LIBERAL ARTS: Pornography]

(27) “I know you’ve heard the saying, ‘Don’t commit adultery,’* and that’s correct; you shouldn’t.

(28) “But I have more to say than that. If a man stares lustfully at a married **woman**,⁸⁷ imagining that she’d have consensual sex with him, and in his mind, sexual fantasies whirl about,[†] he’s already committed **heart**⁸⁸ adultery.

(29) “So that this doesn’t happen to you, if the better one of your symbolic eyes—the ones in your figurative heart—causes you to **stumble**⁸⁹ by desiring that which is not rightfully yours, rip it out.

“It’s better to wear a patch over your symbolic right **eye**⁹⁰ than it is to have your entire **body**⁹¹ flung into that metaphorical fiery garbage dump called **Gehenna**.⁹²

(30) “Also, if your symbolic right hand (the one you use most often) is being used as a sexual fantasy feeder, amputate it and toss it away from you.

“Again, you should have a nub where your symbolic hand used to be than to have your whole body hurled into the

* Vs. 27: **Exodus** ²⁽⁸⁾ 20:14 [#30/16]; **Deuteronomy** ⁶⁽⁹⁾ 5:18 [#31/17].

† Vs. 28: **Deuteronomy** ⁷⁽¹⁰⁾ 5:21 [#32/18]; 2 Samuel 11:2 [#33/19]; Job 31:1 [#34/20].

metaphorical rubbish dump where an inextinguishable fire burns. You know the place. It's called **Gehenna**.⁹³

(31) "In the past, oral law stated, 'Whoever divorces his wife for even seemingly insignificant things need only give her a divorce certificate.'"

(32) "However, I'm changing that. Anybody who divorces his wife for anything other than **fornication**⁹⁴ (sexual misconduct with a man, woman, child, or animal) is guilty of leaving her open for committing adultery.

"And if anyone marries this exposed woman, she's an adulteress and he's a adulterer.

Mean What You Say

(Chapter 5, verses 33-37)

[MEDICAL SCIENCE: Craniology/Cellular
Biology=Leukemia/Molecular Genetics]

(33) "I already know you heard our ancestors were told, 'Don't swear⁺⁹⁵ unless you can back it up. If you have sworn to *Y^ehowah*',⁹⁶ back it up with action.'[‡]

(34) "Let me clarify: Don't swear at all! If you swear by heaven, watch out! That's God's throne.

(35) "If you swear by earth, be careful! That's God's footstool.[§] Don't use Jerusalem to swear by either. After all, it is the city of the great king.

(36) "And please, don't swear by your **head**⁹⁷ because it's not really yours. After all, that belongs to God because he

* Vs. 31: **Deuteronomy** ⁸⁽¹¹⁾ 24:1 [#35/21].

[†] Vs. 33: **Leviticus** ¹⁽¹²⁾ 19:12 [#36/22]; **Numbers** ¹⁽¹³⁾ 30:2 [#37/23]. God's name *Y^ehowah*' (11th instance in this translation) occurs in both these Torah books.

[‡] Vs. 33: **Deuteronomy** ⁹⁽¹⁴⁾ 23:21 [#38/24]; Psalms 50:14 [#39/25]; Ecclesiastes 5:4 [#40/26].

[§] Vs. 35: Isaiah 66:1 [#41/27]; Lamentations 2:1 [#42/28].

created you. You don't even have the power to turn one hair **white or black**,⁹⁸ and you're going to swear by something that's not yours?

(37) "To eliminate all your pontification when you say 'Yes,' mean 'Yes.' When you say 'No,' mean 'No.' So, mean what you say and say what you mean. Everything else is a lie in some form, which, any way you view it, would identify you as having lied.

Turn the Other Cheek

(Chapter 5, verses 38-42)

[MEDICAL SCIENCE: Orthodontics/
LIBERAL ARTS: Self-Help/Civility]

(38) "We've all heard the saying, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a **tooth**.'^{*99}

(39) "But there's more to it than that. I'm telling you today that you shouldn't allow yourself to be drawn into a fistfight over words. If someone slaps you with a stinging insult, turn the other cheek[†] instead of retaliating.

(40) "And if someone had a legal reason to sue the pants off you, be willing to give him your shirt too. The point is, don't retaliate in kind. Redirect that vindictive energy toward good works.

(41) "And if a civil official, or his representative, forces you into undesirable temporary civil service, do more than what is asked.

* Vs 38: **Exodus** ³⁽¹⁵⁾ 21:4 [#43/29]; **Leviticus** 24:20 ²⁽¹⁶⁾ [#44/30]; **Deuteronomy** ¹⁰⁽¹⁷⁾ 19:21 [#45/31].

† Vs 39: Proverbs 12:16 [#46/32]; 29:24 [#47/33].

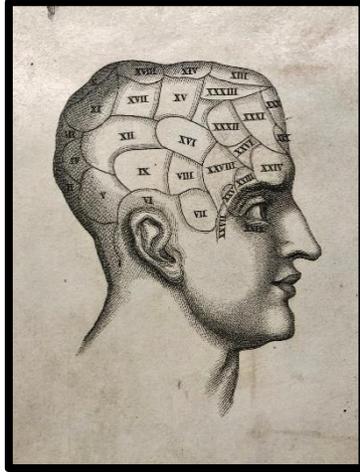


Figure 23: Craniology

See “head” endnote (#97) in Matthew 5:36.
[Two Engravings From Craniology Burlesqued in Serio-comic - Etsy](#)

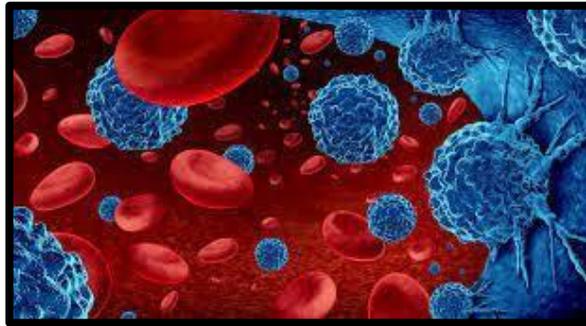


Figure 24: Leukemia cells

See “white or black” endnote (#98) in Matthew 5:36.
[iAMagainstALL.org | Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia - Ami Paige Foundation](#)

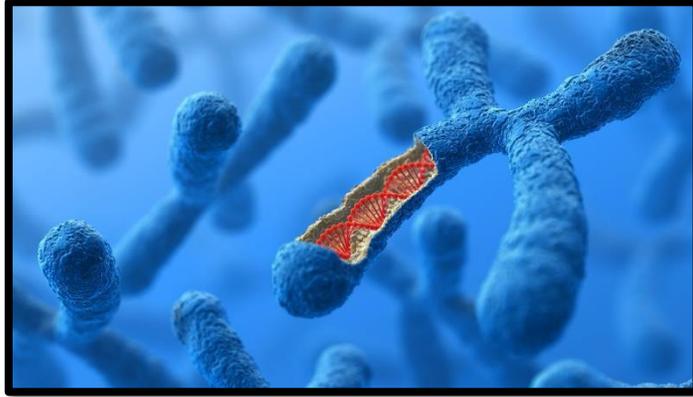


Figure 25: Genetics

See “white or black” endnote (#98, last paragraph) in Matthew 5:36.
[An Outline of Molecular Genetics \(vision.org\)](http://vision.org)



Figure 26: Orthodontist

See “tooth” endnote (#98) in Matthew 5:38.
[Orthodontist Placing Rubber Bands On Female Patient Braces Stock Photo - Download Image Now - iStock \(istockphoto.com\)](https://www.istockphoto.com)

(42) “Be generous to the person asking you for necessities, and don’t reject the poor one trying to get a loan from you. Give it to him, but without the traditional interest.*

Love Your Enemy

(Chapter 5, verses 43-48)

(43) “The old saying, ‘You must love your friend and hate your enemy’ seems to make sense on the surface. (44) But don’t be fooled. You should have principled love for your enemies† and even pray for the ones persecuting you.

(45) “When you do this, it proves that you’re sons of your Father in the heavens. He provides sunshine for everyone, good and bad. He does the same with the rain, causing refreshing showers to fall upon the morally upright and the dreadful degenerate alike.

(46) “So, if you only love the people that love you, what’s so special about that? Don’t the worst people in the world love those that love them? (47) Also, do you, as Jews, think it’s impressive to speak or say ‘hello’ to your brothers only? Don’t the non-Jews from all nations, who you dislike, do that too? (48) In sum: You must operate at an optimum level—just as your heavenly Father operates at an optimum level‡—when interacting with people you like and don’t like.

Chapter 6

MATTHEW 6:1-34

Give Gifts in Secret

(Chapter 6, verses 1-4)

[LIBERAL ARTS: Arts & Entertainment]

* Vs 42: **Leviticus** ³⁽¹⁸⁾ 25:36 [#48/34]; **Deuteronomy** ¹¹⁽¹⁹⁾ 23:19 [#49/35].

† Vs 44: Proverbs 25:21 [#50/36].

‡ Vs 48: **Leviticus** ⁴⁽²⁰⁾ 19:2 [#51/37]; **Deuteronomy** ¹²⁽²¹⁾ 18:13 [#52/38].



Figure 27: Ancient Greek theater

See “show off” endnote #100 in Matthew 6:1.

By dronepicr - Athen Akropolis, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=52018314>

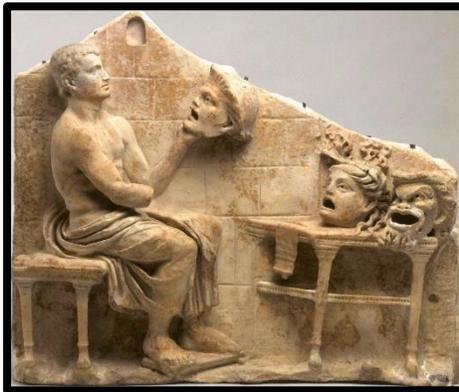


Figure 28: Ancient Greek actor's masks

See “Hypocrites” endnote #101 in Matthew 6:2.

Roman, [Republican](#) or [Early Imperial](#) Relief of a seated poet ([Menander](#)) with masks of New Comedy, 1st century BC. – early 1st century AD, [Princeton University Art Museum](#)

(1) “Be very careful not to keep performing religious acts in front of people just to **show off**.¹⁰⁰ If you do, you can forget about being rewarded by your heavenly Father.

(2) “When you help the poor or needy with nice gifts, don’t announce to the whole world what you’re doing. **Hypocrites**¹⁰¹ do that. They do it in both religious and secular settings, so people can say how “generous” they are. But I’m telling you the truth, that’s as much of a reward as they’ll get.

(3) “Instead, when you help the poor and needy, keep it to yourselves. (4) In this manner, your gifts of mercy will be done in **secret**,¹⁰² and your Father who sees even secret things, will reward you secretly.

The Wrong Way to Pray

(Chapter 6, verses 5-8)

[LIBERAL ARTS: Philanthropy]

(5) “When it comes to prayer, don’t be like the hypocrites. They **love**¹⁰³ it when everyone sees them praying, so they pray in all types of religious settings, and anywhere they deem appropriate in public. But I’m telling you the truth, that’ll be the extent of their reward.

(6) “When you pray, go to a **private place**¹⁰⁴ in the house, close the door behind you, and pray secretly to your Father; then, and only then, will your Father reward you.

(7) “Whatever you do, don’t just recite the same old things repeatedly.* It smacks of insincerity. You know, fakers do that all the time, imagining that God will hear them because of their verbosity.

* Vs 7: 1 Kings 18:26 [#53/39].

(8) “So, don’t imitate them, because, even without all those meaningless words, your Father knows everything you need before you even request it.

Prayer, Forgiveness, & Fasting

(Chapter 6, verses 9-18)

[FINANCE: Debt & Debt Relief]

(9) “Here’s how you should pray: ‘Our heavenly Father, let your name be sanctified.* (10) Let your celestial Kingdom-Government become a tangible reality. Let your will be done on earth[†] as it is in heaven.

(11) “Give us our daily ration of food,[‡] (12) and forgive us our debts, our sinful nature and actions, as we have forgiven these in others. (13) Don’t allow our sin to tempt and conquer us (sin from within) and rescue us from the temptation the wicked one introduces to us (sin from without).[§]

(14) “If you pardon and overlook the mistakes of others, your heavenly Father will forgive and forget yours. (15) On the other hand, if you don’t tolerate and overlook the mistakes of others, don’t expect your Father to pardon and overlook yours.

(16) “When you’re fasting,** don’t distort your face like the hypocrites. They disfigure their faces so that everyone knows they’re fasting. But I’m telling you the truth, that’s as much of a reward as they’ll receive.

* Vs 9: Ezekiel 36:23 [#54/40]; Ezekiel 38:23 [#55/41].

† Vs 10: Psalms 37:10 [#56/42].

‡ Vs 11: **Exodus** ⁴⁽²²⁾ 16:4, 5 [#57/43]; Psalms 37:25 [#58/44]; Proverbs 30:8 [#59/45].

§ Vs 13: Psalms 82:4 [#60/46]; Psalms 97:10 [#61/47].

** Vs 16: Zechariah 8:19 [#62/48].



Figure 29: Debt relief.

See Matthew 6:12.

[Debt Relief Sign And Manager With Documents Stock Photo - Download Image Now - Debt, Relief Carving, Financial Loan - iStock \(istockphoto.com\)](#)



Figure 30: Kleptomania.

See “Thieves” endnote #105 in Matthew 6:19.

[What Is Kleptomania? \(verywellmind.com\)](#)

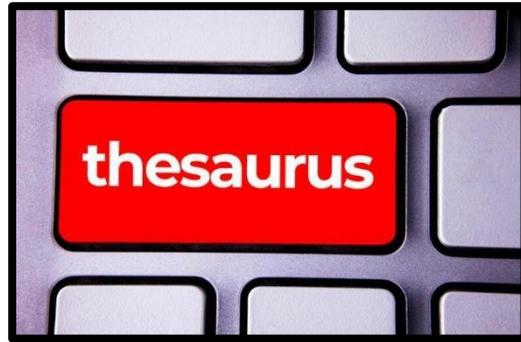


Figure 31: Thesaurus.

See “Thieves” endnote #105 in Matthew 6:19.
[Thesaurus | More Than a Word Processing Feature \(attorneyatwork.com\)](#)

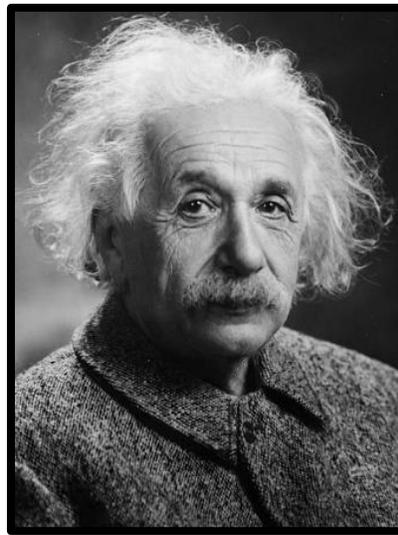


Figure 32: Einstein (Critical thinking)

See “Learn a lesson” endnote #107 in Matthew 6:28.
[Einstein’s Unique Approach to Thinking | Evernote | Evernote Blog](#)

(17) “Here’s what you do when you fast: freshen up and be well-groomed.*

(18) “Although people might not know you’re fasting, your Father looking on in secret does, and he will reward you.

Accumulate Heavenly Treasures

(Chapter 6, verses 19-21)

[PSYCHOLOGY: Kleptomania/

LITERATURE: Thesaurus]

(19) “Stop accruing material things around your house and building large bank accounts to the exclusion of serving God. **Thieves**¹⁰⁵ can burglarize your home and steal what you have accumulated, and the money in your bank account can be devalued.

(20) “Instead, accumulate spiritual **treasure**¹⁰⁶ in heaven where there is no planned obsolescence, and where thieves can’t illegally access your account and wipe out your savings.

(21) “Believe me, where your treasure is—whether material or spiritual—there your heart is also.

Simple Eye, Spiritual Riches

(Chapter 6, verses 22-24)

(22) “The lamp of the spiritual body is the spiritual eye. If then, you have a modest eye, your whole body will shine brightly; (23) but if you have a wicked spiritual vision, you have the darkness of a cancerous body.

“If upon closer examination, it’s discovered that you have a ‘black light’ as it were, your darkness is great!

(24) “No matter who you are, you cannot be loyal to two superiors who issue conflicting orders. Eventually, you’re

* Vs 17: Ecclesiastes 9:8 [#63/49].

going to prefer one over the other, siding with one and disregarding the other.

“It’s the same way with spiritual things as opposed to material things.

“Ultimately, you cannot work for spiritual riches and material wealth simultaneously, attempting to give each one first place.

Priorities

(Chapter 6, verses 25-34)

[PSYCHOLOGY: Coping Psychospiritually,
Critical Thinking, Logic]

(25) “With this in mind, here’s what I have to say to all of you: Stop worrying about what you’re going to eat, or what you’re going to drink, or what clothes you’re going to wear. Doesn’t your life mean more than food in your stomach and a garment on your back?

(26) “Take a good look at the birds.* They aren’t farmers, planting crops here and there, waiting for them to grow, and then gathering the fruits of their labor for storage. Even so, your heavenly Father feeds them.

“Don’t you know that, as human children of God, your value far exceeds that of birds? **(27)** Which one of you can extend his life[†] by being distressed over food and drink?

(28) “As far as clothes are concerned, why be troubled? **Learn a lesson**¹⁰⁷ from the flowers in a garden. They grow to be beautiful in form and color, and have a wonderful scent about them, yet, they didn’t have to work for their pleasing smell and appearance.

* Vs 26: Job 38:41 [#64/50]; Psalms 147:9 [#65/51].

[†] Vs 27: Psalms 39:5 [#66/52].

(29) “Now, compare them to King Solomon, who was very rich* and had more clothes than he could wear in a lifetime. Yet, he didn’t nearly have the assortment, collection, and selection of clothes that flowers have.

(30) “Now, if God, that Master Tailor in the heavens, can supply tailor-made clothes to vegetation that’s in the field one day and the oven the next, surely, he can take care of the clothing needs of you who possess just a little faith.

(31) “So, don’t ever stress out and worry yourself with questions like: ‘Oh, my God! What are we going to eat?’ or, ‘Oh Lord! What are we going to drink?’ or, ‘Jesus Christ! What are we going to wear?’

(32) “These very things are what ungodly people live and die for. Just be aware of this one fact: Your heavenly Father already knows you need all these things, so don’t worry!

(33) “Continue prioritizing all aspects of God’s celestial Kingdom Government and its associated righteousness and all other itemized necessities of life will be added to you.

(34) “It bears repeating: Don’t ever be overly concerned about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have its own set of troubles. Since every day has its share of difficulties, why try to capture tomorrow’s when you already have today’s to contend with? Leave the next day’s challenges where they are.

* Vs 29: 1 Kings 10:5 [#67/53].



Figure 33: Ancient carpenter's tool.

Read the words of carpenter Jesus in Matthew 7:1-5.
[Old-Time Woodworking Tools That Are Useful Today - Outdoor Revival](#)



Figure 34: Pig nose ring.

See “pearls” endnote #108 in Matthew 7:6.
[What does a gold ring in a pig's snout mean? - Quora](#)

Chapter 7

MATTHEW 7:1-29

Don't Be a Hypocritical Judge

(Chapter 7, verses 1-6)

[ACADEMICS: Forestry/Wood Shop]

(1) "Stop arbitrarily rating the value of a person so that your own value won't be arbitrarily rated.

(2) "The criterion you use to size others up will be used to size you up. Yes, the way you measure a person's worth as an individual is the same way God will measure yours.

(3) "So why, then, do you point out the sawdust in your brother's eye, but overlook the log in your own?

(4) "Or how can you bring yourself to approach your brother and say, 'Let me help you with that sawdust in your eye,' when that log is distorting and impairing your own vision?

(5) "You're nothing but a hypocrite!

The first thing you need to do is pry out that large piece of lumber from your own eye and then clearly see how to extricate that speck of sawdust from your brother's eye.

(6) "Do not give holy things to people who are on the same spiritual level as dogs.*

"Or, don't throw **pearls**¹⁰⁸ of spiritual wisdom to pigs, or people who have no appreciation for such. In fact, they'll hate you for trying to help and will react violently!

Persist in Supplicating God

(Chapter 7, verses 7-12)

[FAMILY THERAPY: Paternal Affection]

* Vs 6: Proverbs 9:7 [#68/54]; Proverbs 15:12 [#69/55].

(7) “Keep asking, and it will be given. Keep searching, and you’ll find. Keep knocking, and the door will open.

(8) “For everyone who persists in asking receives. Everyone who continues searching finds. And the door will open for everyone who doesn’t tire of knocking.

(9) “This overall concept shouldn’t be difficult to fathom. When a hungry son asks his loving father for a meal, the father won’t give him a plateful of stones that look like buns of bread, will he?

(10) “Or maybe the boy will ask for a fish dinner. His father won’t serve him up a poisonous snake, will he?

(11) “It only follows, then, that if you sinful humans know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your perfect heavenly Father give good things to those asking him?

(12) “Do the same good things to people that you’d like them to do to you. This, in fact, is the summation of the Law and the Prophets.

Right Entrance, Wrong Ministers

(Chapter 7, verses 13-20)

[ACADEMICS: Local Government, City Planning/ SCIENTIFIC METHOD: Critical Thinking/PSYCHIATRY: Lycanthropy/ MEDICINE: General Practitioner/ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE: Botany]

(13) “Squeeze through the tight entrance to eternal life, because the path that leads to devastation and annihilation is vast, comfortable, and has lots of wiggle room, that’s why so many people go through it.

(14) “The narrow, restricted entrance, on the other hand, takes you to the path of life, but only a **few**¹⁰⁹ find it and have the discipline to agonize through it.



Figure 35: Lycanthropy.

See “wolves” endnote #111 in Matthew 7:15.

[Stream Lycanthropy by Cameron Shane | Listen online for free on SoundCloud](#)



Figure 36: Critical thinking (higher knowledge).

See “see through their disguise” endnote #112 in Matthew 7:16.

[Critical thinking enhances performance | The Mail & Guardian \(mg.co.za\)](#)

(15) “Watch out for and reject **deceptive ministers**¹¹⁰ who say they’re from God but really aren’t. They’re vicious salivating **wolves**^{*111} dressed to look like harmless, innocent sheep.

(16) “You can **see through their disguise**,¹¹² though, by examining their deeds and course of action.† People never pick grapes from thorns or **figs**¹¹³ from thistles,‡ do they?

(17) “It’s simple: a good fruit tree produces edible fruit; a rotten tree produces rotten fruit. (18) Conversely, a good tree won’t produce bad fruit, and a rotten tree won’t bear good fruit.

(19) “As you know, you must cut down the rotten tree and burn it. (20) My point is, you can determine a false prophet by whether he lives his life in harmony with the Scriptures.

Do God’s Will, Build a Solid Foundation

(Chapter 7, verses 21-29)

[ACADEMICS: Land Surveying, Architecture]

(21) “Not everyone saying to me ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the celestial Kingdom-Government. Instead, it’s the person practicing my heavenly Father’s will that’ll make it.

(22) “Oh yes, many will enquire, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we use your name in prophesying, in exorcising demons, and in performing miracles?§ Didn’t you see and hear us?’

(23) “And then I’ll give them the shocking disclosure: ‘Even though you used my name, I’ve never acknowledged

* Vs 15: Ezekiel 22:27 [#70/56].

† Vs 16: Proverbs 20:11 [#71/57].

‡ Vs 16: **Genesis**²⁽²³⁾ 1:11 [#72/58].

§ Vs 22: Jeremiah 14:14 [#73/59]; Jeremiah 27:15 [#74/60].

your “righteousness,” which was sanctimonious works! Get away from me, you worthless workers of wickedness!’

(24) “So that you won’t be shocked, listen to my sayings, and act on what you’ve heard. If you do, you’ll be like that prudent man who constructed his house on solid rock.

(25) “When a violent hurricane lashed against that building, it didn’t collapse because of its solid rock foundation.

(26) “By way of contrast, everyone who hears my sayings and doesn’t respond with the right actions is like the fool who built his house on sand.

(27) “When that same hurricane hit, the collapse of his house was so great that you couldn’t tell a house used to be there!”

(28) When Jesus finished lecturing, the crowds were astounded. They were overwhelmed by his style and manner of teaching.

(29) Besides, as God’s representative, he authoritatively used the Hebrew Scriptures in a way that they had never seen before. When the **scribes**¹¹⁴ taught, they relied on unconvincing oral traditions as their authority.

Their presentation was no match for the devastating logic Jesus used.

Chapter 8

MATTHEW 8:1-34

Jesus Heals a Leprous Man

(Chapter 8, verses 1-4)

[ACADEMICS: Freudian Psychotherapy, Catharsis]

(1) When Jesus descended the mountain, many people followed him.

* Vs 23: Psalms 6:8 [#75].

(2) One of them was a man with leprosy. He came up and began to **bow in respect**,¹¹⁵ saying: “Lord, if you just will it, you can **cleanse**¹¹⁶ me, healing my infirmity in the process.”

(3) Reaching for the man, Jesus touched him and said: “I will it. Be cleansed of your infirmity.” And immediately, the leprosy was eradicated.*

(4) Then Jesus said to him: “Don’t tell anyone what I did. Go show yourself to the priest and offer a gift as required by the Law of Moses. This will serve as a witness to them.”

Jesus Heals Officer’s Servant

(Chapter 8, verses 5-13)

[ACADEMICS: Psychotherapy, Bruxism]

(5) When he came to Capernaum, an army officer approached him begging, (6) saying: “Sir, my manservant is a bedridden paralytic who is in constant anguish.”

(7) He said to him: “Don’t worry. When I make my way to your house, I’ll cure him.”

(8) The army officer responded: “Sir, I’m a Gentile sinner whose house is not worthy of your presence. If you speak the word, my servant will be cured.

(9) “I know this because I, like you, have a measure of authority. I can shout out orders to anyone of my soldiers: ‘Go and do that!’ or to another, ‘Come and do this!’ or to my slave, ‘Pick that up!’ and everything I order is done.

“If that’s true of a ordinary man like me, surely it must be even more so for a great man like you.”

(10) There weren’t too many things that amazed Jesus, but what this man said pleasantly surprised him.

* Vs 3: **Exodus** ⁵⁽²⁴⁾ 4:7 [#76].



Figure 37: Catharsis: Emotional cleansing.

See “cleanse” endnote #116 in Matthew 8:2.
[Catharsis: Definition and Examples from Literature - TCK Publishing](#)



Figure 38: Bruxism.

See “crying and anguish, manifested by the grinding of teeth (or bruxism)” endnote #117 in Matthew 8:12b.
[Understanding how bruxism affects dental restorations \(dental-tribune.com\)](#)

It stunned him so much that he didn't even address the army officer right away!

Being duly impressed, Jesus said to those following him: "I'm telling you like it really is, I haven't found anyone in all of Israel whose faith is so great—present company included.

(11) "But I'll tell you this, a lot of Gentiles—just like this man—from the east and the west* will join Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the table in the celestial Kingdom-Government, (12) whereas the sons of the kingdom—the Jews—will be tossed out into the darkness of night.

"There is where their **crying and anguish, manifested by the grinding of teeth (or bruxism)**,¹¹⁷ take place."

(13) Then, turning his attention back to the army officer, Jesus said:

"You can go now. Your faith has caused your request to be granted." The man's servant was healed that same hour.

Jesus Cures Peter's Mother-In-Law

(Chapter 8, verses 14-17)

[MEDICAL SCIENCE: Fever]

(14) When Jesus visited Peter at his home, he noticed Peter's mother-in-law sick in bed, **on fire with a fever**.¹¹⁸

(15) So he removed the fever by touching her hand. She got right up and began serving him a meal, as was the custom.¹¹⁹

(16) By the time evening fell, people had started bringing him many demon-possessed persons, and he dismissed the demons with a single word. Also, he cured the sick (17) so THAT HE MIGHT FULFILL WHAT ISAIAH THE PROPHET SAID WHEN HE WROTE:¹²⁰

* Vs 11: Isaiah 49:12 [#77].



Figure 39: High fever.

See “on fire with a fever” endnote #118 in Matthew 8:14.
[The 13 Best Thermometers for Kids and Adults of 2023 | Tested by Verywell Family](#)



Figure 40: Windstorm.

See “windstorm” endnote #121 in Matthew 8:24.
[NOAA Officials Stress Hurricane Danger and Storm Safety - Eos](#)

“He himself absorbed our ailments and shouldered our diseases.”*

Spiritual and Physical Dead

(Chapter 8, verses 18-22)

(18) When Jesus realized the size of the crowd gathering, he gave the order to leave for the other side of the sea. (19) Upon his arrival, he was approached by a certain scribe who said to him:

“Teacher, lead the way, and I’ll follow you anywhere.”

(20) But Jesus replied: “Foxes have enduring residences in dens and birds have stable roosts where they live, but the Son of Humanity doesn’t have a consistent address. As an itinerant preacher, he’s always on the move.”

(21) Then another of the disciples said to him: “Lord before I follow you, let me go and bury my father when he dies.”

(22) Jesus said: “No. Follow me right now, from this very moment on. You don’t know when your father’s going to die! Just let those of your unbelieving relatives who’re spiritually dead bury the ones who’ll at some point become physically dead.”

Jesus Christ: The Real “Weatherman”

(Chapter 8, verses 23-27)

[MARINE SCIENCE: Oceanography]

(23) And when Jesus boarded a boat, his disciples were right behind him.

(24) While they were in the boat, out of nowhere, a **wind-storm**¹²¹ struck and threatened to sink the vessel. Jesus, however, was fast asleep.[†]

* Vs 17: Isaiah 53:4 [#78].

† Vs 24: Psalms 4:8 [#79].

(25) Frightened, they woke him up, crying aloud in a panic: “Help us, Lord, we’re going to die!”

(26) But he said to them: “Why are you all so alarmed, you with little faith?” He got up and stopped the windstorm, making the weather calm and tranquil.*

(27) The men were astonished and said: “What kind of man can stop a windstorm?”

Demons Possess Pigs

(Chapter 8, verses 28-34)

(28) When he got to the other side, he came into the region of the Gadarenes. That’s where he encountered two demon-possessed men.

They lived in the graveyard and were as ferocious as wild animals. No one would dare go by.

(29) They saw Jesus and screamed:

“What are you doing here, **Son of God?**^{†122} Did you come to torment us before the scheduled time?”

(30) Jesus didn’t say a word. But off in the distance there was an illegally-kept herd of pastured pigs. (31) So the demons pleaded with him, saying:

“If you evict us, send us to reside in the swine.”‡

(32) Jesus angrily said one word:

“Leave!”

They left the two men and went directly into the pigs.

The herd of pigs went crazy! They ran off a cliff, landed in the sea, and died. It was an awful, terrifying sight.

* Vs 26: Psalms 65:7 [#80]; Psalms 89:9 [#81]; Psalms 107:29 [#82]

† Vs 29: 1 Kings 17:18 [#83].

‡ Vs 31: **Deuteronomy**¹³⁽²⁵⁾ 14:8 [#84]; Isaiah 65:4 [#85].

(33) The pig herders ran into the city and told everybody everything that had happened regarding the two demon-possessed men.

(34) As a result, the entire town came out to meet Jesus! When they saw and talked with him, they strongly urged him to leave the area.

Chapter 9

MATTHEW 9:1-38

Jesus Criticized for Healing Paralytic

(Chapter 9, verses 1-8)

[ACADEMICS: Psychology (phobias)]

(1) Jesus left at the request of the people and took a boat to his hometown. (2) The crowd of locals didn't waste any time approaching him. They brought him a paralyzed man who was lying on a portable bed. Their faith so moved Jesus that he told the paralytic:

"Be brave, son. Your sins are pardoned."

(3) Instead of being duly impressed, Jesus' words and actions offended the scribes! They concluded:

"This man **blasphemes.**"¹²³

(4) Jesus, knowing their thinking, accosted them and said: "Why are you all conjuring up wicked things in your hearts?"

(5) "Let me show you what I mean: Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are pardoned,' or 'Go ahead, get up and walk'? Either way, the man is going to be healed!"

(6) "However, for you to know that the Son of Humanity has earthly authorization to forgive sins, I'll put it another way."

Turning to the paralytic, Jesus said:

"Get up, take your portable bed, and walk home."

(7) And the man got up and went home.

(8) Fear¹²⁴ jolted the crowd when they saw this. So, they gave God the glory who gave certain men—representatives of his—such power.

Matthew Chosen, Jesus Criticized Again

(Chapter 9, verses 9-13)

(9) After this incident with the scribes, while he was en-route to another location, Jesus saw a tax collector named Matthew sitting in his office. Jesus told him,

“Follow me into God’s service as a full-time worker.”

Matthew rose and followed him.

(10) Later, when Matthew had Jesus and a few of the earlier disciples over for a meal, many other tax collectors and sinners felt comfortable enough to come and join them!

(11) Of course, this scene bothered the Pharisees. So, they asked his disciples:

“Why does your teacher eat with despised tax collectors and known sinners?”

(12) Jesus overheard them and said: “Healthy people don’t need a physician, but sick ones do. **(13)** Comprehend the meaning of the Hebrew Scripture verse that says, ‘I want mercy instead of sacrifice.’* As a spiritual physician, I came to call, not the righteous, but the spiritually sick.”

John’s Disciples Question Jesus

(Chapter 9, verses 14-17)

[ACADEMICS: Freudian Psychotherapy, Nymphomania, Oenophilia

ACADEMICS: Seamstress, Tailor, Haberdashery/CHEMISTRY]

(14) After handling questions from the educated scribes and responding to Pharisaical criticism, the disciples of John the Baptist approached, accosted Jesus, and asked:

* Vs 13: Proverbs 21:3 [#86]; Hosea 6:6 [#87].

“We’re with the Pharisees on fasting. So, why don’t your disciples get with the program?”

(15) Jesus answered:

“They would if there was a need to. You see, the bridegroom’s friends have no reason to grieve or fast if the **bridegroom**¹²⁵ is alive and well, do they?”

“Granted, days are coming when the bridegroom will be killed, and then they’ll fast over the grievous occasion.

(16) “In the meantime, just as no one grieves at a wedding, nobody ever patches up a torn piece of clothing—which has been washed many times—with a piece of material that has not yet been washed.

“As you know, when that piece of unwashed material is washed for the first time, it shrinks.

“So, if you don’t wash it before placing it on the torn piece of clothing that was washed and shrank before, it’ll shrink and tear the older piece.

“That piece of clothing will be completely ruined and worse than before, which would naturally upset the owner.

(17) “Neither do people pour new, unfermented wine into old wineskin flasks or leather bottles.

“As you know, when new wine is poured into leather bottles, the leather expands as the wine ferments, creating gases as it does.

“But if someone goes ahead and pours new wine into old leather bottles that have already expanded to their limit, then the bottles will burst, spilling wine everywhere, turning a happy occasion into a sad one.



Figure 41: Nymphomania.

See “bridegroom” endnote #125 in Matthew 9:15.

[Causes and symptoms of nymphomania - Time News](#)



Figure 42: Oenophiles.

See “new₁” endnote #126 in Matthew 9:17.

[Oenophile - Definition Meaning and Synonym - Wine Oenophilia \(wineclubs.net\)](#)

“Obviously, thinking people put new wine into new wineskins so that both the **new**₁¹²⁶ wine and the **new**₂¹²⁷ wine-skin bottles are spared.”*

Jesus Resurrects Little Girl

(Chapter 9, verses 18-26)

[MEDICAL SCIENCE: Cryonics, Bioengineering, Molecular Nanotechnology, Nanomedicine/SOCIOLOGY: Fame]

(18) Surprisingly, while he was sitting down speaking, a certain ruler was so respectful of Jesus that he **bowed**¹²⁸ as he approached, saying:

“When I left home, my daughter was alive but gravely sick. She could very well be dead by now. If so, I know all you have to do is touch her, and she’ll come to life.”

(19) Duly impressed, Jesus got up and allowed the man to lead him to his home, and his disciples followed.

(20) Something happened, though, along the way. A woman who had suffered vaginal hemorrhaging for 12 years snuck up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his coat.

(21) She knew it would heal her because she kept saying to herself: “If I could just reach his coattail, I’ll be healed.”†

(22) Jesus turned around, looked at her, and said:

“Stay brave, daughter. Your faith healed you.” She was healthy from then on!

(23) When he arrived at the ruler’s house and saw the expensive flute players playing their sad song, along with the confused, noisy, aristocratic crowd, **(24)** Jesus, a charlatan peasant in their eyes, said:

* Vs 17: Job 32:19 [#88].

† Vs 21: **Leviticus** ⁵⁽²⁶⁾ 15:25 [#89].

“Everyone can leave and go home now. The reason you came no longer exists, because the little girl is not dead. She’s fast asleep.”

When they saw that he was serious, they laughed out loud, mocking the low-class laborer as they did.

(25) As soon as the ruler took control of the situation and sent the crowds out, Jesus held the little girl’s hand. **She got right up.**¹²⁹

(26) Needless to say, no one in the pretentious crowd was laughing anymore! This news **spread like wildfire**¹³⁰ throughout the entire region.

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

(Chapter 9, verses 27-31)

(27) As Jesus was leaving, two blind men followed him, begging loudly:

“Be merciful toward us, Son of David. Heal us!”

(28) Jesus heard them but pretended he didn’t as he entered the house, not saying a word in response.

This snub didn’t stop the blind men.

They somehow gained entrance and approached Jesus. Not being able to ignore this, Jesus asked:

“Do both of you *really* believe I can heal you?”

They answered:

“Yes, of course, Lord. Why do you think we followed you in here?”

(29) While touching their eyes, he said:

“Based on your undeniable faith, let it happen.”

(30) Suddenly, they could see! Jesus strictly told them:



Figure 43: Rigor Mortis.

See “She got right up” endnote #129 in Matthew 9:25.
[How to Distinguish Rigor Mortis From a Cadaveric Spasm | Sciencing](#)

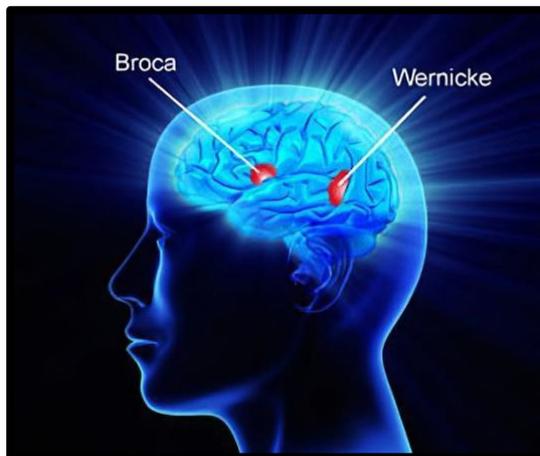


Figure 44: Broca's and Wernicke's Areas of the Brain.

See endnote #131 Commentary in Matthew 9:33.
[Aphasia – Types – Motor Aphasia \(medindia.net\)](#)

“Now, don’t go running around telling everybody what happened, okay?”*

(31) Well, they didn’t tell anyone between where Jesus was and the door. But when they got outside, they told everyone.

Jesus Criticized Yet Again, Heals While Touring

(Chapter 9, verses 32-38)

[ACADEMICS: Freudian Psychotherapy,
Homosexuality, Lesbianism]

(32) Jesus and his disciples were barely out of the house when suddenly people brought him a speechless, demonized man.

(33) After Jesus expelled the demon, the man was able to speak again.¹³¹ This overwhelmed the crowds who said:

“We’ve never seen or heard of anything like this at any time in all of Israel.”

(34) But the Pharisees grumbled:

“He has a deal with the Devil, the ruler of the demons. That’s how he’s able to expel them. It’s all a diabolical con.”

(35) Jesus embarked on a tour of all the cities and villages, teaching the Jews in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the celestial Kingdom-Government.

At the same time, he cured the people of every kind of disease and **infirmity**¹³² imaginable.

(36) As Jesus viewed the crowds, he really felt sorry for them. They were like helpless, unprotected sheep that had been abused.†

(37) So he said to his disciples: “There’s a lot of spiritual farm work to be done, but with few to do it.

* Vs 30: Isaiah 42:2 [#90].

† Vs 36: **Numbers**²⁽²⁷⁾ 27:17 [#91]; 1 Kings 22:17 [#92]; Ezekiel 34:5 [#93].

(38) “Therefore, plead with the Owner to hire more to send into his spiritual harvest.”

Chapter 10

MATTHEW 10:1-42

Jesus Dispatches Twelve With Instructions

(Chapter 10, verses 1-15)

[ACADEMICS: Engineering]

(1) So, he gathered his twelve disciples and gave them new powers. They now had the authority to exorcise demons and cure people of every sort of dreadful disease and debilitating infirmity.

(2) Here are the names of the twelve apostles: **First**,¹³³ there’s Simon (or Peter) and his brother Andrew. Then there’s another set of brothers, James and John, Zebedee’s sons.

(3) Though not fleshly brothers, Philip and Bartholomew are the next two. Then there’s Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector. Another apostle named James, whose father was Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus.

(4) The last two are another apostle named Simon (who was also called the Zealous One) and Judas Iscariot, who later betrayed* Jesus.

(5) These twelve Jesus sent forth with the following instructions:

“Don’t go into nearby non-Jewish areas to preach the good news; and don’t go into Samaritan cities.^{†134} (6) Go only to the Jewish nation of lost sheep.[‡]

(7) “As you go, preach to the Jews, saying, ‘The celestial Kingdom-Government has approached.’

* Vs. 4: Psalms 41:9 [#94].

† Vs. 5: 2 Kings 17:24 [#95],

‡ Vs. 6: Isaiah 53:6 [#96]; Jeremiah 50:6 [#97]; Ezekiel 34:6 [#98].

(8) “Cure the Jewish sick, resurrect the Jewish dead, make Jewish lepers clean, and oust demons from Jewish victims. You weren’t charged money for the good news, so don’t charge anyone else.

(9) “Don’t try to work and save a lot of money for your preaching trip. (10) Don’t prepare a lunch or other meal, nor should you pack any extra clothes for the tour; because the preacher of the good news works for and deserves his food.*

(11) “Whenever you enter a Jewish city or village, carefully search for deserving ones. When you find them, stay with them until you assist them on the way to the truth. Then you can leave.

(12) “When entering a Jewish home, greet the household. (13) If the family deserves it, let the peaceful atmosphere you desire settle upon it.

“However, if it doesn’t deserve it, leave with peacefulness about yourself. The household will be as it was before you approached it.

(14) “Wherever anyone isn’t receptive to the message and doesn’t show this by inviting you in or listening to you, upon leaving, don’t soil the road with the dirt from that city.

(15) “I’m telling you the truth, as bad as the non-Jewish people of Sodom^{†135} and Gomorrah were, even they will be a cut above the Jewish inhabitants of that city when Judgment Day comes.

* Vs. 10: **Numbers** ³⁽²⁸⁾ 18:31 [#99].

† Vs. 15: **Genesis** ³⁽²⁹⁾ 19:4 [#100].

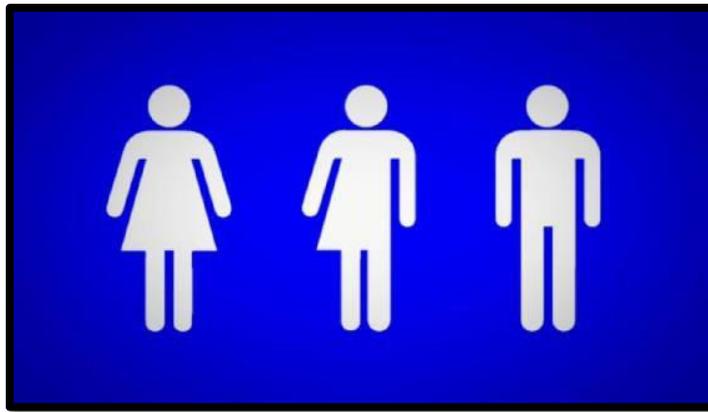


Figure 45: Transgender restroom sign?

See “infirmity” endnote #132 in Matthew 9:35.

[All Gender Restroom Sign - ADA compliant plaque with braille | ADA Central](#)



Figure 46: Prototype.

See “First” endnote #133 in Matthew 10:2.

[The Importance of Prototyping | What is a Prototype? \(jmetalworks.co.uk\)](#)

Exercise Caution, Expect Trials

(Chapter 10, verses 16-23)

[ACADEMICS: Ophiology]

(16) “Beware! It’s a jungle out there! And where I’m sending you, you’ll be like sheep among wolves.* So, prove **shrewd as snakes**,^{†136} yet docile as doves.

(17) “Watch certain Jewish men closely because they’ll drag you to court and bad mouth you in their places of worship. (18) Why, they’ll haul you before governors and kings just for being my followers, but it’ll be a witness to them and the rest of the world.

(19) “However, when they serve you a subpoena or summon you to court some other way, don’t become troubled and start worrying about what you’ll say, or how you’ll say it.

“What you need to know will be given to you when you need to know it.‡

(20) “For those just aren’t your words coming out of your mouth. It’s the spirit of your Father talking through you.

(21) “You’ll have to endure more than court battles, though. Your own family will turn against you.

“A brother will betray brother, which will end in death. And a father will turn in his own child. Children will rebel against parents and will have them killed.§

(22) “This hatred for you won’t be confined to the family. All sorts of people will make you their object of hate because of being my followers. But he that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved.

* Vs. 16: Zephaniah 3:3 [#101].

† Vs. 16: **Genesis** ⁴⁽³⁰⁾ 3:1a [#102],

‡ Vs. 19: Jeremiah 1:7 [#103].

§ Vs. 21: Micah 7:6 [#104] (See also vs. 35.)

(23) “When they persecute you in one Jewish city, escape to another.

“As sure as I’m talking to you right now, you won’t complete the sprawling circuit of Israelite cities until the Son of Humanity arrives in heaven.

Don’t Fear Temporary Death

(Chapter 10, verses 24-31)

[SCIENCE: Psychosomatic Medicine/

COMPUTER SCIENCE: Digital Computing, Binary Calculations]

(24) “A student isn’t greater than his teacher, nor is a slave above his master.

(25) But a student can reach the same level as his teacher, and a slave can reach his master’s level.

If people call me Satan—although I am your Teacher and Master—you know they won’t have any kind words for you, my students, when you become teacher and master!

(26) But don’t fear them or their plots and secret strategies. Because whatever they’ve planned or covered up will be **revealed**.¹³⁷ Their **schemes**¹³⁸ will be exposed.

(27) What I tell you under cover of darkness say in the light. What things I whisper to you speak in public.

(28) People will have a deadly hatred for you. Don’t be afraid* of those who can only **temporarily put you to death**.¹³⁹ Fear him who can **destroy you permanently**.¹⁴⁰

(29) Sparrows are inexpensive at the Jewish marketplace, right? Despite this, they’re so important to your heavenly Father that he knows when even one of them dies.†

* Vs. 28: Proverbs 29:35 [#105]; Isaiah 51:12 [#106]; Ezekiel 3:9 [#107].

† Vs. 29: **Deuteronomy** ¹⁴⁽³¹⁾ 22:6 [#108].



Figure 47: Ophiology.

See “shrewd as snakes” endnote #136 in Matthew 10:16.

[The 8 Most Colorful Snakes Found in the United States \(msn.com\)](http://msn.com)

[What is Ophiology? : r/ophiology \(reddit.com\)](http://reddit.com)



Figure 48: Psychosomatic.

See “destroy you permanently” endnote #140 in Matthew 10:28.

[Psychosomatic Disorder: Causes, Signs, Symptoms, Types and Treatment - Boldsky.com](http://boldsky.com)



Figure 49: Binary code.

See “how many” endnote #141 in Matthew 10:30.

[Binary Code And The Power Of The 'Machine' – Dreamcatcher Reality](#)



Figure 50: Computer science.

See “seemingly insignificant” endnote #143 in Matthew 10:42.

[Bachelor of Science in Computer Science | Degree in Computer Science | Undergraduate Degree Program | Ottawa University](#)

(30) God knows you so well he knows **how many**¹⁴¹ hairs you have on your head!*

(31) So don't worry. You're worth much more than many sparrows.

Family Enemies

(Chapter 10, verses 32-39)

(32) "Everyone, therefore, who has overcome his fear and publicly discloses his affiliation with me, I'll also declare affiliation with him before my heavenly Father.

(33) "But whoever publicly denies knowing me, I'll disinherit him in a private audience with my Father.

(34) "Don't think I came to bring peace to a world alienated from God. No, I come as a warrior to break up families.

(35) "I came to cause chaos in the family, a man opposing his father, a daughter opposing her mother, a young newly-wed woman opposing her mother-in-law.¹⁴²

(36) "A man's enemies will be his own family members.

(37) "But don't cave into family pressures! I have no use for a man who loves his father or mother more than me. And he that loves son or daughter more than me is not fit for discipleship.†

(38) "Whoever doesn't accept the tortuous emotional pain, stress, and suffering that comes with following me is not worthy of discipleship.

(39) "The person that loves life and lives it as he pleases will eventually lose it. But he that loses his life because of me will ultimately live forever.

* Vs. 30: 1 Samuel 14:45 [#109]; 2 Samuel 14:11 [#110].

† Vs. 37: **Deuteronomy** ¹⁵⁽³²⁾ 33:9 [#111].

Jesus Offers Rewards

(Chapter 10, verses 40-42)

[ACADEMICS: Math & Computer Science]

(40) “He that welcomes you into his life receives me also. And if he receives me, he accepts him that sent me.

(41) “He that welcomes a Hebrew prophet because he is a prophet will get a prophet’s reward.* He that welcomes a Jewish righteous man because he is such a man will get an honest man’s reward.†

(42) “And whoever provides one of my **seemingly insignificant**¹⁴³ Jewish disciples with a cup of cold water on the merit of his being my disciple will be rewarded.

Chapter 11

MATTHEW 11:1-30

John the Baptist Enquires About Jesus Christ

(Chapter 11, verses 1-6)

(1) As soon as Jesus finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went across from there to teach and preach in their cities.

(2) Meanwhile, John the Baptist, who was incarcerated, heard about all Christ was doing. He, therefore, sent his own followers (3) and asked Jesus:

“Are you the Expectant One‡ we’ve been waiting for? Or, is it someone else?”

(4) Jesus answered them by saying:

“Go back to John and tell him what you’re hearing with your own ears and seeing with your own eyes:

* Vs. 41: 1 Kings 17:10 [#112]; 2 Kings 4:8 [#113].

† Vs. 41: 2 Kings 4:13 [#114].

‡ Vs 3: **Genesis** ⁵⁽³³⁾ 49:10 [#115]; Daniel 9:24 [#116]; Malachi 3:1 [#117].

(5) “The blind and visually impaired can see again;* the disabled are walking like nothing was ever wrong with them; the lepers are completely healed; those deaf or hard of hearing can hear clearly now; and the dead are being brought back to life.

“Even the poor and otherwise economically depressed are having good news preached to them.

(6) “The person that doesn’t stumble† over the miracles I’ve perform will experience an unmatched peacefulness.”

Jesus Extols John the Baptist

(Chapter 11, verses 7-19)

[ACADEMICS: Philosophy/Sophomore, University Matriculation]

(7) As John the Baptist’s disciples were leaving, Jesus asked the crowd these questions about him:

“Why did you all go into the wilderness? Was it to see tumbleweeds blown about?

(8) “When you got there, what did you really see? Did you see a man dressed in regal clothing? You didn’t see that because those decked out like that are in stately palaces, not roaming about in the wilderness.

(9) “So, what was the real reason you trekked out to the wilderness? Was it to see a prophet? Well, I’m here to say you got more than you bargained for.

(10) “What is written in the Hebrew Scriptures is about John the Baptist: ‘Note this! I’m sending my messenger ahead of you. He’ll make all the necessary preparations!’‡

(11) “I’m being entirely truthful—not exaggerating—when I say that of all the children women have given birth to,

* Vs. 5: Isaiah 35:5 [#118]; Isaiah 61:1 [#119].

† Vs. 6: Isaiah 8:14 [#120]. See endnote for “stumble” in Matthew 5:29.

‡ Vs. 10: Isaiah 40:3 [#121]; Malachi 3:1 [#122].

none has grown up to be greater than John the Baptist. But, by comparison, even one of the lesser ones in the celestial Kingdom-Government is more significant than he is.

(12) “Speaking of the celestial Kingdom-Government, from John’s time till now, it’s what men have been reaching for, and, since it’s in arm’s length—as it were—they have actually grasped it.

(13) “The entire Hebrew Scriptures, all the Prophets, as well as the Mosaic Law, outlined ongoing prophecies that culminate with John. **(14)** It’s up to you to believe it or not, but he is ‘Elijah who is bound to come.’* ”

(15) “Let those who really understand what I’m saying act on my words.

(16) “This Jewish generation is unique.

“Let me think now.

“With whom shall I compare it?

“It’s like young children playing in the park who whine to their hard-to-please playmates, **(17)** complaining, ‘We played good music to cheer you up, but that didn’t work. We sat and cried for you to share your sadness, but you would have nothing to do with us.’

(18) “Similarly, John came to you fasting and abstaining from alcohol, yet people say, ‘He’s demon possessed.’

(19) “Doing the exact opposite, the Son of Humanity came eating freely, not fasting at all, and moderately drinking alcoholic beverages, yet, hard-to-please people still say, ‘Look at him! A piggish alcoholic who befriends tax collectors, prostitutes, and sinners in general.’

* Vs. 14: Malachi 4:5 [#123].

“Despite how it might seem to others, the **wisdom**¹⁴⁴ of the two approaches John and I displayed has been proven righteous by our actions.

“There’s just no pleasing some people!”

Jesus Condemns Cities

(Chapter 11, verses 20-24)

(20) He then began to reprimand the cities that saw his most extraordinary works yet persisted in their stubborn unrepentance:

(21) “Damn you, Chorazin! Damn you, Bethsaida!

“Why this harsh criticism?

“Because if the non-Jewish inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon¹⁴⁵ saw the powerful works you saw, they would have openly grieved in sackcloth and ashes and repented a long time ago.*

(22) “So I say this to all of you, It’ll be better for Tyre and Sidon on Judgment Day than for you people.

(23) “And what about you citizens of Capernaum? Do you think your accolades will reach heaven?

“Think again, because you’re going straight to hell!†

“Why?

“Because if the **Sodomites**‡¹⁴⁶ saw the miracles you saw, Sodom would be around today instead of having been destroyed by God.

(24) “So I say this to you citizens of Capernaum, it’ll be better for the Sodomites on Judgment Day than for you.”

* Vs. 21: Daniel 9:3 [#124]; Jonah 3:6 [#125].

† Vs. 23: Isaiah 14:15 [#126].

‡ Vs. 23: **Genesis** ⁶⁽³⁴⁾ 19:1-29 [#127].

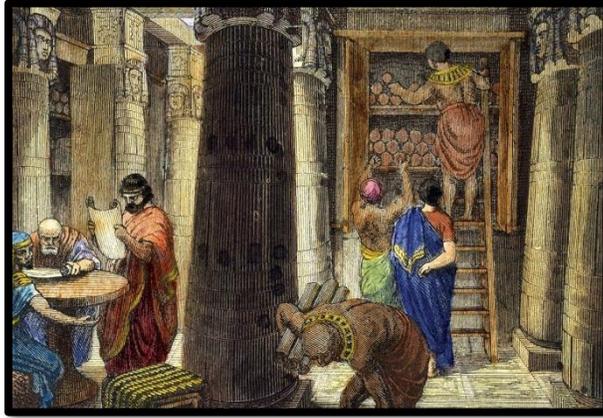


Figure 51: Ancient Library of Alexandria.

See “wisdom” endnote #144a in Matthew 11:19.

[The World's 10 Oldest Libraries | History Hit](#)

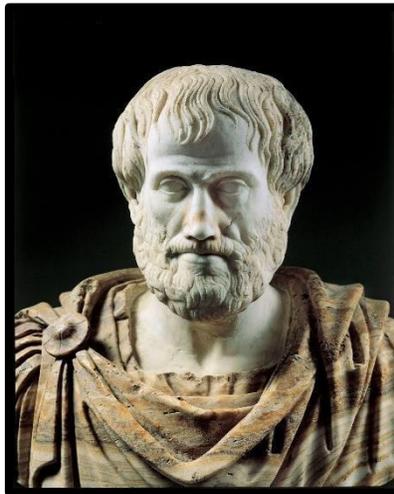


Figure 52: Greek philosopher Aristotle

See “wisdom” endnote #144b in Matthew 11:19.

[Aristotle | Biography, Works, Quotes, Philosophy, Ethics, & Facts | Britannica](#)

Truth Concealed, Father Revealed

(Chapter 11, verses 25-30)

[ACADEMICS: Computer Science, Cryptography]

(25) Then Jesus redirected his attention and said:

“I praise you publicly, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you’ve chosen to **encrypt**¹⁴⁷ these wonderful truths so that arrogant intellects could not decipher them*[†]; but you have **revealed**¹⁴⁸ these same truths to those with childlike humility.[†] (26) Indeed, O Father, this is how you operate.”

(27) Shifting his attention back to those listening, Jesus now said:

“My Father has given me everything. No one **completely understands**¹⁴⁹ the Son but the Father. Neither does anyone fully understand the Father but the Son and whoever the Son wants to reveal him to.

(28) “Come to me, all who are slavishly overworked and overwhelmed, and I will rejuvenate you.

(29) “As strange as it may seem, when you enter into refreshing servitude to me and are educated by me,[‡] you actually learn compassion because I’m gentle, kind, and humble in heart.[§]

“With such qualities, I’ll reinvigorate your very souls.**

(30) For tender servitude to me has a calming effect. My ‘load’ is virtually weightless.”

* Vs. 25: Isaiah 29:14 [#128].

† Vs. 25: Psalm 8:2 [#129].

‡ Vs. 29: **Deuteronomy**¹⁶⁽³⁵⁾ 18:18 [#130].

§ Vs. 29: Zechariah 9:9 [#131].

** Vs. 30: Jeremiah 6:16 [#132].

Chapter 12

MATTHEW 12:1-50

Master of the Sabbath

(Chapter 12, verses 1-8)

(1) At that time of the season, Jesus walked through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples, hungry by now, plucked heads of grain to eat.*

(2) When the Pharisees saw it, they confronted Jesus, complaining: “Look at that! By working to pick food today, your disciples are actually breaking Sabbath law!”†

(3) He responded:

“Haven’t you read what David did when he and his men were hungry?‡ (4) They went into God’s House and ate the sacred bread,§ something unlawful** for him and his men to eat since it was only for the priests.†† Remember that?

(5) “Or haven’t you read in the Law‡‡ that priests *profaned* the Sabbath but remained innocent of breaking it.

(6) “But I’m here to tell you that something greater and more important than the temple itself is here, (7) and if you really understood what Scripture means when it says, ‘I’ll take mercy any day over sacrifice,’§§ you men would not have condemned my innocent disciples.

* Vs. 1: **Exodus** ⁶⁽³⁶⁾ 12:16 [#133]; **Deuteronomy** ¹⁷⁽³⁷⁾ 23:25 [#134].

† Vs. 2: **Exodus** ⁷⁽³⁸⁾ 20:10 [#135]; **Exodus** ⁸⁽³⁹⁾ 31:15 [#136]; **Deuteronomy** ¹⁸⁽⁴⁰⁾ 5:14 [#137].

‡ Vs. 3: 1 Samuel 21:6 [#138].

§ Vs. 4: **Exodus** ⁹⁽⁴¹⁾ 25:30 [#139]; **Exodus** ¹⁰⁽⁴²⁾ 40:23 [#140].

** Vs. 4: **Leviticus** ⁶⁽⁴³⁾ 24:5 [#141]; **Leviticus** ⁷⁽⁴⁴⁾ 24:9 [#142].

†† Vs. 4: **Exodus** ¹¹⁽⁴⁵⁾ 29:33 [#143].

‡‡ Vs. 5: **Numbers** ⁴⁽⁴⁶⁾ 28:9 [#144].

§§ Vs. 7: Hosea 6:6 [#145].

(8) “Realize that in God’s scheme of things, the Son of Humanity is the Master of the Sabbath.”*

Jesus Cures Man on Sabbath

(Chapter 12, verses 9-13)

(9) After leaving there, Jesus went into their synagogue.

(10) Look over there! There’s a man with a severely deformed hand! Jesus’ critics ask,

“Is it lawful to perform the miraculous ‘work’ of curing on the Sabbath?”

This was a trick question to get Jesus to incriminate himself because even though it was a good work, it was still *work!*

(11) Jesus responded with his own question, asking: “Which of you men, on a Sabbath day, would not work by lifting his sheep out of a pit[†] it had fallen into?‡

(12) “Well, a man is worth much more than a sheep! So, yes, it is lawful to do a good work on the Sabbath.”

(13) He then instructed the man:

“Extend your hand in front of me.”

When the man stretched it out, it was completely healed and looked as good as his other.

The Nations Predicted to Hope in Jesus

(Chapter 12, verses 14-21)

(14) The Pharisees hated what Jesus did so much they wanted to kill him.

So, they planned his murder.

(15) When Jesus realized this, he left the area.

* Vs. 8: **Exodus** ¹²⁽⁴⁷⁾ 34:21 [#146]; **Leviticus** ⁸⁽⁴⁸⁾ 25:4 [#147]; **Leviticus** ⁹⁽⁴⁹⁾ 25:10 [#148].

† Vs. 11: **Exodus** ¹³⁽⁵⁰⁾ 21:33 [#149].

‡ Vs. 11: **Exodus** ¹⁴⁽⁵¹⁾ 23:4 [#150]; **Deuteronomy** ¹⁹⁽⁵²⁾ 22:4 [#151].

Many people followed him, and he cured them all (16) but insisted they not tell everybody about him.

(17) THIS WAS IN FULFILLMENT OF THE SPECIFICATIONS SET OUT BY THE PROPHET ISAIAH, WHO QUOTED GOD WHEN HE WROTE:¹⁵⁰

(18) “Just look at my specially selected servant,* my beloved whom I’ve embraced! I’ll pour my spirit upon him,[†] and he’ll clearly show the nations the meaning of justice.

(19) “He won’t draw unnecessary attention to himself by yelling and shouting in the streets.[‡]

(20) “He won’t put his foot on the back of the neck of the oppressed; neither will he snuff out that one’s weakening desire to live.

“No, the justice he dishes out will be victorious,[§] (21) and it’ll fire up hope in his name in non-Jewish peoples around the world.”**¹⁵¹

Jesus Expels Demons, Defines Unforgivable Sin

(Chapter 12, verses 22-32)

(22) Next, they brought him a demonized man who was blind and couldn’t talk. Jesus cured the man so that he could now see and speak.

(23) Upon seeing this, the crowds were overwhelmed and finally asked:

“Could this possibly be the Son of David after all?”

(24) When the Pharisees heard this, they falsely accused Jesus, saying:

* Vs. 18: Isaiah 42:1 [#152]; Haggai 2:23 [#153].

† Vs. 18: Isaiah 61:1 [#154].

‡ Vs. 19: Isaiah 42:2 [#155].

§ Vs. 20: Habakkuk 1:4 [#156].

** Vs. 21: Isaiah 11:10 [#157]; Isaiah 42:4 [#158].

“This man can exorcize demons because he and Satan are best friends! They have a con game going on!”

(25) Knowing their thinking, Jesus told them,

“A government would self-destruct if it had a protracted civil war. And no family would remain close if everyone hated each other and constantly bickered.

(26) “It’s the same with Satan, the king of the demons. If he exorcises himself, or if demons exorcise other demons, how could Satan’s structured government—or his family of demons and willing citizen-humans—stand?

(27) “Furthermore, if I dismiss demons because of my supposed association with Satan, how do your sons discharge them?

“According to your logic, they must be best friends with the Devil too! By casting out demons themselves, they’re exposing your faulty reasoning.

(28) “On the other hand, if it is, in fact, by means of God’s spirit that I oust devils, the debate or battle between you and me is over. God’s celestial Kingdom-Government won, and you didn’t even notice.”

(29) “I mean, how can anybody break into a bodybuilder’s house and steal his valuables unless the robber first somehow neutralizes the householder?

“The robber would have to find a way to bind and gag the bodybuilder first, then he can steal household goods.*

(30) “This is the bottom line: If a man doesn’t side with me as a friend, this indicates that he considers me his enemy.

“If he doesn’t stand by me for one purpose, he distances himself by going in the opposite direction.

* Vs. 29: Isaiah 49:24 [#159].

(31) “Because of this, I’ll tell you all right now: Every type of sin and sacrilege will be forgiven men, but sacrilege against the manifestations of God’s spirit is unforgivable.

(32) “Let me explain what I mean: If anyone says one bad thing about the Son of Humanity, he’ll be forgiven.

“Not so with the **holy spirit**.¹⁵²

“If anyone denies and decries the unmistakable evidence of the outworking of God’s spirit, it will not be forgiven him in this world, nor in the new one to come.”

Men Judged by Their Words

(Chapter 12, verses 33-37)

(33) “People, why don’t you do one thing or the other? Be consistent! Either make the tree fine, and its fruit fine, or make the tree rotten, and its fruit rotten too.

“Either way, everyone will know what kind of tree you are by the fruit you produce.

(34) “As for you, you are all snakes, as are your parents!

“How can you possibly speak good, non-poisonous words when you are wicked?”

“You can read a man’s heart by the words that come out of his mouth.

(35) “The good man sends out good vibes from good things he considers essential, whereas the wicked man sends out bad vibes from wicked things vital to him.

(36) “I’m here to tell you that all the harmful things men say they’ll answer for on Judgment Day.†

* Vs. 34: Job 14:4 [#160].

† Vs. 36: Ecclesiastes 12:14 [#161].

(37) “For it is by the very words that come out of your mouth that will either gain you favor in God’s eyes or will doom you to damnation.”*

Jonah, Solomon, and a Wicked Generation

(Chapter 12, verses 38-42)

(38) Some scribes and Pharisees presented a response in the form of a request:

“Teacher, please, show us a sign.”

(39) He replied:

“A wicked generation of Jews[†] who are spiritual infidels continually looks for a ‘sign,’ but the only one it’ll get is the sign of the prophet **Jonah**.¹⁵³

(40) “Remember how Jonah was in the stomach of a giant fish for three days and three nights?[‡] Well, the Son of Humanity will be in the bosom of the earth for three days and three nights. There’s your ‘sign.’

(41) “The men of the ancient non-Jewish city of Nineveh didn’t need a ‘sign.’ They simply heard Jonah’s message from God and recognized it for what it was.

“They’ll be resurrected on Judgment Day and will rightfully criticize your spiritually adulterous generation seeking a ‘sign.’

“Unlike you, those men repented. Yet, I’m far more of a prophet than Jonah ever was, and you still won’t favorably respond to my God-given message!

(42) “The Southern non-Jewish queen[§] will be back in the resurrection also, and she will also denounce your generation.

* Vs. 37: Proverbs 13:3 [#162].

[†] Vs. 39: Isaiah 57:3 [#163].

[‡] Vs. 40: Jonah 1:17 [#164].

[§] Vs. 42: 1 Kings 10:1 [#165]; 2 Chronicles 9:1 [#166].

“Why?”

“Because she came from African parts to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and here I am, someone greater and wiser than Solomon, and you will neither give me a listening ear nor the time of day!”

Seven Spirits and a Wicked Generation

(Chapter 12, verses 43-45)

(43) “Here’s what happens when a foul spirit, a demon, leaves a man:

“The entity searches the wilderness or some other sparsely populated area for a place to rest but cannot find one.

(44) “It then says, ‘I’ll return to the house I left.’

“When it arrives, it finds that no one is home; but the house is clean and beautifully furnished.

(45) “Upon seeing this, it locates seven demons more wicked than itself. They all enter and haunt the house.

“The final circumstances for the householder are obviously much worse than they were initially.

“Well, it’s the same with this wicked generation of Jews. The final circumstances for it will be much worse than they were before.”

Jesus’ Disciples: His Spiritual Family

(Chapter 12, verses 46-50)

(46) As he was enlightening the crowds with his moving speeches, look over there! His mother and brothers are working their way through the crowd.

They arrive just outside the house where he’s speaking, seeking a private audience with him.

(47) So, someone shouted:

“Excuse me, Teacher! Your family, your mom, and brothers are outside. They want to talk to you.”

(48) Jesus responded to the caller's cry with a couple of puzzling questions: "Who really is my mother? And who really are my brothers?"

(49) Gesturing toward his disciples, he answered his own rhetorical questions:

"Behold! These are my mother and brothers!

(50) For anyone doing my heavenly Father's will is like a brother, sister, and mother."

Chapter 13

MATTHEW 13:1-58

The Illustration of the Planter

(Chapter 13, verses 1-9)

[ACADEMICS: Farming, Oceanography]

(1) Jesus left the house and sat by the sea the same day. (2) So many people gathered to hear him speak that he boarded a boat and sat in it. Everyone else stood on the beach.

(3) He then related to them many things by illustrations, saying:

"Listen up! A man went out to plant seeds, scattering them as he walked.

(4) "As he sprinkled the seeds, some fell alongside the road, only to be eaten by birds."

(5) "Others landed on gravel, with little topsoil. Not surprisingly, they sprang up immediately since the soil was so **shallow**.¹⁵⁴ (6) But they were burned dry at sunrise. The root couldn't extract enough moisture from the surface soil.

(7) "Other seeds bounced into thorn patches where the thorns came up and strangled them.

(8) "Some of the seed, though, found their way to fine soil where they grew and bore fruit; one a hundredfold, another sixty, still another, thirty.

(9) “Let those with spiritual ears discern the meaning of what I’m saying and respond appropriately.”

Getting the Sense of Illustrations

(Chapter 13, verses 10-17)

[ACADEMICS: Cybersecurity,
Celestial Encryption Key]

(10) His disciples now approached and asked:

“Why do you use illustrations when speaking to the crowds?”

(11) Jesus replied:

“As my disciples, you have been endowed with comprehending the holy **mysteries**¹⁵⁵ of the celestial Kingdom-Government. The uninitiated haven’t been gifted with such understanding.

(12) “For whoever has will be given more, and he’ll flourish as a result. But whoever doesn’t have, even what’s his, will be confiscated.

(13) “That’s why I speak to them in illustrations, because, although they are looking, they see nothing at all; and although they are hearing, they really don’t listen so as to grasp the correct understanding.*

(14) “They fulfill the prophecy written by Isaiah when he said, ‘Even though you’re hearing, the correct understanding isn’t registering. And even though you’re looking, you really don’t see what’s being said.’† (15) For the heart of this people has gradually become unresponsive, and although they have ears, they haven’t acted on what they’ve heard. They’ve shut their eyes and closed their ears to the truth. Hence, they never allow themselves to discern the truth with their eyes or really

* Vs. 13: Isaiah 6:10 [#167]; Jeremiah 5:21 [#168]; Ezekiel 12:2 [#169].

† Vs. 14: Isaiah 6:9 [#170].

hear it and act accordingly. If they had a heartfelt appreciation for truth, they would take a different course of action, and I would certainly heal them.*

(16) “However, you have godly serenity and are cheerfully content because you see the truth with your eyes and hear it with your ears.

(17) “Truly I say that many prophets and righteous men of Israel yearned to see the things you’re seeing, and hear what your hearing, but never got the opportunity.”

Perceiving Planter Parable

(Chapter 13, verses 18-23)

(18) “Listen, all of you, while I explain the meaning of the parable of the planter.

(19) “When someone hears but doesn’t really understand the message of the celestial Kingdom-Government, the wicked one comes and snatches what has been planted in his heart. This is the seed that fell alongside the road.

(20) “As for the one that fell on the gravel, this is the one that hears the truth and joyfully accepts it.† **(21)** Yet he’s not really rooted in the truth. So, when he faces hardship or is victimized by it, he immediately falters.

(22) “As for the one that bounced in the thorn patch, this one hears the truth, but the stress and uneasiness of living in this world, coupled with the futility of trying to make more money, strangle and suffocate the truth, and he becomes unfruitful.

* Vs. 15: Isaiah 44:18 [#171].

† Vs. 20: Isaiah 58:2 [#172]; Ezekiel 33:31 [#173].

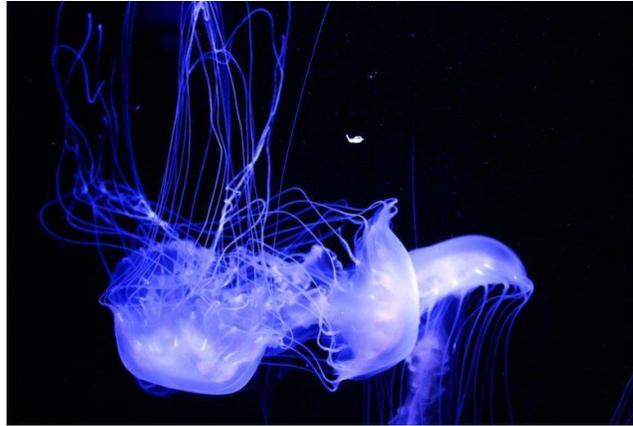


Figure 53: Oceanography.

See “shallow” endnote #154 in Matthew 13:5.

[Oceanography vs. Marine Biology – What’s the Difference? \(environment.co\)](#)



Figure 54: Critical thinking (common fallacies).

See “seed” endnote #156 in Matthew 13:24.

[5 Ways to Build Your Child’s Critical Thinking Skills - Washington Parent](#)

(23) “Now, the one planted in the good soil hears and understands the truth and then bears fruit according to his abilities, a hundred times more in one case, sixty times more in another case, and thirty times more in the third case.”

The Wheat and the Weeds

(Chapter 13, verses 24-30)

[ACADEMICS: Seminary, Critical Thinking, Bias in Higher Education/EARTH SCIENCE: Agriculture]

(24) He presented another agricultural illustration:

“The celestial Kingdom-Government has become like a man that planted good quality **seed**¹⁵⁶ in his **field**.¹⁵⁷

(25) “While he and his servants slept, another man, his enemy, came and planted weeds among the wheat, and then disappeared stealthily into the night.

(26) “Sometime later, when the seeds sprouted and produced fruit, the weeds made their debut as well.

(27) “So, the householder’s servants approached him and said, ‘Master, didn’t you plant good quality seed in your field? Why are weeds showing up also?’

(28) “He replied: ‘A saboteur, an enemy of mine, did this.’ They asked, ‘Do you want us to remove the weeds?’

(29) “He said: ‘No, not yet. You might accidentally uproot the wheat too. (30) Leave both as they are until the harvest. At that time, I’ll tell the gatherers, “First, single out the weeds, bundle them up, and burn them. After that, gather the wheat and be sure to put it in the storage facility.””

The Mustard Grain and the Yeast

(Chapter 13, verses 31-35)

(31) Switching to another illustration, he continued,

“The celestial Kingdom-Government is just like a mustard seed that a man took and planted in his field.

(32) “Although it is the smallest of all the seeds in this region, when it reaches maturity, it is the largest of the vegetables, and when it becomes a tree, the birds in the sky* come and rest on its branches.”

(33) He started with another illustration:

“The celestial Kingdom-Government is like yeast which a woman took and hid in three large containers of flour until all of it fermented.”

(34) He said all these things to the crowds through illustrations. In fact, he wouldn’t talk to them without using word pictures.

(35) THIS WAS DONE SO THAT WHAT THE PROPHET CHRONICLED ABOUT JESUS COULD BE FULFILLED WHEN HE WROTE WHAT THE MESSIAH WOULD SAY:¹⁵⁸

“I’ll speak with word pictures whenever I lecture. And when I instruct, I’ll unlock secrets that have been hidden from the start.”†

Wheat and Weeds Explained

(Chapter 13, verses 36-43)

[LIBERAL ARTS: Cosmetology/ ACADEMICS: Cosmocracy]

(36) After dispersing the crowds, he went into the house. His disciples followed and asked:

“Please explain to us the meaning of the illustration about the weeds in the field.”

(37) Jesus said:

“The planter of the good quality seed is the Son of Humanity, (38) the field is the **world**¹⁵⁹ at large, and the good quality seed represents the sons of the kingdom.

* Vs. 32: Psalm 104:12 [#174]; Daniel 4:12 [#175].

† Vs. 35: Psalm 78:2 [#176].

“The weeds, though, are the sons of the wicked one, (39) and the enemy that planted them is the Devil himself. The harvest is the closing period of an interdependent global structure alienated from God, and the gatherers are angels.

(40) “Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered and burned, so it’ll be during the closing period of the interdependent global structure.

(41) “The Son of Humanity will dispatch his angels, and they’ll retrieve from his kingdom everything that causes faltering, and people committing wickedness, (42) and they’ll fling them into the blazing furnace.*

“In there,[†] they’ll cry and **grind their teeth in anguish**.¹⁶⁰

(43) “At the same time, the righteous ones will radiate[‡] as brightly as the sun.[§] They’ll shine in God’s glory while in the celestial Kingdom-Government of their Father.

“Let those with spiritual ears listen and respond.

Hidden Treasure, Valuable Pearl, Dragnet

(Chapter 13, verses 44-52)

(44) “The celestial Kingdom-Government is like a treasure that someone hid in a field that a man discovers and hides somewhere else. The man is so happy he sells everything and buys the entire field.

(45) “The celestial Kingdom-Government is like a traveling salesman looking to buy beautiful pearls.

(46) “When he found a very expensive one, he immediately left, sold all the merchandise he had acquired up to that point, and bought the pearl.

* Vs. 42: Daniel 3:6 [#177].

† Vs. 42: Psalm 112:10 [#178].

‡ Vs. 43: Daniel 12:3 [#179].

§ Vs. 43: Judges 5:31 [#180].



Figure 55: Cosmology.

See “world” endnote #159a in Matthew 13:38.

[A brief cosmology of cosmetology: A make-up artist's meditation on the science and art of transformation | Salon.com](#)



Figure 56: Cosmetology.

See “world” endnote #159b in Matthew 13:38.

[Cosmetology and Esthetics: What is the Difference? - Cosmetology School & Beauty School in Texas - Ogle School](#)

(47) “The celestial Kingdom-Government is like a dragnet lowered into the sea. It swept up all kinds of sea life on the first try.

(48) “After it got full, they towed it to the beach, sat down, and got down to the business of separating the good catch* from the unsuitable ones.†

“The good ones they put into containers, but the ones unfit to eat, they discarded.

(49) “It’s going to be the same way during the closing period of the interdependent global structure: the angels will advance forth to separate the wicked‡ from the righteous.

(50) “They will cast the wicked into the blazing mental furnace. There is where they’ll have agonizing **bruxism**¹⁶¹ (clenching of teeth).

(51) “Did you fully comprehend the point being made in each illustration?”

They said to him:

“Yes, we did.”

(52) He said:

“That being the case, realize that every scribe or educator who teaches publicly, when taught the truth about the celestial Kingdom-Government, is like a man, a homeowner, who brings new and old things out of his treasure trove.”

Hometown Crowd Stumbles Over Jesus

(Chapter 13, verses 53-58)

(53) When Jesus concluded his array of illustrations, he left there and went across country.

* Vs. 48: **Leviticus** ¹⁰⁽⁵³⁾ 11:9 [#181].

† Vs. 48: **Leviticus** ¹¹⁽⁵⁴⁾ 11:12 [#182].

‡ Vs. 49: **Psalm** 1:5 [#183].

(54) Upon arriving in his hometown, he went to the synagogue and began teaching. People were flabbergasted and asked:

“How did this man become so wise and perform so many miracles? (55) Isn’t that the carpenter’s oldest boy? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary? And aren’t his younger brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? (56) The entire family, including his sisters, all live here with us in the community, don’t they?”

(57) So, they looked at him condescendingly.

But Jesus made this comment about their misgivings:

“A prophet is held in high esteem and is well respected everywhere except in his own hometown, and among his family members.”*

(58) Because of this, he restricted the number of miracles he performed there. Their lack of faith didn’t warrant fuller miraculous expressions.

Chapter 14

MATTHEW 14:1-36

Herod Arrests John the Baptist

(Chapter 14, verses 1-5)

[THEOLOGY: Religious Persecution]

(1) District ruler Herod heard about Jesus’ miracles. (2) Worried, he said to his servants:

“This must be John the Baptist. I had him killed, now he’s come back to life and is performing all these stunning miracles!”

(3) Herod had John handcuffed, arrested, and thrown into prison, all because of the incestuous relationship between

* Vs. 57: Jeremiah 11:21 [#184].

Herod and his sister-in-law Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. **(4)** John would constantly remind him:

“Your marriage is illegitimate. It’s a flagrant violation of God’s law.”*¹⁶²

(5) Herod wanted to kill him for saying this, but he was afraid of the crowd since they were convinced that John was a prophet.

Herod’s Birthday Party

(Chapter 14, verses 6-13)

(6) During the celebration of Herod’s birthday,[†] his step-daughter, the daughter of his wife Herodias, performed a sensual dance before everyone.

Herod was so moved **(7)** that he swore his honor to give the exotic dancer whatever her heart desired. Yes, anything she wanted.

(8) After some sinister coaching from her vindictive mother, the young woman asked:

“Chop off the head of John the Baptist and serve it to me on a tray.”

(9) The king was crestfallen. [Never in his wildest imagination did he think she’d ask for something like that!]

Because he swore to give her whatever she wanted before his guests, he had to carry out the gruesome request.

(10) He issued the order to have John beheaded. **(11)** They brought John’s head back on a tray and gave it to the young woman. She then gave it to her mother.

* Vs. 4: **Leviticus** ¹²⁽⁵⁵⁾ 18:16 [#185]; **Leviticus** ¹³⁽⁵⁶⁾ 20:21 [#186].

† Vs. 6: **Genesis** ⁷⁽⁵⁷⁾ 40:20 [#187].

(12) John's disciples went to the prison to retrieve his headless body, buried it, and then came to tell Jesus the whole story.

(13) As soon as Jesus heard the news, he left by boat for an isolated place to be alone in thought.

It turned out to be a futile move because when the crowds from the surrounding cities learned of his whereabouts, they followed him on foot.

Jesus Miraculously Feeds Over 5,000

(Chapter 14, verses 14-22)

[MANAGEMENT: Crowd Control]

[ACADEMICS: Catering, Applied Food Science]

(14) When he turned and saw many people following him—both healthy and unhealthy—he felt sorry for them, so he cured the sick.

(15) Since it was dark by now, his disciples said:

“We’re out here in the middle of nowhere, and it’s already late. Maybe you should dismiss the crowds so they can go into nearby towns and buy food.”

(16) However, Jesus said to them:

“They really don’t have to go anywhere. You feed them.”

(17) With some dismay, they responded:

“We don’t have close to enough food for all these people. We only have five loaves of bread and two fishes.”

(18) He said:

“Bring them to me.”

(19) Next, he directed the crowds to sit picnic-style on the grassy areas.

He then took the five loaves and two fishes, looked up to heaven, said a blessing, broke the bread, and gave these to the disciples, who, in turn, gave them to the crowds.

(20) Everyone ate to satisfaction. In fact, there were twelve baskets full of leftovers,* (21) even though there were about five thousand men, not including women and children.

(22) Then he turned to his disciples and told them to quickly board the boat and meet him on the other side of the sea. He decided to stay and see the crowds off.

Jesus Walks on Water

(Chapter 14, verses 23-36)

[ACADEMICS: Physical Education (Indoor-

Outdoor), Competitive Sports/Paranormal Psychology]

(23) After seeing the crowds off, he ascended the mountain to pray. Even though it was very late by now, he was there all alone.

(24) Meanwhile, the boat was hundreds of **yards**¹⁶³ away from land. There was a storm that night, and the wind pounded the boat with large waves.

(25) But sometime between three and six o'clock in the morning (while it was still dark), Jesus came to them, big as day, walking on water.

(26) When the disciples saw him—not knowing it was him—walking on the sea, they were petrified. They shouted: “It’s a **ghost!**”¹⁶⁴ and started screaming in fear.

(27) But Jesus said to them right away:

“It’s okay! Don’t be scared. It’s only me, Jesus.”

(28) While slowly regaining his composure, Peter spoke up and replied:

“Lord, if it’s really you, make me walk on water like you. In fact, give me the ability to walk to you.”

* Vs. 20: 2 Kings 4:44 [#188].



Figure 57: Exercise.

See “yards” endnote #163 in Matthew 14:24.

[Consistent Exercise Linked To More Heart Health Benefits For People Who Suffer From Anxiety and Stress, Study Finds \(everydayhealth.com\)](https://www.everydayhealth.com/fitness/consistent-exercise-linked-to-more-heart-health-benefits-for-people-who-suffer-from-anxiety-and-stress-study-finds/)

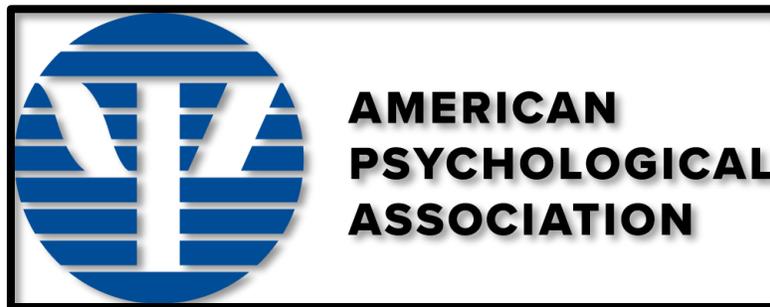


Figure 58: APA & Paranormal psychology.

See “ghost” endnote #164 in Matthew 14:26.

[Ghosts, Ouija boards, and ESP: Psychology and the paranormal, with Chris French, PhD \(apa.org\)](https://www.apa.org/psychology/paranormal)

(29) Jesus said:

“Come on!”

Peter then climbed out of the boat and started walking on the waters toward Jesus.

(30) But as soon as he saw the windstorm’s fury, he panicked, and began to sink, yelling:

“Jesus Christ! Save me!”

(31) Jesus quickly grabbed him, and said:

“You have such little faith! You were doing well. Why did you start doubting?”

(32) The windstorm subsided when they both reached the boat and got in.

(33) Then the disciples in the boat **bowed in respect**¹⁶⁵ to Jesus, saying:

“You really are God’s Son.”

(34) After all the excitement, they finally reached land at Gennesaret.

(35) The men there recognized him and spread the news that Jesus was in the area. The people responded by bringing all their sick to him.

(36) They begged him to let them touch his outer garment’s edge.* When they did this, they were completely healed.

Chapter 15

MATTHEW 15:1-39

God’s Law Verses Jewish Tradition

(Chapter 15, verses 1-11)

[SOCIOLOGY: Profanity]

* Vs. 36: **Leviticus** ¹⁴⁽⁵⁸⁾ 6:27 [#189]; **Numbers** ⁵⁽⁵⁹⁾ 15:38 [#190].

(1) Then Pharisees and scribes traveled from Jerusalem to debate with Jesus, asking:

(2) “Why don’t your disciples follow the tradition of our **forefathers**?¹⁶⁶ For example, we noticed they don’t **carefully**,¹⁶⁷ yes, ceremonially wash their hands before eating.”

(3) Jesus responded:

“First let me ask you a question: Why do you follow our forefathers’ tradition but completely ignore the commandments of the God they claimed to worship?”

(4) “You gave me one example; I’ll give you two.

“God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’* and, ‘Execute the person who **berates**¹⁶⁸ either his father or his mother.’†

(5) “You men have changed these simple commands. Instead, you say, ‘Whoever tells his father or mother: “Anything I have that you can gain some profit from, I’m giving as a gift to God. I’ve dedicated it to him.””

(6) “He doesn’t have to honor his mother and father at all according to your custom. So, you’ve effectively made God’s word null and void because of your tradition.

(7) “Let me put it to you this way: You’re all a bunch of hypocrites. Isaiah was spot on when he prophesied about you men when he wrote, (8) ‘These people say the right things about me with their mouths, but they don’t really mean it. Their hearts aren’t in it.‡ (9) Their worship means nothing to me because they elevate their doctrines over my word.’”

* Vs. 4: **Exodus** ¹⁵⁽⁶⁰⁾ 20:12 [#191]; **Deuteronomy** ²⁰⁽⁶¹⁾ 5:16[#192].

† Vs. 4: **Exodus** ¹⁶⁽⁶²⁾ 21:17 [#193]; **Leviticus** ¹⁵⁽⁶³⁾ 20:9 [#194]; **Deuteronomy** ²¹⁽⁶⁴⁾ 27:16 [#195].

‡ Vs. 8: Isaiah 29:13 [#196]; Ezekiel 33:31 [#197].

(10) He told everyone to gather around him closely and said to them:

“Pay close attention and comprehend what I’m telling you: **(11)** The food that crosses a man’s lips doesn’t stain his soul. It’s the words that part those lips that befoul him.”

Jesus Explains How Words Befoul a Man

(Chapter 15, verses 12-20)

[ANATOMY: Viscera, Gastrointestinal Tract]

(12) Then the disciples approached him and said:

“You do know you offended the Pharisees by what you said, don’t you?”

(13) He responded:

“If my heavenly Father didn’t plant the plant, it would be uprooted anyway.

(14) “Don’t be too concerned with them; it’s the blind leading the blind in their case. Out there is an unsuspecting hole in the ground waiting for them to plunge into.”*

(15) Peter requested:

“In plain language, tell us what you mean when you say that words befoul a man.”

(16) At this, he said to them all:

“You still don’t get the point, do you? **(17)** Okay, let me break it down for you. Here’s the simple process:

“[1] All the food you put into your mouth (everything you eat) eventually reaches the lower intestines; [2] sooner or later, you have a bowel movement; [3] then the discharge goes into the sewer. Get it?”

* Vs. 14: Isaiah 9:16 [#198]; Malachi 2:8 [#199].

(18) “On the other hand, the words coming out of your mouth spring from the heart (not the intestines!), and those words are like verbal sewage.

(19) “For example, the heart produces wicked reasonings,* murders, marital infidelities, illicit sex, thieveries, false testimonies, and irreverent statements.

(20) “These things amount to internal metaphorical sewage that befouls a man’s soul, but to eat without ceremonially washing your hands doesn’t soil the soul at all.”

Jesus Heals Demonized Girl

(Chapter 15, verses 21-28)

[PHILOSOPHY: Critical Thinking]

(21) Jesus left there and retreated into certain areas of Tyre and Sidon.

(22) And notice there! A local Phoenician woman came out crying aloud:

“Have compassion for me, Son of David! My daughter is badly demonized.”

(23) But he didn’t say a word. When his disciples reached him, they began requesting:

“Please get rid of her. She keeps following us, crying all over the place.”

(24) He answered her by saying:

“I was sent to lost sheep-like Jews only.”†

(25) When the woman came closer, she **bowed out of reverence**¹⁶⁹ to him, desperately imploring:

“Lord, you’ve got to help me, please!”

(26) He answered her:

* Vs. 19: **Genesis** ⁸⁽⁶⁵⁾ 8:21 [#200]; **Deuteronomy** ²²⁽⁶⁶⁾ 15:9 [#201].

† Vs. 24: **Isaiah** 53:6 [#202].

“It’s not right to take food out of the mouths of babies and put it into the mouths of puppies.”

(27) She respectfully shot back:

“Yes, I agree, Lord. But even puppies eat crumbs falling from the table of their owners.”

(28) Then he replied:

“Wow, what a comeback! You have great faith, woman. Let it happen as you wish.”

And from that moment on, her daughter was cured.

More Healing, Thousands Fed

(Chapter 15, verses 29-39)

[ACADEMICS: Applied Food Science]

[MANAGEMENT: Crowd Control]

(29) Jesus crossed the countryside and came to his next stop near the Sea of Galilee. He went up into the mountain, sat, and rested.

(30) Then the crowds came to him, bringing their handicapped, mutilated, visually impaired, speechless, and others with a bevy of ailments. They virtually threw them at his feet, and he cured them.*

(31) It amazed the crowd as they saw the speechless speaking, the handicapped walking, and the visually impaired seeing clearly, and they gave glory to the God of Israel.

(32) Then Jesus summoned the disciples to him and said:

“I feel sorry for the crowd because they’ve been here with me for three days, and there’s nothing for them to eat. I don’t want to send them away hungry. They might faint from hunger on the road.”

(33) The disciples retorted:

* Vs. 30: Isaiah 35:5 [#203].

“Where, out in the middle of nowhere, are we going to get enough food to feed all these people?”*

(34) Jesus asked:

“How many loaves do you have between yourselves?”

They answered:

“Seven, and a few small fish.”

(35) So, after telling the people to get comfortable by stretching out on the grass, (36) he took the seven loaves and small fishes, looked up to heaven, said a blessing, broke the bread, and gave these to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds.†

(37) Everyone ate and was satisfied. There were seven baskets full of leftovers, (38) even though there were four thousand men, as well as women and young children.

(39) Finally, he sent the crowds away, boarded a boat, and came into the regions of Magadan.

Chapter 16

MATTHEW 16:1-28

Opposers Seek Sign from Jesus

(Chapter 16, verses 1-4)

[SCIENCE: Meteorology]

(1) The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus to bait him in Magadan. They asked him to show them a spectacular heavenly sign.

(2) He replied:

“At evening time, you men make a prediction by saying, ‘The weather will be good today. Just look at that clear, fire-red sunset.’

* Vs. 33: **Numbers** ⁶⁽⁶⁷⁾ 11:22 [#204].

† Vs. 36: **Deuteronomy** ²³⁽⁶⁸⁾ 8:10 [#205]; 1 Samuel 9:13 [#206].

(3) “And in the morning, you say, ‘It’ll be cold, rainy weather today because, although it’s a beautiful fiery sunrise, it’s also cloudy.’

“You know how to read the weather but don’t know how to read the signs of the times.

(4) “An evil generation of Jews that’s spiritually promiscuous, though married, persists in looking for a sign. The only sign it’ll get is the sign of Jonah.”*

He then turned and walked away.

Opposers and False Doctrines

(Chapter 16, verses 5-12)

[ACADEMICS: Theology]

(5) When the disciples crossed to the other side, they realized they didn’t bring the loaves of bread.

(6) Jesus told them:

“Keep your eyes open and look out for the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

(7) They were puzzled and had a private conversation, saying:

“We didn’t bring any loaves with us.”

(8) Knowing this, Jesus said:

“Why are you having this discussion among yourselves? Is it because you don’t have any loaves of bread, little faith crew?

(9) “You don’t get the point, do you? Don’t you remember when I fed five thousand men? And what about the leftovers? How many baskets full did you all collect? Do you recall?

* Vs. 4: Jonah 1:17 [#207].

(10) “And don’t tell me you forgot about that time I fed four thousand men with seven loaves. Do you remember how many leftover baskets there were?”

(11) “I can’t believe you actually think I was talking about real loaves of bread. How could you? Again, just watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”*

(12) They finally caught on and realized he was talking about the actual erroneous, infectious teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees, not the yeast used to make bread.

Peter Receives Kingdom Keys

(Chapter 16, verses 13-20)

[ACADEMICS: Theology]

(13) When Jesus and his disciples came into the area of Caesarea Philippi, he posed the question:

“Who is the Son of Humanity rumored to be among the people?”

(14) They said:

“It all depends on who you ask. Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

(15) He then said to them:

“Alright. Now, who do *you* say I am?”

(16) Simon Peter said:

“You’re the Christ, the Son of the living God.”†

(17) Jesus said to him:

“Well said, Simon, son of Jonah! You have good reason to be pleased since no man disclosed this to you. No, it had to be my Father, who is in the heavens.

(18) “Additionally, I am announcing to you that just as surely as your name is Peter, upon the rock you correctly

* Vs. 11: **Leviticus** ¹⁶⁽⁶⁹⁾ 2:11 [#208]; **Leviticus** ¹⁷⁽⁷⁰⁾ 6:17 [#209].

† Vs. 16: Psalm 2:7 [#210].

identified as ‘Christ, the Son of the living God,’ I will build my congregation, and not even Hell’s gate* will be able to unearth it.

(19) “I’ll give you the heavenly keys of the kingdom, and whatever things you chain and lock on earth will have already been chained and locked in the heavens where I’ll be. And whatever things you unlock on earth will already have been unlocked in the heavens where I’ll reside.”

(20) Then he forcefully told his disciples to be sure not to tell anyone that he was indeed the Christ.

Peter Censures Jesus, Receives Rebuke

(Chapter 16, verses 21-23)

(21) From that point forward, Jesus made clear to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, where he’d be persecuted and eventually killed by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, but would be resurrected on the third day.†

(22) Upon hearing this, Peter, full of himself because of correctly identifying the Messiah and subsequently being slated to receive the keys of the kingdom, took him aside and censured him in private, saying:

“Don’t be so hard on yourself. Lighten up, Lord. None of this stuff is going to happen to you.”

(23) Jesus bristled, turned his back, and yelled:

“Get behind me, Satan! You’re scandalous because you’re thinking human thoughts rather than Godly ones.”

True Disciple Disavows Self

(Chapter 16, verses 24-28)

(24) Then Jesus told his disciples:

* Vs. 18: Isaiah 28:18 [#211].

† Vs. 21: Psalm 16:10 [#212]; Isaiah 53:12 [#213].

“If anyone wants to be my disciple, he must disavow his right to live as he sees fit. He must be willing to accept a torturous life and continually follow me.

(25) “Whoever wants to save his miserable life in this system will lose it, and whoever loses his short, gutted life for my sake will find a richly rewarding one.

(26) “For what good is it for a man to convert the whole world but lose his own life? Or what will he trade for his life?”

(27) “For the Son of Humanity will surely come in his Father’s glory, accompanied by angels assigned to him, and will reward each one according to his behavior.†

(28) “Believe what I’m about to say: some of you standing here won’t taste the bitterness of death until you first see the Son of Humanity coming in his kingdom.”

Chapter 17

MATTHEW 17:1-27

Jesus Transfigured

(Chapter 17, verses 1-9)

[ACADEMICS: Zoology, Entomology/
COMPUTER SCIENCE: Cloud Computing]

(1) Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, his brother, and climbed this tall mountain. They were all alone.

(2) Then, right before them, Jesus was **transfigured**.¹⁷⁰

Yes, his form was changed before their very eyes! His face was as bright as the sun,[‡] and his clothes radiated dazzling light.

* Vs. 26: Psalm 49:7, 8 [#214].

† Vs. 27: Psalm 62:12 [#215]; Proverbs 24:12 [#216].

‡ Vs. 2: **Exodus**¹⁷⁽⁷¹⁾ 30:13 [#217].



Figure 59: Metamorphosis.

See “transfigured” endnote #170 in Matthew 17:2.
[How does a caterpillar turn into a butterfly? | Discover Wildlife](#)



Figure 60: Cloud computing.

See “cloud” endnote #171 in Matthew 17:5.
[The Future Of Computing: Supercloud And Sky Computing \(forbes.com\)](#)

(3) Suddenly, out of nowhere, Moses and Elijah showed up and started talking to him!

(4) Peter reacted to the scene, saying:

“Lord, it’s so wonderful to be here. If you want, I’ll do the work of pitching three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

(5) Before he could finish speaking, look at that! A phenomenally large, very bright cloud dwarfed them.

Completely stunned, the three disciples discerned a voice coming from **the cloud**,¹⁷¹ saying:

“This is my Son, the dear one that I’ve endorsed. Listen to him when he speaks.”*

(6) At hearing these statements, the disciples fell to the ground, trembling with fear, hiding their faces in the dirt.

(7) Then Jesus approached, touched them comfortingly, and said:

“You can get up now. Don’t be afraid.”†

(8) When they raised their eyes from the ground, Jesus was standing alone.

(9) As they descended the lofty mountain, Jesus gave them an order:

“Don’t tell anyone what you saw in this vision until the Son of Humanity has been resurrected.”

John the Baptist Alias “Elijah”

(Chapter 17, verses 10-13)

(10) Curious about having seen Elijah in the vision, the disciples now asked Jesus:

“Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

* Vs. 5: Psalm 2:7 [#218]; Isaiah 42:1 [#219]; **Deuteronomy** ²⁴⁽⁷²⁾ 18:15 [#220].

† Vs. 7: **Exodus** ¹⁸⁽⁷³⁾ 38:26 [#221].

(11) Jesus answered:

“They’re partly right. Elijah is undoubtedly coming and will restore all things. (12) But they don’t have the whole story. Elijah has already come and gone, but they didn’t recognize him.

“Consequently, they mistreated him. The same thing is going to happen to the Son of Humanity. They won’t recognize him and he, too, will suffer.”

(13) Then the disciples correctly deduced that he was talking about John the Baptist.

Disciples’ Failed, Demon Expelled

(Chapter 17, verses 14-21)

[BUSINESS: Oligopoly]

(14) And when they approached the crowd, a man stepped forward and fell to his knees, saying:

(15) “Lord, please show compassion for my son because he’s in an awful way. As an epileptic who’s very ill, he often falls into the fire (risking serious burns) or falls into the water (nearly drowning). (16) I brought him to your disciples, but they couldn’t cure him.”

(17) Jesus said:

“O you faithless, twisted Jewish generation.* Just how long do I have to deal with you? How long must I tolerate you? Bring me the boy.”

(18) After rebuking the demon, it left the boy, who was cured from that hour on. (19) When Jesus was alone, the disciples asked him in private:

“Why couldn’t we expel it?”

(20) He answered them bluntly:

* Vs. 17: **Deuteronomy** ²⁵⁽⁷⁴⁾ 32:5 [#222]; **Deuteronomy** ²⁶⁽⁷⁵⁾ 32:20 [#223].

“Because of your **small-quantity**¹⁷² faith. You know, truthfully, if you men have faith the size of a mustard grain, you will say to any mountain in your way, ‘Get out of my way and go somewhere else!’ and the mountain will move. You could do anything you want. The word ‘impossible’ wouldn’t even be in your vocabulary.” (21) —

Jesus Again Predicts Death, Resolves Tax Issue

(Chapter 17, verses 22-27)

(22) It was when they had convened in Galilee that Jesus again broke the news to them:

“The Son of Humanity is bound to be betrayed and subsequently turned over to the authorities,* (23) who in turn will kill him; then on the third day he’ll be raised from the dead.”

This really upset the disciples.

(24) After they reached Capernaum, men from the temple collecting the two-drachma tax approached the disciples. They singled out Peter for a sarcastic question about Jesus:

“Your teacher is just dying to pay his two-drachma tax just like everyone else is, isn’t he?”

(25) Peter said:

“Of course, he is.”

However, when he came into the house, he was unaware that Jesus knew about the tax question. Therefore, Jesus asked a series of questions before Peter spoke:

“What’s your opinion, Simon? Who is to pay taxes to earthly kings? Would it be their royal family members, or non-members making a living in the kingdom?”

(26) When he said “non-family members,” Jesus replied:

* Vs. 22: 2 Samuel 24:14 [224].

“In reality, then, the royal family is tax-free. (27) But so that nobody stumbles, go to the sea, cast a fishhook into it, and grab the first fish you catch. When you open its mouth, you’ll find a coin.

“Take it and give it to the temple tax collectors to cover your tax and mine.”

Chapter 18

MATTHEW 18:1-35

Pride that Stumbles Leads to Destruction

(Chapter 18, verses 1-11)

(1) Shortly after this exchange, the disciples approached Jesus and said:

“Earlier, you mentioned *earthly* kings. Since you brought up kingly power and authority, who, in fact, is the greatest among the *heavenly* kings in the superior celestial Kingdom-Government?”

(2) [Other people with children were around when the disciples asked this question], so Jesus called a humble, cooperative, unassuming little boy and put him right in the middle of his disciples (3) and said:

“Unless you make a complete about-face, that’s right, a 180-degree turn in your prideful attitudes and become as humble and unassuming as little boys, you most assuredly will not be permitted entrance into the celestial Kingdom-Government to find who’s the greatest there.

(4) “Having said this, now I’ll answer your question more directly. In contrast to those prideful earthly kings, whoever humbles himself like this little boy is the greatest in the celestial Kingdom-Government.* (5) And welcoming in my name

* Vs. 4: Proverbs 15:33 [225].

any follower of mine who is humble just like him is the same as welcoming me.

(6) “But whoever scandalously stumbles* a humble, faithful, childlike follower of mine would be better off doing these six things:

[1] “Make or buy a piece of rope.

[2] “Tie it around a huge, heavy stone (the kind that a donkey pulls around to crush grain into flour).

[3] “Tie said stone around his neck.

[4] “Hire men to load him and the stone on a large ship to accommodate the rock.

[5] “Sail out far away from shore.

[6] “Then have a good number of hired men push the stone with the man tied to it into the heart of the sea to plunge him quickly to his death, never to be seen alive again.

(7) “There will be trouble due to scandalous behavior within my ever-growing world of disciples!

“It’s to be expected because of the tendency toward pride that’ll lead some men—particularly those in authority—to develop into wolves in sheep’s clothing.

“But, cursed is the animalistic man through whom the scandal comes!

(8) “So, if there is something seriously flawed with your outgoing personality that is as dear to you as the external extremities of your hand or foot that’s causing the scandal, with the delicate precision of a surgeon-therapist, cut it out of you; it’s better for you to embrace eternal life missing a favorite part of your personality as represented by a limb or appendage than to be hurled being the ‘Total Me,’ full-bodied into the symbolic fire that roars forever.

*Vs. 6: See endnote for “stumble” in Matthew 5:29.

(9) “If the source of scandal is a more internal part of your personality—say, like an eye—rip it unceremoniously out of its socket and throw it away from you. It’s better for you to see your way clearly to everlasting life with one eye (absent a more internal part of your personality), than to be lofted with a pair of spiritually blind eyes into the fiery Gehenna.

(10) “Speaking of eyes, watch out that you men do not loathe these little ones.

“Why?

“Because they have profound heavenly connections: their own celestial angels who gaze upon the very face of my heavenly Father. (11) —

God Demonstrates Love for Lost Sheep

(Chapter 18, verses 12-14)

(12) “What lesson can you learn from the following scenario? Let’s say a man comes into possession of a hundred sheep, and after counting them carefully, he realizes that one has strayed off.

“Out of great concern, don’t you think he’d leave the ninety-nine—with their security in numbers—there, on the mountaintop, and set off in search for the frightened, lonely, missing one?

(13) “If after vigorous searching he finds it, believe me when I say he’s happier about finding that one than the secured ninety-nine.

(14) “It’s the same with my heavenly Father; He doesn’t want any of his seemingly insignificant followers to be lost and thereafter perish.

Procedure for When a Brother Sins Against You

(Chapter 18, verses 15-20)

(15) “If, like an errant sheep that’s strayed, your brother sins against you, reprove him.* Yes, show him where he’s wrong in private. If he responds as he should, good. You’ve won him over.

(16) “But if not, recruit one or two others to take along with you as you speak again to him, exposing his error for all to see. The Scriptural requirement of having two or three witnesses is then met.†

(17) “If he refuses to listen to these disinterested third parties, report it to the elders who represent the congregation.

“If he refuses to listen to **the body of elders as congregation representatives**,¹⁷³ then treat him no longer as a brother Jew who’s a follower of mine.

“Treat him like a non-Jew who wants nothing to do with discipleship. In fact, treat him like a despised tax collector.

(18) “I’m telling you the truth, if you men follow these procedural steps, whether you convict (bind) or pardon (loose) a congregant of spiritual impropriety, the action will have already taken place in heaven.

(19) “This truth bears repeating: If a couple of you responsible elders on earth agree on a judicial matter where involved parties have made a request, the results of the judicial meeting will be adhered to with divine approval due to the elders having followed divine procedures established by my heavenly Father.

* Vs. 15: **Leviticus** ¹⁸⁽⁷⁶⁾ 19:17 [#226].

† Vs. 16: **Deuteronomy** ²⁷⁽⁷⁷⁾ 19:15 [#227].

(20) “Because where two or three elders who by divine influence have been led together to meet on a judicial matter in my name, it’s as if I’m right there with them.”

Unlimited Forgiveness

(Chapter 18, verses 21-22)

(21) Then Peter approached and asked:

“Lord, how many times am I to go through this procedure (possibly involving a congregational judicial committee of elders) when my Jewish brother sins against me?

“How many times should I personally forgive him once it has been determined that he was actually in the wrong? As many as seven times?”

(22) Jesus replied:

“I’m telling you, not, ‘As many as seven times,’ but as many as seventy-seven times.

Jesus Illustrates Heartfelt Forgiveness

(Chapter 18, verses 23-25)

[ACADEMICS: Microeconomics, Macroeconomics]

(23) “In connection with forgiving your brother, the celestial Kingdom-Government can be likened to a man, a king, who wanted to reconcile his accounts with his slaves.

(24) “As he began balancing his books, a man was brought before him who owed **thousands upon thousands**¹⁷⁴ of lifetimes of labor.

(25) “Since there was no way he could repay what he owed, his master ordered him, his wife, and his children—the entire family—to be sold along with all their belongings so at least a payment could be made.*

*Vs. 25: **Exodus** ¹⁹⁽⁷⁸⁾ 21:7 [#228]; **Leviticus** ¹⁹⁽⁷⁹⁾ 25:39 [#229]; 2 Kings 4:1 [#230]; Nehemiah 5:8 [#231].

(26) “But the slave threw himself to the ground and began groveling, begging, ‘Please be **patient**¹⁷⁵ with me, and I’ll pay all that I owe you.’

(27) “The master surrendered to sorrow, so much so that he let the slave off, canceling the total debt.

(28) “But that same slave left there looking for a fellow slave who owed him just over three months’ work. Grabbing him, he started strangling his fellow slave, demanding, ‘Give me my money right now!’

(29) “His co-laborer fell to his knees and began begging him, imploring, ‘Please be patient with me, and I’ll pay back everything I owe you.’

(30) “However, he refused. Instead, he arranged for his incarceration until he could get his money.

(31) “This really bothered the other slaves who witnessed everything, so they went and explained what had transpired to their master.*

(32) “Then his master sent for him and said, ‘Wicked slave, I dismissed your daunting debt when you begged me.

(33) Shouldn’t you have turned around and shown the same spirit of mercy to your fellow slave?’†

(34) “Exhibiting righteous indignation, his master had him arrested and taken into custody until the entire debt could be paid.

(35) “In the same way,‡ my heavenly Father will deal with all of you if each of you doesn’t sincerely and honestly forgive his brother from the heart.

* Vs. 31: **Leviticus** ^{20[80]} 5:1 [#232].

† Vs. 33: Proverbs 21:13 [#233].

‡ Vs. 35: Job 34:11 [#234]; Psalm 62:12 [#235]; Proverbs 24:12 [#236].

Chapter 19

MATTHEW 19:1-30

Jesus Crosses the Jordan

(Chapter 19, verses 1-2)

(1) After Jesus finished speaking, he left Galilee and came across the Jordan River to the plains of Judea. (2) But he was not alone. Great crowds followed him, and he miraculously healed them.

Jesus Debates Divorce

(Chapter 19, verses 3-9)

(3) The Pharisees now approached Jesus to test him:

“Is it legal for a man to divorce his wife for any reason?”*

(4) Jesus replied:

“Absolutely not! Didn’t you read in the Law of Moses that in the beginning, God created male and female[†] (5) and said, ‘This is why a man will leave the care of his father and mother, and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh’?[‡]

(6) “They’re not two anymore. They’ve become one flesh. Therefore, what God has bonded together, let no man disassemble.”

(7) They responded:

“Well then, why did **Moses command**¹⁷⁶ that she be given divorce **papers**¹⁷⁷ and sent on her way if her husband determined that she behaved indecently?”

(8) Jesus answered:

“Moses only did that as a compromise. Both he and God knew you were stubborn, so you were permitted to divorce

*Vs. 3: **Deuteronomy** ²⁸⁽⁸¹⁾ 24:1 [#237].

[†] Vs. 4: **Genesis** ⁹⁽⁸²⁾ 1:27 [#238]; **Genesis** ¹⁰⁽⁸³⁾ 5:2 [#239].

[‡] Vs. 5: **Genesis** ¹¹⁽⁸⁴⁾ 2:24 [#240].

your wives for virtually anything. But that wasn't how God originally arranged it.*

(9) "However, I'm telling you now that whoever divorces his wife for any reason other than sexual infidelity and marries another woman commits adultery."†

Singleness

(Chapter 19, verses 10-12)

(10) The disciples responded:

"If a man is displeased with his wife and can't easily divorce her, then it's better not to marry in the first place. He should remain single."

(11) Jesus said:

"Every man can't do what you're saying. Singleness isn't an option for them; it's only for those who possess the gift.

(12) "There are three reasons why men don't marry:

[1] "Some men are born to be single.‡

[2] "Other men compel certain men not to marry.

[3] "Still others choose singleness to devote more time to the interests of God's celestial Kingdom-Government.

"For the man who can—for the sake of the kingdom—make room in his life for singleness, let him do so."¹⁷⁸

Jesus Reproves Disciples for Deterring Children

(Chapter 19, verses 13-15)

(13) Then little boys and girls were brought to him with the understanding that he'd lay his hands upon them and offer prayer. But his disciples weren't having it.

(14) However, Jesus said:

* Vs. 8: **Genesis** ¹²⁽⁸⁵⁾ 2:24 [#241].

† Vs. 9: Malachi 2:14 [#242].

‡ Vs. 12: **Deuteronomy** ²⁹⁽⁸⁶⁾ 23:1 [#243].

“Leave those children alone and quit trying to stop them from coming to me, for the celestial Kingdom-Government belongs to people with the innocence such as is possessed by these children.”

(15) And he laid his hands upon them, embracing them, and then left.

Struggle for Rich to Enter Kingdom

(Chapter 19, verses 16-26)

(16) Look! A man approached Jesus and asked:

“Teacher, what good works must I do to live forever?”

(17) Jesus responded:

“Why do you ask me about what’s good? There is only One that is good. But, if you want to live forever, live by the commandments continually.”*

(18) The man retorted:

“Which ones?”

Jesus said:

“You must not murder,[†] You must not commit adultery,[‡] You must not steal,[§] You must not lie,^{**} (19) Honor your father and mother,^{††} and, You must love your neighbor as your-self.”^{‡‡}

(20) The young man said:

“I’ve kept all of these. Am I missing something?”

(21) Jesus answered:

* Vs. 17: **Leviticus** ²¹⁽⁸⁷⁾ 18:5 [#244].

[†] Vs. 18: **Exodus** ²⁰⁽⁸⁸⁾ 20:13 [#245]; **Deuteronomy** ³⁰⁽⁸⁹⁾ 5:17 [#246].

[‡] Vs. 18: **Exodus** ²¹⁽⁹⁰⁾ 20:14 [#247]; **Deuteronomy** ³¹⁽⁹¹⁾ 5:18 [#248].

[§] Vs. 18: **Exodus** ²²⁽⁹²⁾ 20:15 [#249]; **Deuteronomy** ³²⁽⁹³⁾ 5:19 [#250].

^{**} Vs. 18: **Exodus** ²³⁽⁹⁴⁾ 20:16 [#251]; **Deuteronomy** ³³⁽⁹⁵⁾ 5:20 [#252].

^{††} Vs. 19: **Exodus** ²⁴⁽⁹⁶⁾ 20:12 [#253]; **Deuteronomy** ³⁴⁽⁹⁷⁾ 5:16 [#254].

^{‡‡} Vs. 19: **Leviticus** ²²⁽⁹⁸⁾ 19:18 [#255].

“Yes, you are. If you want to be complete in your worship of God—not missing a thing—go sell what you have and distribute the proceeds to the poor, and you’ll have riches aplenty in heaven. Then, come be my follower.”

(22) When the young man heard Jesus’ answer, he left crestfallen, for he had many riches.*

(23) Consequently, Jesus told his disciples:

“You can rest assured that it’ll be tough for a rich man to gain entrance into the celestial Kingdom-Government.

(24) “Let me put it to you another way: It’s easier for a **camel**¹⁷⁹ to squeeze through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God.”

(25) The disciples were astonished, and asked:

“If this rich young man who keeps the Law can’t be saved, then who can?”

(26) Looking them straight in the eye, Jesus said:

“With any man—rich or poor—it would be an impossible feat to get saved. But God makes salvation possible for anyone.”†

Sacrifices and Rewards of Discipleship

(Chapter 19, verses 27-30)

(27) Peter spoke up and said:

“Well, look at our situation! We did exactly what you told the rich guy to do. We gave up everything to follow you; so, what heavenly treasures await us?”

(28) Jesus said:

“Here’s my twofold guarantee to each of you:

*Vs. 22: Psalm 62:10 [#256].

† Vs. 26: **Genesis** ¹³⁽⁹⁹⁾ 18:14 [#257]; Job 42:2 [#258]; Jeremiah 32:17 [#259]; Zechariah 8:6 [#260].

[1] In the heavenly re-creation when I, the Kingly Son of Humanity, sit on my glorious throne, each of you who have followed me will sit on twelve judicial thrones* to judge all who initially start in God's favor as did the original twelve tribes of Israel when they left Egypt.

(29) [2] "And everyone that has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or inherited properties for the kingdom cause that I champion will get multiple blessings and will inherit everlasting life.

(30) "But many first in line will be sent to the back, and the ones in the back will move to the front.

Chapter 20

MATTHEW 20:1-34

A Baron's Prerogative

(Chapter 20, verses 1-16)

(1) "God's celestial Kingdom-Government is like a man, a land baron, who regularly goes out every summer morning to hire laborers to work on his farm.

(2) "After negotiations, he agreed they should work for a denarius a day and sent them to the farm.

(3) "After going out to the marketplace again, this time around 9 a.m., he noticed other unemployed men standing around looking for work, (4) so he said to them: 'You're all hired. Go to the farm, and I'll pay you a fair wage.'

(5) "They trusted him and went on to work on the farm. He returned to the marketplace around noon and later, around 3 p.m., and did the same thing all over again.

(6) "Finally, at approximately 5 p.m., he went out yet again and found others standing around looking for work.

*Vs. 28: Daniel 7:14 [#261].

Concerned, he empathetically asked: 'Why have you men been standing around unemployed all day?'

(7) "They replied: 'We haven't been loafing; we're willing to work; it's just that nobody hired us.' He said to them: 'All of you are hired now. Go ahead to the farm.'

(8) "When 6 o'clock came that evening,* the land baron ordered his foreman, 'Call everyone and pay them a day's wage.† First, pay the most recent ones I hired, then work your way back through the others until you get to the first ones I hired early this morning.'

(9) "When those hired at 5 p.m. came, they each got a denarius. All the other workers saw this, (10) so when the first ones hired early in the morning came, they assumed they would be paid more. They were wrong. They each received a denarius, the same as the last ones hired.

(11) "After they each got their money from the foreman, they bypassed him and went straight to the land baron, (12) protesting, 'These 5 o'clock laborers only worked an hour, and you paid them the same as us. Since we're the ones who've been working in the hot sun all day, we should be paid more!'

(13) "In reply to the group's spokesman, the land baron said, 'Look man, I haven't done anything wrong here. Didn't we agree that you'd be paid a denarius? (14) Take your money and get off my property. I'm going to pay the last man the same as you. (15) I mean, this is my payroll, isn't it? By law, I can do whatever I want to with it, right? Or are you giving me the evil eye‡ because I am a generous employer?'

*Vs. 8: Judges 19:16 [#262].

† Vs. 8: **Leviticus** ²³⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ 19:13 [#263]; **Deuteronomy** ³⁵⁽¹⁰¹⁾ 24:15 [#264].

‡ Vs. 15: **Deuteronomy** ³⁶⁽¹⁰²⁾ 15:9 [#265].

(16) “So, it will be in God’s celestial Kingdom-Government: the first shall be last, and the last first.”

Jesus Predicts Manner of Death

(Chapter 20, verses 17-19)

(17) Preparing to go up to Jerusalem, Jesus led his disciples to a private area off the road and told them:

(18) “Comprehend what I’m about to tell you! We’re going up to Jerusalem, where the Son of Humanity will be taken into custody and tried by the chief priests and scribes.

“After that, he’ll receive the death penalty; (19) be turned over to the Gentile enemy of the Jews to be made fun of, terrorized and tormented, then nailed to the stake, after which he’ll die and be resurrected.”

Apostolic Power Move

(Chapter 20, verses 20-23)

(20) Then Zebedee’s wife, the mother of James and John (two of Jesus’ first four disciples), approached him with her sons, **bowing respectfully**¹⁸⁰ as she did, to make a request.

(21) Noticing her actions, he asked:

“What can I do for you?”

She responded:

“Give the order to have my two sons sit on either side of you when you assume rulership of God’s celestial Kingdom-Government.”

(22) Jesus directed his answer to her sons and said:

“You men don’t know what you’re asking. I just told all of you the horrible things about to happen to me.

“Can you deal with similar things happening to you?”

They said to him:

“We can handle it.”

(23) He countered:

“Make no mistake about it. Similar horrible things will indeed happen to you.

“But who sits where when I govern God’s Kingdom is my Father’s call, not mine.”

Jesus Condemns Ecclesiastical Politics

(Chapter 20, verses 24-28)

[ACADEMICS: Political Science, Separation of Church and State]

(24) When the other ten heard what James and John had requested, they were furious.

(25) To defuse the matter, Jesus immediately called a meeting and said:

“Since you are generally familiar with the **political apparatus**¹⁸¹ as it operates in non-Jewish nations, you know that worldly politicians exercise clout over citizens and that other powerful men flex influential muscle over people.

(26) “As prospective rulers in God’s celestial Kingdom-Government, don’t be like them. On the contrary, whoever wants to be great among you must be servant to the rest, **(27)** and whoever wants first place among you must be a slave to the group.

(28) “This same self-sacrificing spirit is in the Son of Humanity who came, not to be served, but to serve others, and to give his life as a ransom in exchange for those kidnapped by sin and death.”*

Jesus Restores Sight

(Chapter 20, verses 29-34)

(29) As they left Jericho, a large crowd followed him. **(30)** Look! There’s a couple of blind men sitting beside the road!

*Vs. 28: **Leviticus** ²⁴⁽¹⁰³⁾ 4:21 [#266].

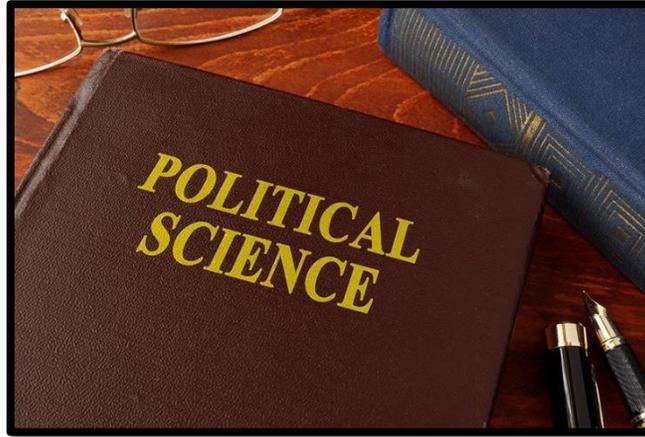


Figure 61: Political science.

See “political apparatus” endnote #181a in Matthew 20:25.
[Political Science | Programs | Lee College](#)

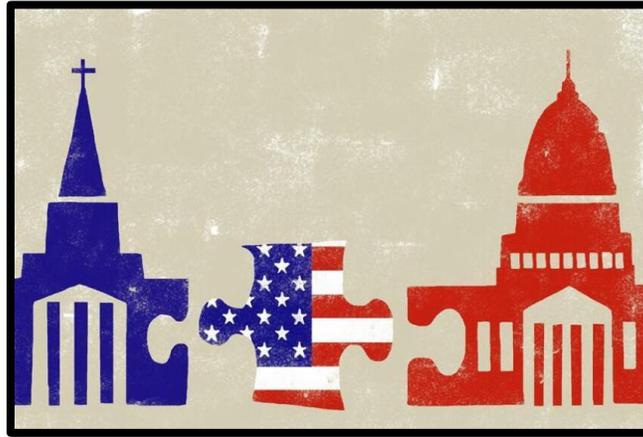


Figure 62: Separation of Church and State.

See “political apparatus” endnote #181b in Matthew 20:25.
[Breaching the Wall of Separation Between Church and State \(chronicle.com\)](#)

What's different about these blind men is that when they heard that Jesus was walking by, they yelled out above the bustle of the crowd, saying:

"Lord, have mercy on us, **Son of David!**¹⁸²"

(31) The embarrassed crowd told them to shut up. But instead, they screamed louder, making the same request:

"Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!"

(32) Jesus heard both men, stopped, turned, and asked:

"What do you want me to do for you?"

(33) They answered:

"Lord, cure our blindness."

(34) Moved by deep empathy, Jesus touched their eyes, curing them immediately, and they became his followers.

Chapter 21

MATTHEW 21:1-46

Jesus Sends for Beast of Burden

(Chapter 21, verses 1-5)

(1) When they got to Bethphage, which sits on the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem, Jesus sent out a couple of disciples,

(2) instructing them:

"Go to the village you see there. You'll find an donkey tied along with a colt. Untie them and bring them to me. **(3)** If anyone says anything, tell him, 'The Lord needs them,' then he'll immediately send them away with you."

(4) THIS HAPPENED SO THE SCRIPTURE COULD BE FULFILLED WHERE THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH WROTE:¹⁸³

(5) "Tell Zion's daughter, 'Notice! Your king is approaching,* but not like arrogant kings with a pompous entourage. He's a modest king, sitting on a humble donkey instead

* Vs. 5: Isaiah 62:11 [#267].

of a proud, pedigreed stallion; yes, upon a colt, the offspring of a beast of burden.”**

Jesus Enters Jerusalem Riding Animal

(Chapter 21, verses 6-11)

[THEOLOGY: Abrahamic Religions]

(6) So, the disciples left and did just as Jesus instructed.

(7) They brought the donkey and its colt and put sweater- and coat-like clothes upon them to serve as improvised saddles, and he sat upon them.†

(8) Most of the crowd spread their outer garments‡ on the road as if to welcome a dignitary, while others got sickles and started cutting down tree branches, laying them on the road.

(9) Some were going ahead of him, shouting:

“**Long live the king!**”¹⁸⁴ **we pray,**[§] this Son of King David!”**

Those behind him were saying the same thing:

“God bless the man that comes in *Yehowah's*¹⁸⁵ name!††
We pray, in the highest heaven, ‘God save the king!’”

(10) All this hoopla happened before he even entered Jerusalem so that when he actually got into the city, everyone there was in a **frenzy**,¹⁸⁶ asking each other:

“Who is this guy?”

(11) Others kept answering:

“This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee!”

* Vs. 5: Zechariah 9:9 [#268].

† Vs. 7: 1 Kings 1:38 [#269].

‡ Vs. 8: 2 Kings 9:13 [#270].

§ Vs. 9: Psalm 118:25 [e#271].

** Vs. 9: 1 Kings 1:39, 40 [#272].

†† Vs. 9: Psalm 118:26 [#273].

Jesus Ejects Money Changers

(Chapter 21, verses 12-14)

(12) A young, strong, angry Jesus entered the temple and aggressively forced out everyone buying and selling there.¹⁸⁷

He was furious!

He flipped over the money changers' tables (coins went flying everywhere!), then kicked over the benches the dove-sellers were comfortably sitting on.

(13) He told them all:

“The **Hebrew Scriptures**¹⁸⁸ say, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer.* But since you all cheat people, you’re effectively converting it into a secret hangout where robbers meet.’”[†]

(14) While he was there in the temple, persons who were blind and disabled maneuvered their way to him, and he cured them.

Religious Leaders Criticize Jesus

(Chapter 21, verses 15-17)

(15) When the religious leaders witnessed Jesus’ wonderful works and little boys singing in the temple, “‘Long live the king!’ we pray,[‡] this **Son of King David!**”¹⁸⁹ they became outraged **(16)** and asked:

“Do you hear what these small boys are saying?”

Jesus answered:

“Yes, I do.

* Vs. 13: 2 Chronicles 6:33 [#274]; Isaiah 56:7 [#275].

† Vs. 13: Jeremiah 7:11 [#276].

‡ Vs. 15: Psalm 118:25 [#277].

“Didn’t you men ever read the psalmist’s song—**David’s melody**¹⁹⁰—where it goes, ‘You’ve caused a beautiful song of praise to come out of the mouths of infants and toddlers?’”*

(17) Jesus didn’t wait for an answer. He just turned and walked away, going to the nearby city of Bethany, where he spent the night.

Jesus Disenchanted with Fig Tree

(Chapter 21, verses 18-22)

(18) While returning with his disciples on his way back to Jerusalem early the next morning, Jesus got hungry.

(19) Conveniently, he saw the green-leaved, healthy, robust, bushy-looking fig tree by the road and expectantly went over to it.

He naturally thought the low-to-the-ground plant would have many hunger-satisfying figs on it.

But, after rummaging through the foliage at the top and bending down to check the lower half of the tree, he disappointingly found only leaves.

Not one fig!

To the deceptive, unproductive tree, he said:

“You won’t disappoint hungry travelers anymore! Your fig-bearing days are over for good.”

And the fig tree instantly withered.

(20) When the disciples saw it, they wondered aloud:

“How did the robust fig tree wither so fast?”

(21) Jesus answered:

“For a certainty, if you have faith with no doubt, not only will you do what I did to the fig tree, but you can tell a mountain, ‘Arise and be hurled into the sea,’ and it’ll happen. (22)

* Vs. 16: Psalm 8:2 [#277].

For everything you ask for in prayer, having faith, you'll receive."

Jesus' "Credentials" Challenged

(Chapter 21, verses 23-27)

(23) Now, after he went into the temple and started teaching, two groups of religious leaders (the chief priests and the elders) approached and asked:

"What are you doing teaching here? Do you have the proper credentials? And if so, what duly authorized institution issued them?"*

(24) Jesus replied:

"I tell you what, you answer my questions first, and then I'll answer yours.

(25) "Who authorized John to baptize people? Was it by divine appointment, or did he receive credentials from an accredited institution?"

They huddled up and began deliberating among themselves, saying:

"If we say, 'by divine appointment,' he'll say, 'Why, then, didn't you believe him?' **(26)** And if we say, 'He received credentials from an accredited institution,' we have the crowds to fear because they believe John was God's prophet, and not just an ordinary educated man."

(27) So, in reply to Jesus, they said,

"Those are tough questions. We don't know the answer."

So, Jesus said to them:

"Well, then, I'm not going to answer yours either."

* Vs. 23: **Exodus** ²⁵⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ 2:14 [#278].

Two Sons Sent to Vineyard

(Chapter 21, verses 28-32)

(28) [To the religious leaders he asked]:

“What do you think: a man had two sons. Approaching the first one, he said, ‘Son, go work on the farm today.’ **(29)** But the first one said, ‘No way.’ However, after refusing, he felt bad and went to work on the farm anyway.

(30) “Going to the second one, he said the same thing. The second son said, ‘I’ll do it, sir,’ but didn’t follow up. He never went to work on the farm.

(31) “Which of these two did what his father wanted?”

They said:

“The first.”

Jesus replied:

“I guarantee you; the hated tax collectors and the **despised prostitutes**¹⁹¹ are going ahead of you into the kingdom of God.

(32) “Here’s why:

“John came to you as a righteous man, but you didn’t believe him. On the other hand, the tax collectors—who you view as traitors—and the prostitutes did.

“And even though you observed their humble belief, you still didn’t feel any regret and start to believe him.”

Wicked Cultivators

(Chapter 21, verses 33-41)

(33) “Listen and learn from another story with a moral:

“A prosperous businessman planted a grape vineyard, built a wall around it, and dug a hole in the ground to press out juice from the grapes.

“Wine would be made from this juice.

“He also built a lookout tower.*

“Eventually, he rented the vineyard out to experienced tenant farmers and traveled overseas.

(34) “When the season came for the grapes to ripen, he sent three slaves to get his share of the crop.

“That was the agreement.

(35) “However, the tenant farmers beat up one slave, killed another, and stoned the other.†

(36) “So, the businessman sent other slaves, more this time, but the tenant farmers did the same to these.‡

(37) “Finally, he sent his very own son, reasoning, ‘They’ll respect my son.’

(38) “On recognizing the son, the tenant farmers huddled together and said, ‘This son of his will inherit everything. Kill him, and we’ll get his inheritance!’

(39) “So, they grabbed him, slung him into the vineyard, and killed him.

(40) “Now, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what do you think he’ll do with the tenant farmers?”

(41) They said:

“Because they’re wicked men who brutalized and killed, he’ll brutalize and kill them also,§ after which he’ll get new tenant farmers to rent to; ones who’ll give him his fair crop share when the season comes.”

Jesus Christ as Stumbling Stone

(Chapter 21, verses 42-46)

(42) Jesus said to the religious leaders:

* Vs. 33: Isaiah 5:2 [#279]; Jeremiah 2:21 [#280].

† Vs. 35: Nehemiah 9:26 [#281].

‡ Vs. 36: 2 Chronicles 36:15 [#282].

§ Vs. 41: Zechariah 12:2 [#283].

“Since you’re supposed to know the Scriptures, didn’t you ever read where it says, ‘The stone that builders rejected* is the very one that has become the chief cornerstone. *Yehowah*¹⁹² orchestrated this, and we see it as a beautiful sight’?

(43) “This is why I’m saying to you, God will take the earthly interests of his celestial Kingdom-Government away from you and give it to a nation producing the fruitful results he wants to see.

(44) “That’s not all.

“The person tripping on this stone will shatter every bone in his body, and the person that the stone falls on will be crushed beyond recognition.”

(45) Now, when the religious leaders—the chief priests and Pharisees—heard and comprehended the word pictures Jesus painted, they realized he was talking about them.

(46) They wanted to physically assault him but refrained from doing so because of the crowd’s reverence of him, believing that he was a prophet.

Chapter 22

MATTHEW 22:1-46

King’s Marriage Feast for Son

(Chapter 22, verses 1-14)

[WAR COLLEGE: Military Strategy]

(1) Jesus wasn’t finished with them yet. He continued with further illustrations, saying:

(2) “The celestial Kingdom-Government has become like a man, a king that threw an elaborate wedding for his son. (3)

* Vs. 42: Psalm 118:22, 23 [#284].

As an added personal touch, the monarch sent out messengers to summon the invited, but they snubbed him.

(4) “Undeterred, he sent out a second group of messengers with these instructions, ‘Tell those who accepted my invitation: “You’ve got to see this! I have an incredible spread here. Beef steaks and an assortment of other meat from well-fed animals. Everything is ready, so come on to this classy occasion!”’

(5) “But the aristocrats, his so-called friends, snubbed him again, going off instead to check on fields or commercial businesses they owned.

(6) “Others that ignored the invitation grabbed his messengers, mistreated them, and killed them. (7) Unsurprisingly, this greatly angered the king, so he sent his **armies**,¹⁹³ who slaughtered the murderers and burned their city.

(8) “With that settled, he now told his messengers, ‘The wedding feast is still ready, but it was too classy for those ingrates. (9) Therefore, find anyone leaving the city by the exit roads and invite these strangers to the marriage festivities.’

(10) “As ordered, the messenger-servants went to the roads leading out of the city and gathered all they found, bad and good. There were so many that when they came, they packed the party room as they laid back at the banquet table.

(11) “When the king came to inspect his guests, a man not dressed for the occasion caught his eye. (12) So, he said to him, ‘Man, how did you get in here dressed like that?’ The man responded with stunned silence.



Figure 63: Ancient Roman army.

See “armies” endnote #193a in Matthew 22:7.
[Roman Legionary - World History Encyclopedia](#)

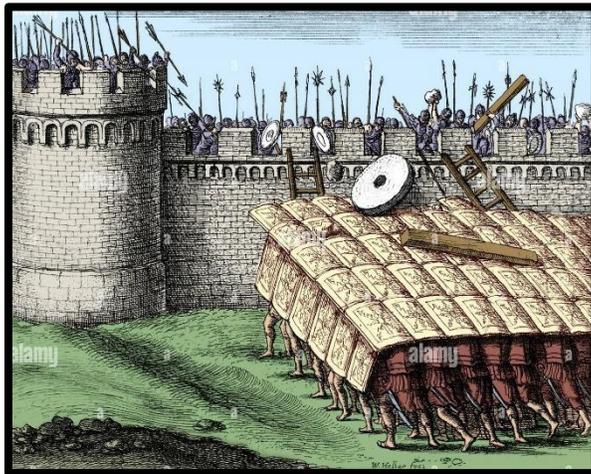


Figure 64: Ancient Roman army strategy.

See “armies” endnote #193b in Matthew 22:7.
[Roman legion hi-res stock photography and images - Alamy](#)

(13) “Then the king told the attendants, “Tie his hands and feet and throw him into the darkness outside. He’ll be so vexed that he’ll weep bitterly, frowning and **clenching his teeth**¹⁹⁴ as he does.”*

(14) “You see, I overbooked on purpose. There are many invited to the festivities, but only a few are actually chosen to remain.”

Pharisees and Herodians Challenge Jesus

(Chapter 22, verses 15-22)

[POLICE SCIENCE: Facial Recognition/Graphology]

(15) Then, the Pharisees called a private meeting to discuss a strategy that would seriously embarrass Jesus during his public preaching.

(16) When they finished the meeting, they sent their advanced students, along with the politically minded Herodians (typically enemies of the Pharisees), to Jesus, saying:

“Teacher, we know you say things exactly as they are, teaching only God’s truth, and, in so doing, you couldn’t care less about what anyone thinks of you.

“Furthermore, it doesn’t matter to you what **the surface skin color of a person’s face**¹⁹⁵ is.

(17) “So, please, answer this question for us: Does divine **Hebrew law**[†] dictate that we pay head tax to the pagan Emperor, Caesar?”

(18) But Jesus, aware of their cunning, said:

“Why are you trying to test me, hypocrites? (19) Show me a coin.”

They approached and gave him a denarius.

(20) He then asked:

* Vs. 13: Psalm 112:10 [#285].

† Vs. 17, **Hebrew law**, may be implied.

(30) “In the heavenly resurrection, there won’t be marriage ceremonies where the groom waits for his prospective bride to be given away. Men and women resurrected to heaven will be like angels who don’t marry.

(31) “As for those resurrected to earthly life, didn’t you read where God spoke through Moses, saying, (32) ‘I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?’*

“That’s why it’s as if they never died.

“They’re still alive to him, as if they were still present here on earth. For he is a God of the living, not the dead.”

(33) The listening crowd was astounded as they pondered Jesus’ words.

Sadducees Collude with Pharisees

(Chapter 22, verses 34-40)

(34) After the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees—muzzling them completely—they joined forces to take him on.

(35) A seasoned attorney from among them, a **doctor of the Law**,¹⁹⁸ stepped to Jesus with a test question:

(36) “Teacher, which is the greatest Law commandment?”

(37) Jesus answered:

“‘You must love **Yehowah**⁺¹⁹⁹ your God with your whole heart, soul, and mind.’ (38) This is both the greatest and the first commandment.

(39) “But there’s a second ‘greatest’ commandment. Like the first, it reads, ‘You must love your neighbor as yourself.’‡

(40) “Both the Mosaic Law that you Sadducees accept (to the exclusion of the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures); and the

* Vs. 32, **Exodus** 3:6 ²⁶⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ [#290].

† Vs. 37, **Deuteronomy** ³⁸⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ 6:5 [#291]; **Deuteronomy** ³⁹⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ 10:12 [#292].

‡ Vs. 39: **Leviticus** ²⁵⁽¹¹⁰⁾ 19:18 [#293].

portion of Scripture embraced by you Pharisees written by prophets who came after Moses (along with your acceptance of the Mosaic Law), hinge on these two commandments.

Jesus Confronts Pharisees

(Chapter 22, verses 41-46)

(41) Jesus happened to catch the Pharisees, who were lurking behind the scenes, alone. Neither the Herodians nor the Sadducees were with them this time. He asked:

(42) “What do you think about the Christ? Who’s his father?”

They replied:

“David.”

(43) He probed further:

“How can it be, then, that under the influence of God’s **holy spirit**,^{*200} David calls him ‘Lord,’ saying, **(44)** ‘*Yehowah*’^{†201} said to my Lord: “Sit to the right of me until I place your enemies under your feet”?”

(45) “If then, under inspiration, David addresses him as ‘Lord,’ how can Christ be his son?”

(46) That did it. He shut the Pharisees up for good. No one, Pharisee or not, even considered challenging him from that day forward.

Chapter 23

MATTHEW 23:1-39

Jesus Castigates Religious Leaders for Hypocrisy

(Chapter 23, verses 1-36)

(1) After stunning the scribes and Pharisees into silence, Jesus spoke to the crowds and his disciples, saying:

* Vs. 43: 2 Samuel 23:2 [#294].

† Vs. 44: Psalm 110:1 [#295].

(2) “Because of their keen, accurate knowledge of the Mosaic Law, the scribes and Pharisees have assumed the authority of Moses and have effectively sat in his judgment seat.*

(3) “Therefore, hear what they have to say and follow their instructions,[†] but don’t do what they do[‡] because they say the right things but don’t do them.

(4) “They package heavy burdens and hoist them upon the common man’s shoulders while they don’t give a thought to offering a finger to help.

(5) “They’re motivated to do good works **in public**,²⁰² only to receive praise from others. Knowing they’ll have the public’s attention, they enlarge the otherwise **small leather cases**²⁰³—strapped on the forehead and the back of the hand[§]—where Scripture verses are inserted into.

And their tassels** were elongated.

(6) “They like sitting in the ‘Very Important Person’ (VIP) section at elaborate dining affairs, and in the front row of synagogues.

(7) “At the mall or marketplaces, they expect people to address them with the impressive religious title, ‘Rabbi.’

(8) “But don’t go by such titles.

“Only one is your ultimate religious leader here on earth, and all of you are brothers.

(9) “Therefore, in this religious context, don’t call anyone ‘Father’ on earth. You already have a ‘Papa,’ and he’s in heaven.

* Vs. 2: **Exodus** ²⁷⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ 18:13 [#296].

† Vs. 3: Malachi 2:7 [#297].

‡ Vs. 3: Malachi 2:8 [#298].

§ Vs. 5: **Deuteronomy** ⁴⁰⁽¹¹⁰⁾ 6:8 [#299].

** Vs. 5: **Numbers** ⁷⁽¹¹¹⁾ 15:38 [#300]; **Deuteronomy** ⁴¹⁽¹¹²⁾ 22:12 [#301].

(10) “Neither be called ‘great master teacher-guides,’ for your Great Master Teacher-Guide here on earth is one, the Christ.

(11) “If you want to become the greatest among your brothers, become their slave.

(12) “Whoever greedily seeks greatness will suffer humiliation. Intriguingly, though, whoever genuinely humbles himself through self-discipline, excellence will be inescapable for him.

(13) “Damn you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You slam shut the gate leading to the celestial Kingdom-Government open to all men. You refuse to enter, and you prevent others from entering. (14) —.²⁰⁴

(15) “Damn you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You sail the open sea and cross dry land to make one convert.

“As wicked as you are, you make him you times two!

“You’ve created someone who’ll reach Gehenna twice as fast as you.

(16) “Be damned, spiritually sightless tour guides who declare, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it can be brushed off. But if anyone swears by the gold in the temple, take him seriously.’

(17) “Spiritually blind morons! Which one is more important, the gold or the temple that has sanctified the gold?*

(18) “You say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, don’t worry about it. But if anyone swears by the expensive gift on the altar, he must pay up.’

(19) “Spiritually blind people! Which is more important the expensive gift or the altar[†] that makes the gift holy?

* Vs. 17: **Exodus** ²⁸⁽¹¹³⁾ 30:29 [#302].

† Vs. 19: **Exodus** ²⁹⁽¹¹⁴⁾ 29:37 [#303].

(20) “Therefore, the person that swears by the altar swears by it and everything on it.

(21) “And the person that swears by the temple swears by it and him who inhabits it.*

(22) “Likewise, the person that swears by heaven itself swears by God’s throne, and God who sits on that throne.

(23) “Damn you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [Why do I say this?] Because you follow the Mosaic Law by meticulously offering small, lightweight amounts of herbs—like a tenth of the mint, dill, and cumin[†]—but completely and purposefully ignore more significant aspects of the Law that carry much more weight, like justice and mercy and faithfulness.

(24) “You’re nothing less than sightless spiritual guides who strain out the small unclean gnat[‡] but eat the large unclean camel![§]

(25) “Damn you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [Why do I sound so harsh?] Because you clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside, they are filled with decadence and pleasure-seeking.

(26) “Pharisee, who lacks spiritual vision, clean first the inside of the cup and dish, then the outside.

(27) “Damn you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [Why do I put it this way?] Because you’re like beautiful, newly sanitized gravestones that sparkle on the outside** but on the

* Vs. 21: 1 Kings 8:13 [#304]; Psalm 11:4 [#305]; Psalm 26:11 [#306]; Psalm 132:14 [#307].

[†] Vs. 23: **Leviticus** ^{26[115]} 27:30 [#308].

[‡] Vs. 24: **Leviticus** ^{27[116]} 11:42 [#309].

[§] Vs. 24: **Leviticus** ^{28[117]} 11:4 [#310].

** Vs. 27: **Deuteronomy** ^{42[118]} 27:4 [#311].

inside are full of putrid, rotten, rancid, foul-spelling dead men's bones.

(28) "Oh, you look all righteous and pious on the outside, but inside, you're full of hypocrisy. Also, you completely disregard God's Law through Moses.

(29) "Damn you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [Why do I sound so mean?] Because you build monuments on the ancient graves of faithful prophets that still exist today and decorate the memorial tombs of righteous ones of long ago (30) and then proceed to say, 'If we lived back in the days of our forefathers, then we would not have been party to killing faithful prophets.'

(31) "[Don't you get it?] By saying this, you're confessing to being sons of the very ones who murdered the prophets.

(32) "Well, continue acting like the generations of your prophet-murdering forefathers who preceded you!

(33) "You're no good lowdown dirty snakes, and, unsurprisingly, the line of forefathers you just mentioned was belly-crawling snakes too.*

"In fact, you're the latest manifestation of generations of no-good lowdown scummy prophet-killing serpents. With this legacy, how could you possibly escape the inevitable judgment of Gehenna?

(34) "For this reason, I'm sending faithful men to pronounce judgment on you: prophets, wise men, and **educated scribes** who teach publicly.

"Oh, some of them you'll kill.

"Others you'll hang, fastening them to poles.

"With still others, you'll torment and terrorize them in your synagogues, persecuting them in city after city.

* Vs. 33: **Genesis** ¹⁵⁽¹¹⁹⁾ 3:15 [#312].

(35) “By taking such actions against these faithful men, you’ve effectively murdered all those like them in the past when your deadly actions are combined with those of your forefathers,’ as you all collectively spilled righteous blood from Abel* to Zechariah, Barachiah’s son, whom you murdered in the opening between the sanctuary and altar.

(36) “Mark my words, this generation will experience all the damnations I’ve proclaimed.†

Jesus’ Heartbreak Over Jerusalem

(Chapter 23, verses 37-39)

(37) “Dear Jerusalem, O Sweet Jerusalem, you became a prophet-killer and executer of other godly men sent forth.‡

“So often I yearned to gather your children together, just like a hen gathers her chicks under her wings!§ But you would have none of it.

(38) “Now look at you! Finally, your time has come. The destruction of your house is closer** than you think.

“God has left the building!

(39) “I’m telling you right here and now, from this moment on, you won’t ever see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he that comes in *Yehowah’s*††205 name!’”

* Vs. 35: **Genesis** 16(120) 4:10 [#313].

† Vs. 36: **Exodus** 30(121) 20:5 [#314].

‡ Vs. 37: 2 Chronicles 23:37 [#315].

§ Vs. 37: Psalm 91:4 [#316].

** Vs. 38: 1 Kings 9:7 [#317]; Jeremiah 12:7 [#318]; Jeremiah 22:5 [#319].

†† Vs. 39, Psalm 118:26 [#320].

Chapter 24

MATTHEW 24:1-51

Jesus Foretells Temple's Destruction²⁰⁶

(Chapter 24, verses 1-3)

(1) After saying these things, Jesus left the temple itself and was now leaving the compound.

But before he could leave the complex, his disciples stopped him.

Being greatly vexed and disturbed about what he said concerning Jerusalem and its 'building' being destroyed, they drew his attention to the beautiful buildings of the temple area and asked,

"These aren't really going to be destroyed, are they?"

(2) Jesus answered:

"Believe what I'm saying as if it has already happened:

"Not only will this entire area be leveled, but you won't even be able to find one stone inadvertently left atop another."*

(3) Later, when he was sitting by himself on the Mount of Olives, the disciples [still bothered by the news of the temple's destruction] approached him in private, asking:

"[We know you didn't mention it to your public audience], but give us, your disciples, some answers:

"When will the Jewish religion end as represented by the temple? What will be the sign of your **presence**²⁰⁷ in connection with the conclusion of the Jewish secular world order?"

End Times Indicators

(Chapter 24, verses 4-8)

(4) Jesus answered:

* Vs. 2: Jeremiah 7:14 [#321]; Jeremiah 26:18 [#322]; Micah 3:12 [#323].

“First off, be very careful. Don’t let anyone fool you* regarding the sign of my presence as the Christ.

(5) “There’ll be many people adopting my name, going around saying, ‘I’m the new Savior, the Christ-like Messianic figure of our day,’ and lots of gullible people looking for answers in life will be misled.

(6) “You and these same people will hear of troubling domestic wars close to home and international wars far away.

“See to it that you’re not terrified.

“These things are a prelude to the end but don’t constitute the end itself. There’s more to it than this.

(7) “One ethnic group will be stirred up against another, and one government will be roused against another.

“There’ll be worldwide food shortages and earthquakes everywhere.

(8) “All these things jump-start very distressful times.

When Bad News is Good News

(Chapter 24, verses 9-14)

[EARTH SCIENCE: Geographical Topography]

(9) “People will cause you all kinds of trouble and will even kill you. And because you’re my followers, you’ll be targeted by haters from all **ethnic**²⁰⁸ groups.

(10) “Then, also, many will become disillusioned and sorely disappointed. As a result, they’ll resort to betraying one another and hating each other.

(11) “While people search for answers, many false prophets will arise, and allure countless persons with their deception.

(12) “And because of spiking crime the world over, natural love that most people have had for their fellowman will dissipate and turn to distrust.

(13) “But the person that has endured until God’s celestial Kingdom-Government annihilates global systemic wicked-

ness will be saved.

(14) “This good news* about the things that God’s celestial Kingdom-Government will accomplish will be preached **globally**²⁰⁹ as a testimony to all ethnic groups.† After that, the worldwide incapacitated system of things in its present form will end.

Emergency Procedures

(Chapter 24, verses 15-22)

(15) “So, when you see the revolting thing‡ that causes despair, just as prophet Daniel described, standing in the sanctuary§ (note: let the reader really discern and comprehend what’s being said), (16) then let my followers living in Judea begin heading for the hills right away.

(17) “[This is how urgent it is that you flee immediately.] If a man is relaxing in his yard outside, he shouldn’t go inside to pack his clothes.

(18) “If he’s at his job, working away from home, neither should he try to return home to pack his clothes.

(19) “As for women, well, the pregnant woman and the nursing mother will really have a hard time in those days as they leave Judea and head for the mountains.

* Vs. 14: Isaiah 52:7 [#325].

† Vs. 14: Daniel 2:44 [#326].

‡ Vs. 15: **Deuteronomy** ⁴³⁽¹²²⁾ 29:17 [#327]; 1 Kings 11:5 [#328].

(20) “So, pray continually that your hasty flight doesn’t happen in the cold of winter. This is especially so since you wouldn’t have had time to pack warm clothes.

“Pray that it doesn’t occur on the Sabbath [since the city gates are closed and locked].

(21) “For then, a world encompassing, apocalyptic, catastrophic event will transpire that has never happened before nor will occur again [on an earth filled with willfully wicked people suffering genetically from millennia of Adamic sin²¹⁰].

(22) “This incident will be so bad that if it weren’t cut short by God, all human and animal life would die.

“But because God’s specially chosen ones* alive at the time, the days of the world encompassing, apocalyptic, catastrophic collective event will be truncated.

False Rumors

(Chapter 24, verses 23-28)

(23) “So, if any one person excitedly says to you, my disciples, ‘Look! The Christ is here,’ or, ‘There he is over there!’ don’t believe it.

(24) “Oh, there’ll be gifted men that’ll rise above the others, but they’re still false Christs and false prophets,[†] saying and doing things so impressive that, if it were possible, they’d even mislead the special chosen ones.

(25) “Listen carefully! I’m warning you ahead of time.

(26) “Therefore, if a group of people say to you with enthusiasm, ‘Look! He’s in that remote, desolate place,’ don’t go there. Or ‘Look! He’s in the sacred inner chambers,’ don’t fall for it.

* Vs. 22: Isaiah 65:8 [#332].

† Vs. 24: **Deuteronomy** ⁴⁴⁽¹²³⁾ 13:1-5 [#333].

(27) “Because just as **lightning**^{*211} comes from the east but shines in the west, the presence of the Son of Humanity will seem like he’s one place but will be in another.[†]

(28) “[But my disciples will know where I am and gather around me], just as eagles know where the carcass is and gather around it.

Celestial Sign

(Chapter 24, verses 29-31)

(29) “Immediately after the collective catastrophic event in those days, the sun and moon will go dark;[‡] the stars will drop from the sky; and the powers of heaven itself will be shaken.

(30) “This will be the introduction of the appearance of the heavenly sign of the Son of Humanity.[§]

“Then all the individual tribes of the earth will pound their breasts in grief and regret^{**} and will figuratively see the Son of Humanity coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great, luminous glory.^{††}

(31) “And he’ll dispatch his angels with a great trumpet sound,^{‡‡} and they’ll gather his special chosen ones together from the east, west, north, and south—from all over the earth; from one end of heaven to the other.

* Vs. 27: Job 7:28 [#3334].

† Vs. 27: Daniel 7:13 [#335].

‡ Vs. 29: Joel 2:31 [#336].

§ Vs. 30: Daniel 7:13 [#337].

** Vs. 30: Zechariah 12:23 [#338].

†† Vs. 30: Daniel 7:14 #339].

‡‡ Vs. 31: Isaiah 27:13 [#340].

Jesus' Nearness

(Chapter 24, verses 32-35)

(32) "Now, learn from the fig tree as I illustrate my point: Just as soon as its young branch grows and sprouts leaves, you know summer's just around the corner.

(33) "Likewise, when you see everything I've detailed here, know that the Son of Humanity is near at the doors.

(34) "I speak truthfully when I say that the generation of earth's doomed individual tribes, the ones I just mentioned, will not perish until all these things happen. (35) Heaven and earth will perish before ever my words fail.

Be Alert

(Chapter 24, verses 36-44)

[METEOROLOGY: Cataclysm]

(36) "Only the Father knows the day and hour of destruction. The heavenly angels don't know. Neither does the Son himself know.

(37) "Recall how the days of Noah* were? That's how the presence of the Son of Humanity will be.

(38) "In the days preceding the **Flood**,²¹² people were going about their daily routine of eating and drinking. Men were marrying as women were being given in marriage, right up until the day that Noah[†] entered the ark.

(39) "They didn't notice a thing until the Flood came and swept them all away.[‡] This is precisely how it will be with the presence of the Son of Humanity.

[It's going to catch people by surprise!]

* Vs. 37: **Genesis** ¹⁷⁽¹²⁴⁾ 6:11 [#341].

† Vs. 38: **Genesis** ¹⁸⁽¹²⁵⁾ 7:7 [#342].

‡ Vs. 39: **Genesis** ¹⁹⁽¹²⁶⁾ 7:23 [#343]

(40) “Two men will be at work during this time. One will be taken along by recognizable truth and act on it, while the other will be content with the status quo and left to his daily way of living.

(41) “While two women engage in domestic work,* one will be taken along by recognizable truth and act on it while the other will be content with the status quo and left to her daily way of living.

(42) “Stay alert, therefore, because you don’t know the day your Lord will suddenly appear.

(43) “Understand that if the man of the house had known about what time the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and prevented his house from being burglarized.

(44) “Be like that man. Be ready. Because at an hour that you don’t think it will happen, that’s precisely when the Son of Humanity comes.

The Sensible Servant

(Chapter 24, verses 45-47)

(45) “Who, without a doubt, is the loyal and sensible servant who the Lord of the household estate put in charge of the other domestic workers to distribute their food at the regularly scheduled time?

(46) “That servant will be a happy man if the master of the estate arrives unexpectedly and finds him working responsibly.

(47) “I’m being real when I say that the master will put him in charge of all his extensive possessions.

* Vs. 41: Isaiah 47:2 [#344].

The Sinister Servant

(Chapter 24, verses 48-51)

(48) “But if ever that loyal servant turns sinister and says in his heart,*

“‘My boss won’t be coming anytime soon,’ **(49)** and start to brutally mistreat his fellow slaves and then socialize by eating and drinking with incorrigible drunkards, **(50)** the master will come unexpectedly on any given day, at an unknown hour, **(51)** and will brutalize that sinister servant and throw him in with the hypocrites.

“There is where his agonized crying and unbearable anguish—manifested by grinding his teeth (**bruxism**²¹³)—will take place.”†

Chapter 25

MATTHEW 25:1-46

Five Fickle and Five Fair Females

(Chapter 25, verses 1-13)

(1) “The celestial Kingdom-Government could be comparable to ten virgins that took lamps with them as they went out to meet the bridegroom.

(2) “Five were fickle, and five were fair or perceptive. **(3)** The fickle took their lamps but didn’t take oil to light them.

(4) The perceptive, however, took a backup supply of oil in their receptacles along with their lamps.

(5) “The bridegroom took a long time, so they all nodded off and eventually fell asleep.

* Vs. 48: Ecclesiastes 8:11 [#345].

† Vs. 51, Psalm 112:10 [#346].

(6) “In the dead of night, someone yelled, ‘The bridegroom is here! Go out to meet him.’ (7) So, they all got up and put their lamps in order.

(8) “The fickle females said to the perceptive ones, ‘Give us some of your backup oil because our lamps are almost out.’

(9) But the perceptive ones replied, ‘There might not be enough for all of us if we do that. Instead, you should buy some from the people who sell it.’

(10) “In the meantime, the bridegroom arrived while they were on their way to buy oil. The perceptive virgins who were ready went with him into the marriage feast, and the door was closed behind them.

(11) “Afterwards, the fickle virgins came, anxiously requesting, ‘Sir, sir, please open the door!’ (12) He answered, ‘Believe me when I say I don’t know any of you.’

(13) “Stay alert, therefore, because you don’t know the day or the hour.

Businessman and Advisors

(Chapter 25, verses 14-18)

(14) “It’s like when a wealthy business executive is about to go overseas.

“He calls a business meeting with his financial advisors and gives them money to invest for him.

(15) “He gave one five highly valued silver coins, to another two, and to yet another, one. The coinage he gave matched each advisor’s business acumen.

“He then went abroad.

(16) “Right away, the one that got five conducted business and gained five more. (17) Likewise, the one that received two gained two more.*

(18) “But the one that received just one went off, dug a hole in the ground, and buried the executive’s highly valued silver coin.

First Two Financial Advisors Rewarded

(Chapter 25, verses 19-23)

(19) “After some time, the wealthy business executive returned from his trip abroad. He then checked in on his financial advisors to see how well his investments performed.

(20) “So, the one that received five silver coins came forward and produced five additional ones, explaining, ‘Sir, you entrusted me with five valuable silver coins, and, as you can see, I gained five more.’

(21) “The executive said to him, ‘Good job, you trusted advisor! Since you were trustworthy with this smaller matter,[†] I’ll give you even greater responsibilities.[‡] Celebrate the fact that you have my vote of confidence!’

(22) “Next, the one that received two silver coins approached and said, ‘Sir, you gave me two silver coins. As you can see, I gained two more.’

(23) “The executive said to him, ‘Good job, you trusted advisor! Since you were trustworthy with this smaller matter, I’ll give you even greater responsibilities. Bask in the fact that you have my vote of confidence!’

* Vs. 16: Proverbs 10:4 [#247].

† Vs. 21: Proverbs 28:20 [#348].

‡ Vs. 21: Proverbs 12:24 [#349].

Third Advisor Banished

(Chapter 25, verses 24-30)

(24) “Finally, the financial advisor that received one silver coin came forward and explained, ‘Sir, I have known you to be a hardcore businessman who conducts hostile takeovers and who orchestrates aggressively leveraged buyouts. (25) Since these tactics intimidate me, I safely buried your valuable silver coin in the ground. Here it is, safe and sound.’

(26) “The executive replied, ‘You wicked, sly, and spineless employee! So, you knew me to be a hardcore businessman who conducts hostile takeovers and orchestrates aggressively leveraged buyouts?’

(27) “In that case, you should’ve deposited my money with the bankers, and on my arrival, I would’ve received both my money and the accrued interest.

(28) “Given the circumstances,” now directing his attention to his enforcers, “take the silver coin from him and give it to the one with ten coins.

(29) “For everyone that has, even more, will be given, and he will have a stockpile of goods.

“But as for the one that doesn’t have much, even what little he has underhandedly accumulated will be confiscated.

(30) “Throw that slick, unproductive employee into the darkness outside.

“He’ll be so vexed that he’ll experience agonizing **bruxism (grinding of teeth)**.^{*214}

* Vs. 30: Psalm 112:10 [#350].



Figure 65: Gymnastics.

See “waring a threadbare garment” endnote #216a in Matthew 25:38.
[Women's Artistic • USA Gymnastics](#)



Figure 66: Plato's academy.

See “waring a threadbare garment” endnote #216b in Matthew 25:38.
[Academy of athens, greece. Neoclassical academy of athens in greece showing main building and statues of ancient greek | CanStock \(canstockphoto.com\)](#)

Sheep Separated from Goats

(Chapter 25, verses 31-33)

(31) “When the Son of Humanity* arrives in all his glory along with all the angels with him, he’ll sit on his glorious throne.

(32) “At that time, all **ethnic**²¹⁵ groups will be gathered before him, and he’ll then separate people[†] one from the other just as a shepherd separates sheep from goats.

(33) He’ll put the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left.

Sheep Praised

(Chapter 25, verses 34-40)

[ACADEMICS: Physical Education/Gymnastics]

(34) “Then the king will invite those on his right, ‘Come, you who my Father[‡] has blessed, inherit the celestial Kingdom-Government prepared for you from when the world was founded.

(35) “For I became hungry, and you fed me,[§] I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in, (36) wearing rags,^{**} and you clothed me. I got sick, and you took care of me. I was imprisoned, and you visited me.’

(37) “Then those righteous ones will respond, ‘Lord, we don’t recall seeing you hungry, feeding you, or thirsty, and giving you something to drink. When did all this happen? (38) When was it that you were a stranger, and we took you in, or

* Vs. 31: Daniel 7:13 [#351].

† Vs. 32: Ezekiel 34:17 [#352].

‡ Vs. 34: Psalm 115:15 [#353].

§ Vs. 35: Isaiah 58:7 [#354]; Ezekiel 18:16 [#355].

** Vs. 36: Ezekiel 18:7 [#356].

wearing a threadbare garment,²¹⁶ and clothed you? (39) When did we see you sick and imprisoned and visited you?’

(40) “And in reply, the king will answer them, ‘Rest assured when I say this, To the extent that you did it to the most unassuming of these my brothers,* you did it to me.’

Goats Sentenced

(Chapter 25, verses 41-46)

(41) “Then he’ll turn his attention to those on his left, saying, ‘Be gone from me, cursed ones, into the perpetual fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.

(42) “For I became hungry, but you didn’t feed me;† I was thirsty, but you gave me nothing to drink.‡

(43) “I was a stranger, but you showed me no hospitality; wearing rags, but you offered me no clothes;§ sick and in prison, but you didn’t look after me.’

(44) “Then they’ll respond, ‘Whoa! Lord, we don’t recall seeing you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or in need of clothing or sick or in prison and did not attend to all your needs. When did our alleged negligence take place?’

(45) “He’ll then answer by saying, ‘Truer words will never be spoken as the ones I’m about to tell you now:

“To the extent that you neglected the most unassuming of these, my brothers, you neglected me.’

(46) “The lives of these negligent ones, these gross sinners by omission, will be **cut off**²¹⁷ eternally, but the righteous ones will live forever.”**

* Vs. 40: Proverbs 19:17 [#357].

† Vs. 42: Isaiah 58:7 [#358]; Ezekiel 18:16 [#359].

‡ Vs. 42: **Deuteronomy** ⁴⁵⁽¹²⁷⁾ 23:4 [#360].

§ Vs. 43: Ezekiel 18:7 [#361].

** Vs. 46: Daniel 12:2 [#362].

Chapter 26

MATTHEW 26:1-75

Jesus Predicts His Death

(Chapter 26, verses 1-2)

(1) Now, when Jesus had finished relating all these meaningful illustrations, he told his disciples:

(2) “Two more days for Passover.* That’s when the Son of Humanity will be turned over for execution.”

Religious Leaders Conspire

(Chapter 26, verses 3-5)

(3) Then the chief priests and the elders of the people convened in high priest Caiaphas’ courtyard (4) to scheme† how they could craftily capture Jesus and kill him.

(5) [Though different ideas were entertained], they arrived at an agreement, saying:

“Not at the festival. People might get all riled up and we end up with a riot on our hands.”

Jesus Receives African Oil

(Chapter 26, verses 6-13)

(6) Jesus happened to be in Bethany at the house of Simon, the leper, (7) when a woman approached him as he was lying stretched out in a relaxed position at the table.

She had costly perfumed oil with her. It was in a small, expensive stone jar imported from **Alabastron**,²¹⁸ Egypt, **Africa**.²¹⁹ She began pouring it upon his head.

(8) On seeing this, the disciples became incensed and said:

“What a waste! (9) This could’ve been sold for lots of money to help poor people.”

* Vs. 2: **Exodus** ³¹⁽¹²⁸⁾ 12:14 [#363].

† Vs. 4: Psalm 2:2 [#364].

(10) Aware of this, Jesus said to them:

“Why are you giving this woman such a hard time? Her action toward me was a good thing. (11) Poor people will always be around for you to assist.*

“Not so with me.

(12) “Understand that when this woman applied perfumed oil upon my body—stretched out here and now—she was preparing for when it’s stretched out for burial in the immediate future.

(13) “You can believe what I’m about to say as if it’s already happened. Wherever this good news is preached in all the world, the story of what this woman did with her African oil will be told in memory of her.”

Judas Plots with Religious Leaders

(Chapter 26, verses 14-16)

(14) Then one of the twelve, the one named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests (15) and asked:

“How much will you give me if I betrayed Jesus to you?”

They stipulated thirty pieces of silver.†

(16) So, from then on, he sought the right time and circumstance to betray Jesus.

Jesus Prepares for the Passover

(Chapter 26, verses 17-19)

(17) On the first day of the festival of unfermented cakes,‡ the disciples approached Jesus, asking:

“What place do you want us to prepare for the Passover?”

(18) He answered:

* Vs. 11: **Deuteronomy** ⁴⁶⁽¹²⁹⁾ 15:11 [#365].

† Vs. 15: **Exodus** ³²⁽¹²⁹⁾ 21:32 [#366]; Zechariah 11:12 [#367].

‡ Vs. 17: **Exodus** ³³⁽¹³⁰⁾ 12:18 [#368]; **Exodus** ³⁴⁽¹³¹⁾ 23:15 [#369]; **Leviticus** ²⁹⁽¹³²⁾ 23:6 [#370]; **Deuteronomy** ⁴⁷⁽¹³³⁾ 16:6 [#371].

“Go into the city, to the home of the designated man and tell him the Teacher says, ‘My date with death is near. As pre-arranged, I’ll celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your place, just as you and I agreed.’”

(19) The disciples did as Jesus instructed and prepared for Passover.

Jesus Aware of Betrayer

(Chapter 26, verses 20-25)

(20) It was nightfall, and Jesus was relaxing, lounging peacefully at the table with his twelve disciples.

(21) Then, while they were eating, he said:

“Guaranteed, one of you will betray me.”

(22) They were shocked out of their senses.

“I’m not the one, am I?” each distressed man asked.

(23) He replied:

“He that dips his hand with mine in the bowl is the one that’ll betray me.* (24) Granted, the Son of Humanity is going to die, just as it has been written, but damned[†] is the man through whom the Son of Humanity is betrayed! He would’ve been better off if he hadn’t been born.”

(25) To this **Judas**,²²⁰ who was about to betray him, said:

“It isn’t I, is it, Rabbi?” Jesus

answered cryptically:

“It is as you said.”

Jesus Inaugurates Memorial Supper

(Chapter 26, verses 26-30)

(26) As they resumed eating, Jesus took a loaf, said a blessing, broke it into pieces, and distributed it.

* Vs. 23: Psalm 41:9 [#372].

† Vs. 24: **Deuteronomy** ⁴⁸⁽¹³⁴⁾ 27:25 [#373].

He then said:

“Take this bread and eat it, for it symbolizes my body.”

(27) Also, he took a cup, and after having given thanks through prayer, he gave it to them, saying:

“Each of you drink from it, (28) because this symbolizes my ‘covenant* of blood,’† which is poured out on behalf of many so that their sins are forgiven.

(29) “You can be assured that from now on I will certainly not drink wine anymore until the day comes when I drink it fresh with you in the celestial Kingdom-Government of my Father.”

(30) After singing praises,‡ they finally left for the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Disciples’ Behavior

(Chapter 26, verses 31-35)

(31) Jesus then said to them:

“All of you will stumble,²²¹ behaving scandalously because of what will happen to me tonight.

“For Scripture says, ‘I’ll strike the shepherd, and the sheep will scatter.’[§]

(32) “But after I’ve been resurrected, I’ll meet up with you in Galilee.”

(33) However, Peter answered:

“Although the others will behave scandalously because of what happens to you, I would never do such a thing!”

(34) Jesus responded:

* Vs. 28: Jeremiah 31:31 [#374].

† Vs. 28: **Exodus** ³⁵⁽¹³⁵⁾ 24:8 [#375]; Zechariah 9:11 [#376].

‡ Vs. 30: Psalm 113-118 [#377].

§ Vs. 31: Zechariah 13:7 [#378].

“Believe what I’m about to say to you Peter: On this very night, before a rooster crows, you’ll be given three opportunities to say that you know me, but each time you’ll deny that we ever met.”

(35) Peter replied:

“I’d die first! I’d never deny knowing you!”

All the other disciples said the same thing.

Jesus Selects Peter, James, and John

(Chapter 26, verses 36-39)

(36) Then the disciples accompanied Jesus to the place called Gethsemane, where he said to them:

“Have a seat while I go over there and pray.”

(37) However, he selected Peter and Zebedee’s sons, James and John, to accompany him.

And as they walked, he started to suffer introspective anguish and to be tormented internally.*

(38) Then he said to them:

“My soul, on the brink of death, is in very sore straits.† Stay here, keep awake, and be watchful with me.”

(39) And taking a few steps forward, he fell on his face, praying and saying:

“My Father, if there is another circumstance under which I could die other than drinking the bitter cup of blasphemous lies that’ll be told about me, please, let that happen.

“Yet, not as I will, but as you will.”‡

* Vs. 37: Isaiah 53:3 [#379].

† Vs. 38: Psalm 42:11 [#380]; Psalm 43:5 [#381].

‡ Vs. 39: Psalm 40:8 [#382].

Jesus Prays, Disciples Sleep

(Chapter 26, verses 40-47)

(40) And he came to the disciples, discovered them sleeping, and said to Peter:

“You men aren’t strong enough to fight sleep for one hour with me?”

(41) “Stay awake, always praying that you might not be tempted and succumb to the temptation.

“For though the spirit is ready, willing, and able, the flesh does not have the strength to match it.”

(42) Again, he stepped away a second time and prayed:

“My Father, if it’s impossible for this bitter cup of lies to pass away before I drink it, let it be as you will.”

(43) He came to the trio of disciples again, only to find them asleep. The weight of their eyelids was unbearable.

(44) So, leaving them undisturbed, he stepped away again and prayed the same prayer thrice.

(45) He returned to the disciples for the third time. But this time, he woke them with a loud voice:

“I can’t believe you’re sleeping and resting at a critical time like this!

“Understand what I am saying: It’s almost time for the Son of Humanity to be betrayed and arrested by Gentile sinners. **(46)** Get up. Let’s go. Look! My betrayer approaches.”

(47) These words had hardly left his mouth when, look! Judas, one of the twelve, drew near.

A crowd accompanied him, carrying metal swords and wooden clubs, all supplied by the chief priests and older men.

Jesus Betrayed with a Kiss

(Chapter 26, verses 48-56)

(48) Now his betrayer had given them a sign, saying: “Whoever I kiss is the man we want. Take him into custody.”

(49) Right then, he went straight up to Jesus and said: “Rejoice, Rabbi!” and he tenderly kissed* him.

(50) But Jesus said to him: “Hey man, why are you here?”

Then the soldiers stepped to Jesus, grabbed him, and took him into custody.†

(51) Whoa! Look at that!

One of those with Jesus grabbed his sword and whacked off the ear of the high priest’s slave.

(52) Jesus quickly responded:

“Put that sword back! For all whose lives revolve around using it as a weapon will be killed by others just like them.‡

(53) “Don’t you think I can implore my Father to send twelve legions of angels immediately?§

(54) “But if I did that, how would the Scriptures saying I’d be arrested and taken into custody be fulfilled?”

(55) In that hour, Jesus said to the crowds:

“So you’re treating me like a criminal now—a robber—coming out here with all your metal swords and wooden clubs to arrest me?

“When you saw me teaching daily in the temple, you didn’t take me into custody then.

* Vs. 49: 2 Samuel 20:9 [#383]; Proverbs 27:6 [#384].

† Vs. 50: Psalm 41:9 [#385].

‡ Vs. 52: **Genesis** ²⁰⁽¹³⁶⁾ 9:6 [#386]

§ Vs. 53: 2 Kings 6:17 [#387]; Daniel 7:10 [#388].

(56) “But all of this is happening IN FULFILLMENT OF PROPHETIC SCRIPTURE.”*²²² Then the disciples fled in fear, leaving him to face the mob alone.[†]

Jesus Appears in Court

(Chapter 26, verses 57-58)

(57) The police took Jesus into custody and led him to High Priest Caiaphas, where the scribes and elders had convened in their joint function as the Jewish Supreme Court.

(58) On the way to Court, Peter kept following in the shadows from a distance until he reached the high priest's courtyard.

After entering, he sat incognito with the butlers to see how things would pan out.

Jesus Convicted, Sentenced to Death

(Chapter 26, verses 59-68)

(59) Meanwhile, the chief priests and the entire Jewish Supreme Court were looking for false witnesses against Jesus so that the Court could sentence him to death.[‡]

(60) But they at first found none, although many witnesses, all of them fake, came forward.[§]

However, eventually, two phony witnesses did present themselves (61) and said:

“This man said, ‘I can demolish the temple of God itself and rebuild it in just three days.’”

(62) With that, the high priest shot to his feet and asked:

* Vs. 56: Psalm 22:1-31 [#389]; Isaiah 53:1-12 [#390]; Lamentations 4:20 [#391]; Daniel 9:26 [#392].

† Vs. 56: Zechariah 13:7 [#393].

‡ Vs. 59: **Exodus** ³⁶⁽¹³⁷⁾ 20:16 [#394].

§ Vs. 60: **Deuteronomy** ⁴⁹⁽¹³⁸⁾ 19:15 [#395]; Psalm 27:12 [#396]; Psalm 35:11 [#397].

“What do you have to say for yourself? How do you respond to their testimony?”

(63) Jesus didn’t say a word.*

So, the high priest said to him:

“By the living God, I **exorcise**^{†223} the truth out of you: tell us whether you are the Christ, the **Son of God!**”²²⁴

(64) Jesus said to him:

“The answer is in your statement. Yet, I’m saying to you, from now on, all will see the Son of Humanity sitting at the right hand[‡] of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”[§]

(65) The high priest ripped his outer garments, saying:

“He has blasphemed! Do we still need witnesses? See! Now you all heard the blasphemy. **(66)** What’s your verdict?”

They answered:

“He is guilty and should be sentenced to death.”^{**}

(67) Then they spat in his face^{††} and punched him with their fists. Others slapped his face,^{‡‡} **(68)** saying:

“Prophecy to us you Christ. Which one of us hit you?”

Peter Thrice Denies Jesus

(Chapter 26, verses 69-75)

(69) As all this transpired, Peter sat outside in the courtyard. That’s when a servant girl confronted him:

“You’re a friend of Jesus the Galilean!”

(70) But he denied it in front of everybody, saying:

* Vs. 63: Proverbs 11:12 [#398]; Isaiah 53:7 [#399].

† Vs. 63: 1 Kings 22:16 [#400].

‡ Vs. 64: Psalm 110:1 [#401]; Daniel 7:14 [#402].

§ Vs. 64: Daniel 7:13 [#403].

** Vs. 66: **Leviticus**³⁰⁽¹³⁹⁾ 24:16 [#404].

†† Vs. 67: Isaiah 50:6 [#405].

‡‡ Vs. 67: Isaiah 53:3 [#406].

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

(71) [Feeling anxious, he left the courtyard and went to the gatehouse.] After arriving there, another girl recognized him and said to everyone there:

“This man is a friend of Jesus the Nazarene.”

(72) And again, he denied it, with a validating oath:

“I don’t know the man!”

(73) After some time, those standing around grew suspicious. They approached Peter and said:

“Without a doubt, you are one of Jesus’ friends, for, like him, you speak with a Galilean dialect.”*

(74) Then he began to curse demonstratively and swear with intensity:

“I don’t know the man!”

Right after he said this, a rooster crowed.

(75) [When he heard the rooster], he remembered that Jesus said:

“Before a rooster crows, you will deny me three times.”

Bitter in spirit, he went outside and wailed profusely.

Chapter 27

MATTHEW 27:1-66

Jesus Taken to Pilate

(Chapter 27, verses 1-2)

(1) When morning arrived, all the chief priests and elders among the people met to conspire against Jesus in seeking his death.† (2) And after handcuffing him, they led him to Governor Pilate.²²⁵

* Vs. 73: Judges 12:6 [#407].

† Vs. 1: Psalm 2:2 [#408].

Judas' Guilty Conscience

(Chapter 27, verses 3-10)

(3) When the betrayer Judas witnessed Jesus' judgment, death sentence, and subsequent incarceration, he was **sincerely repentant**²²⁶ and was moved to embarrassingly return the thirty silver pieces to the chief priests and older men, (4) emotionally confessing:

"I sinned when I betrayed this righteous man."*

They said:

"Are we supposed to feel sorry for you? You were the one who kissed him on the cheek and called him your friend!"

(5) So, he threw the silver pieces into the temple,[†] then went off and hanged himself.

(6) But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said:

"Since this money represents the price of a man's life, it's illegal to put it in the sacred treasury."

(7) After deliberating on what should be done with it, they purchased the potter's field as a graveyard for non-Jews.

(8) That's why, up until today, that field has been called the "**Field of Blood.**"²²⁷

(9) WHAT PROPHET JEREMIAH RELATED WAS FULFILLED:²²⁸

"And they took the thirty silver pieces,[‡] the estimated price of a man according to the price set by sons of Israel on some men, (10) and invested them in the potter's field, according to what *Yehowah*²²⁹ had commanded me."

Pilot Ponders

(Chapter 27, verses 11-14)

(11) Jesus stood before the governor, who now asked him:

* Vs. 4: **Deuteronomy** ⁵⁰⁽¹³⁹⁾ 19:10 [#409].

† Vs. 5: Zechariah 11:13 [#410].

‡ Vs. 9: Zechariah 11:12 [#411].

“Are you the king of the Jews?”

Jesus answered:

“It is as you say.”

(12) But when the chief priests and elders accused him, he said nothing.*

(13) Then **Pilate** said to him:

“Don’t you hear the long list of charges they’re testifying you committed?”

(14) Yet, he didn’t answer him, not saying one word.

This intrigued the governor.

Jesus versus Barabbas

(Chapter 27, verses 15-23)

(15) Now, it was the custom at every festival for the governor to free a prisoner popular with the crowd.

(16) The authorities had the notoriously Bad Barabbas in custody at the time.

(17) So, when they convened, Pilate asked:

“Which one do you want me to free, Bad Barabbas or Jesus, the one rumored to be Christ?”

(18) He knew they were jealous[†] of Jesus, which is why they handed him over.

(19) Moreover, while he was holding court, his wife sent him a message, saying:

“Avoid doing anything bad to that righteous man.[‡] I suffered from a horrible nightmare because of him!”

(20) But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and have Jesus executed.

(21) Now, in responding, the governor told them:

* Vs. 12: Proverbs 11:12 [#412]; Isaiah 53:7 [#413].

† Vs. 18: Proverbs 27:4 [#414].

‡ Vs. 19: Isaiah 53:11 [#415]; Zechariah 9:9 [#416].

“Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”

They said:

“Barabbas.”

(22) Pilate responded:

“Well, what about Jesus, who people say is the Christ?”

They all said:

“Kill him!”

(23) He said:

“Why, what did he do?”

They ignored the question and kept screaming:

“Kill him!”

Pilate Absolves Himself

(Chapter 27, verses 24-26)

(24) Pilate realized he was getting nowhere. Instead, he saw that he was agitating the crowd even more.

Therefore, he took water and washed his hands* in front of everyone, saying as he did:

“I wash my hands of this matter and am therefore innocent of his blood. His life is in your hands.”

(25) At that, the people said:

“Let his blood come upon us and our children!”†

(26) Then he released Bad Barabbas, but had Jesus whipped and sent him to his death on a **torture stake**.²³⁰

Police Again Brutalize Jesus

(Chapter 27, verses 27-31)

(27) Then, the governor’s elite praetorian guards took Jesus into the governor’s palace and gathered the entire local police force around him.

* Vs. 24: **Deuteronomy** ⁵¹⁽¹³⁹⁾ 21:6 [#417].

† Vs. 25: **Deuteronomy** ⁵²⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ 19:10 [#418]; Joshua 2:19.

(28) Stripping him down to his underwear, they put a purple gown on him, (29) and braided a crown of prickly thorns that they put on his head.

They also put a reed in his right hand. And, kneeling before him, they teased,* saying:

“Good afternoon, O King of the Jews!”

(30) They spat† on him, took the reed, and slapped him upside the head.

(31) After making fun‡ of him for some time, they removed the gown and dressed him in his original clothes.

Then they led him off for impaling.²³¹

Jesus Impaled at Golgotha

(Chapter 27, verses 32-37)

[LIBERAL ARTS: African Philosophy, The Art of Debate/

MEDICAL SCIENCE: Pharmaceuticals]

(32) On the way out, they found a man named **Simon, an African native from Cyrene.**²³² They made him carry Jesus’ torture stake.²³³

(33) And when they arrived at the place called Golgotha (or “**Cranium Cap**”²³⁴), (34) they gave Jesus alcohol mixed with a **drug.**^{§235} But after tasting it, he refused to drink.

(35) When they impaled** him, they divided his expensive outer garments†† among themselves by shooting dice. (36) As they sat, they watched over him.

* Vs. 29: Judges 16:25 [#419].

† Vs. 30: Isaiah 49:7 [#420]; Isaiah 50:6 [#421].

‡ Vs. 31: Isaiah 53:7 [#422].

§ Vs. 34: Psalm 69:21 [#423].

** Vs. 35, Psalm 22:16 [#424].

†† Vs. 35, Psalm 22:18 [#425].

(37) Also, the authorities posted in writing over his head the crime he was charged with:

“This is Jesus, King of the Jews.”

Jesus Rebuked by Robbers

(Chapter 27, verses 38-44)

(38) There were two robbers on stakes on either side of Jesus.* (39) Passersby blasphemed him, making contemptible, exaggerated movements with their heads,† (40) saying:

“Hey, Temple Man—the one who can both demolish it and rebuild it in just three days—save yourself! If you’re truly **one of God’s sons**,²³⁶ prove it by stepping off the stake!”

(41) The chief priests, scribes, and elders joined the people in making fun of Jesus, saying:

(42) “He saved others but can’t save himself! He’s King of Israel. Let him hop down off the torture stake, and we’ll believe him.

(43) “He has trusted in God. So, let God rescue him if He wants. After all, the man said, ‘I’m God’s Son.’”‡

(44) Like everyone else, even the robbers being executed with Jesus began teasing him.

Jesus Expires

(Chapter 27, verses 45-50)

(45) An eerie darkness enshrouded the land§ from noon until around 3 o’clock that same afternoon.

(46) It was just after 3 o’clock when Jesus shouted:

* Vs. 38, Isaiah 53:12 [#426].

† Vs. 39, Psalm 22:7 [#427]; Psalm 109:25 [#428].

‡ Vs. 43, Psalm 3:3 [#429]; Psalm 22:8 [#430]; Psalm 42:10 [#431].

§ Vs. 45: Amos 8:9 [#432].

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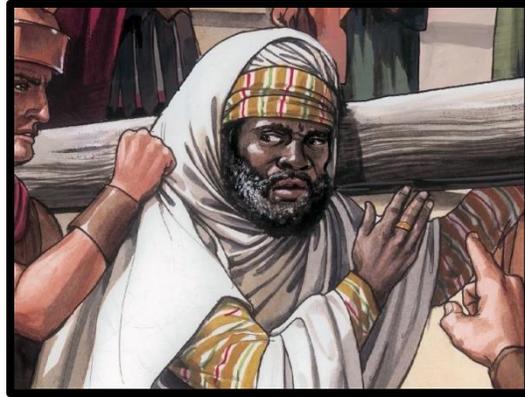


Figure 67: Simon of Cyrene.

See “Simon, an African native from Cyrene”
endnote #232a in Matthew 27:32.



Figure 68: How come ancient Israelite women looked.

See “Simon, an African native from Cyrene”
endnote #232a in Matthew 27:32.

[THE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF ANCIENT ISRAEL THE HEBREWS & THE SONS OF
HAM PART THREE \(blackinamerica.com\)](http://blackinamerica.com)

“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?”^{*237}

This means, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”

(47) When some of those standing by heard this, they started saying:

“This man is calling Elijah.”

(48) Right away, one of them ran and took a sponge, soaked it in sour[†] wine, put it on the end of a reed stick, and reached up to give him a drink.

(49) But the rest of them objected:

“Don’t help him! Let’s see if Elijah comes and saves him.”

Another man grabbed a spear and pierced his side.

Blood and water came out.

(50) Again, Jesus cried out with a loud voice and released the spirit of life within him.²³⁸

Great Earthquake

(Chapter 27, verses 51-54)

[EARTH SCIENCE: Seismology]

(51) Whoa! The curtain[‡] in the sanctuary was torn in half from top to bottom. Then when **the earth quaked**²³⁹ violently, massive stone tombs were split,[§] (52) flinging the corpses of the holy ones out of their graves.

(53) People visiting the graveyard after Jesus’ life breath ascended to God left there and entered Jerusalem.

Once there, they explained what happened at the graveyard to many people in the holy city.

* Vs. 46, Psalm 22:1 [#433]; Isaiah 53:10 [#434].

† Vs. 48: Psalm 69:21 [#435].

‡ Vs. 51: **Exodus**³⁷⁽¹³⁹⁾ 26:31 [#436].

§ Vs. 51: 1 Samuel 14:15 [#437].

(54) But when the army officer and the one hundred men who reported to him were watching over Jesus and saw the earthquake and everything else happening around them, they all grew very much afraid, saying among themselves:

“This really was the **Son of God**.”²⁴⁰

Females Focus on Jesus

(Chapter 27, verses 55-56)

(55) Many women were there watching Jesus’ execution from a distance. They had traveled with him from Galilee to care for his domestic needs.

(56) Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

Jesus Buried

(Chapter 27, verses 57-61)

(57) As evening approached, a rich man from Arimathea named **Joseph**²⁴¹ arrived. He had himself become one of Jesus’ disciples.

(58) This man went to Pilate and asked to take possession of Jesus’ corpse.* Pilate granted the request and commanded the body to be released to his custody.

(59) Then Joseph took Jesus’ body, wrapped it in clean fine linen, (60) and laid it in his new memorial tomb† which his men had quarried in the rock mass. [And after his men] rolled a **large stone**²⁴² to block the entrance, he left.

(61) But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary continued to sit there, positioned right in front of the grave.

* Vs. 58: **Deuteronomy** ⁵³⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ 21:23 [#438].

† Vs. 60: **Isaiah** 53:9 [#439].



Figure 69: Tombs tossed by earthquake.

See “the earth quaked” endnote #239a in Matthew 27:51.
[Flooded Vt. town struggles to ID cemetery remains - Deseret News](#)

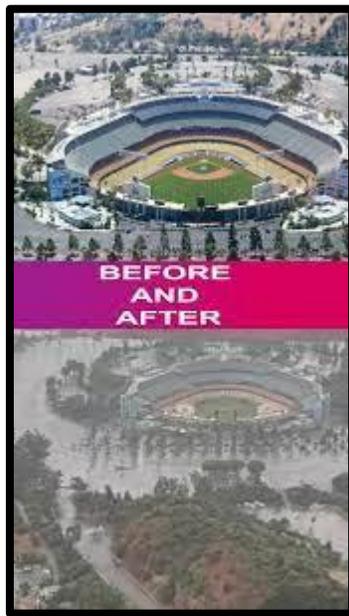


Figure 70: Dodger Stadium before and after.

See “the earth quaked” endnote #239b in Matthew 27:51.
[dodgers stadium flooded | TikTok Search](#)

Jesus Tomb Guarded

(Chapter 27, verses 62-66)

(62) The next day, which was after the Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees assembled before Pilate, saying:

(63) “Majestic One, we remember what this charlatan said when he was alive. He said, ‘After three days I’ll be resurrected.’ (64) Therefore, give the command to secure the grave until the third day, that way his disciples won’t come and steal his body then tell everybody, ‘He was resurrected from the dead!’ The new ‘resurrected’ imposter will be worse than the first one.”

(65) Pilate said to them:

“You have your own guard to make it secure. Secure it as you will.”

(66) So, they went and made the grave secure by sealing the stone* and posting the guard.

Chapter 28

MATTHEW 28:1-20

Women View Grave

(Chapter 28, verse 1)

(1) After the Sabbath, when dawn ascended on the first day of the week, **Mary Magdalene**²⁴³ and the other Mary came to see the gravesite.

Angel Appears

(Chapter 28, verses 2-4)

(2) Whoa, another great **earthquake!**²⁴⁴ This one happened when *Y^ehowah’s*²⁴⁵ angel descended from heaven, approached the **stone**,²⁴⁶ and rolled it away. **He was now sitting on it.**²⁴⁷

* Vs. 66: Daniel 6:17 [#440].

(3) His presence and essence were sizzling as hot lightning* while his clothes were white as freezing snow!²⁴⁸

(4) The trembling guards were practically scared to death because of his appearance!

Angel Instructs Women

(Chapter 28, verses 5-7)

(5) But, in response to the look on the faces of the women, the [compassionate] angel said:

“Don’t you two be afraid because I know you’re looking for Jesus, who was impaled. (6) He’s not here because he was raised, just as he predicted. Come, see for yourselves where he was lying.

(7) “Now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he was resurrected from the dead. That’s not all! He’s going ahead of you into Galilee. You all will see him there. Make a mental note of it! You’ve been told.”

Jesus Intercepts Women

(Chapter 28, verses 8-10)

(8) So, hastily leaving the memorial tomb with fear tinged with great joy, they ran to notify his disciples.

(9) And behold! Jesus intercepted them and said:

“Be joyous, ladies!”

They approached and grabbed him by his feet as they **bowed**²⁴⁹ before him.

(10) Then Jesus said to them:

“Have no fear! Go, report to my brothers so they can head for Galilee to meet me there.”

* Vs. 3, Judges 13:6 [#441]; Daniel 10:6 [#442].

Chief Priests Conspire

(Chapter 28, verses 11-15)

(11) As the women were going off in one direction, look at that! Some of the custody guards were headed in the other direction, going to the city to report to the chief priests everything that had happened.

(12) And after the chief priests met and consulted with the elders, they bribed the soldiers with enough money to shut them up* **(13)** and said:

“Say, ‘His disciples came and abducted his body at night while we were sleeping.’ **(14)** And if the governor hears about it, we’ll persuade him to pardon you. Don’t worry about it.”

(15) So, they took the bribe and said precisely what they had been instructed to say, and the story of what happened spread among Jews in faraway lands everywhere.

Resurrected Jesus Instructs Disciples

(Chapter 28, verses 16-20)

(16) The eleven faithful disciples—[Judas the betrayer had hung himself]—went to the Galilean mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. **(17)** Upon seeing him, they **bowed**²⁵⁰ low to the ground. But some were skeptical. They weren’t so sure it was really him.²⁵¹

(18) Still, Jesus approached and spoke to them, saying: “All authority[†] has been given me²⁵² in heaven and on earth.

(19) “Therefore, I am charging you to go and make disciples of people of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,[‡] and of the Son, and of the holy spirit, **(20)** teaching them to embrace all the things I have commanded you.

* Vs. 12: Proverbs 17:23 [#443].

† Vs. 18: Daniel 7:14 [#444].

‡ Vs. 19: Psalm 83:18 [#445]; Isaiah 64:8 [#446]

“And understand this! I am with you all the days it’ll take for all the components of the sign to come together, spelling the cataclysmic end of this world as it is currently known.”

Appendix A

The Gospel of Matthew: Infrastructure for the Christian Greek Scriptures

The Gospel of Matthew was the Christian Bible for all the other New Testament writers.

An indication of this can be seen below.

In parenthesis is the number of times a Scripture text from Matthew is listed as a cross-reference in the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures — With References* (1984).

Matthew (N/A)	Mark (578)	Luke (682)
John (290)	Acts (146)	Romans (76)
1 Corinthians (66)	2 Corinthians (23)	Galatians (13)
Ephesians (17)	Philippians (8)	Colossians (9)
1 Thessalonians (10)	2 Thessalonians (15)	1 Timothy (15)
2 Timothy (10)	Titus (6)	Philemon (0)
Hebrews (59)	James (40)	1 Peter (18)
2 Peter (18)	1 John (28)	2 John (4)
3 John (5)	Jude (10)	Revelation (95)

Appendix B

Medieval Manuscripts to Modern Versions of Matthew's Gospel

Translators acknowledged the importance of Matthew's Gospel centuries before the publication of the present translation and the subsequent translations of Matthew's Gospel by Jehovah's Witnesses, as discussed in the Introduction.

Although incomplete, the list below serves a dual purpose. It not only comprises 30 different translations of the Gospel of Matthew from the 14th century down to the 20th century, but it also documents the use of the divine name (as does the present translation) as found therein:

1. **c. 1385** - *Even Bohan* (אבן בוחן, "Tested Stone; Touchstone"), by Shem-Tob ben Isaac Ibn Shaprut, Spain. The Hebrew text of Matthew's Gospel is part of this work. See the *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, by George Howard (whom the present author consulted with in the past), Macon, GA, U.S.A., 1995. Regarding the divine name, Howard wrote, under the heading "The Divine Name": "Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew employs the Divine Name, symbolized by "ה" (apparently an abbreviation for השם, 'the Name')." ."
2. **1537** - תורת המשיח, *Euangelium secundum Matthæum in lingua hebraica, cum versione latina* (Gospel of Matthew, in Hebrew and Latin), by Sebastian Münster, Basel, Switzerland, where he uses יהוה ("Jehovah" in English) in some verses of the main text.

3. **1551** - כפי מתי המבשר . . . תורת המשיח . . . *Sanctum Domini nostri Iesu Christi Hebraicum Euangelium secundum Matthæum* (Hebrew Gospel of Matthew), edited by Johannes Quinquarboreus, Paris. The Tetragrammaton יהוה ("Jehovah" in English) occurs in the main text of certain verses.
4. **1555** - בשורת מתי , *Euangelium Hebraicum Matthæi* (Gospel of Matthew, in Hebrew), edited by Jean du Tillet, translated into Latin by Jean Mercier, Paris. The translation into Hebrew uses יהוה or an abbreviated form of the Tetragrammaton in the main text of certain verses.
5. **1557** - תורת המשיח , *Euangelium secundum Matthæum in lingua hebraica . . . Vnà cum Epistola D. Pauli ad Hebræos, Hebraicè & Latinè* (Gospel of Matthew and Paul's letter to the Hebrews, in Hebrew and Latin), by Sebastian Münster, Basel. The Hebrew translation uses יהוה ("Jehovah" in English) or an abbreviated form of the Tetragrammaton in the main text of certain verses.
6. **1574** - *Nowy Testament* (New Testament, in Polish), by Szymon Budny, Łęczycza, Poland. Łęczycza uses "Jehowa" ("Jehovah" in English) in the main text of some verses in Matthew's Gospel.
7. **1581** - בשורת הקרואות שנה בשנה בשבתות ובהגי - *Euangelia anniuersaria, quae Dominicis diebus & in Sanctorum festis leguntur, Hebraicè conuersa* (Liturgical Gospels, in Hebrew, including Matthew's Gospel), by Fridericus Petri, Antwerp. Petri uses יהוה ("Jehovah" in English) in the main text of certain verses.
8. **1794** - *Das Neue Testament oder die heiligen Bücher der Christen* (New Testament, containing the Gospel of Matthew to Acts of Apostles, in German), by Johann Otto Thiess, Leipzig, 1794-1800. It took Thiess about seven years to complete his translation, which uses "Jehovah" in the main text of certain verses.

9. **1798** - *The New Testament ..., in Hebrew and English, in Three Volumes*, containing the Gospel of Matthew to First Corinthians, by Richard Caddick, London, 1798-1805. Caddick spent at least seven years on his translation, and the Hebrew portion uses יהוה ("Jehovah" in English) in the main text of several verses.
10. **1816** - *Book hoa Matthew* (Gospel of Matthew, in Bullom So), by Gustavus Reinhold Nyländer, London. Nyländer's translation uses "Jehovah" in the main text of selected verses.
11. **1833** - *Ko te tahi wahi o te Kawenata Hou o Ihu Karaiti te Ariki, to tatou kai wakaora. Me nga upoko e waru o te Pukapuka o Kenehi* (Genesis 1-8, Gospels of Matthew and John, and Acts of Apostles to 1 Corinthians, in Maori), by James Shepherd, William Yate, William Williams, and others, Sydney, Australia. This translation uses "Ihowa" ("Jehovah" in English) in the main text of several verses, both in the Hebrew Old Testament and in the Greek New Testament.
12. **1836** - *A New Version of the Four Gospels; with notes critical and explanatory, by a Catholic* (John Lingard), London. This translation, which includes the Gospel of Matthew, uses "The Lord (Jehova)" ("Jehovah" in English) in the main text once at Matthew 22:44.
13. **1838** - *Minuajimouin gaizhibiiget au St. John and Minuajimouin au St. Matthiu* (Gospels of John and of Matthew, in Chippewa), by John Jones and Peter Jones, Boston, MA, U.S.A., 1838-1839. This translation uses "Jehoua," "Jihoua," or "Jehouah" ("Jehovah" in English) in the main text of select verses.

14. **1855** - *Ivangeli eli-yingcwele eli-baliweyo g'Umatu* [Reprinted, with some alterations, from the Translation published by the American Missionaries] (Gospel of Matthew, in Zulu), by John William Colenso, London. Colenso's translation uses "YEHOVA" or "Yehova" ("Jehovah" in English) in the main text of select verses.

15. **1858** - *Sango Iam. Ya Matiu e Lëndëkidi* (Gospel of Matthew, in Benga), by G. M'Queen, New York. This translation uses "Jëhova" ("Jehovah" in English) in the main text of various verses.

16. **1861** - *The Gospels of Matthew, and of Mark, Newly Rendered Into English; With Notes on the Greek Text*, by Lancelot Shadwell, London. Shadwell's translation uses "JEHOVAH" in the main text of various verses.

17. **1863** - *La Evangelia hna cinihane hnei Mataio* (Gospel of Matthew, in Drehu), by Samuel McFarlane, Nengone, Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia. "Iehova" (Jehovah" in English) is in the main text of certain verses.

18. **1864** - *Tungarar Jehovald. Yarildewallin. Extracts From the Holy Scriptures* (containing the Gospel of Matthew in Narrinyeri), by George Taplin, Adelaide, South Australia. God's name, "Jehovah," appears in the main text of several verses, both in the Old and New Testaments. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chapters 5 to 7), "Jehovah" appears over a dozen times.

19. **1865** - *Mwo Sasu lun Jisus Kraist leum las, ma Mattu el sim* (Gospel of Matthew, in Kosraean), by Benjamin Galen Snow, Honolulu, Hawaii. This translation uses "Jeova" or "Jeofa" (the

equivalent of “Jehovah” in English) in the main text of some verses.

20. **1867** - *Cesvs Klist em opunvko-hero Maro Coyote* (Gospel of Matthew, in Muskogee), by Robert McGill Loughridge and others, New York. They use “Cehofv” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of some verses.
21. **1869** - *Matīyū: Ku Nam Navosavos ugi* (Gospel of Matthew, in Eromanga), by George Nicol Gordon and James Douglas Gordon, London. The translators use “Iehōva” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of various verses.
22. **1871** - *Njia Yekpei kina Mati iye Nyegini* (Gospel of Matthew, in Mende), by James Frederick Schön and others, London. The translators use “Yēwoj” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of certain verses.
23. **1892** - *Nalologena wo se Yesu Kristo Kome Mataio* (Gospel of Matthew, in Tasiko, Epi), by Oscar Michelsen, London. Michelsen uses “Yehova” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of various verses.
24. **1894** - *Ensurua embu ta Iesu Kristo. Matiu i ulia* (Gospel of Matthew, in the Aulua dialect of Malekula, New Hebrides), by T. Watt Leggatt and others, Melbourne, Australia. These translators use “Iova” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of selected verses.
25. **1894** - *Évangile selon Matthieu* (Gospel of Matthew, in Fang), by Arthur W. Marling, London. Marling uses “Jehōva” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of some verses.

26. **1905** - *Losangu lunengela lwakafundibwa kudi Mateyo* (Gospel of Matthew, in Luna), by William Henry Westcott and others, Leeds, United Kingdom. The translators use “Yeoba” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of some verses.
27. **1909** - *O Evangelho Segundo S. Matheus* (Gospel of Matthew, in Portuguese), by Manuel Fernandes de Santanna, Lisbon, Portugal. This translator uses “Iáhve” (“Jehovah” in English) in either the main text of particular verses or in explanatory notes.
28. **1910** - *Mataio nu Evanelia* (Gospel of Matthew, in the Iai [Narau] dialect of Purari), by John Henry Holmes, London. Holmes uses “Iehova” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of some verses.
29. **1914** - *Injili Mar Mathayo* (Gospel of Matthew, in Dholuo), by A. A. Carscallen, London. Carscallen uses “Yawe” (“Jehovah” in English) in the main text of at least one verse.
30. **1966** - *Matthew* (in Suki), by Midim Bidri, Ivy Lindsay, and Grahame Martin, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. The translators use “Jehovah” in the main text of some verses.

Appendix C

Sources

Below are many of the sources that were consulted in forming the critical endnotes in *Modern Matthew: Good News for Today—College Edition*.

- *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Bauer)*
- *African Origin of Civilization—Myth or Reality, The*
- *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words (W. E. Vines)*
- *Barnes' Notes on the Bible*
- *Biblical Archaeology Review*
- *Clark's Commentary on the Bible*
- *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV)*
- *Divine Name King James, The*
- *Elberfelder Bibel*
- *Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present, The*
- *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*
- *Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*
- *God's Word Translation*
- *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*
- *Holy Scriptures (J.N. Darby), The*
- *International Standard Version*
- *Jewish New Testament*
- *Journal of Biblical Literature*
- *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures, The*
- *Medical News Today*
- *National Institutes of Health in the United States*
- *New American Standard Bible*
- *New International Version*
- *New Living Translation*
- *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*
- *Oxford English Dictionary*

- *Psychosomatic Medicine*
- *Septuagint*
- *Stolen Legacy: Greek Philosophy is Stolen Egyptian Philosophy*
- *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*
- *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*
- *Theology Behind Scientific Thought (Vol. 2), The*
- *Vincent's Word Studies*
- *Watchtower, The*
- *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*
- *Weymouth New Testament*
- *Wikipedia**
- *Young's Literal Translation*

* As noted in the Introduction under the "Wikipedia" subheading, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.) recognizes *Wikipedia* as a legitimate reference work. The *Wikipedia* reference example appears under section 10.3, "Edited Book Chapters and Entries in Reference Words," p. 329. However, the present author believes caution should be exercised by quoting the popular online encyclopedia. Several other sources have been consulted to support credibility when quoting Wikipedia in the present work, though these might not appear in the text in all cases.

Endnotes

¹ **Chapter 1**, verse 1, **history**: The Greek word for “history” is *genesis* (γενέσεως), meaning “genesis.” (See verse 18 also.) Therefore, the Gospel of Matthew presents not only the “genesis” or history of Jesus but the Gospel itself is also the “genesis” or beginning of the second part of the Bible, commonly referred to as the New Testament.

Or, it can be said that Matthew’s Gospel is the first of five books (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts) forming “The Christian Pentateuch.” (See Introduction for more details.)

² **Chapter 1**, verse 2, **brothers**: “Brother” in Greek is *adelphos* (ἀδελφός), from which the English word “Philadelphia” is partially derived.

Since *philia* (transliterated from φιλία in James 4:4, and from which the English word “filial” comes) is one of four Greek words for “love,” when combined with *adelphos* Philadelphia means “brotherly love,” hence the expression behind the name of the U.S. city, “The City of Brotherly Love.”

About 2,000 years before the U.S. city was named Philadelphia, another city bore that name in the Bible (Revelation 3:7). Jesus “loved” the Christians there because they “kept the word” (Revelation 3:9, *King James Version*).

The actual Greek word *philadelphia* (φιλαδελφία), aside from the ancient city, occurs six other times in the Bible in 1 Thessalonians 4:9; Hebrew 13:1; 1 Peter 1:22 and 3:8; and twice in the verse in 2 Peter 1:7.

³ **Chapter 1**, verse 3, **would-be**: The scenario documented in Genesis 38:6-30 provides this background information.

⁴ **Chapter 1**, verse 18, **birth**: The exact Greek word for “birth” in this verse is *genesis* (γένεσις), the exact name of the first book of the Bible. (See Matthew 1:1 endnote.)

This same Greek word for “birth” (*genesis*, γένεσις) factors into our discussion in a fascinating way insofar as the miraculous birth of Jesus is concerned; and in connection with skeptics who say a “virgin birth” is impossible. See “virgin” in endnote for Matthew 1:23 for more details.

⁵ **Chapter 1**, verse 18 [COMMENTARY]: For a comprehensive discussion on Joseph’s role in Jesus’ life, see the article (not fully edited) [When Did Jesus Adoptive Dad Die?](#) ([firpocarrarchives.com](#)).

⁶ Chapter 1, verse 18, **holy spirit**: The expression “holy spirit” appears capitalized, preceded by the definite article “the” in virtually all translations; hence, it is rendered “the Holy Spirit.” This gives the impression that the holy spirit is a person. However, the definite article does not appear in Greek, nor is “holy spirit” capitalized.

Moreover, in Greek, “spirit,” *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), is in the neuter—not the masculine—gender, and it means “wind” (moving air) or “breath” (also moving air). For example, pneumatic tools are driven by high-pressure air. And if a person has pneumonia, their lungs—which produce moving air—are inflamed due to bacterial or viral infection.

⁷ Chapter 1, verse 20, **Y^ehowah’s**: This is the first of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

Although the traditional rendering of God’s name is “Jehovah,” **Y^ehowah** appears to be closer to the original Hebrew pronunciation.

For a more comprehensive explanation, see Chapter 1, “Reconstructing the Divine Name—With the Computer?” (p. 1) in the book *The Divine Name Controversy* (1991).

Despite general prejudice in scholarly circles against the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References* (1984), produced by Jehovah’s Witnesses, I found their arguments for restoring God’s name to the New Testament as explained in Appendix 1D (p. 1564) compelling (there is nothing to be gained by reinventing the wheel):

From App 1A and 1C it is evident that the Tetragrammaton in Hebrew characters (יהוה) was used in both the Hebrew text and the Greek *Septuagint*. Therefore, whether Jesus and his disciples read the Scriptures in either Hebrew or Greek, they would come across the divine name. In the synagogue at Nazareth, when Jesus rose and accepted the book of Isaiah and read 61:1, 2 where the Tetragrammaton occurs twice, he pronounced the divine name. This was in accordance with his determination to make Jehovah’s name known as can be seen from his prayer to his Father: “I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world. I have made your name known to them and will make it known.”—Joh 17:6, 26.

There is evidence that Jesus’ disciples used the Tetragrammaton in their writings. In his work *De viris illustribus* [*Concerning Illustrious*

Men], chapter III, Jerome, in the fourth century, wrote the following: “Matthew, who is also Levi, and who from a publican came to be an apostle, first of all composed a Gospel of Christ in Judaea in the Hebrew language and characters for the benefit of those of the circumcision who had believed. Who translated it after that in Greek is not sufficiently ascertained. Moreover, the Hebrew itself is preserved to this day in the library at Caesarea, which the martyr Pamphilus so diligently collected. I also was allowed by the Nazarenes who use this volume in the Syrian city of Beroea to copy it.” (Translation from the Latin text edited by E. C. Richardson and published in the series “Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur,” Vol. 14, Leipzig, 1896, pp. 8, 9.)

Matthew made more than a hundred quotations from the inspired Hebrew Scriptures. Where these quotations included the divine name he would have been obliged faithfully to include the Tetragrammaton in his Hebrew Gospel account. When the Gospel of Matthew was translated into Greek, the Tetragrammaton was left untranslated within the Greek text according to the practice of that time.

Unmistakable manuscript evidence indicates that God’s name first appeared in Hebrew letters nestled in the Greek-language text but was removed in later versions of that same Greek text.

⁸ Chapter 1, verse 21, **Jesus**: The Hebrew equivalent of the popularized English name Jesus is *Yeshua* (or *Yehoshua*), and it means “**Y^ehowah’** is Salvation.” Hence, **Y^ehowah’** (Jehovah) saves sinners from their sins through Jesus.

⁹ Chapter 1, verse 22, **Y^ehowah’**: This is the second of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

¹⁰ Chapter 1, verse 22, [**Word Group**] ALL THIS HAPPENED TO FULFILL WHAT **Y^ehowah’** TOLD HIS PROPHET: To impress upon the minds of his Hebrew-speaking Jewish audience (and later his Greek-speaking Jewish readers; compare Acts 6:1) the significance of Jesus’ role as the foretold Messiah, Matthew referenced the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) using similar wording as expressed above (Matthew 2:15, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:56; 27:9).

¹¹ Chapter 1, verse 23, **virgin**: According to verse 23, Mary was a “virgin” (Greek, *par-the’nos*, παρθένος) when she gave “birth” (*genesis*, γένεσις) to Jesus.

Instead of quoting from the Hebrew text, Matthew quotes from the Greek *Septuagint* version of Isaiah 7:14, which uses *par-the'nos*, for the Hebrew word *al-mah'* (מַהְלָה), meaning “a young woman, a virgin” (Strong’s Hebrew: 5959. מַהְלָה (*almah*) -- a young woman, a virgin (biblehub.com)).

Intriguingly, “parthenogenesis”—a virgin giving birth—is a modern-day scientific expression. It occurs naturally with water fleas, aphids, nematodes, bees, scorpions, wasps, fish, birds, and sharks.

Is parthenogenesis possible in humans?

The consensus is that parthenogenesis is impossible for humans. However, not all scientists agree.

“Roughly 1 percent of moms may be virgins—or so they claim in a new survey. Virgin birth, or parthenogenesis, typically occurs in non-humans that reproduce asexually, including sharks, Komodo dragons, pit vipers and boa constrictors.

The British Medical Journal, which published the study in its latest Christmas issue, points out many retell the birth of Jesus to the Virgin Mary this time of year.

A team of American researchers wanted to find out the frequency this occurred in humans.

“We examined the incidence of virgin pregnancy and birth based on self report of pregnancy and sexual debut, hypothesizing that individual and contextual factors may influence reporting,” wrote the researchers, led by Amy H. Herring, a biostatistician at UNC’s Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Indeed, that appeared to be the case for some women. The researchers found 0.8 percent of responders gave birth despite being virgins, without the use of any assisted reproductive technology like IVF ([Virgin births claimed by 1 percent of U.S. moms: Study - CBS News](#)).

For almost two thousand years, Gospel writer Matthew has substantially popularized the word “parthenogenesis” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

This reality may surprise scientists who work in medicine, biology, genetics, and different related genres of what some see as the “exotic” sciences.

¹² **Chapter 1**, verse 23, **translates**: Matthew’s brief explanatory commentary may have served a dual purpose, each for the benefit of the Hebrew and Greek reader.

First, in his original Hebrew version, he explained to the Jewish reader that the expression “God Is With Us” is being used as a “name,” just as it was for Isaiah’s son in Isaiah 7:14.

Second, when he translated his Hebrew version into Greek, it is unlikely that the Greek speaker/reader would know the meaning and significance of the name “Immanuel.” (See Matthew 26:63 “Son of God” endnote under the heading “Written and Spoken Hebrew in the New Testament,” first entry, “(a) *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*” (See also Matthew 27:46.)

¹³ **Chapter 1**, verse 23, **God Is With Us**: This quote is from Isaiah 7:14, where, in the ancient Hebrew manuscript versions of Isaiah of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the medieval *Codex Leningrad B19a*, God’s name appears.

The expression “God Is With Us” is actually two words in the original Hebrew, and does not mean that Yeshua is **Y^ehowah’**.

One Bible version translates the expression “Emmanu-El” (Isaiah 8:8, *Young’s Literal Translation*). It meant that God was both on the side of his people and with his people.

Another translation renders this verse: “And his outstretched wings will be covering the land from side to side: for *God is with us* [Hebrew, אֱלֹהִים עִמָּנוּ, or, *emmanuel*]” (Isaiah 8:8, *Bible in Basic English*).

This text shows God was with his people *at that time*, even though Jesus of Nazareth had yet to be born. God is *with* Jesus. Jesus is *with* us. Therefore, through Jesus, “God Is With Us.”

¹⁴ **Chapter 1**, verse 24, **Y^ehowah’**: This is the third of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

¹⁵ **Chapter 2**, verse 1, **Eastern**: In the *Latin Vulgate*, the Latin word for “Eastern” is *oriental* (not necessarily meaning Asian). When someone is “disoriented,” for example, it means he does not know which way is “east.” The Latin word for “west” is *occidental*.

¹⁶ **Chapter 2**, verse 1, **scholars** [COMMENTARY]: Most translations use the word “astrologers” here. The actual Greek word is *magoi* (μάγοι, plural of μάγος), from which the English words “magic” and “magician” are derived. It means sorcerer, magician, or wizard.

However, there is another definition of what has traditionally been translated “astrologers.”

Instead of identifying the men from the East as “astrologers,” one translation more accurately reports that “a band of *scholars* arrived in Jerusalem from the East” (Matthew 2:1; 2:7, 16 *Message Bible*, emphasis supplied). Regarding the translation “scholars,” please note the detailed points made in this article, dated December 7, 2017, written by the present author, in the original complete with various proofing errors:

Long before the days of a worldwide system of radio-navigation linked by a constellation of 24 satellites and their corresponding ground stations—better known as Global Positioning System (GPS)—a lone star led several “astrologers” to the location of toddler Jesus. Although the number of “astrologers” or “Magi” (or magicians) is usually characterized as being three, the Bible nowhere gives the exact number. (Matthew 2:1-12, *New World Translation, New International Version*) Could that lone star be a devil star leading unholy men to young Jesus?

Why Called “Astrologers”?: The English word “star” comes from the Greek word *aster* (ἀστήρ), from which we get the words “astronomy” (a captivating, legitimate scientific study of the stars), and “astrology” (a beguiling pseudoscience having to do with consulting the stars, which the Bible condemns). (Exodus 19:1-6; 20:3, 4; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Isaiah 47:13; Amos 5:26; Acts 7:43) The men who traveled to visit toddler Jesus were called “astrologers,” essentially because they were following a star.

They were alternatively called “Magi” (Greek, μάγοι, *magoi*; related to the English word “magician”), which occurs only once in the Greek New Testament. Granted, the *Greek-English Lexicon* (1968) by Liddell and Scott says μάγος (*magos*, singular of μάγοι, *magoi*) can be used in a “bad sense.” But, surprisingly, “magic” wasn’t inevitably bad.

The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament by Moulton and Milligan (reprint, 1976) quotes one source as noting that “magic is originally something divine, holy” (p. 385). This was because divinely-inspired miracles looked like “magic.”

Besides, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (1983) by Hatch and Redpath equates the Greek *magos* (μάγος) with the Hebrew (מַגִּיִּם א) (Vol. 2, p. 891). Significantly, this Hebrew word is applied to Daniel, who was “chief of the magic-practicing priests [Greek, μάγων, LXX]...and astrologers.” (Daniel 5:11, 12, emphasis added.) Also, under [μάγος, singular], *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (1957) by Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich, says the *magos* (μάγος) is a “wise man and priest, who was expert in astrology, interpretation of dreams and various other secret arts” (p. 486), all different categories under the same umbrella that covers Daniel (and Joseph before him according to Genesis 40, 41), and the visitors of toddler Jesus, appropriately called scholars.

“**Scholars**” Not “**Astrologers**”?: Well before Christ’s time the Hebrew word *ḥă·kâ·mîm* (חֲכָמִים) meant a “class of learned and shrewd men.” (*Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, reprinted 1978, Brown, Driver, and Briggs) Intriguingly, this “class of learned and shrewd men” included but was not restricted to “astrologers, magicians, and the like” from Egypt and Babylon.

This word occurs at least 32 times in the Hebrew Old Testament and is the same word used in a Hebrew retroversion (Hebrew New Testament, United Bible Societies, Israel Agency, 1976) of Matthew 2:1. That means the traditional “astrologers” were really a “class of learned and shrewd men,” not devil-inspired magicians.

Furthermore, the *Analytic Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (1970) by Davidson notes that the singular form of *ḥă·kâ·mîm* (חֲכָמִים) means “wise man,” and that related words, interestingly, mean “to long for” or “desire ardently” (as when the scholars ‘longed’ to see toddler Jesus). One word also associated with *ḥă·kâ·mîm* (חֲכָמִים) means “to treasure up,” “lay up,” or “to gather or compress into a roundish form” as a “bracelet” of “gold beads” (pp. 382-383). As a matter of record, the scholars did indeed “lay up” “treasures” for toddler Jesus. (Matthew 2:11, *New World Translation*)

Hence, instead of loosely calling them “astrologers” one translation more accurately reports that “a band of *scholars* arrived in Jerusalem from the East.” (Matthew 2:1; 2:7, 16 *Message Bible*, emphasis supplied.) More specifically, they’re called “*religion scholars*.” (Matthew 2:4, *MB*, emphasis supplied.) Consistent with these translated

texts, the visiting scholars never received divine instructions to abandon their astrological ways. Contrariwise, from their introduction, the scholars are consistently stitched into the spirit-directed thread.

For example, the scholars said they saw “*his star*”—that is, *Jesus’ star*—that led them to Bethlehem to render him obeisance. (Matthew 2:2, *NWT*, emphasis supplied.) This doesn’t sound Devil-contrived. The star in question “went *ahead* of them until it came to a stop above where the young child was.” (Matthew 2:9, emphasis supplied.) If the heavenly star was an angel (angels are called “stars” at Job 38:7), then this would not be the first time Jehovah God orchestrated directions to a predesignated location. (Exodus 23:20-23; see also Exodus 32:34; 33:2.)

An overall consideration of the 14-step God-directed sequence involving toddler Jesus silently speaks volumes.

Chain of Events:

1. **Angel Gabriel** announces John’s birth to Zechariah (Luke 1:5-25)
2. Zechariah filled with **holy spirit** (Luke 1:67)
3. **Angel Gabriel** announces birth of Jesus to Mary (Luke 1:26-38)
4. **Angel** directs Joseph in a dream not to divorce Mary (Matthew 1:18-25)
5. **Angel** tells shepherds of Jesus’ birth; angel army praise God (Luke 2:8-14)
6. Shepherds visit infant Jesus in manger (not house) and **re-joice** (Luke 2:15-20)
7. **Holy spirit** reveals Simeon would live to see Messiah (Luke 2:22-35)
8. **Prophetess Anna joyfully** praises God for infant (Luke 2:36-38)
9. A **star** directs Eastern scholars seeking toddler Jesus to Jerusalem (Matthew 2:1, 2)
10. **Star** directs **joyful** scholars (not “demonic astrologers”) to Jesus in a “house” (not manger) (Matthew 2:9-11)
11. Scholars receive “**divine warning**” in a dream to avoid Herod (Matthew 2:12)
12. **Angel** tells Joseph in a dream to take family to Africa (Egypt) (Matthew 2:13-15)

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13. **Angel** tells Joseph in a dream to return to Israel (Matthew 2:19-21)
 14. Joseph receives "**divine warning**" in a dream (same as the scholars) to avoid Judea (Matthew 2:22, 23)

Access this link to read the article online '[Astrologers' Locate Toddler Jesus \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](#). For almost two thousand years, down to our day, Matthew has primarily popularized these words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁷ See endnote for "toddler" in Matthew 2:8.

¹⁸ Chapter 2, verse 2, **star**: The Greek words for "star" is *aster* (ἀστήρ, found in this verse and throughout the Christian Greek Scriptures) and *astron* (ἄστρον, used by Gospel writer Luke at Luke 21:25, Acts 7:43, and Acts 27:20; and by the apostle Paul at Hebrews 11:12), from which the English words "asteroid," "astronomy" and "astrophysics" come. Astronomy is the combination of *astron* (ἄστρον) "star" and *nomos* (νόμος) "law."

Hence, it can be translated "law of the stars." For almost two thousand years, down to the present, Matthew has popularized words like "asteroid," "astronomy," "astrophysics," and related words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁹ Chapter 2, verse 4, **scribes**: The original Greek word for "scribes" (but in the singular) is *grammateús* (γραμματεὺς). The word "grammar" and related words come from this Greek word (see endnote for verse 5).

Although one might think of a simple copyist similar to a notary public, the ancient Jewish scribe was much more.

These men "were the more learned part of the people, who were employed in writing out, and expounding the law" ([Matthew 2 Gill's Exposition \(biblehub.com\)](#)).

The Jewish New Testament appropriately translates *grammatéon* (γραμματέων) as "Torah-teachers," that is, teachers of the Mosaic Law (see Matthew 5:20 and 7:29.) Their educational training in the Law made them more reprehensible in the eyes of Jesus the Christ.

Jesus warned that, for the most part, his disciples should "beware of the scribes" (Luke 20:46, *King James Version*).

However, because of their advanced education, "some of the Scribes answered, and they were saying to him, 'Teacher, you have spoken beautifully'" (Luke 20:39, *Aramaic Bible in Plain English*), or, as another translation puts it,

“Teacher, you have given a good answer!” (Luke 20:39, *Contemporary English Version*).

Marks’ account of this same scenario states that one scribe quietly absorbed Jesus’ stellar answer to a challenging question posed by the Sadducees and afterward presented his own ostensibly problematic question (Mark 12:18-28).

When Jesus answered, the scribe responded: “Admirably answered, Teacher; You truthfully stated that he is one, and there is no other but him” (Mark 12:32, *Amplified Bible*). “When Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of God’” (Mark 12:34, *New American Standard Bible*).

Jesus recognized and applauded this humble scribe’s educational training and acknowledged his proximity to gaining access to the “kingdom of God.”

However, most other scribes were indeed “far from the kingdom of God” as Jesus clearly indicated in the context of his interaction with the humble scribe (Mark 12:35-40).

For almost two thousand years, Matthew has mostly popularized words like “grammar” and “grammarian” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

²⁰ Chapter 2, verse 5, **wrote**: The original Greek word for “write” is *graphó* (γράφω), which means, “I write.” English words such as “graph” and “graffiti” spring from this Greek word. (See Matthew 22:20 endnote.)

²¹ Chapter 2, verse 8, **toddler**: The Greek word for “toddler” in this text is *paidion* (παιδίον), which is closely akin to *pais* (παῖς), another Greek word for “young child.”

For good reason, then, the *King James Version* translates *paidion* as “young child” instead of “newborn infant” [verses 8, 9, 11, 13(2), 14, 20, and 21 of Matthew chapter 2].

The present translation alternately renders *paidion* as “boy-king” in the previously mentioned verses.

Anticipatorily, the term “boy-king” is introduced in Matthew 2:2 even though the Greek word *paidion* is not in the original text.

The English word “pediatrics” comes from *paidion* (παιδίον). When the Greek word *pais* (παῖς) is combined with *iatros* (ιατρός), the English word “pediatrician” is born. (See also endnote for verse 16 below.)

For nearly two millennia, down to our modern time, Matthew has mainly popularized these words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

²² Chapter 2, verse 8, “I”: The Greek word for “I” is *ego* (εγω), from which the English words “ego” and “egomaniac” come.

Although there is nothing inherently wrong with the word “ego” (Jesus himself used the Semitic-language equivalent many times), in the context of this verse, Herod could rightly be accused of having megalomaniacal fantasies of omnipotence as he sought to have supreme power.

Oxford Dictionaries define a megalomaniac as “a person who is obsessed with their own power.”

Herod’s “ego” led him to mass murder.

His mental condition, left unchecked, led to him killing an undetermined number of innocent boys two years of age and under (Matthew 2:16).

Today, a person suffering from megalomania may well be treated with medication by a psychiatrist.

For almost two thousand years, down to our present time, Matthew has popularized words like “ego,” “egomaniac,” “egocentric,” and related words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

²³ Chapter 2, verse 8, **pay my respects**: The *King James Version* uses the word “worship,” whereas the present translation uses “pay my respects.”

The original Greek word for “worship” or “pay my respects” is *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω). It can acceptably mean “(fall down and) worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to, [or] welcome respectfully,” according to *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (1957), by Walter Bauer.

In the vast majority of instances in Scripture, *proskuneo* means worship of God. When in a Revelation vision John fell at the feet of an angel to worship him, the angel quickly censured him and said, “worship [*proskuneo*] God!” (Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9).

But, given the context of Matthew 2:8 wherein there is an introduction of a new toddler king-designate into the world, he was to be ‘welcomed respectfully.’

Interestingly, another Greek word, *doxa* (δόξα), which generally means “honor” or “glory,” can also be translated “worship” (Strong’s Greek: 1391. δόξα (doxa) -- opinion (always good in N.T.), hence praise, honor, glory (biblehub.com)).

Hence, Jesus stated: “But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship [*doxa*] in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee” (Luke 14:10, *KJV*). Here, Jesus certainly didn’t mean that the person honored before all was to be worshipped.

Moreover, “worship” is not always the best translation for *proskuneo*.

For example, the glorified Jesus Christ told faithful Christians in the ancient city of Philadelphia that he would make the satanic liars among them “come and worship [*proskuneo*, προσκυνέω] before thy feet” (Revelation 3:9, *KJV*).

No, Jesus was not saying that he would force these liars to actually *worship* faithful ones. Instead, he was saying, “I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you” (Revelation 3:9, *New International Version*).

When a demonized man filled with devils “saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him” (Mark 5:1-16, *KJV*; see also Mark 3:11). Instead of actually worshipping Jesus as God, the man no doubt “prostrated” himself before Jesus, with “prostrate” being an accurate translation of *proskuneo* given the context. (Compare Mark 1:40, 5:22 although *proskuneo* is not found in these verses).

The demon correctly recognized Jesus as the “son of the most high God” (Mark 5:7, *KJV*), not as the “most high God” Himself.

Interestingly, in the same context, Mark described the scenario whereby a woman with a chronic gynecological ailment stealthily touched Jesus’ clothing to be healed, causing Jesus to detect that “virtue had gone out of him” (Mark 5:25-33, *KJV*).

Just before being discovered, the woman “came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth” 5:30, *KJV*).

Mark used the Greek word *prospiptó* (προσπίπτω, which is related to *proskuneo*), translated “fell down before him” (Mark 5:33, *KJV*). (See [Strong’s Greek: 4363. προσπίπτω \(prospiptó\) -- to fall upon, fall prostrate before \(biblehub.com\)](#)).

The main difference between *prospiptó* and *proskuneo* is intent. Both words involve the same action—genuflecting—with the latter exclusively including worshipful adoration to a god.

For example, in using familiar earthly terms in heaven, the apostle John saw persons who “threw themselves down with their faces to the ground before the throne and worshiped [root word προσκυνέω, *proskuneo*] God” (Revelation

7:11, *NET Bible*; see also Revelation 11:16). Bowing down with faces to the ground was a separate act from worshipping God.

Prospiptó only occurs in the Gospel writings of Mark and Luke when it means to fall down before, sans the thought of worship (Mark 3:11; 5:33; 7:25; Luke 5:8; 8:28; 8:47; Acts 16:29). In none of these instances does the *KJV* render *prospiptó* “worship.”

People fell down before certain ones where neither *proskuneo* nor *prospiptó* was involved. For example, Peter, James, and John “fell facedown to the ground, terrified,” when they heard God’s voice from heaven during the transfiguration (Matthew 17:6, *New International Version*).

Later in the same chapter, “a man approached Jesus and knelt before him,” requesting that he exorcize a demon from his son (Matthew 17:14-20, *New International Version*).

A leprous man “fell with his face to the ground and begged” Jesus to heal him of a terrible case of leprosy (Luke 5:12). The man was not attempting to worship Jesus.

Likewise, in the case of the unforgiving slave, “his fellow servant fell to his knees and begged” for more time to repay a debt (Matthew 18:29). Worship was certainly nowhere in the mix.

Finally, one of ten blind men who was healed “fell facedown at Jesus’ feet in thanksgiving” (Luke 17:16, *Berean Standard Bible*), or “quickly bowed at Jesus’ feet and thanked him” (Luke 17:16, *God’s Word Translation*), or “prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him” (Luke 17:16, *New Revised Standard Version*).

While profoundly thankful, there is no indication that the man whose sight was restored attempted to worship Jesus.

²⁴ Chapter 2, verse 8, **boy-king**: See endnote for “toddler” earlier in this verse.

²⁵ Chapter 2, verse 9, **boy-king**: See endnote for “toddler” in Matthew 2:8.

²⁶ Chapter 2, verses 10-11a [COMMENTARY]: The star moving to a specific house could be said to be the conceptual Scriptural forerunner of modern-day celestial GPS systems that can locate terrestrial areas with pinpoint accuracy ([Global Positioning System - Wikipedia](#)).

²⁷ Chapter 2, verse 11, **boy-king**: See endnote for “toddler” in Matthew 2:8.

²⁸ Chapter 2, verse 11b, **bowing before**: The Greek word *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω) appears here. See Matthew 2:8, endnote, “**pay my respects**,” for a more detailed explanation. The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as “worship” in most Bible translations, in texts with similar content,

context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

²⁹ Chapter 2, verse 13, **Y^ehowah's**: This is the fourth of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

³⁰ Chapter 2, verse 13a, **boy-king**: See endnote for "toddler" in Matthew 2:8.

³¹ Chapter 2, verse 13, **Africa**: Although the Greek word for "Egypt" (*Aiguptos*, Αἴγυπτος) appears in the original text, the word "Africa" is implied. This is especially so since there is no original Bible language word for "continent," neither in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek.

For the sake of clarity, the modern-day reader is reminded that Egypt is in Africa (that is, on the African continent), although Egypt is commonly (and erroneously) identified as being in the "Middle East," which is a *region* but not a *continent*.

Regarding the etymology of the word "Africa," some argue that it is derived from the ancient Greek word for a "shudder" or "trembling" (Greek, φρίκη, "frika"; see Bauer lexicon [1957], p. 873) attributable to fear (Greek, φόβος, *phobos*). Though not found in the New Testament, φρίκη ("frika") does appear in the *Septuagint* (the Old Testament or Hebrew Scriptures translated into Greek) in Job 4:14 (LXX).

When the negating Greek prefix "α" (a) is added to φρίκη ("frika"), the bases for the English word "Africa" (Αφρίκη) is formed, which roughly translates into "the land that is without shuddering or trembling caused by fear."

This understanding would perhaps explain why **Y^ehowah's** angel directed Joseph to take his wife Mary and toddler Jesus to Africa, specifically Egypt (Matthew 2:13).

Interestingly, Joseph was characterized as having fear *before* he went to Africa (see Matthew 1:20, where a form of φόβος is used) and *after* he returned from Africa (see Matthew 2:22, where a form of φόβος is also used), but never while he was *in* Africa (Αφρίκη), the land where there was no reason for fearful shuddering or trembling.

Intriguingly, it has been asserted that the Romans later adopted a variation of the above Greek words and came up with *ofer*, which is one of the Latin (the language of the Romans) adjectives for "dark" or "gloomy." The exact opposite

of these adjectives is the Latin word *apricus*, which means *not* dark or gloomy, that is, “sunny,” as in Africa (*afēr + apricus = “Africa”*).

As if to settle the debate, Moses recorded this first description of Egypt: “And Lot lifteth up his eyes, and seeth the whole circuit of the Jordan that it is all a watered country (before Jehovah's destroying; Sodom and Gomorrah, as Jehovah's garden, as the land of Egypt” (Genesis 13:10, *Young's Literal Translation*).

The part of Africa called Egypt was “Jehovah's garden.” (See also Genesis 2:13, *King James Version*, where Ethiopia, Africa, is associated with the Garden of Eden.)

Therefore, as per the angel's instruction, Joseph fled Bethlehem with Mary and toddler Jesus to escape the metaphorically dark, gloomy situation where Herod was intent on killing young Jesus to the metaphorical—and literal—light of sunny Africa.

Most importantly, irrespective of the etymological significance of Greek and Latin words, making a round trip to Africa fulfilled Old Testament prophecy (Matthew 2:15).

³² Chapter 2, verse 13b, **boy-king**: See endnote for “toddler” in Matthew 2:8.

³³ Chapter 2, verse 14, **boy-king**: See endnote for “toddler” in Matthew 2:8.

³⁴ Chapter 2, verse 15, **Y^ehowah's**: This is the fifth of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

³⁵ Chapter 2, verse 15: See endnote for “**Word Group**” in Matthew 1:22.

³⁶ Chapter 2, verse 16, **boys**: The Greek word for “boys” here is *paidion* (παῖδιον). (See also endnote on verse 8 under “toddler” above.)

Interestingly, though not found in Latin translations of this text, the term “infant” comes from the Latin word *infans*, and means one who is “unable to speak,” or is “speechless.”

Hence, in seeking the death of speechless and defenseless little boys two years of age and under, Herod was willing to and did commit mass infanticide.

³⁷ Chapter 2, verse 19: **Y^ehowah's**: This is the sixth of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

³⁸ Chapter 2, verse 20, **boy-king**: See endnote for “toddler” in Matthew 2:8.

³⁹ Chapter 2, verse 21, **boy-king**: See endnote for “toddler” in Matthew 2:8.

⁴⁰ Chapter 2, verse 23: See endnote for “**Word Group**” in Matthew 1:22

⁴¹ **Chapter 2**, verse 23: This is a collective or summary quote from three prophets and the four Scriptural texts they wrote. These prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah. Isaiah wrote two texts: Isaiah 11:1 [#5] and Isaiah 53:2 [#6]. The other two texts are in Jeremiah 23:5 [#7] and Zechariah 3:8 [#8].

⁴² **Chapter 3**, verse 1, **John the Baptist** [COMMENTARY]: Although Matthew doesn't venture into the background of John the Baptist, Luke does. In doing so, Luke reveals seven unique things about John's parents and his conception and birth:

First: Before John the Baptist was conceived, his humble, notable parents had status and a stellar reputation as faithful servants of God. Luke writes:

“During the time when Herod was king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife's name was Elizabeth; she also belonged to a priestly family. They both lived good lives in God's sight and obeyed all the Lord's laws and commands (Luke 1:5-6, *Good News Translation*).

Second: An elderly Zechariah got his wife Elizabeth, also advanced in age, pregnant through divine intervention (Luke 1:7, 18). This was also the case with their foreparents, Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 17:17).

Third: An angel announced that the son to be born to them should be named John (Luke 1:11-13).

Fourth: John “shall be great in the sight of the Lord” (Luke 1:15a, *King James Version*). Jesus characterized him as “more than a prophet” (Matthew 11:9, *NIV*).

Indeed, the Lord considered John to be a “great” man. Jesus would later say of him, “I assure you that John the Baptist is greater than anyone who has ever lived” (Matthew 11:11, *Good News Translation*).

John's preaching and stature were profound, and his stellar, conscientious disciples were well-known (Matthew 9:14; Mark 2:18-20; Luke 5:33; 7:18-23; John 11:2-3).

And even though Jesus' disciples were baptizing in one area while John was doing so in another (John 3:22-24), John prophesied that the number of Jesus' disciples would eclipse his (John 3:26-30).

Long after the dynamic spread of Christianity—sparked in part by the conversion and baptism of a spirit-energized Paul, who was

instrumental in establishing numerous congregations as chronicled by Luke (Acts 9-18)—this same Paul encountered about 12 faithful disciples of John the Baptist, who appropriately were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:1-7).

Earlier, prior to writing the book of Acts, Luke noted that even Jesus mentioned the “baptism of John” (Luke 20:4, *King James Version*) when answering religious opposers who tried to trip him up. And later, Luke recorded that Peter also referenced “the baptism which John preached” (Acts 10:37, *KJV*) and that Peter recalled Jesus’ words, “John baptized with water” (Acts 11:16, *NWT*).

John’s message evidently reached North Africa.

Luke tells of an African Jew named Apollos, who, unlike the 12 or so disciples of John mentioned above, had an accurate though incomplete knowledge of Jesus and remained a disciple of John the Baptist:

“At that time a Jew named Apollos, who had been born in Alexandria [in Egypt, North Africa], came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent speaker and had a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures.

“He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord, and with great enthusiasm he proclaimed and taught correctly the facts about Jesus. However, he knew only the baptism of John” (Acts 18:24-25, *Good News Translation*).

Ultimately, “when Priscilla and Aquila heard [Apollos], they took him home with them and explained to him more correctly the Way of God” (Acts 18:26, *GNT*).

The point is that John’s powerful teachings continued to reverberate far beyond the borders of Israel, even after the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of his cousin, Jesus the Christ.

Fifth: Notably, John was to be “filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother’s womb” (Luke 1:15b, *New American Standard Bible*). Only the birth of Jesus was more miraculous. Besides John, no other person in the Bible is spoken of as being filled with holy spirit while still in their mother’s womb.

Sixth: Fascinatingly, “Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit” (Luke 1:41, *New International Version*) when, in her sixth month of pregnancy, the fetus in her womb jumped upon hearing Mary’s greeting.

Seventh: Relatedly, as was *not* the case with the younger man Joseph, who was to become the adoptive father of the yet-to-be-born Jesus, Zechariah, like his wife and unborn son John, also “was filled with the Holy Spirit” (Luke 1:67, *English Standard Version*).

So first the unborn John, next his mother Elizabeth, when about six months pregnant with him, and then his father Zechariah, all received an unprecedented dose of holy spirit.

When John preached throughout the country around Jordan, the *common people* (Matthew 3:5; Luke 3:2b-11), *religious leaders* who placed heavy burdens on the common people (Matthew 7-12), the *tax collectors* who the common people despised and distrusted (Luke 3:12-13), and even *Roman police* who were known by the common people to harass, falsely accuse, and receive bribes (Luke 3:14), all heard him.

“In many different ways John preached the Good News to the people and urged them to change their ways” (Luke 3:18, *GNT*). He pointedly admonished them all to take corrective action, with no record of him getting pushback from anyone.

John’s admirers even included Herod, a politician who imprisoned him for publicly criticizing his adultery that led to marriage (Matthew 14:1-12).

Herod’s wife, Herodias (who used to be his sister-in-law, having been married to his brother Philip), had such deadly, venomous hatred for John that she was ultimately responsible for his brutal and gruesome death.

John’s presence and stature were such that people pondered if he was the expected Christ. Luke records:

“The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah” (Luke 3:15, *New International Version*; compare John 9:18-20).

Even the priests, Levites, and Pharisees all sent representatives from Jerusalem to pepper John with questions as to his possible messiahship (John 1:19-28; 5:33-36). Indeed, people “were convinced that John was a prophet” (Luke 20:6, *New World Translation*).

Holding John in such high esteem as one sent by God, his disciples were offended when a rival, as they saw it, supervised baptism at another location while John himself was baptizing:

“Rabbi, do you remember the man you spoke so favorably about when he was with you on the other side of the Jordan River? Well, he’s baptizing, and everyone is going to him!” (John 3:22-26; 4:1-2, *God’s Word Translation*).

John reassured them that all was well and reminded them of what he had said earlier about his role as the forerunner to the Messiah (John 3:27-30).

John had taught his disciples how to pray, prompting one of Jesus’ disciples to request that Jesus do the same right after Jesus finished praying. Luke writes:

“One day in a place where Jesus had just finished praying, one of His disciples requested, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples’” (Luke 11:1, *Majority Standard Bible*).

Though Matthew didn’t mention that Jesus was answering a request in his account, Jesus responded to his disciple’s entreaty by offering what has come to be known as “The Lord’s Prayer,” the most famous prayer ever uttered.

The future apostle Andrew was first a disciple of John the Baptist (John 1:35-40). Andrew introduced his brother Simon, who also later became an apostle, to Jesus, who called him “Cephas, (which is translated ‘Peter’” (John 1:41-42).

Based on what he heard, even Herod initially (and fearfully) contemplated whether Jesus was John resurrected before concluding that since he beheaded John, the mysterious miracle worker must be someone else—someone he wanted to meet (Matthew 14:2; John 9:7-9).

The overwhelming significance of Herod mentioning Jesus and John in the same breath could easily escape the notice of the casual reader.

Putting matters in perspective, below are some of the miracles Jesus performed as recorded by Matthew, up until the moment that Herod believed Jesus was John resurrected, even though John had never come close to performing such miracles:

- Jesus healed a leper (Matthew 8:1-4).
- Jesus healed many people (Matthew 8:14-17).
- Jesus calmed a storm (Matthew 8:23-27).
- Jesus expelled demons (Matthew 8:28-34).
- Jesus healed a paralytic man (Matthew 9:1-8).
- Jesus resurrected a girl (Matthew 9:18-19, 23-26).
- Jesus healed a woman (Matthew 9:20-22).
- Jesus healed two blind men (Matthew 9:27-29).
- Jesus healed man rendered speechless by a demon (9:32-33).
- Jesus healed man’s withered hand (Matthew 12:9-14).

John did not do any of the above. Indeed, he “did not perform a single sign (attesting miracle)” (John 9:41, *Amplified Bible*). Still, Herod worriedly exclaimed: “This must be John the Baptist raised from the dead! That is why he can do such miracles” (Matthew 14:2, *New Living Translation*).

While Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are known as the Holy Family throughout Christendom, it may not be too much of a stretch to call John the Baptist, righteous Elizabeth, and priest Zechariah the closely related second Holy Family.

⁴³ Chapter 3, verse 2, **Repent**: The Greek word for “repent” (*metanoéō*, μετανοέω) is a combination of *meta* (μετα, “change”) and *noeó* (νοέω, “mind,” or, “thinking”). Hence, *metanoéō* (or “repent”) means to change one’s mind about doing wrong; to change who one is as a sinner. (See Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:9-10.)

The apostle Paul used a word related to *metanoéō*. That word is “metamorphosis” (μεταμορφοῦσθε) and is translated “transform” in many versions of the Bible at Romans 12:2. The basic translation is “to change form” (*meta* [μετα], “change”; *morphóō* [μορφώω], “form”).

With the help of God’s spirit, a repentant person would have changed his mind and, to the extent possible, the sinful inner man that had formed inside.

⁴⁴ Chapter 3, verse 3a, **Y^ehowah**: This is the seventh of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2). Intriguingly, the number seven has significance in the Bible and this seventh occurrence is the first time God’s name is embodied within the Scripture itself.

⁴⁵ Chapter 3, verse 3b: Isaiah 40:3 [#9]. Interestingly—perhaps even intriguingly—the number seven, as noted, has significance in the Bible, and this seventh occurrence is the first time God’s name occurs within the Scripture itself. See endnote for Matthew 1:20.

⁴⁶ Chapter 3, verse 6: This verse indicates John’s familiarity with the Mosaic Law as he appealed to Jews and Jewish converts to repent of their sins against said Law.

⁴⁷ Chapter 3, verse 9, **stones**: The original Greek word for “stone” is *lithos* (λίθος). When combined with the Greek word meaning “I write” (*graphó*, γράφω; see endnote for Matthew 2:5), the English word “lithograph” is formed, which basically means to write on a stone. (See also Matthew 4:3 for “smooth rocks that look like buns” endnote commentary.)

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized “lithograph” and related words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁴⁸ **Chapter 3**, verse 11, **holy spirit**: See endnote for Matthew 1:18.

⁴⁹ **Chapter 3**, verse 11, **fire**: The original Greek word for “fire” is *pur* (πῦρ)—alternately transliterated *pyr*—and can represent both the fire, as well as the heat that emits it.

Certain English words have *pyr-* as a prefix. For example, a *pyromaniac* is one who has an unhealthy obsession with fire. And the Oxford dictionary defines *pyrolysis* as “decomposition brought about by high temperatures.”

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has popularized words related to the prefix *pyr-* far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁵⁰ **Chapter 4**, Verse 1, **Devil**: The Greek word for “Devil” is *diabolos* (διάβολος) and is recognized as a cognate in any number of languages. A “devil” slanders, falsely accuses, defames, and unjustly criticizes to ‘hurt, malign, condemn, or sever a relationship.’

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “devil,” “devilish,” “diabolical,” and others far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁵¹ **Chapter 4**, verse 1, **test**: The Greek word for “test” is *peirazó* (πειράζω). In quoting another source, *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* notes that *peirazó* “originally [meant] to test, to try which was its usual meaning in the ancient Greek and the LXX [Septuagint]” (emphasis supplied).

Though *peirazó* can accurately be translated “tempt,” to the modern mind, this may suggest that the subject—in this case, Jesus—is tempted to do wrong but successfully fought off that temptation. As is apparent, such was not the case with the perfect man Jesus.

While the *New World Translation* uses “tempted” in this verse, the same translation uses “test” instead of “tempt” in translating *peirazó* a few verses later (verse 7). See also Matthew 22:18, where “test” as opposed to “tempt” is used for *peirazó* in the *New World Translation*.

⁵² **Chapter 4**, verse 3, **one of God’s sons**: In testing a famished Jesus, the Devil, in effect, asked an unusually provocative question with a subtle, sinister, secondary challenge.

In devaluing the role of Jesus as God’s “beloved Son” (Matthew 3:17), the Devil asks, “if you’re truly *one* of God’s sons...” as if, by chance, he was God’s son, but *one* of many; one without any status whatsoever as God’s only begotten son.

He repeats this formula in verse 6, and Devil-inspired opponents of Jesus echo the same question. At the same time, the Lord hangs, dying in agony on the torture stake (Matthew 27:40).

Jesus humbly responded to the Devil by saying that not just the ‘beloved, highly esteemed Son of God’ (verified by the miraculous events surrounding Jesus’ baptism) but man—any man—must be nourished by spiritual food from God’s Word, the Hebrew Scriptures. (See also “Son of God” endnote in Matthew 26:63.)

⁵³ Chapter 4, verse 3, **smooth stones that resemble loaves of round bread buns** [COMMENTARY]: The Greek word for a singular loaf of bread is *artos* (ἄρτος) (Strong’s Greek: 740. ἄρτος (artos) -- bread, a loaf (biblehub.com)). However, it is in the plural in this verse (see also Matthew 14:17).

The Hebrew equivalent of *artos*, as found, for example, in 1 Samuel 10:4, is *lechem* (לֶחֶם). From the days of ancient Israel, bread was often round, as indicated in the text of Judges 7:13.

In fact, the related Hebrew word *kikkar* (כִּכָּר) literally means “a round loaf” in 1 Samuel 2:26 (Strong’s Hebrew: 3603. כִּכָּר (kikkar) -- a round, a round district, a round loaf, a round weight, a talent (a measure of weight or money) (biblehub.com)).

For illustrative purposes, Jesus focused on the similarity between a smooth stone and a loaf of bread when juxtaposed in Luke 11:11 in several versions of the Bible (e.g., *Aramaic Bible in Plain English*, *King James Version*, and *Douay-Rheims Bible*).

This fact has not escaped the notice of at least one commentary.

With regard to Luke 11:11, the *Expositor’s Greek Testament* states that “there is resemblance between the thing asked and supposed to be given: loaf and stone” (Luke 11:11 Commentaries: “Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? (biblehub.com)).

⁵⁴ Chapter 4, verse 4, **man**: The Greek word for “man” (or “mankind”) is *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος). The English words “anthropology” (the study of man) and

philanthropy (love of mankind; see endnote for Matthew 1:2) are among those that incorporate *anthrōpos*. (Also see endnote under “want” for Matthew 6:5.)

⁵⁵ Chapter 4, verse 4, **Y^ehowah**: This is the eighth of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

⁵⁶ Chapter 4, verse 4. The first recorded saying out of Jesus’ mouth after his baptism is a quote from the fifth and final book of the Torah wherein the Divine Name **Y^ehowah**.

⁵⁷ Chapter 4, verse 6, **one of God’s sons**: See endnote above for “one of God’s sons” in Matthew 4:3.

⁵⁸ Chapter 4, verse 6, **Go for it!**: Tempting or trying to cheat death for its sheer rush and excitement is not a new concept.

Engaging in high-risk high-altitude death-defying extreme sports (e.g., bungee-jumping, or risky parachuting maneuvers) is Devil-inspired. It is also summarized in the collective motto, “Go for it!”

This is, without a doubt, where the thought behind the English word “daredevil” comes from. In short, the ‘Devil dares’ one to do something completely unnecessary and foolhardy, simply for the thrill of it.

One dictionary defines daredevil as “a reckless impetuous irresponsible person. harum-scarum, madcap, swashbuckler, hothead, lunatic. adventurer, venturer - a person who enjoys taking risks. tearaway - a reckless and impetuous person” ([Daredevil - definition of daredevil by The Free Dictionary](#)).

Sadly, during this writing, a French daredevil fell to his death from the 68th floor of a Hong Kong skyscraper on July 31, 2023.

Under the headline, “Daredevil plunges 68 floors to his death after Hong Kong skyscraper stunt 'went wrong,’” the article starts by saying:

A daredevil photographer was found dead after he climbed a 712-foot-high skyscraper. Remi Lucidi, 30, had made a name for himself with his intrepid photographic stunts, which often saw him scaling high buildings around the world to take photographs and selfies ([Daredevil plunges 68 floors to his death after Hong Kong skyscraper stunt 'went wrong' \(msn.com\)](#)).

The heartbreaking title of another article, “Daredevil 'banged on windows for help' before plunging 700ft to his death from skyscraper,” reads in part:

Lucidi, known as 'Remi Enigma,' on social media, had reached the 68th floor of the 721-foot Tregunter Tower in Hong Kong's before his fatal fall. The adventurer had been seen by a maid knocking on the windows of the penthouse to get back inside the building, but fell to his death before any help could arrive ([Daredevil 'banged on windows for help' before plunging 700ft to his death from skyscraper \(msn.com\)](#)).

The greater the threat to human life (as in playing a "game" of Russian roulette), the greater the "rush." Sincere prayers ascend for Lucidi, his family, friends, and fans.

As he did with Jesus, the Devil dares one to take an exciting chance with his life. Jesus noted that **Y^ehowah'** must not be tested in such a way.

⁵⁹ Chapter 4, verse 7, **Y^ehowah'**: This is the ninth of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

⁶⁰ Chapter 4, verse 8, **very high mountain** [COMMENTARY]: Almighty God Jehovah, who "is a Spirit" (John 4:24, *King James Version*), directed Moses to ascend a mountain to get a distant panoramic view of a prosperous, desirable land, (Numbers 13:23, 27; Deuteronomy 32:48-52).

Satan the Devil, who is a wicked spirit force in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:11-12; Revelation 12:9), copied Jehovah and used this same mountain view approach when he led Jesus in spirit to a lofty mountain to display before him an all-encompassing view of the glorious, desirable kingdoms of the world (Matthew 4:8-9).

John documented that, in vision, an angel "took me in spirit to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God" (Revelation 21:10, *New American Bible*), "having the glory of God" (Revelation 21:11a, *KJV*). Indeed, it was a gloriously desirable city! (Revelation 21:11b-27)

In all three instances, it was someone from the spirit realm showing a human a mountain high panoramic view of some very desirable location.

⁶¹ Chapter 4, verse 8, **world**: The Greek word for "world" is *kosmos* (κόσμος) and could be translated as "order, world," "universe; worldly affairs; the inhabitants of the world; adornment," or "'ordered system' (like the universe, creation)" (Strong's Greek: 2889. κόσμος (kosmos) -- order, the world (biblehub.com)). *Kosmos* runs the gamut of being the root of rarely used English words to very familiar ones.

For example, though rarely used, “cosmocracy” (which triggered my Word spellchecker) is defined primarily as “rulership of the world; a global government” ([cosmocracy - Wiktionary](#)).

More familiar words like “cosmetic” and “cosmology” also come from *kosmos*, given that a woman’s made-up face is orderly arranged along with beautifully adorned clothing.

Peter cautioned Christian women not to be consumed with such matters when he wrote. “Don’t be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes [*kosmos*]” (1 Peter 3:3, *New Living Translation*).

Chapter 4, verse 9, **fall down in prostration**: The original Greek word for “fall down in prostration” is *piptó* (πίπτω), and it means to “fall prostrate” but does not connote worship. (See endnote for Matthew 2:8, “pay my respects.”)

Chapter 4, verse 9, **worship**: The original Greek word for “worship” here is *proskuneó* (προσκυνέω), which, in this context, means “properly, to kiss the ground when prostrating before a superior,” according to *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*.

Unlike *piptó* (πίπτω), which just means to “fall prostrate” (as discussed in the previous endnote), *proskuneó* (προσκυνέω) in this setting quite likely “suggests the willingness to make all necessary physical *gestures of obeisance* [*sic*],” as per this same source.

See Matthew 2:8, endnote, “**pay my respects**,” for a more detailed explanation. The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as “worship” in most Bible translations, in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

⁶² Chapter 4, verse 10, **Satan**: The Greek word for “Satan” is *satanas* (Σατανᾶς), meaning “resister.”

Interestingly, Jesus did not refer to Satan as “Devil,” even though Matthew used “Devil” three times previously in verses 1, 5, and 8. Though the word “Devil” is found nowhere in the Hebrew Scriptures, “Satan” is.

It could be that Jesus used “satan” (Hebrew, שטן) as found in Psalm 109:6, given the fact that the Devil quoted the book of Psalms (91:11, 12) himself when he misapplied it in verse 6.

Granted, Psalm 109:6 is rightly applied to traitorous Judas Iscariot, but the apostle John describes the influence “Satan” had on Judas (John 13:21-27), thus teaming the two up in the scurrilous plot to murder Jesus.

Intriguingly, there exists one instance in the Hebrew Bible where “satan” neither refers to the Devil nor a human, but instead, to a faithful angel.

At Numbers 22:22, 32 **Y^ehowah**’s angel stationed himself to “resist” (Hebrew, שָׂטָן, *satan*) the unfaithful prophet Balaam. These two instances are the only ones occurring in the entire Torah (or Pentateuch).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “Satan,” “satanic,” and “Satanism” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁶³ Chapter 4, verse 10, **Y^ehowah**: This is the tenth of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

⁶⁴ Chapter 4, verse 10, **special attention in a worshipful way**: The Greek word for this clause is *latreuseis* (λατρεύσεις), which means to “serve, especially God” (Strong’s Greek: 3000. λατρεύω (*latreuó*) -- to serve (biblehub.com)). Jesus here quotes Deuteronomy 10:20.

The Greek *Septuagint* version of Deuteronomy 10:20 uses the same word, namely, *latreuseis* (λατρεύσεις).

⁶⁵ Chapter 4, verse 11b, **ministering**: The Greek root word for “minister” is *diakoneó* (διακονέω), and when used in the first person singular in Jesus’ time with respect to dining, it is translated, “I wait at table (particularly of a slave who waits on guests); I serve (generally)” (Strong’s Greek: 1247. διακονέω (*diakoneó*) -- to serve, minister (biblehub.com)).

Since the perfect man Jesus was naturally hungry *and thirsty* after enduring the brutal, sweltering heat of the wilderness for over five weeks (Compare Acts 9:9, 19), the angels brought him food and water, which justifies the expansive translation in the present version.

Moreover, several other translations reflect a similar understanding. For example, note these renderings of *diakoneó* at Matthew 4:11b:

- “Angels came and waited on him” (*New Revised Standard Version*).
- “Angels came and began to serve Him” (*Christian Standard Bible*).
- “Angels came and attended him” (*New International Version*).
- “Angels came and took care of Jesus” (*New Living Translation*).

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- “Angels came...bringing Him food and serving Him” (*Amplified*).

That even a single angel would feed and provide water for a hungry and thirsty prophet is not unprecedented in the Hebrew Scriptures, the very ones Jesus often quoted.

After the prophet Elijah, who feared for his life, “ran to the town of Beer-sheba in Judah. He left his servant there, then walked another whole day into the wilderness” (1 Kings 19:1-3, *Contemporary English Version*). Eventually, “he lay down in the shade and fell asleep” (1 Kings 19:1-5a).

“Suddenly an angel woke him up and said, ‘Get up and eat.’ Elijah looked around, and by his head was a jar of water and some baked bread. He sat up, ate and drank, then lay down and went back to sleep” (1 Kings 19:6).

It didn’t stop there.

The food *and* water kept coming.

“Soon the LORD’s angel woke him again and said, ‘Get up and eat, or else you’ll get too tired to travel.’ So Elijah sat up and ate and drank. The food and water made him strong enough to walk 40 more days” (1 Kings 19:7-8).

Jesus, “full of holy spirit,” may also have eaten a hearty meal and drank plenty of water while in Jordan *before* being divinely led into the wilderness for 40 days (Luke 4:1, *New World Translation*), just as Elijah ate and drank aplenty *after* his 40-day trek across an unforgiving wilderness (1 Kings 19:8).

The same could be said of Moses who, while spending 40 days and nights in the wilderness mountain called Sinai (Exodus 24:18), “neither ate food nor drank water” (Deuteronomy 9:18, 25, *NWT*). Interestingly, angels were in the mix with Moses during his stay on Mount Sinai (Acts 7:38; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2).

When Jesus extinguished the fever that struck Peter’s mother-in-law, “she got up and prepared a meal [Greek root, *diakoneó*] for him” (Matthew 8:15, *NLT*). Such was first-century Jewish hospitality.

For example, Luke recorded another instance where *diakoneó* unmistakably meant preparing and serving a meal:

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving [*diakoneó*, verb form]. And she went up to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve [*diakonia*, noun form] alone? Tell her then

to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:38-42, *English Standard Version*).

Later, after he resurrected Mary’s and Martha’s brother, Lazarus, the family spread an evening meal for Jesus, “at which Martha waited at table [Greek root, *diakoneó*]” (John 12:2, *Weymouth New Testament*).

In prioritizing their responsibilities as apostles, they appointed qualified men to address discrimination perpetrated by biased men among the believers instead of allowing the legitimate issue to become an apostolic entanglement. They wrote: “It is not appropriate for us to neglect [teaching] the word of God in order to serve tables [Greek root, *diakoneó*] and manage the distribution of food” (Acts 6:2-7, *Amplified Bible*).

Unsurprisingly, today in the food service and hospitality industries, a person who takes orders and distributes food at a restaurant is called a “waiter,” “waitress,” or by the gender-neutral term, “server.”

Indeed, “the angels began ministering to Jesus by serving him food and water,” as is stated in the main text in Matthew 4:11 of the present translation. (Compare also Philemon 1:13.)

⁶⁶ Chapter 4, verse 14: See endnote for “**Word Group**” in Matthew 1:22.

⁶⁷ Chapter 4, verse 16, **light**: The Greek word for “light” is either *phos* (φῶς) or *photos* (φωτός). When combined with the Greek word for “write” or “graph” (*graphó*, [γράφω], see endnote for Matthew 2:5), the word “photograph” is formed.

Technically, this word essentially means ‘graphic light.’ Generally speaking, with the absence of light, good photographs would be impossible.

This same Greek word, *photos* (φωτός), is also embedded in the English word “photosynthesis” (*photos* [φωτός, “light”] + *syn* [συν, “together,” see “synagogues” endnote at Matthew 4:23] + *tithémi* [τίθημι, “put, place,” and first occurs at Matthew 5:15]).

Photosynthesis is when a “massive amount of Sunlight [is converted] into electrical and then chemical energy. The input is carbon dioxide (CO₂), water (H₂O), minerals and light, and the output is carbohydrates (food) that we need for our nourishment, and oxygen that we need to breathe.

“This oxygenic photosynthesis occurs in higher plants (e.g., rice, maize, wheat, mosses, ferns, forest trees, shrubs, etc); in green, red, brown and yellow

algae, and even blue-green cyanobacteria” ([What is Photosynthesis \(illinois.edu\)](#)).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the three Greek words that, when combined, shed light.

⁶⁸ [Chapter 4](#), verse 18, **sea**: The Greek word for “sea” is *thalassa* (θάλασσα). And although the Sea of Galilee is the “sea” mentioned explicitly in this verse (see verse 13 also), it itself is dwarfed by and is a part of the greater Mediterranean Sea region.

Some people in this region doubtlessly had a blood disease called thalassemia, named after the Greek word for sea. To this day, thalassemia is relatively common in the Mediterranean Sea region.

Interestingly, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States reveals more details as to the nature and background of thalassemia:

Thalassemia is an inherited (i.e., passed from parents to children through genes) blood disorder caused when the body doesn’t make enough of a protein called hemoglobin, an important part of red blood cells. When there isn’t enough hemoglobin, the body’s red blood cells don’t function properly and they last shorter periods of time, so there are fewer healthy red blood cells traveling in the bloodstream.

Red blood cells carry oxygen to all the cells of the body. Oxygen is a sort of food that cells use to function. When there are not enough healthy red blood cells, there is also not enough oxygen delivered to all the other cells of the body, which may cause a person to feel tired, weak or short of breath. This is a condition called anemia. People with thalassemia may have mild or severe anemia. Severe anemia can damage organs and lead to death ([What is Thalassemia? | CDC](#)).

Significantly, verses 23 and 24 indicate that Jesus went about curing various infirmities.

As Matthew’s Gospel circulated around the Mediterranean Sea region, and as the apostle Paul and his missionary companions spread the good news—no doubt using Matthew’s Gospel in the form of a codex (book)—the fact that thalassemia may well have been among the diseases Jesus cured would have made the message that much more attractive, especially to victims as well as their family and friends.

⁶⁹ **Chapter 4**, verse 18, **two**: The Greek word translated “two” is *duo* (δύο). English words such as “duo,” “dual,” “duet,” and “Deuteronomy” all come from *duo*.

⁷⁰ **Chapter 4**, verse 23, **teaching**: The Greek root word translated “teach” is *didaskó* (διδάσκω). The English word “didactic” comes from this Greek word. However, *didaskó* connotes far more than just passing data or information.

“Didactic” is defined as teaching moral instruction or a moral lesson; that is, teaching students not just to be good students, but good people also. While an instructor may teach algebra or some foreign language, “moral instruction as an ulterior motive” (Idiom App) may not be a part of the equation. Jesus, on the other hand, not only taught “moral instruction” but included “sayings of everlasting life” (John 6:68, *New World Translation*) in his inimitable curriculum.

When the two Greek words *auto* (αὐτό, as first recorded in Matthew 3:4) and *didaskó* (διδάσκω) are merged, the English word “autodidact,” which means “self-taught,” is born.

That this concept was not foreign to first-century Christians can be seen in the apostle Paul’s letter to the Romans wherein he asked the rhetorical question, “Do you, however, the one teaching someone else, not *teach yourself*?” (Romans 2:21, *New World Translation*).

Interestingly, both forms of αὐτό and διδάσκω are found in this single verse. As the context of the verse shows, the self-teaching was to start with unhypocritical “moral instruction” (Romans 2:17-24).

⁷¹ **Chapter 4**, verse 23, **synagogues**: The original Greek word for “synagogue” is *sunagógé* (συναγωγή), and it means a ‘coming together.’ *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* states that this word means “an assembly, congregation, synagogue, either the place or the people gathered together in the place.” Considering several other words that involve the prefix “syn-” illustrates its functional usage.

For example, a “thesis” is an unproven statement or theory. The opposite of “thesis” is “antithesis.” It is a counter proposition. A “synthesis” (again, with “syn-” meaning “together”) means a successful combination or blending of the “thesis” and “antithesis.”

Though the word “synthesis” does not occur in the Christian Greek Scriptures, it is found in its Greek form (σύνθεσις) in other early literature (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 797).

The Greek word *sunthaptó* (συνθάπτω, “to bury along with”) that occurs in Colossians 2:12 and Romans 6:4 is the closest one will find to “synthesis” (σύνθεσις) in the Christian Greek Scriptures or New Testament.

⁷² **Chapter 4**, verse 23, **good news**: The Greek word for the English expression “good news” is *euaggelion* (εὐαγγέλιον).

The Latin word is the more familiar term *evangelium*, from which the English words “evangel,” “evangelist,” and “evangelism” are derived. Interestingly, the Greek word for “angel” (*aggelos*, ἄγγελος) is embedded in the Greek word for “good news” (εὐαγγέλιον), just as the Latin word for “angel” (*angel*) is implanted in the Latin term for “good news” (*evangelium*).

There is good reason for this.

The word “angel,” as found in the Bible, primarily means “messenger.”

In the vast majority of cases, it applies to intelligent heavenly spirit creatures, as can be seen, for example, when examining the first chapter of the Bible book of Hebrews (verses 4-7 and 13).

This fact notwithstanding—and for purposes of this discussion—the term also applies to men in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

The texts found in Matthew 11:10; Luke 7:24, 9:52; Galatians 4:14; and James 2:25 bear this out.

Faithful angels, men, women, and children associated with *euaggelion* (εὐαγγέλιον) help propagate the “good news” as indicated in the prefix of this Greek expression. This prefix—“eu”—means “good.”

This can be seen, for instance, in the Greek-based English word “eulogy,” which literally means “good word” (*eu* [εὐ], “good”; *logos* [λόγος], “word”). Not surprisingly, ‘good words’ are spoken of the deceased ‘eulogized’ at a funeral.

That angels work in close association with humans who preached the “good news” can be seen from the Scripture text at Revelation 14:6: “And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, and he had everlasting good news [εὐαγγέλιον] to declare as glad tidings to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people.”

Since this angel’s voice does not literally resonate from “midheaven,” the message of the “good news” (*euaggelion*, εὐαγγέλιον) radiates from faithful servants of God on earth as these work in concert with angelic direction.

⁷³ **Chapter 4**, verse 23, **curing**: The original Greek word from which “curing” is derived is *therapeúo* (θεραπεύω), meaning “I cure.” It is also the basis for the English word “therapy.” *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* defines *therapeúo* as,

“I care for, attend, serve, treat, especially of a physician; hence: I heal.” Jesus healed people physically, mentally, emotionally, and otherwise—but especially spiritually.

Little wonder, then, that he saw himself as a “spiritual physician,” according to Matthew 9:12, 13.

⁷⁴ **Chapter 4**, verse 23, **sickness**: The Greek word for “sickness” is *malakia* (μαλακία). See Matthew 9:35 endnote for more details.

⁷⁵ **Chapter 4**, verse 24, **lunatic**: The *King James Version* of the Bible, the most popular translation in history, says that Jesus healed “those which were lunatick [*sic*]” (Matthew 4:24; 17:15).

Since the Latin word for moon is *luna* (from which we get the English words “lunacy” and “lunatic”), and since Matthew used the Greek word *seléniazomai* (σεληνιάζομαι) that literally means “be moonstruck” (Strong’s Greek: 4583. σεληνιάζομαι (seléniazomai) -- to be moonstruck, spec. be epileptic (supposedly influenced by the moon) (biblehub.com)) (to be *crazy* in love with someone), some people think the Bible backs the thought that the full moon drives people crazy (shades of werewolves and vampires!).

Actually, careful research of all major Bible translations, commentaries, and lexicons reveal that Matthew used the Greek word *seléniazomai*, which was popularly used in his day to mean “epileptic,” which epilepsy was “supposedly influenced by the moon,” according to *Strong’s*.

However, Matthew employs the term in a medical sense in Matthew 4:24 and Matthew 17:15 (the only two places found in the New Testament), not superstitiously associating the disease with certain phases of the moon.

Whatever the case, “violent lunatics (or those with severe mental illnesses”), as *seléniazomai* is rendered in the present translation of Matthew 4:24, were among *sick* persons cured by Jesus.

⁷⁶ **Chapter 4**, verse 23, **paralyzed**: The basic Greek word for “paralyzed” in this text is *paralytikos* (παραλυτικός), a cognate from which the English word “paralysis” is derived.

⁷⁷ **Chapter 4**, verse 23, **cure**: The original Greek word here is *therapeúō* (θεραπεύω). See “curing” endnote for verse 23 above.

⁷⁸ **Chapter 5**, verses 14-16 [COMMENTARY]: Jesus spoke about effective, practical, beneficial ways of placing lighting in one’s home. His observations may cause some to think of the ancient Chinese thought and functionality of feng shui.

“Feng shui’s meaning can be broken down into the Chinese words ‘feng,’ meaning wind, and ‘shui,’ meaning water. The concept is derived from an ancient poem that talks about human life being connected to and flowing with the environment around it” ([The Basic Principles of Feng Shui \(thespruce.com\)](#)).

Cambridge Dictionary defines feng shui as “an ancient Chinese belief that the way your house is built or the way that you arrange objects affects your success, health, and happiness” ([FENG SHUI | definition in the Cambridge English Dictionary](#)).

Fascinatingly, a perfectly arranged environmental home in prelapsarian Eden; and wind, water, and an enclosed domicile in the form of an ark during the Flood of Noah’s day are among pictographic episodes captured in Chinese characters extracted directly from the book of Genesis, according to Dr. James Logan, an attorney, and theologian ([Genesis in Chinese Pictographs | The Institute for Creation Research \(icr.org\)](#)).

Of course, during his ministry, Jesus also quoted Genesis in his discussion of the marriage of the first man and woman in prelapsarian Eden (Matthew 19:3-6), as well as the events surrounding the Flood of Noah’s day (Matthew 24:37-39), though his preaching and teaching encompassed broader topics beyond these two subjects.

⁷⁹ Chapter 5, verse 16, **works**: The Greek word here is *ergon* (ἔργον), and *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* defines it as “work, task, employment; a deed, action; that which is wrought or made, a work” ([Strong’s Greek: 2041. ἔργον \(ergon\) -- work \(biblehub.com\)](#)). When *ergon* (ἔργον, “work”) is combined with *nomos* (νόμος, “law”), the resultant English word is “ergonomics.”

In the article “A brief history of the origin of ergonomics and human factors,” the U.S. government states:

This expression and the concepts behind it are not at all new. Prior civilizations (e.g., the Greeks and Egyptians) embraced ergonomics. The coining of the term ‘ergonomics,’ derived from the Greek words ‘ergon’ meaning work and ‘nomos’ meaning natural law, was officially accepted in Britain in 1950. Later in 1952, Britain formed The Ergonomic Society. The United States followed shortly thereafter, forming The Human Factors Society in 1957 ([Chapter 1: Ergonomics and Wellness \(ergonomics/human factors history\) \(fema.gov\)](#)).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized “ergonomics” and related words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁸⁰ Chapter 5, verse 17, **Law**: The original Greek word for “law” is *nomos* (νόμος). *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* defines it as “Custom, law” in the Christian Greek Scriptures, “of law in general...of divine laws; of a force or influence impelling to action; of the Mosaic law...the books which contain the law, the Pentateuch, the Old Testament scriptures in general” (Strong’s Greek: 3551. νόμος (nomos) -- that which is assigned, hence usage, law (biblehub.com)).

When one of the Greek words for “second” (*deuteros*, δεύτερος; see, for example, Matthew 22:26) is combined with *nomos* (νόμος), the result is “second law,” or “Deuteronomy” (Δευτερονόμιον), the Greek Septuagint name for the fifth book of the Pentateuch (see Deuteronomy 1:1 and 17:18, LXX).

⁸¹ Chapter 5, verse 18, **minutest letter**: The Greek word for “smallest letter” is *iōta* (ιώτα), which, interestingly, is the name of the smallest letter in the *Greek* alphabet and corresponds to the letter “i” in English.

Since Matthew initially wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, he did not use the Greek word *iōta* (ιώτα) in his initial Hebrew version. Instead, he used the Hebrew word *yōd* or *yud* (יוד), which is the smallest letter in Hebrew (and Aramaic, which shares the same alphabet) and resembles the English apostrophe (’).

The *yōd* is equivalent to the English letter “y.”

In comparing *yōd* with *iōta* in this Scripture text, *Strong’s* noted: “By analogy, the Hebrew letter *yōd* refers to the Greek letter, *iōta* (the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet). This symbolizes how each and every detail of the Hebrew-Greek text of Scripture (its grammar) is guaranteed by the Lord Himself to be inerrant and unstoppable powerful!” (Strong’s Greek: 2503. ἰώτα (iōta) -- iota (biblehub.com)).

This text also reflects Matthew’s skills and fluency as a translator.

⁸² Chapter 5, verse 18, **smallest stroke**: The Greek word translated “smallest stroke of a letter” is *keraiā* (κεραία) and is defined by *Strong’s* as “a little hook, an apostrophe on letters of the alphabet, distinguishing them from other little letters, or a separation stroke between letters” (Strong’s Greek: 2762. κεραία (keraiā) -- a little horn (biblehub.com)).

⁸³ Chapter 5, verse 20, **scribes**: The original Greek word for “scribes” (but in the singular) is *grammateús* (γραμματεύς). English words like “grammar” and “grammarian” sprang from this Greek word.

One might think of the first-century scribe as an official copyist, like a modern-day notary public. There is good reason for such rationale. In ancient Ephesus, the *grammateús* was “the town-clerk, the secretary of the city” (Strong’s Greek: 1122. γραμματεύς (grammateus) -- a writer, scribe (biblehub.com)).

However, the ancient Jewish scribe was much more than a notary public in first-century Jewish culture.

These men “were the more learned part of the people, who were employed in writing out, and expounding the law” (Matthew 5:20 Commentaries: “For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. (biblehub.com)).

The *Jewish New Testament* appropriately translates *grammatéon* (γραμματέων) as “Torah teachers,” that is, teachers of the Mosaic Law. (See Matthew 7:29.) Their educational training in the Law made them reprehensible in the eyes of Jesus.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “grammar” and “grammarian” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁸⁴ Chapter 5, verse 22, **fool**: The basic Greek word for “fool” is *móros* (μωρός), from which the English word “moron” comes. This word occurs in some form 12 times in the New Testament or Christian Greek Scriptures, half in the Gospel of Matthew.

Pauline epistles account for the other six times in his letters to the Corinthians (four times), to Timothy (one time), and to Titus (one time).

Psychologists once accepted the word “moron” as an appropriate designation. One source notes that “mental deficiency used to be divided into the following sub-classifications, but these labels began to be abused by the public and are now largely obsolete: Borderline Deficiency (IQ 70-80), Moron (IQ 50-69), Imbecile (IQ 20-49) and Idiot (below 20). Mental deficiency is now generally called mental retardation” (IQ Classifications - AssessmentPsychology.com).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the word “moron” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁸⁵ Chapter 5, verse 22, **Gehenna**: The English word “Gehenna” is transliterated from the Greek *ge’enna* (γέεννα). For all intents and purposes, the Latin word for it (*ge-hen’na*) is the same as the English. The Greek, Latin, and English

have all come from the Hebrew expression, *geh hin-nom'* (גי הנם), which means “valley of Hinnom.”

Although *Strong's* mischaracterizes it as a place of punishment, it gets it right when it notes that Gehenna is “a valley west and South of Jerusalem, also a symbolic name for the final place of punishment of the ungodly” (*Strong's Greek: 1067. γέεννα (geenna) -- Gehenna, a valley W. and South of Jer., also a symbolic name for the final place of punishment of the ungodly (biblehub.com)*). See end-note for “Gehenna” in Matthew 5:30.

⁸⁶ Chapter 5, verse 25, **adversary at law**: The Greek word here is *antidikos* (ἀντίδικος). (Note the prefix “anti” means against.) This expression signifies that your brother has something against you, though the context indicates that he may not be justified. He may well be the culpable one (i.e., the one in the wrong), meaning that if you both ended up in court, you would rightfully be the plaintiff or accuser.

That you would be the plaintiff in the right appears to be a logical conclusion given that the second part of verse 25 considers the scenario where you are culpable; hence, your brother would have a legitimate complaint against you, which means you would be the defendant who would likely lose if the matter were adjudicated.

In either case, Jesus commands *you* to take the initiative to settle matters between you and your brother, with the genuine goal of resolving issues quickly before they get out of hand.

Scholars have variously defined *antidikos* as “properly, a prosecuting attorney arguing a case-at-law; an ‘opponent at law,’” and “a technical legal term used in antiquity of an adversary in a courtroom, i.e. someone seeking official (formal, binding) damages” (*Strong's Greek: 476. ἀντίδικος (antidikos) -- an opponent, adversary (biblehub.com)*).

Just as Matthew used technical medical terms in chapter 4, verses 23 and 24, he now uses technical legal terms.

Both usages indicate that Matthew was a highly trained, well-educated versatile apostle of Christ. As such, he was privileged and well-qualified to record and translate the words of Jesus Christ from Hebrew to Greek, something that no other New Testament writer accomplished.

⁸⁷ Chapter 5, verse 28, **woman**: The root Greek word for “woman” is *guné* (γυνή), from which we get the English word gynecology, meaning the study of woman. For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words associated with “gynecology” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁸⁸ Chapter 5, verse 28, **heart**: The Greek word for “heart” is *kardia* (καρδία), from which the English word “cardia” is derived, which pumps out related words or terms like “cardio” (giving the heart a good workout at the gym); “cardiac arrest” (or *cardiopulmonary* arrest), defined as “the cessation of normal circulation of the blood due to failure of the heart” (Wikipedia); or “cardiology” (meaning

the study of the heart), and “cardiologist,” a physician who specializes in the analysis of the heart.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words that incorporate “cardio” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁸⁹ Chapter 5, verse 29, **stumble**: The Greek word for “stumble” is *skandalizó* (σκανδαλίζω), from which the English words “scandal” and “scandalous” are derived. The latter word is defined as “causing scandal; offensive to a sense of decency or shocking to the moral feelings of the community.” (www.yourdictionary.com › Dictionary Definitions).

Using the eye to look lustfully at a married woman would cause the owner to stumble and, by extension, ‘offend the decency or be shocking to the moral feelings of the community’ of Jesus’ disciples.

Commentator Albert Barnes notes that *skandalizó* “commonly means a stumbling-block, or a stone placed in the way, over which one might fall. It also means a net, or a certain part of a net against which, if a bird strikes, it springs the net, and is taken. It comes to signify, therefore, anything by which we fall, or are ensnared; and applied to morals, means anything by which we fall into sin, or by which we are ensnared” (Matthew 5:29 Commentaries: “If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. (biblehub.com)).

Jesus *commanded* his followers to symbolically “rip” (imperative mood in Greek) the offending eye out of its socket. (See endnote below for further commentary.)

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “scandal” and “scandalous” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁹⁰ Chapter 5, verse 29, **eye**: The Greek word for eye is *ophthalmos* (ὄφθαλμός). The English word ophthalmology is derived straight from the Greek. Ophthalmology is “[t]he branch of medicine concerned with the study and treatment of disorders and diseases of the eye” or “a branch of medicine specializing in the anatomy, function and diseases of the eye.”

An ophthalmologist should not be confused with an optometrist. While some of their professional responsibilities overlap, an optometrist is a Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) but cannot perform surgeries on the eye, while an

ophthalmologist is a medical doctor (M.D.) who specializes in delicate and complex surgeries on the eye.

Interestingly, Jesus says followers should become ophthalmologists, as it were, by performing surgery to remove a symbolically sinful eye, *ripping* it out if necessary.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “ophthalmology” and “ophthalmologist” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁹¹ Chapter 5, verse 29, **body**: The Greek word for body is *sóma* (σῶμα), which is part of the English word *psychosomatic* (*psyche*, “mind”; *sóma* “body”).

According to one medical authority, “[p]sychosomatic means mind (*psyche*) and body (*soma*). A psychosomatic disorder is a disease which involves both mind and body. Some physical diseases are thought to be particularly prone to being made worse by mental factors such as stress and anxiety. Your mental state can affect how bad a physical disease is at any given time” (Psychosomatic Disorders | Patient).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized “soma” and words related to it far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁹² Chapter 5, verse 29, **Gehenna**: See endnotes for “Gehenna” in Matthew 5:22 and 30.

⁹³ Chapter 5, verse 30, **Gehenna**: Jesus no more meant a literal fiery hell of Gehenna than he meant for his followers to literally rip out their offending eye or chop off their offending hand in connection with lusting after a married woman. (See endnote for Matthew 5:22.)

⁹⁴ Chapter 5, verse 32, **fornication**: The Greek word for “fornication” is *porneia* (πορνεία). The English words “pornography” and “pornographic” come from *porneia*. As documented in the endnote for Matthew 2:5, the Greek word for “write” (or graph) is *graphó* (γράφω). Since *porneia* means ‘surrendering sexual purity’ or ‘promiscuity of any and type,’ “pornography” means ‘the detailed writing or graphic description’ of such.

In the modern-day setting, pornography can be defined as descriptively written or graphically described fornication, irrespective of the medium in which it is presented.

Though not endorsing what it represents, for nearly two thousand years, down to the present, Matthew has essentially popularized words prefixed with “porno-” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁹⁵ [Chapter 5](#), verse 33, See endnote for Matthew 1:20 for more details.

⁹⁶ [Chapter 5](#), verse 33, **Y^ehowah**: This is the 11th of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

⁹⁷ [Chapter 5](#), verse 36, **head**: The Greek word for “head” is *kephalé* (κεφαλή), and English words like electroencephalogram (EEG) and encephalitis (an inflammation of the brain) are based on *kephalé*.

One source defines an EEG as “a test that measures and records the electrical activity of your brain. Special sensors are attached to your head and hooked by wires to a computer. The computer records your brain’s electrical activity on the screen or on paper as wavy lines” ([Electro Encephalo Graph: Ajumon - R | PDF | Electroencephalography | Electronics \(scribd.com\)](#)).

Craniology (cranium, “skull,” + -ology “study of”), a word related to *kephalé* (κεφαλή), is the “science concerned with variations in size, shape, and proportion of the cranium, especially with the variations characterizing the different races of humans,” according to another medical Web site dealing with the subject ([Healthgrades Health Library](#)).

Gospel writer Matthew actually uses the word *kranion* (κρανίον) in Matthew 27:33. In so doing, for almost two thousand years—down to our modern day—he has essentially popularized “cranium” and related words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁹⁸ [Chapter 5](#), verse 36, **white or black**: The Greek word for “white” is *leukos* (λευκός), which is the basis for the English word “leukemia.”

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), “The word Leukemia comes from the Greek *leukos* which means ‘white’ and *aima* which means ‘blood’. It is cancer of the blood or bone marrow (which produces blood cells) ... A person who has leukemia suffers from an abnormal production of blood cells, generally leukocytes (white blood cells)” ([Leukaemia: a model metastatic disease - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)).

The exact Greek word for “black” in this text is *melainan* (μέλαιναν), from which the English word “melanin” comes. Jesus was aware of the genetics of *leukos* and *melainan* and that, on a cellular level, his servants were powerless to control the dynamics within the genetics.

Furthermore, for almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “leukemia” and “melanin” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

⁹⁹ **Chapter 5**, verse 38, **tooth**: The Greek word for “tooth” (or “teeth”) is *odous* (ὀδούς). It forms part of the English word “orthodontist” (Greek *orthos*, “straight”; *odon*, “tooth”; *ist*, “one who does something”). Hence, an orthodontist is ‘one who straightens teeth.’

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized “orthos-” and words associated with it far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁰⁰ **Chapter 6**, verse 1, **show off**: The singular Greek word for “show off” (literally, “to be watched, seen, or observed”) is *theathēnai* (θεαθῆναι), from which the English word “theater” is derived. The root word *théatron* means “spectacle in a theater.”

Jesus condemned the actions of hypocritical people who practiced righteous acts—as if they were performing in a theater—in front of people.” (See verse 2 and associated endnote below. Also, see Matthew 23:5 under “in public” for the related noun form of *θεαθῆναι*.)

The related Greek verb *theatrízō* (θεατρίζω) occurs once in the New Testament in Hebrews 10:33 and means “to ridicule, making a *public spectacle* out of someone, putting them on *exhibit* for *public jest* and *mockery* (used only in Heb 10:33)” (Strong’s Greek: 2301. θεατρίζω (theatrízō) -- to make a spectacle of (bi-blehub.com)).

¹⁰¹ **Chapter 6**, verse 2, **hypocrites**: The Greek word “hypocrite” is *hupokrités* (ὑποκριτής). In ancient times, a “hypocrite” was an actor who worked in a theater (see endnote above) and wore a mask on stage. By wearing the mask, he pretended to be someone else.

According to *Strong’s*, the pious, hypocritical person Jesus criticized was “like a performer acting under a mask (i.e. a theater-actor); (figuratively) a two-faced person; a ‘hypocrite,’ whose profession does not match their practice—i.e. someone who ‘says one thing but does another’” (Strong’s Greek: 5273. ὑποκριτής (hupokrités) -- one who answers, an actor, a hypocrite (biblehub.com)).

Insofar as the trumpet was concerned, playing it in front of the Greek theater (again, see endnote above) drew attention to the scheduled performance.

The self-righteous person Jesus censured ‘trumpeted’ his presence in some extravagantly noisy way to attract as much attention as possible to his acts of almsgiving (gifts of mercy to the poor and downtrodden).

But unlike the stage actor who performed in a theater, the pious hypocrite gave his ‘two-faced’ theatrical performance “in all types of religious settings, and anywhere they deem appropriate in public,” as Jesus mentioned in verse 5.

As an aside, what is particularly fascinating is that Jesus was very familiar with Greco-Roman arts and entertainment.

¹⁰² **Chapter 6**, verse 4, **secret**: The basic Greek word for “secret” is *kruptos* (κρυπτός), and it simply means “secret” or “hidden.” The English word “encrypt” or “encryption” comes from this Greek word. (See Matthew 11:25 for more discussion.)

¹⁰³ **Chapter 6**, verse 5, **love**: The basic Greek word here is *phileó* (φιλέω). It means “love,” and is one of four different Greek words for the English word “love.” The others are:

- *a·ga·pe* (principled love).
- *e·ros* (sexual or ‘erotic’ love; not found in the Christian Greek Scriptures though it occurs in the Greek *Septuagint*).
- *stor·ge·* (love for blood relatives).

Just as there is a modern-day U.S. city named Philadelphia, there was an ancient city bearing the same Greek name, Φιλαδέλφεια (Revelation 1:11; 3:7), which combined two Greek words: love, *phileó* (φιλέω), and brother *adelphos* (ἀδελφός, as first found in Matthew 4:18), hence the “City of Brotherly Love.”

As they were admonished to do in the first century, Christians are encouraged today to have “brotherly love” (φιλαδελφία, which word occurs in Hebrews 13:1) for one another.

When *phileó* (φιλέω) is combined with *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος, the Greek word for “man,” “mankind,” or “humankind,” as found at Matthew 4:4), the resultant English word is “philanthropy” (*philanthrōpia*, φιλανθρωπία, meaning ‘one who has love or affection for mankind’) found twice in the New Testament or Christian Greek Scriptures in Acts 28:2 and Titus 3:4.

¹⁰⁴ **Chapter 6**, verse 6, **private place** [COMMENTARY]: In a person’s home, one could pray audibly or silently in a private place with God’s blessing. One could even pray a brief, silently in a very public venue and still be heard by God (Nehemiah 2:3-5)

Of course, when speaking aloud, even in a private place, one would do well to exercise caution, particularly if they are being critical of legitimate governmental authority charged with maintaining order (Romans 13:1-7).

“Don’t let yourself think about cursing the king; don’t curse the rich, not even in secret” (Ecclesiastes 10:20a, *Contemporary English Version*). Why not? “Because a bird of the sky will transmit your voice” (Ecclesiastes 10:20b, *Aramaic Bible in Plain English*).

Today, sophisticated surveillance devices—in the form of *birds*—can access virtually any “private place.” When asked, “has science created technological birds as spies,” Google AI answered:

“Yes, science and technology have created ‘technological birds’ that function as spies, primarily by using real bird bodies ... researchers in the United States are also developing these ‘zombie drones’ from dead birds.”

Popular Mechanics quotes one scientist as saying: “‘Instead of using artificial materials for building drones, we can use the dead birds and re-engineer them [as drones],’ New Mexico Tech professor Mostafa Hassanalian [tells New Scientist](#).” ([Scientists Are Turning Dead Birds Into Drone Zombies](#)) The re-engineered birds are very lifelike as can be seen in a YouTube video. (www.youtube.com) I have personally witnessed several of them.

¹⁰⁵ [Chapter 6](#), verse 19, **thieves**: The basic Greek word for “thief” is *kleptés* (κλέπτης) and means one who “steals by stealth...rather than in the open with violence” (*Strong’s Greek: 2812. κλέπτης (kleptés) -- a thief (biblehub.com)*).

The English word “*kleptomaniac*” also comes from the Greek. The root word *klepto* [κλέπτω] is found later in verse 19 and is defined as one who has an “irrational urge to steal in the absence of an economic motive” ([Kleptomania - Definition, Meaning & Synonyms | Vocabulary.com](#)). The point of the verse is: material things can be stolen, motive aside.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the word “*kleptomaniac*” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁰⁶ [Chapter 6](#), verse 20, **treasure**: The Greek word for “treasure” is *thésauros* (θησαυρός), as in, “I have a dictionary, but I need a thesaurus.”

How is the thesaurus a treasure?

The word *thesaurus* comes from the Latin word ‘*thēsauros*,’ which was derived from the Greek ‘*thēsauros*.’ The literal meaning of the Greek origin word is ‘a treasure,’ ‘treasury,’ ‘storehouse,’ or ‘chest.’ In other words, a *thesaurus* is a book, or ‘treasure chest’ of synonyms ([The Thesaurus—Its History and Importance in Writing \(languagetool.org\)](#)).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the word “*thesaurus*” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁰⁷ [Chapter 6](#), verse 28, **Learn a lesson**: The single Greek word for this clause is *katamanthánó* (καταμανθάνω). It’s found only in this Scripture and literally means “to learn thoroughly” (*Strong’s Greek: 2648*).

καταμανθάνω (katamanthanó) -- to learn thoroughly (biblehub.com)), or “[l]earn accurately” (*The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*).

Interestingly, *katamanthanó* may be akin in theory to the “scientific method,” which has been described in simplistic terms as ‘learning how to learn.’ The actual word itself—*katamanthanó*—seems to emphasize the *process of learning*, whereas another Greek word, *epiginóskó* (ἐπιγινώσκω)—translated as “accurate knowledge” in specific texts of the *New World Translation*—emphasizes the *quality of the information* taken in. When combined, these terms make for psychospirituality.

Examine the “see through their disguise” endnote (#112) in Matthew 7:16 (*Figure 36*), and the “seed” endnote #156 in Matthew 13:24 (*Figure 54*).

¹⁰⁸ **Chapter 7**, verse 6, **pearls**: The exact Greek word for “pearls” in this text is *margaritas* (μαργαρίτας), but it has nothing to do with the popular Mexican alcoholic beverage bearing the same name. This is not the first mention of the coupling of jewelry and pigs or swine in Scripture.

“As a ring of gold in a swine’s snout, So is a beautiful woman who is without discretion [her lack of character mocks her beauty]” (Proverbs 11:22, *Amplified Bible*).

Unlike the beautiful woman described here in Proverbs, Rebekah, who was to become the wife of Isaac, had both inner and outer beauty (Genesis 24:1-67). She “was very beautiful” (Genesis 24:16, *New International Version*) and was gifted with “a gold nose ring” (Genesis 24:22, 47). She was far from a beautiful woman who was proud and piggish.

¹⁰⁹ **Chapter 7**, verse 14, **few**: The Greek word here is *oligos* (ὀλίγος), which means ‘few in quantity or number’ as opposed to that which is innately small in size by nature (Greek, *mikros*, μικρός, English, micro; see Matthew 10:42 endnote). An oligarchy, for example, is ‘rule by the few,’ not ‘rule by the small (as in Lilliputians or midgets).’ This verse contains the first of 42 occurrences of *oligos* in the Christian Greek Scriptures, the first seven of which are in the book of Matthew.

¹¹⁰ **Chapter 7**, verse 15, **deceptive ministers**: The Greek word translated as “deceptive ministers” is *pseudoprophétés* (ψευδοπροφήτης). This is actually a combination of two Greek words that literally means “false prophets” (“false,” *pseudés*, ψευδής + “prophet,” *prophétés*, προφήτης). The English prefix for “false,” “pseudo-” (which also means “deceptive,” or “lying,” just as it does in Greek), is essentially a transliteration of *pseudés*. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* describes a “false prophet” as “one who in God’s name teaches what is

false” (Strong’s Greek: 5578. ψευδοπροφήτης (pseudoprophétés) -- a false prophet (biblehub.com)).

¹¹¹ Chapter 7, verse 15, **wolves**: The Greek word for “wolf” is *lukos* (λύκος, alternately transliterated *lykos*). When the Greek word for “man” (*anthrōpos*, ἄνθρωπος), as found in Matthew 4:4 (see endnote), is combined with the Greek word for “wolf,” the legend of the werewolf or “wolf man” (λύκος-ἄνθρωπος) is born.

Interestingly, clinical lycanthropy is all too real.

Britannica states that lycanthropy is a “mental disorder in which the patient believes that he is a wolf.”

If he were alive today, Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar—who ate grass in the wild for seven years as his hair grew long and his fingernails and toenails grew into claws—would doubtlessly be diagnosed with clinical lycanthropy (Daniel 4:33).

Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance notes that “wolf” (*lukos*, λύκος) was “often applied to persons of wolfish proclivities” (Strong’s Greek: 3074. λύκος (lukos) -- a wolf (biblehub.com)).

In the text of Matthew 7:15, Jesus went so far as to liken false prophets, not only to wolves, but to cunning deceptive wolves that come in sheep’s clothing.

A little known fact is that for almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the expressions “were- wolf” and “wolf man”—as well as the thought behind these—far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹¹² Chapter 7, verse 16a, **see through their disguise**: The Greek word that this phrase is translated from is *epiginóskó* (ἐπιγινώσκω) and is a combination of two Greek words: *epi* (ἐπι, “upon”) and *ginóskó* (γινώσκω, “knowledge”).

While translators and lexicographers grapple with a precise definition, it appears basically to mean not merely the possession of “knowledge” (*ginóskó*)—which may or may not be inherently or innately sufficient or adequate in and of itself—but having a fuller, complete, more robust (even corrective) knowledge that would complete or make accurate the partial, inadequate, inaccurate “knowledge” (*ginóskó*), and embellish, enhance, or expand the “knowledge” (*ginóskó*) that intrinsically stands on its owns.

Therefore, it takes “knowledge” (*ginóskó*)—even deficient “knowledge”—and corrects or elevates it to a “higher” (hence, “upon” or ‘on top of’) status;

again, regardless of the current condition of that “knowledge” (*ginóskó*) prior to elevation.

As a consequence, it transforms *ginóskó* (γινώσκω) into *epiginóskó* (ἐπιγινώσκω), that is, ‘upon or higher knowledge’; hence, correctly translated ‘fuller knowledge,’ ‘complete knowledge,’ and ‘accurate knowledge,’ or variations (or iterations) thereof.

Intriguingly, the Greek philosopher Parmenides of the 6th century B.C. noted that “there are two paths of knowledge: one leading to a knowledge of truth, and the other to a knowledge of the opinions of men” (*Stolen Legacy: Greek Philosophy is Stolen Egyptian Philosophy*, 1954, George G. M. James).

It is this latter “knowledge of the opinions of men” that Paul referred to as “falsely called ‘knowledge’” (1 Timothy 6:20, *New World Translation*), or, as another translation puts it, “arguments in the vain name of science” (1 Timothy 6:20, *Jubilee Bible 2000*). The Latin equivalent is “falsi nominis scientiæ” (1 Timothy 6:20, *Latin: Vulgata Clementina*), viz., “falsely named science,” or pseudoscience, or “science falsely so called” (1 Timothy 6:20, *King James Version*).

The Latin word translated from *epiginóskó* (ἐπιγινώσκω) in Colossians 1:10 is *scientia* (though this is not the case in Matthew 7:16), from which the English word “science” is derived.

The entire purpose of the scientific method is to gain not a general cursory knowledge of something in nature but a more profound, more accurate knowledge in any field of scientific endeavor.

As one source notes: “The scientific method is the basic method, guide, and system by which we originate, refine, extend, and apply knowledge in all fields” (www.scientificmethod.com).

Regarding medical science as engaged by a physician who is a general practitioner, *ginóskó* (γινώσκω, “knowledge”) comes into play yet again.

Simply put, when the Greek preposition “through” (*dia*, διά) is coupled with the Greek noun “knowledge” (*ginóskó*, γινώσκω), the English word “diagnosis” is born.

A physician determines that a person has a cold “through” their “knowledge” of medicine.

Furthermore, since the Greek prefix *prog-* (προγ) has to do with forecasting the future, the physician’s “prognosis” (or “prediction” based on their “knowledge” of ailments and medicine) may be that the patient will get over the cold in eight days.

The term *epiginóskó* (ἐπιγινώσκω) occurs six times in the book of Matthew. (See also Matthew 6:28.)

Also, see “Learn a lesson,” endnote #107, in Matthew 6:28 (*Figure 32*), and “seed” endnote #156 in Matthew 13:24 (*Figure 54*).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized all the above Greek words and their multifarious combinations far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹¹³ **Chapter 7**, verse 16b, **figs**: The Greek word for “fig” is *sukon* (σῦκον), from which the English word “sycamore” is derived.

As is indicated in the context (verses 17 and 18), Jesus’ listening audience could rightfully be called “agriculturalists” or “botanists.”

Though neither of these words is found in the Greek context, they occur elsewhere in the Greek New Testament.

When Jesus was speaking in Matthew 13:24, Bible writer Matthew used the Greek word *agros* (ἀγρός). The English word “agriculture” comes from this Greek word. And at Hebrews 6:7, we find the Greek word *botané* (βοτάνη), from which the English word “botany” is derived.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “sycamore,” “agriculture,” and “botany” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹¹⁴ **Chapter 7**, verse 29, **scribes**: See “scribes” endnote for Matthew 2:4.

¹¹⁵ **Chapter 8**, verse 2, **bow in respect**: The original Greek word for “worship” is *proskuneó* (προσκυνέω), which, in this context, means “properly, to kiss the ground when prostrating before a superior” (Strong’s Greek: 4352. προσκυνέω (proskuneó) -- to do reverence to (biblehub.com)).

See Matthew 2:8, endnote, “**pay my respects**,” for a more detailed explanation. The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as “worship” in most Bible translations, in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew, are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

¹¹⁶ **Chapter 8**, verse 2, **cleanse**: The Greek word *katharizó* (καθαρίζω) means “I cleanse,” “I purify,” or “I purge.” The English word “catharsis” comes from *katharizó*. The *APA Dictionary of Psychology* (2nd ed.) states that catharsis is “the release of strong, pent-up emotions” (p. 164). In other words, there’s a cleansing of the psyche or soul.

When Jesus cleansed the man of leprosy, he also facilitated the release of the man's "strong, pent-up emotions" caused by being a leper. The man was undoubtedly overjoyed at being "immediately" cured (Matthew 8:1-3).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the word "catharsis," and related expressions far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹¹⁷ **Chapter 8, verse 12, crying and anguish, manifested by the grinding of teeth (or bruxism):** The Greek equivalent for this clause is κλαυθμός καὶ ὁ βρυγμός τῶν ὀδόντων. The key word, however, is *brugmos* (βρυγμός), from which the English word bruxism is derived.

Dr. Moti Nissani states: "The word bruxism is taken from the Greek word *brychein*: gnashing of teeth. Although the term *bruxism* is not generally known to lay people, it is shorter and more convenient than *teeth clenching or grinding*. For this reason, and because that's the way it can be found in the professional literature, I shall use it in all my internet informational links." He continues:

Bruxism, unfortunately, means different things to different experts. So we must try to clarify the terminological confusion that still surrounds this subject. Bruxism can perhaps be best defined as the involuntary, unconscious, and excessive grinding, tapping, or clenching of teeth. When it occurs during sleep, it may be best called *sleep bruxism*. A few people, on the other hand, *brux* while they are awake, in which case the condition may be called *wakeful bruxism*.

The above terms are [preferable] to the widely-used *nocturnal* and *diurnal* bruxism, for the simple reason that one may engage in sleep bruxism during the day and in wakeful bruxism during the night. The distinguishing factor between these related conditions is obviously sleep, not sunlight" ([What is Bruxism \(drnissani.net\)](http://drnissani.net)).

Some causes of bruxism are anxiety, stress, tension, and depression. Those not in Christ's favor experience all the above and may suffer bruxism as a result. Interestingly, for almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the word "bruxism" far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹¹⁸ **Chapter 8, verse 14, on fire with a fever:** The base Greek word for "on fire with a fever" is *puressó* (πυρέσσω). This singular Greek word literally means "to be on fire," or "to be ill of a fever" ([Strong's Greek: 4445. πυρέσσω \(puressó\) --](#)

to be on fire, to be ill of a fever (biblehub.com)). At the root of *puressó* (πυρέσσω) is *pur* (πῦρ). Regarding this latter word, recall that the endnote for Matthew 3:11 reads in part: “The original Greek word for ‘fire’ is *pur* (πῦρ)—alternately transliterated *pyr*—and can represent both the fire, as well as the heat that fire emits.”

There are basically two words in Biblical Greek that have to do with fire or heat, both of which serve as a basis for medical terms down to this day. They are *puretos*, πυρετός (translated “fever” at Matthew 8:15), and *kautériazó*, καυτηριάζω (occurring only once in 1 Timothy 4:2, and from which the English word “cauterize” is derived; it means to “cauterize,” “sear” or “burn with a hot iron”).

Regarding the modern-day meaning of “cauterize,” one online English dictionary says it means “to burn with a hot iron, electric current, fire, or a caustic, especially for curative purposes; [to] treat with a cautery” (Cauterize definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary (collinsdictionary.com)).

A familiar Greek word for “heat” is *thermē* (θέρμη), from which the English expression “thermometer” comes, appropriately named since it was explicitly designed to measure body heat; often to determine if the patient has a fever. The disciple and Bible writer Luke, who was also a physician, is the only one to use *thermē* (θέρμη), having done so in Acts 28:3 regarding heat emanating from a makeshift campfire.

Gospel writers Luke and Mark also record Jesus’ encounter with Peter’s mother-in-law. However, in describing her condition, Luke uses the two words *puretō megalō* (πυρετῶ μεγάλῳ, literally, “fever great”) at Luke 4:38. In contrast, Mark (at Mark 1:30) uses the same word—*puressó* (πυρέσσω)—that Matthew does.

Some scholars believe physician Luke uses a medical expression in his account. According to one Bible commentator, “ancient physicians distinguished fevers into great and small” (Vincent’s Word Studies: Luke: Luke Chapter 4 (sacred-texts.com)). However, one may be hard-pressed to locate convincing documentation that bolsters this conclusion. Aside from this, there is reason to believe that Luke’s two-word characterization is not a medical expression after all.

The use of an adjective indicating intensity or degree as Luke does when he notes Peter’s mother-in-law had a “great” or “high” fever (πυρετῶ μεγάλῳ) does not make this a medical expression no more so than the apostle John’s

expression “great heat” (*kauma*, καῦμα, *mega*, μέγα) at Revelation 16:9 makes it a medical term.

Of course, the argument could be made that John could have, in fact, used a medical expression. After all, one does not have to be a physician to use a medical term. However, this does not seem likely in John’s case since his occupation, and lack of advanced education (compare Matthew 21:23-27 and Acts 4:13) permeates throughout the Johannine writings of the Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Revelation.

John’s Greek has a simple, elementary, and fundamental style, making it the first study standard for many of today’s beginning Greek students. It has historically served as a standard. By way of contrast, not only are the writings of Luke and the Pauline epistles ripe with sophisticated Greek, but they are also peppered with several neologisms (“new” [*neos*, νέος, see Matthew 9:17], “word” *logos*, λόγος; see also Matthew 13:24).

Perhaps most compelling is the fact that, in characterizing the strength of the fever, the efficiency-minded tax collector/accountant Matthew—not yet having the luxury of a fellow Gospel writer who was a highly educated historian and physician to consult with—used one word as opposed to Luke’s two.

Moreover, Matthew further demonstrates his recognition of the fact that the robust, descriptive word *puressó* (πυρέσσω) is to be distinguished from the more familiar Greek word for “fever” (*puretos*, πυρετός), which he uses in virtually the same breath in the following sentence, in verse 15.

Indeed, as of today, physicians still characterize fevers as being “high-” or “low-grade.” A more colloquial or pedestrian expression would be, “She’s burning up with a fever!”—virtually the same way Matthew characterized it. Irrespective of the cause of her fever, Jesus had no problem curing her.

¹¹⁹ Chapter 8, verse 15 [COMMENTARY]: Although many translations say that Peter’s unnamed mother-in-law “ministered,” more specifically, she served them a meal, given that it was Peter’s home. She likely lived with him and his unnamed wife (her daughter) and helped with domestic chores while Peter was away on preaching campaigns with Jesus and the rest of the apostles. (See parallel account in Luke 4:39).

¹²⁰ Chapter 8, verse 17: See endnote for “**Word Group**” in Matthew 1:22.

¹²¹ Chapter 8, verse 24, **windstorm**: The Greek word here is *seismos* (σεισμός), from which the English word “seismic” is derived. Though this term is now associated with earthquake activity (see Matthew 27:51 and 28:2), it also

applies to bodies of water since they, too, are part of the “earth.” (A tsunami may well be likened to a rolling liquid earthquake.)

Interestingly, certain bodies of water experience consistent yet inexplicable sudden storms between certain hours of the day. This phenomenon baffles oceanographers.

For example, between specified afternoon hours, neither tourist boats nor fishing boats—or water vessels of any kind—are allowed to travel Lake Atitlan in the Central American country of Guatemala due to constant and consistent unexplainable storm activity.

This is also true of other bodies of water and was apparently true to some extent of the Sea of Galilee back in Jesus’ day.

¹²² Chapter 8, verse 29, see “Son of God” endnote in Matthew 26:63.

¹²³ Chapter 9, verse 3, **blasphemes**: The Greek word is *blasphéméō* (βλασφημέω), from which the English word “blaspheme” is transliterated.

¹²⁴ verse 8, **fear**: The Greek word is *phobeó* (φοβέομαι), a derivative of *phobos* (φόβος, as found at Matthew 14:26 in the genitive case), from which the English term “phobia” comes.

The APA Dictionary of Psychology, published by the American Psychological Association, defines phobia as “a persistent and irrational fear of a specific situation, object, or activity” (p. 792). In Bible times, phobia also meant to marvel at or to have deep and abiding respect or reverence for something or someone.

¹²⁵ Chapter 9, verse 15, **bridegroom**: The Greek word here is *numphios* (νυμφίος), or, *nymphios*, from which the English word “nympho” comes, the root word of “nymphomania.”

Although *nymphios* refers to a bridegroom in this text, most English dictionaries associate “nympho” and “nymphomania” with a woman with a strong sex drive. (A man with strong sexual desires is called a “satyr.”)

Although this word has a rich history in ancient Greek culture, the Hebrew word *sa’iyir*, שַׁעִיר, as found in Isaiah 13:21 and 34:14 in the *King James Version*, predates the Greek rendition.

One of several websites reveals that “Nymphomania is a mental disorder marked by compulsive sexual behavior. Compulsions are unwanted actions, or rituals, that a person engages in repeatedly without getting pleasure from them or being able to control them.

In the case of nymphomania, people act out their compulsions by engaging in risky behaviors such as promiscuity. Whether or not nymphomania qualifies as a true mental illness is often debated in the medical community, but evidence suggests that compulsive sexual behavior is a real and serious illness” ([Nymphomania - Symptoms, Causes, Treatments \(healthgrades.com\)](#)).

Interestingly, only the Gospel writers (all four of them) use a form of the word *nymphios* (νυμφίος), and of these, Matthew (not Doctor Luke) uses it the most.

Therefore, for nearly two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “nympho” and “nymphomaniac” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹²⁶ [Chapter 9](#), verse 17, **new₁**: The Greek word here is *neos* (νέος; the first of 24 occurrences in the Christian Greek Scriptures), and means “new,” insofar as time is concerned, i.e., chronologically new, new in time sequence; new or fresh on the scene, something recent, or even youthful, as distinguished from *kainos* (καινός), discussed in the following endnote. Since *neos* is so flexible, it can act as a prefix for any number of nouns.

In Colossians 3:10, the apostle Paul used *neos* (νέος) in describing the *new path* the man who put on the new personality would take. In contrast, in Ephesians 4:24, he used *kainos* (καινός) only in describing the *new man*. (See endnote below.)

As any oenophile (one who has a love [*philia*, φιλία, see Matthew 1:2] of wine [*oinos*, οἶνος, first mentioned here in the entire New Testament]) will attest to, wine by its very nature is aged. Therefore, the “new” wine, though aged by nature, Jesus speaks of is introduced into new wineskins.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words prefixed with “neo-” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹²⁷ [Chapter 9](#), verse 17, **new₂**: The Greek word here is *kainos* (καινός; the first occurrence of the 42 times it is found in the New Testament), which means inherently or substantively new in quality, or fresh or innovatively new, and is to be distinguished from *neos* (νέος) above.

The apostle Paul used *kainos* (καινός) in Ephesians 4:24 when he said that one desiring to serve God substantively becomes a “new man (or person),” one “created according to God’s will.” (Ephesians 4:24b, *New World Translation*) This “new man” is now moved to action.

Having become a “new” (*kainos*, καινός) man according to Ephesians 4:24, he is now compelled to change from his former direction in life and embark upon a “new” (*neos*, νέος) course according to Colossians 3:10, where (*neos*, νέος) “stresses the fact of the believer’s new experience, recently begun, and still proceeding” (*An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, W.E. Vine, 1984, p. 782).

In Jesus’ illustration in Matthew 9:17, the type of wine and the animal from which the wineskin came would doubtlessly be a matter of keen interest to the modern-day sommelier.

¹²⁸ Chapter 9, verse 18, **bowed**: Greek, *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω). See Matthew 2:8, endnote, “**pay my respects**,” for a more detailed explanation. The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as “worship” in most Bible translations, in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

¹²⁹ Chapter 9, verse 25, **she got right up**: Though this is Matthew’s first recorded instance of Jesus resurrecting someone (Matthew 11:2-15; Luke 7:18-30), it was Jesus’ second documented resurrection (Mark 5:35-43; Luke 8:41-56). The girl Jesus resurrected was in Stage I (Autolysis) of the four stages of Rigor Mortis. Jesus’ friend Lazarus had been dead for several days before the Lord resurrected him. (John 11:11-14)

In fact, tissue deterioration had already begun, for Lazarus’ sister Martha be-moaned, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible” (John 11:39, *New Living Translation*). This is Stage II of the four stages of Rigor Mortis.

All four stages and the explanation of each are listed and explained in the following excerpt:

Stage I: Autolysis

This stage is otherwise called self-digestion and starts following death. The blood circulation and respiratory exercises stop not long after death. The body can’t get oxygen or evacuate metabolic waste. This makes an acidic [environment](#) in the body because of that the cells burst. Little rancles begin showing up on the skin and inside organs. The top layer of the skin starts to relax. The membranes produce enzymes that eat the cells.

Stage II: Bloat

The enzymes delivered by the membranes produce numerous gases. The shade of the skin blurs because of the sulfur-containing mixes

discharged by the bacteria. Foul smells are delivered by the [microorganisms](#) in the process called putrefaction.

Stage III: Active Decay

All the body parts become liquified at this stage. All the delicate tissues of the body decay. The leakage of fluids through orifices signals the start of active degradation. The organs, muscles, and skin liquefy. Hair, bones, cartilage, and other decay byproducts remain after all of the body's soft tissue has decomposed. During this period, the cadaver loses the most weight.

Stage IV: Skeletonization

There is no set time span when skeletonization happens. This is on the grounds that the decomposition rate relies on the loss of organic and inorganic components. Skeletonization refers to the final stage of decomposition when the soft tissues of a body or carcass have deteriorated or dried to the point where the skeleton can be seen ([Rigor Mortis – Definition, Causes, Occurrence and Stages \(vedantu.com\)](#)).

Despite this seemingly insurmountable obstacle, Jesus reversed the deterioration process by reanimating Lazarus' cells. He even went so far as to restore Lazarus' memory.

He did all this after uploading a request to God (in the form of a prayer) and receiving a downloaded app (holy spirit) that empowered him to perform the miracle (John 11:39-45). Medical science today can only wishfully envision being able to do what Jesus did.

¹³⁰ [Chapter 9](#), verse 26, **spread like wildfire**: The Greek word for this expression is *phémé* (φήμη), from which the English word "fame" is derived. Indeed, Jesus' fame spread like a wildfire everywhere.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like "fame" and "famous" far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise. He does this as he discusses the famous words of the most famous man ever, Jesus Christ, as these appear in the most famous book in history, the Holy Bible.

¹³¹ [Chapter 9](#), verse 30 [COMMENTARY]: Though not on the same occasion, Jesus performed a similar healing recorded in Mark's Gospel.

Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. There some

people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him. After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "Ephphatha!" (which means "Be opened!"). At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly (Mark 7:31-35, *New International Version*).

The ear is right near the temple where the temporal lobe of the brain is situated. The auditory cortex (responsible for hearing) is part of the temporal lobe, as is Wernicke's area, which is mainly involved in processing speech.

Instead of placing "his hand on him" in general as the people "begged," significantly, Jesus "put his fingers into the man's ears" near the temporal lobe containing the auditory cortex and Wernicke's area. Thereafter, Jesus used holy spirit and the healing power of his perfect spit on the man's tongue (see the article [The Scientific Significance of the Saviors Saliva \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com)).

The outcome of Jesus' actions was that the "man who was deaf and could hardly talk" was that his "ears were opened," and "his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly."

(NOTE: Wernicke's area connects to Broca's, the motor speech area, through a neural pathway. See the probable connection between Broca's area and disciples suddenly acquiring the ability to speak in tongues in an upper room in Jerusalem during Pentecost in the article [Think Youre Christians? Think Again. \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com)).

¹³² Chapter 9, verse 35, **infirmity**: The Greek word for "infirmity" is *malakia* (μαλακία)—a derivative of the word *malakos* (μαλακός, "soft" or "effeminate")—and means a sickness or condition that weakens or 'softens' the victim.

In 1 Corinthians 6:9, one finds the only occurrence in Scripture of *malakos* (μαλακός).

There, it refers to a "soft" or "effeminate" man who is the passive partner in a same-sex sexual encounter.

Relatedly, the purposeful thinking of females and males who deliberately engaged in intra-gender sexual connections softened their morals, resulting in cognitive infirmity or mental illness.

Romans 1:26-28 bears this out, particularly when it comes to the use of the Greek word *ἀδόκιμος* (*adokimos*) at Romans 1:28, which Thayer defines as meaning, "in a moral sense ... unfit for something."

The word ἀδόκιμος (*adokimos*) is used in Romans 1:28 to describe the mind. Hence, it means having disapproved thinking that does not stand the test of sexual morality as determined by the Creator of man and woman (Romans 1:25). This mental deficiency is a precursor to moral repugnancy.

Interestingly, until the latter part of the 20th century, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) considered male and female homosexuality a cognitive “infirmary” or mental illness.

Additionally, it may or may not be significant that Jesus mentions the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah—known as centers for same-sex encounters in connection with *malakia* (μαλακία)—just a relatively few verses later in Matthew 10:1, 15. (See “Sodomite” endnote at Matthew 11:23.)

¹³³ **Chapter 10**, verse 2, **First**: The Greek word here is *prōtos* (πρῶτος), and means “first, before, principal, most important” (Strong’s Greek: 4413. πρῶτος (prōtos) -- first, chief (biblehub.com)). While there is a long list of words in English that owns the prefix “proto,” perhaps one of the more popular ones is the engineering term “prototype.”

One online dictionary defines it as “A first or preliminary model of something, esp. a machine, from which other forms are developed or copied.” (Google.com) Though “prototype” is not found in Matthew, it is located in Luke 2:7 where, appropriately, Gospel writer Dr. Luke speaks of childbirth as he uses the term *prototokon* (πρωτότοκον, “firstborn”) concerning the birth of Jesus. Of the grand total of eight times this word occurs in the New Testament, the apostle Paul, in an intriguing way, also uses it regarding Jesus.

In Colossians 1:15, he identifies Lord Jesus Christ as “the firstborn [*prōtokos*, πρωτότοκος] of all creation” (*New American Standard Bible*). Therefore, not only was he Mary’s firstborn in order of birth, he was God’s firstborn in order of creation.

Finally, although popular in the field of engineering, for almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “prototype” and “prototypical” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹³⁴ **Chapter 10**, verses 5 [COMMENTARY]: Jesus instructed the apostles to avoid Samaritan cities because, according to 2 Kings 17:24, non-Jews inhabited these cities. These restrictive instructions are exclusive to Matthew’s account. They further indicate that he wrote his inspired Gospel in Hebrew, initially intended for a Jewish audience.

¹³⁵ Chapter 10, verse 15: See the “infirmity” endnote in Matthew 9:35 and the “Sodomite” endnote in Matthew 11:23.

¹³⁶ Chapter 10, verse 16, **shrewd as snakes**: Jesus introduces his knowledge of ophiology, or the study of the behavioral characteristics of snakes, by instructing his followers to be “shrewd as snakes.”

The Greek root word for “shrewd” is *phronimos* (φρόνιμος), and it means “intelligent, prudent, sensible, wise.”

The root word for “shrewd” in the Hebrew retroversion of this text is *arum* (ערום). This is the same Hebrew word used in Genesis 3:1, where it states that “The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made” (*New Living Translation*).

Since everything **Y^ehowah** (Jehovah) made in the Garden of Eden was “good” (Genesis 1:9, 12, 18, 21, 25, *King James Version*), this was also true of the snake before manipulated its mind and body (Genesis 3:1-5, 13-15). Intriguingly, elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, *arum* is always applied to humans, mainly in a positive sense (Job 5:12; 15:5; Proverbs 12:23; 13:16; 14:8, 15, 18; 22:3, 27:12).

The snake’s shrewdness may help explain why Eve was not surprised when it appeared to be speaking on its own. After all, it “was more clever than all the wild animals” (Genesis 3:1, *God’s Word Translation*), perhaps even having a measure of critical thinking skills. This distinction may have catapulted it to the top of the list of the first couple’s favorite animals.

Its independent, unanticipated “good,” unmarred, wholesome behavior no doubt kept Adam and Eve captivated, maybe even enthralled. Indeed, the snake may well have accompanied Eve throughout the day while Adam was away, delighting her with its fascinating untainted antics.

Unsurprisingly, given the snake’s shrewdness or humanlike cleverness, it was the Devil’s obvious pick of “all the wild animals” (whose behavior and disposition were also “good”) to possess and manipulate in order to deceive Eve. (Genesis 3:13; 1 Timothy 2:14)

With its independent thinking (*arum*), it purposefully and deliberately decided to work with the Devil, which may be why God cursed it for the choice it made. (Genesis 3:14) From this we can deduce that its thinking and actions were reprehensible.

Whatever the case, Matthew 10:16 indicates that Jesus recognized that snakes still possess and manifest a certain cursed level of shrewdness, which is why they have never been tamed since the Garden. (Compare Revelation 12:9.)

¹³⁷ Chapter 10, verse 26, **revealed**: The Greek word here is *apokaluptó* (ἀποκαλύπτω, *apó*, “away from” and *kalýptō*, “to cover”).

The final book of the Bible is called “Apocalypse” in some (Catholic) Bibles and “Revelation” in others (Protestant or Eastern Orthodox). God’s message was “uncovered” or “revealed” to John.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew was the first to use the Greek word *apokaluptó* in the Christian Greek Scriptures and, along with the apostle John, has essentially popularized the word far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹³⁸ Chapter 10, verse 26, **schemes**: The underlying Greek word here is *kruptos* (κρυπτός), which is where the English word “encrypt” comes from. See endnote for Matthew 6:4 (also 11:25) for further discussion.

¹³⁹ Chapter 10, verse 28, **temporarily put you to death**: Or “destroy the **body**” (*sóma*, σώμα). See endnote immediately below.

¹⁴⁰ Chapter 10, verse 28, **destroy you permanently**: Or “destroy the **soul**” (*psuché*, or, *psyche*, ψυχή). When “soul” and “body” are combined (see endnote above) in this verse, the resultant English word is “psychosomatic.”

Though not the point of this verse where both *psyche* and *soma* occur, Dr. Z. J. Lipowski of The Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, a doctor of psychosomatic medicine, University of Toronto, notes that “*The Oxford English Dictionary* lists the word ‘psychosomatic’ for the first time in a supplement published in 1982, and offers a set of its definitions.

“It defines the adjective ‘psychosomatic’ as one ‘involving or depending on both the mind and the body as mutually dependent entities’ (5, p. 888).

“The term has been used to refer to the following: 1) physical disorders, those caused or aggravated by psychologic factors, and, less often, to mental disorders caused or aggravated by physical factors; 2) the branch of medicine concerned with the mind-body relations; and 3) the field of study, one sometimes designated ‘psychosomatics,’ concerned with the relationship between mind and body” (*Psychosomatic Medicine* Vol. 46, No. 2, March/April 1984).

Interestingly, Dr. Lipowski wrote that one “historian of psychosomatic medicine shrewdly observed years ago, even though the word ‘psychosomatic’ is unsatisfactory, it is ‘so deeply entrenched in the literature that it will never be eradicated.’”

Similarly, for almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the term “psychosomatic” in literature throughout the ages far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁴¹ Chapter 10, verse 30, **how many**: The basic Greek word here is *arithmeó* (ἀριθμέω, from ἀριθμός), from which the English word “arithmetic” is derived. (See also Luke 12:7.)

Today, ‘advanced scientific’ formulas and business calculations are performed by sophisticated calculators and electronic digital computers based on the binary system. Binary code is the very infrastructure of the smallest digital calculators to the largest supercomputers.

Regarding the history of the binary, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) documents that “Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) is the self-proclaimed inventor of the binary system and is considered as such by most historians of mathematics and/or mathematicians” ([Who Discovered the Binary System and Arithmetic? Did Leibniz Plagiarize Caramuel? - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)).

Whatever the case, it was Jesus Christ who—by way of extrapolation—was the first person to call attention to a distinct and naturally occurring binary state involving the human body.

He recognized the exclusively opposing two-state “either-or” concept involving human hair. Previously he told his listeners: “You don’t even have the power to naturally turn one **hair** permanently *white or black*” (Matthew 5:36).

When this text is held in juxtaposition with the above text—“the very **hairs** of your head are all *numbered*” (Matthew 10:30, *King James Version*)—the outgrowth is a binary arithmetic concept that eliminates the “gray,” thereby laying the foundation for the vast array of today’s digital electronic products.

(It may be more than incidental that of the four Gospel writers, only Matthew [10:30] and Luke [12:7] refer to Jesus’ numbering of human hairs. After all, Matthew was a tax collector/auditor/accountant with a keen interest in numbers. At the same time, Luke was a physician with a keen interest in the human body, including its hair.)

As “binaurally” different as God’s heavenly throne is from his earthly footstool (Isaiah 66:1), both Jesus’ earthly sentiment and post-resurrection attitude reflect consideration of binary precision. He felt that a person was either “in” or “out,” “for” him or “against” him, with no room for a middle ground (Matthew 12:30; Luke 9:49, 50).

He wished that those who claimed to follow him were either “on” or “off,” “hot” or “cold,” but not nauseatingly lukewarm (Revelation 3:14-16).

Intriguingly, Jesus knew his listeners would no doubt associate his binary example of “white or black” hair with the idea of ‘calculating,’ ‘computing,’ or ‘tallying up’ votes represented by “white or black” stones.

For example, in Luke 14:28, Jesus asks: “Who of you that wants to build a tower does not first sit down and *calculate* [Greek, ψηφίζω; emphasis supplied] the expense, to see if he has enough to complete it?” (*New World Translation*) The Greek verbal expression *pséphizó* (ψηφίζω) means “to reckon,” “to count up,” “compute,” or “calculate” (*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*) and comes from the Greek root noun *pséphos* (ψῆφος).

In ancient times, a *pséphos* (ψῆφος) was a small smooth stone or pebble imbued with binary properties to represent a vote. As *Strong’s* states, it was “a pebble used in ancient elections to vote” (Acts 26:10).

Strong’s elaborates further by stating that “[a] *white* stone typically meant ‘yes’ and a black stone ‘no.’” Apparently, in the case of elections, whoever had the largest amount of white pebbles won.

Though Jesus mentions “white” before “black,” and was aware that “black” hair is healthier than “white” hair (Matthew 5:36; compare Leviticus 19:32;

Proverbs 16:21 and 20:29 where “gray” hair generally is but does not always represent wisdom), he was aware that in the “white” or “black” voting system both pebbles were neutral in and of themselves, minus any intrinsic deficiencies.

(For brief discussions on “micro-chip” and “cloud computing,” see endnotes at Matthew 10:42 and 17:5, respectively.)

¹⁴² Chapter 10, verse 35, see endnote for vs. 21.

¹⁴³ Chapter 10, verse 42, **seemingly insignificant**: The base Greek word for “seemingly insignificant” is *mikros* (μικρός), from which the word “micro-” is derived.

There is also the word “micron,” which is a unit of measurement equaling one-millionth of a meter in scientific applications.

“Microscope,” “microchip,” “microcontroller,” and “microprocessor” are four more common examples of modern-day items familiar to most people.

The *microscope* is “an optical instrument having a magnifying lens or a combination of lenses for inspecting objects too small to be seen or too small to be seen distinctly and in detail by the unaided eye” ([Microscope Definition & Meaning | Dictionary.com](#)).

For a brief discussion from another angle of the Greek word “macro-” see endnote for Matthew 18:26.

A *microprocessor* “is an integrated circuit on a tiny silicon chip that contains thousands or millions of tiny on/off switches, known as transistors” ([Belarus.net](#)).

Words incorporating “micro-” discussed here are examples of Jesus’ influence on computer science through Matthew’s Greek translation of His words.

For almost two thousand years, especially in today’s technologically advanced society, Matthew has essentially popularized all the above words having to do with “micro-science” and “micro-technology” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise. (For a discussion on binary code, see vs. 30; for information on “cloud computing,” see Matthew 17:5 endnote.)

¹⁴⁴ **Chapter 11**, verse 19, **wisdom**: The Greek word for “wisdom” is *sophia* (σοφία). When combined with *phileó* (Φιλέω)—one of four Greek words for “love”—the English word “philosophy” (‘love of wisdom’) results. (See the entry “want” in the endnote at Matthew 6:5.)

The actual Greek word *philosophia* (φιλοσοφία) occurs once in the Sacred Text of the Christian Greek Scriptures in Colossians 2:8, and Acts 17:18 is the only

place where the term “philosophers” (*philosophos*, φιλοσόφων) occur. There, Epicurean and Stoic philosophers are mentioned.

When one thinks of ancient philosophers, the most famous names in history are Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. World conqueror Alexander the Great, when 13, was tutored by Aristotle ([Aristotle | Biography, Works, Quotes, Philosophy, Ethics, & Facts | Britannica](#)).

Another word used in conjunction with *sophia* (σοφία) is “sophomore,” a familiar expression associated with colleges and universities. A “sophomore” is a second-year student.

Interestingly, this English word is based on the two Greek words, *sophia* (σοφία), and *móros* (μωρός), from which the English word “moron” comes. (See endnote on Matthew 5:22.)

The thought is that a sophomore is someone who is a “moron” or is “foolish,” but who thinks he is “wise.” Dictionary.com says a sophomore is “intellectually pretentious, overconfident, conceited, etc., but immature.”

While the word “sophomore” as such does not appear in the Christian Greek Scriptures, *sophia* (σοφία) and *móros* (μωρός) do occur in the same verse at 1 Corinthians 1:27 in the Sacred Text.

Interestingly, Jesus Christ was faulted for not having matriculated to what would be considered an accredited university with its vast library (possibly libraries) in our day (Matthew 13:54; Luke 7:14, 15), as was true of his disciples Peter and John (Act 4:13), who also had not attended any institution of higher learning in the first century.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the above Greek words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁴⁵ [Chapter 11](#), verse 21, This was particularly insulting because these were non-Jewish cities mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, hence, inhabited by pagans.

¹⁴⁶ [Chapter 11](#), verse 23, **Sodomites**: The divine destruction of Sodom, known for its sin of large-scale homosexuality, is chronicled in the Genesis account. The word sodomy is derived from the ancient city of Sodom.

The condemnation of gay sex was later codified in the Mosaic Law. Jesus’ reference here to potentially repentant gays is a positive one. (See “infirmity” endnote at Matthew 9:35.)

¹⁴⁷ [Chapter 11](#), verse 25, **encrypt**: The underlying Greek word here is *kruptó* (κρύπτω), from which the English word “encrypt” comes. Words like

“cryptography,” “encrypted,” and “encryption” are primarily used in the fields of computer science and electrical engineering.

Intriguingly, God designed the *sacred* secret of the good news in such a way that it is encrypted to persons with proud hearts; hence, they are unable to unlock the valuable truths found in Jesus’ message.

In contrast, a humble heart is the key that *uncovers* (see endnote for “revealed” below) those truths. (Compare 2 Corinthians 4:4) See related endnote at Matthew 13:11, and “secret” endnote for Matthew 6:4.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized all the above words (especially those related to encryption) far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁴⁸ Chapter 11, verse 25, **revealed**: The Greek word here is *apokaluptó* (ἀποκαλύπτω), and it means to uncover or reveal. For more information, see endnote for Matthew 10:26 under “revealed.”

¹⁴⁹ Chapter 11, verse 27, **completely understands**: The Greek word here is *epiginóskó* (ἐπιγινώσκω). As discussed in the endnote for Matthew 7:16, it signifies *fuller* knowledge, or *complete* knowledge.

¹⁵⁰ **Chapter 12**, verse 17: See endnote for “**Word Group**” in Matt. 1:22.

¹⁵¹ Chapter 12, verse 21 [COMMENTARY]: Even Hebrew-speaking Jews and Jewish proselytes knew the Hebrew Bible prophesied that other nations would put faith in the Messiah (Isaiah 11:10). For example, Isaiah 42:4 in the *Septuagint* (LXX) reads: “And in his name, nations will hope.”

¹⁵² Chapter 12, verse 32, **holy spirit**: See endnote for Matthew 1:18.

¹⁵³ Chapter 12, verse 39, **Jonah** [COMMENTARY]: Consider the real-life experience of a man who survived being submerged underwater in the bowel of a ship for three days. [Jesus, Jonah, & a Modern-Day Whale of a Miracle \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com)

¹⁵⁴ **Chapter 13**, verse 5, **shallow** (or “not having the depth”): The Greek word here is *bathos* (βάθος), from which the English word “bath” is derived. Another English word, “bathysphere,” also comes from this Greek word. Indeed, *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* states that *bathos* (βάθος) can mean “deep water” ([Strong’s Greek: 899. βάθος \(bathos\) -- depth \(biblehub.com\)](http://strongsgreek.com)).

In the case of Jesus' illustration, the point he was trying to make is that the soil had such little depth that it could not supply enough moisture to support the growth of a seed to a plant.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the word "bath" far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁵⁵ Chapter 13, verse 11, **mysteries**: The underlying Greek word for "mysteries" is *mustérion* (μυστήριον), from which the English word "mystery" comes. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* notes this Greek word means "a mystery, secret, of which initiation is necessary" (*Strong's Greek: 3466. μυστήριον (mustérion) -- a mystery or secret doctrine (biblehub.com)*).

This same source further states: "In the Bible, a 'mystery'...is not something unknowable. Rather, it is what can only be known through revelation, i.e. because God reveals it" (*Strong's Greek: 3466. μυστήριον (mustérion) -- a mystery or secret doctrine (biblehub.com)*).

One may ask what the difference is between *mustérion* (μυστήριον) in this verse and *kruptó* (κρύπτω)—from which the English word "encrypt" is derived—as discussed under the "encrypt" endnote at Matthew 11:25.

The simple answer is, the encrypted message of the good news is decrypted by a humble heart, whereas the divine mystery is a "secret teaching" (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, p. 531) kept even from the faithful until God's appointed time of revelation.

For almost two thousand years, in our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the word "mystery" (and related words) far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁵⁶ Chapter 13, verse 24, **seed**: The Greek word for "seed" is *sperma* (σπέρμα), from which we get the English word "sperm." The Latin word for *sperma* (σπέρμα) is *semen*. English words like "seminal," "seminary (*seminarium*)," and "disseminate" come from the Latin *semen* and are discussed below.

Regarding the complexities of "seminal," the following treatment from blurit.com considers its various shades of meaning:

"The word seminal relates to semen. It was obtained from the Latin word *sēminālis* which was taken from *sēmen*, *sēmin* meaning seed. Anything which contains semen or generates or refers to semen is termed seminal." ([What Does Seminal Mean? - Blurtit](#))

In discussing the words "seminary" and "seminarium," one dictionary notes: Today's Good Word comes from Latin *seminarium* 'seed bed', the

neuter form of *seminarius* ‘of or related to seed’, used as a noun. This name is appropriate since a seminary is where the seeds of religious up-bringing are sown. The root of this word is *semen* ‘seed’, which comes from the same earlier Proto-Indo-European root that gave us English *sow* and *seed*. The Latin version turns up in several English words borrowed from Latin such as *seminal* ‘starting a new line of thought’ and *disseminate* ‘to spread like broadcasting seeds’ [as Jesus mentioned earlier in this chapter at Matthew 13:3, 4] ([seminary - alphaDictionary * Free English On-line Dictionary](#)).

Finally, the Greek *sperma* (σπέρμα) is used uniquely in Acts 17:18.

There, it is combined with the Greek term for “word” (*logos*, λόγος; compare endnote for “good news” at Matthew 4:23), which produced the neologism (or “new” [*neos*, νέος, see Matthew 9:17], “word” *logos*, λόγος), *spermologos* (σπερμολόγος). Commentator Albert Barnes notes:

The word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It properly means ‘one who collects seeds’ and was applied by the Greeks to the poor persons who collected the scattered grain in the fields after harvest, or to gleaners; and also to the poor who obtained a precarious subsistence around the markets and in the streets. It was also applied to birds that picked up the scattered seeds of grain in the field or in the markets. The word came hence to have a twofold signification:

(1) It denoted the poor, the needy, and the vile the refuse and off-scouring of society; and, (2) From the birds which were thus employed, and which were troublesome by their continual unmusical sounds, it came to denote those who were talkative, garrulous, and opinionated those who collected the opinions of others, or scraps of knowledge, and retailed them fluently, without order or method. It was a word, therefore, expressive of their contempt for an unknown foreigner who should pretend to instruct the learned men and philosophers of Greece ([Acts 17 Barnes’ Notes \(biblehub.com\)](#)).

Ironically, insofar as critical thinking is concerned, the Greek philosophers who called Paul a *spermologos* (σπερμολόγος) committed several common fallacies in so doing. For example:

(1) *Ad Hominem* ('attacking the man instead of addressing the argument),' also called Genetic Fallacy: They attacked Paul instead of addressing his compelling arguments. They said, in effect: "Paul is an inferior seed picker!" "Paul isn't one of us!" (2) *Common Belief* ('our philosophical school of thought is right because we all believe it!'): In so many words, they claimed: "Paul doesn't think as we philosophers do therefore; he has to be wrong!" (3) *Traditional Wisdom* ('appeal to peers and popularity'): They concluded: "Paul isn't associated with one of our legacy institutions of higher learning that espouses traditional wisdom."

To these critics, Paul may have been a well-educated lawyer in Jewish law and a competent speaker (compare Acts 14:8-18 with 2 Corinthians 10:10), but he certainly was no philosopher.

The above are three examples of fallacious reasoning. Ultimately, Jesus' planted good quality seed that produced faithful followers like the apostle Paul.

For all intents and purposes, for almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has popularized the word "sperm" (and words that it has given birth to) far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

Also, see the "Learn a lesson" endnote (#107) in Matthew 6:28 (*Figure 32*), and examine the "see through their disguise" endnote (#112) in Matthew 7:16a (*Figure 36*).

¹⁵⁷ *Chapter 13*, verse 24, **field**: The Greek word for "field" is *agros* (ἀγρός), from which the English word "agriculture" is derived. (See endnote for Matthew 7:16 under "figs.")

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has popularized this word—and, by extension, others associated with it—far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁵⁸ *Chapter 13*, verse 35: See endnote for "**Word Group**" in Matthew 1:22.

¹⁵⁹ *Chapter 13*, verse 38, **world**: The original Greek word here is *kosmos* (κόσμος). It means an "ordered system," or, according to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, "the world, universe; worldly affairs; the inhabitants of the world; adornment."

Two prominent English words come from *kosmos*: (1) *cosmos* ("world" or "universe"); and (2) *cosmetic*: "the order ('ensemble') used of treating the face as a whole," as per HELPS™-Word-studies.

Just as women have been 'adorning' their faces with cosmetics for thousands of years (compare 1 Timothy 2:9; 1 Peter 3:5; Revelation 21:2), the Creator has 'adorned' the *kosmos*—or universe—for countless eons, making it beautiful beyond description.

A less familiar third English term is "cosmocrat," which means "ruler of the world." While Satan the Devil rightly claims this title as ruler of a world alienated from God (John 12:34; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2), the

ultimate Ruler of the universe is its Creator, **Y^howah**' Elohim (Jehovah God). He is the rightful and Supreme Ruler of the ultimate Cosmocracy (Exodus 6:3; Psalm 83:18; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 4:11).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has popularized these words and their various shades of meaning far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁶⁰ **Chapter 13**, verse 42, **grind their teeth in anguish**: The original Greek word here is "bruxism" (*brugmos*, βρυγμός). The sentence from which it was taken in this verse may well be a quote from Psalm 112:10.

There, in the *King James Version*, it says that the wicked will "be grieved" and "shall gnash with his teeth" (Hebrew, וְנָכַח עִנְיֹוֹ יָדָיו וְרַק). See also Matthew 8:12 endnote.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized the word "bruxism" far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁶¹ Chapter 13, vs. 50, **bruxism**: See endnote for Matthew 13:42.

¹⁶² **Chapter 14**, verse 4 [COMMENTARY]: Like Jesus, who came after him, John the Baptist referenced the Torah or Mosaic Law during his preaching. (See Matthew 3:6.)

¹⁶³ **Chapter 14**, verse 24, **yards**: The basic Greek word here is *stadion* (στάδιον), which was one-eighth of a Roman mile. The plural of *stadion* is *stadium*, from which the English word is derived.

As it was then, so it is today. An ancient *stadium* was "a race-course for public games." (Strong's Greek: 4712. στάδιον, (stadion) -- a stadium (a Gr. measure of length), by impl. a racecourse (biblehub.com)) Not surprisingly, in a setting plucked straight out of ancient times, the apostle Paul speaks about sporting events that occurred in a *stadium*:

Do you not know that those who *run in a race* [Greek, σταδίω] all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified" (1 Corinthians 9:24-27, *New American Standard Bible*).

The ancients obviously realized the importance of physical education. Paul demonstrated an intimate familiarity with Greco-Roman games played in various *stadiums*.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has popularized the word “stadium” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁶⁴ **Chapter 14**, verse 26, **ghost**: The original Greek word here is *phantasma* (φάντασμα), from which the English word with the exact same spelling and meaning is derived. Enthusiasts of paranormal psychology may be familiar with this expression. The English word phantasmagoria (synonyms “fantasy,” “dream,” “hallucination,” and “mirage”) also comes from this Greek word.

¹⁶⁵ **Chapter 14**, verse 33, **bowed in respect**: As discussed earlier in the endnotes of Matthew 2:8 and 11, the basic Greek word for “bowed in respect” is *proskuneó* (προσκυνέω).

Though many translations use “worship,” there is a number that recognize that the disciples are not here performing an act of “worship” to Jesus.

Note how these translations render *proskuneó* in this verse:

“Bowed down” (*God’s Word Translation*).

“Adored him” (*Douay-Rheims*).

“Did homage to him” (*Darby Translation*).

“Fell down before him” (*Weymouth New Testament*).

“Did bow to him” (*Young’s Literal Translation*).

See Matthew 2:8, endnote, “**pay my respects**,” for a more detailed explanation. The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as “worship” in most Bible translations in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew, are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

¹⁶⁶ **Chapter 15**, verse 2, **forefathers**: The Greek word here is *presbuteros* (πρεσβύτερος) and is the first of 66 such occurrences in the New Testament.

Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance states that a first-century *presbuteros* was “an elder, a member of the Sanhedrin,” or “an elder of a Christian assembly” (*Strong’s Greek: 4245. πρεσβύτερος (presbuteros) -- elder (biblehub.com)*).

The English word “presbyterian” is derived from *presbuteros*. It is defined as ‘denoting a Christian Church or denomination governed by a body of elders according to Presbyterianism.’

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized “presbyterian” and words associated with it far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁶⁷ Chapter 15, verse 2, **carefully**: While on the surface it may seem that this was a simple hygienic handwashing, ceremonially washing hands involved more than just the hands.

Ceremonial hand washing was similar to how surgeons “scrub in” today. This expression means “to wash the hands and forearms very thoroughly, as for surgery” (Medical Definition of Scrub in (rxlist.com)). Gospel writer Mark wrote that the Pharisees would “wash their hands and forearms” (Mark 7:2, *New Heart English Bible*, *World English Bible*).

The Greek word for “carefully” in this text is *pugmé* (πυγμή), and it means “the first,” “clinched hand,” “with the first (hard scrubbing)” (Strong’s Greek: 4435. πυγμή (pugmé) -- the fist (biblehub.com)). Significantly, *Strong’s* also notes *pugmé* means “up to the elbow.”

While Matthew doesn’t use *pugmé* in Matthew 15:2, nor anywhere else in his Gospel, Mark does, as noted. In Mark’s Gospel, the *New World Translation* translates *pugmé* as “up to the elbow” (Mark 7:3).

Of course, none of this is to suggest that the Pharisees were surgeons. However, it does highlight an interesting parallel between the Bible and modern-day surgical science. In this regard, compare Matthew 18:8 in the present translation.

¹⁶⁸ Chapter 15, verse 4, **berates**: The original Greek word here is *kakologeó* (κακολογέω), which literally means “bad word.” It is derived from *kakos* (κακός, ‘bad or evil in the broadest sense’) and *logos* (λόγος, ‘word or saying’; see endnote for Matthew 4:23). Both in English, Spanish, and perhaps as well as in other languages, the word “kaka” (Greek, κακά) has a significantly negative connotation.

Though not referring to the everyday pejorative use of the word, κακά is found in Luke 16:25; Acts 9:13; Romans 3:8, 2 Timothy 4:14, Titus 1:12, and 1 Peter 3:12.

Having a consistency of meaning in numerous modern-day languages, for almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized “kaka,” as well as the entire idea of “bad words,” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁶⁹ Chapter 15, verse 25, **bowed out of reverence**: See Matthew 2:8 endnote under “**pay my respects**” for a more detailed explanation.

The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as “worship” in most Bible translations, in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

¹⁷⁰ **Chapter 17**, verse 2, **transfigured**: The original Greek word is *metamorphosó* (μεταμορφόω), from which the English word “metamorphosis” is derived. The original word is a combination of the Greek words *metá* (μετά, “change”) and *morphóō* (μορφόω, “form” or “shape”).

The two examples that come to mind for most readers are the transformation of the caterpillar into a butterfly and the tadpole into a frog.

Entomologists (zoologists who specialize in studying insects) who are frequently teachers, throughout their course of teaching, point to the metamorphosis the caterpillar and tadpole experience in their transformative evolution.

Christians are admonished to go through a continual metamorphosis or transformation of a spiritual nature as they resist being fashioned after the world of mankind that is not calibrated by holy spirit (Romans 12:2).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has popularized metamorphosis far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁷¹ **Chapter 17**, verse 5, **the cloud**: The underlying Greek word for “cloud” (*nephelé*, νεφέλη) in this text is not the focus of this endnote, even though Matthew is the first to use one of several Greek words translated “cloud.”

The centerpiece of this commentary is the conceptual similarity between the original celestial “cloud” in this text and the rudimentary, by comparison, 21st-century cyberspace expression “cloud computing” (or “enterprise cloud computing” for businesses).

While the details of “cloud computing” are nebulous for many, its foggy explanation is also beyond the scope of this consideration.

Suffice it to say, the cloud in the context of computing contains all the resources necessary to run a business of virtually any size.

Unlike traditional Information Technology (IT) departments, there is no need for service, storage, a technical team, or upgrades (which could be incompatible with other installed software and bring the system down like a house of cards).

Ideally, cloud computing eliminates the traditional ‘company data center, office space, power, cooling, bandwidth, networks, a complicated software stack

plus the team of experts to install, configure, and run it; not to mention the development, testing, staging, and production associated with complicated software programs.’

Cloud computing seamlessly envelops all these functions. With a subscription service, one could upload and download from “the cloud” at will.

Now, enter the unwitting basis for earthbound “cloud computing,” namely, ultra-advanced “celestial cloud computing”—as outlined in Scripture—that has been in operation for literally thousands of years.

“The cloud” in this Scripture text (verse 5) is a form of artificial intelligence (AI), voice, data, images, and more, downloaded to the minds of the three apostles (Matthew 17:1-9).

The three-dimensional (3-D) images of “Moses and Elijah”—downloaded from “the [ultra-advanced celestial] cloud” to each of their minds—were so vivid that their consciousness processed the data stream as if the images were as authentic as Jesus himself.

Among other things, the download from the celestial cloud activated the vision center of the brain in such a way so as to—according to verse 9—cause the three to witness the same “vision” (Greek, *horama*, ὄραμα, which basically means ‘to see both spiritually and mentally’) as if they were each wearing a pair of specialized high-resolution 3-D goggles associated with virtual reality (compare “mind uploading” in the endnote for Matthew 9:25).

There are several applications (or “apps”) for the celestial cloud.

For example, the resurrected Jesus Christ (who ascended to heaven in a cloud) “poured out”—or downloaded—holy spirit soon after reaching his destination (Acts 2:33). Unlike manmade “cloud computing,” ultra-advanced “celestial cloud computing” is versatile enough to allow God’s servants on earth to initiate a “download” of holy spirit by “uploading” prayers (Luke 11:13).

Conversely, God himself can ignite a “download” at any time he pleases, and upon whomever he wants—all for the outworking of his benevolent will and purpose (Judges 13:24; 14:5, 6; 15:14).

This app can appropriately be called “Anticipatory Cloud Computing” (ACC) because ultra-advanced celestial cloud computing *anticipates* user needs—partially based on a past pattern of behavior—and downloads accordingly.

Interestingly, humans have imitated the divine when it comes to naming conventions.

For instance, as of this writing, there is an Internet company named “Force.com.” God’s holy spirit is also identified as his “active force.” And on June 6, 2011, Apple announced its iCloud, which has been called “a hard drive in the sky” (iCloud is more than “a hard disk in the sky”... it’s a NAS in the sky | Seagate Blog).

Furthermore, some believe that the concept of a global network of hard drives (hardware) containing a sprawling worldwide web (software) and associated components originated from the Bible.

For example, intrigued observers see the various modes of transmission (e.g., radio, microwave, fiber optics) and the information they carry, springing from the seminal concept of Zechariah’s vision of “a flying scroll,” written on both sides (Zechariah 5:1-3, *New International Version*), which was an unheard-of concept even back then. The scroll itself is seen as the hardware, and the message on the scrolls is understood as the software.

Also, the idea of a touchscreen tablet computer designed to be manipulated with your finger can be found as far back as the second book of the Bible. Exodus 31:18b (*NET Bible*) says that Moses was given “tablets of stone written by the finger of God,” also on both sides (Exodus 32:15-16).

And, it goes without saying that whether your tablet is made of stone (“the workmanship of God” himself [Exodus 32:16, *New World Translation*]), glass, or plastic, if in anger you throw it hard enough at a solid object, it will shatter and need replacing. This was the case when Moses, in his anger, threw the tablets God gave him, full of invaluable informational content, at a large rock and shattered them. (Exodus 32:19; 34:1, 4, 28c-29a).

In the final analysis, “cloud computing”—“a hard drive in the sky”—is a feeble imitation of the ultra-advanced celestial cloud in connection with the Transfiguration. (For a discussion on binary code, see Matthew 10:30.)

¹⁷² Chapter 17, verse 20, **small quantity faith**: The Greek word here is *oligopistos* (ὀλιγόπιστος) and is a combination of the two Greek words *oligos* (ὀλίγος, “little,” “small,” “few”; see Matthew 7:14) and *pistis* (πίστις, “faith”).

The difference between *oligos* (ὀλίγος) and *mikros* (μικρός, “micro”) is that *oligos* denotes ‘small in number’ or ‘low in quantity’ insofar as an amount is concerned, whereas *mikros* (μικρός, “micro”) denotes ‘small in size or stature.’ (See endnote for Matthew 10:42 for further discussion of *mikros*.)

The English word “oligopoly,” although not frequently seen in print, means a state or condition of limited competition where a *few* dominate.

“Some examples of oligopolies include the car industry, petrol retail, pharmaceutical industry, coffee shop retail, and airlines. In each of these industries,

a few large companies dominate” ([Oligopoly Explained - Examples, Principles and Overview \(economicsonline.co.uk\)](#)).

¹⁷³ **Chapter 18**, verse 17, **the body of elders as congregation representatives**: Elders in ancient Israel represented the congregation. For example, the Mosaic Law states:

“If the whole congregation of Israel unintentionally does something wrong, without the assembly being aware of it, if they do even one thing that is forbidden by any of the Lord’s commands, they will be guilty.

“When the wrong they have done becomes known, the congregation must sacrifice a bull as an offering for sin. They must bring it in front of the tent of meeting.

“The leaders of the congregation [emphasis supplied] will place their hands on the bull’s head in the Lord’s presence” (Leviticus 4:13-15, God’s Word Translation).

As indicated here, elders who took the lead in the congregation were to act responsibly on behalf of the congregation when even an unintentional sin was committed.

¹⁷⁴ **Chapter 18**, verse 24, **thousands upon thousands**: The Greek word here is *myrioi* or *murioi* (μυριοί), from which the English word “myriad” comes. In both languages, it essentially means “ten thousand,” “countless,” or “innumerable.”

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has popularized this word far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁷⁵ **Chapter 18**, verse 26, **patient**: The compound Greek word here is *makrothumeó* (μακροθυμέω) which literally means “long-suffering,” “long-spirited,” or “longtempered.”

The first part of the word is *makro* (μακρο) and means “long” or “large.” This can be seen in the English word “macroeconomics.” (See endnote for Matthew 10:42 for a discussion on “micro-.”)

It “is a branch of economics that studies how an overall economy—the markets, businesses, consumers, and governments—behave” ([Macroeconomics Definition, History, and Schools of Thought \(investopedia.com\)](#)).

This site further states “Macroeconomics examines economy-wide phenomena such as inflation, price levels, rate of economic growth, national income, gross domestic product (GDP), and changes in unemployment.”

The English word “economy” is also of interest.

It is a combination of the Greek word for “house” or “household” (*oikia*, οἰκία, which first occurs in Matthew 2:11) and the Greek word for law (*nomos*, νόμος, see endnote for Matthew 5:17), resulting in *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία, see Luke 16:2 for first of nine occurrences of the word in the New Testament).

The word *oikonomia* therefore means “house law,” or “house(hold) management or rules.”

¹⁷⁶ **Chapter 19**, verse 7, **Moses command**: These two words and the rest of the words in verses 7 and 8 further indicate that Matthew’s Gospel was initially written explicitly in Hebrew with the Jews in mind.

¹⁷⁷ **Chapter 19**, verse 7, **papers**: The Greek word here is *biblion* (βιβλίον), from which the English word “Bible” is derived. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance’s* short definition explains it as “a papyrus [from which the English word “paper” comes] roll” (Strong’s Greek: 975. βιβλίον (biblion) -- a paper, book (biblehub.com)).

This is the first of 34 occurrences (the sole one in the book of Matthew) of the root word in the New Testament or Christian Greek Scriptures, most of which appear in the book of Revelation.

Strong’s more expansive explanation of *biblion* (βιβλίον) describes it as “a roll—bill, book, scroll, writing.”

Another reference work adds that “The word [βιβλίον] is a diminutive of βίβλος, which originally means the inner bark of the papyrus, used for writing, then a book or roll of this bark; hence a paper” (*Vincent’s Word Studies.*, p. 108).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has popularized these words far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁷⁸ **Chapter 19**, verse 12 [COMMENTARY]: Commentators have divergent views on what Jesus meant as per the three causes of some men declining to marry. *Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible* states:

Our Lord here distinguishes the various sorts of persons, that can and do live in a single state with content: some by nature, and others by violence offered to them, are rendered incapable of entering into a marriage state; and others, through the gift of God, and under the influence of his grace, abstain from marriage cheerfully and contentedly, in order to be more useful in the interest of religion.

But the number of either of these is but few, in comparison of such who choose a conjugal state, and with whom it is right to enter into it, notwithstanding all the difficulties that may attend it.

Some men are eunuchs, and of these there are different sorts; there are some, which were so born from their mother's womb; meaning, not such who, through a natural temper and inclination of mind, could easily abstain from marriage, and chose to live single; but such who had such defects in nature that they were impotent, unfit for, and unable to perform the duties of a marriage state; who, as some are born without hands or feet, these were born without proper and perfect organs of generation ([Matthew 19 Gill's Exposition \(biblehub.com\)](#)).

¹⁷⁹ **Chapter 19**, verse 24, **camel**: The Greek word here is *kamélos* (κάμηλος), from which the English word “camel” comes. This Greek word is virtually a cognate of the Hebrew *gamal* (גמל), which occurs 54 times in the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament.

The Greek *kamélos* (κάμηλος) is found six times in the Christian Greek Scriptures or New Testament, three of which are included in Matthew. Apparently, both Hebrew and Greek words include the dromedary.

Under “dromedarius,” *Britannica* states:

Arabian (one-humped) riding camel (*Camelus dromedarius*), a swift domestic species not found in the wild. Although wild dromedaries are extinct, the importation of dromedaries to Australia in the 19th century resulted in the establishment of a feral population that continues to live in the country's interior. Being longer legged and slimmer than the Bactrian (two-humped) camel, dromedaries have been known to carry a rider 115 miles (185 km) in less than 11 hours, and racing dromedaries can reach a top speed of 40 miles (65 km) per hour over short distances” ([Draft animal | Britannica](#)).

For several thousand years, down to our modern day, writers of the Hebrew and Christian Greek Scriptures—but especially Matthew—have popularized the word “camel” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁸⁰ **Chapter 20**, verse 20, **bowing respectfully**: See Matthew 2:8, end-note, “**pay my respects**,” for a more detailed explanation.

The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as “worship” in most Bible translations, in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew, are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

¹⁸¹ Chapter 20, verse 25, **political apparatus**: Given his purely Jewish background, Jesus here demonstrates an intriguing measure of knowledge of worldly political affairs, perhaps acquired between ages 12 and 30 (Luke 2:42; 3:23).

Whatever the case, that “politics” are in the mix can be seen from Matthew’s use of the Greek words “city” (about 24 times) and “cities” (around 5 times) in his Gospel. The Greek word for “city” is *polis* (πόλις), from which we get the following English words: “police,” “policy,” “politic,” “political,” and “politically.”

Contextually, Matthew quotes Jesus as mentioning “the holy city [*polis*, πόλις]” (referring to Jerusalem) in Matthew 4:5, in stark contrast with “all the kingdoms of the world and their glory” in Matthew 4:8. The “world” in verse 8 is synonymous with non-Jewish nations under the control of worldly politicians.

That the political aspect of the exchange between Jesus and Satan was not restricted to the then-dominant Roman world power can be seen from the fact that “*kingdoms* [plural] of the world” were the collective focal point under discussion and were the items Satan put on the table—as it were—and not just the Roman government.

This indicates that Jesus and his apostles had some familiarity with political science or knowledge of politics.

Political science then and now has been defined as “the study of governments, public policies and political processes, systems, and political behavior” ([Introduction - Political Science / Public Policy Resources - LibGuides at Michigan State University Libraries \(msu.edu\)](#)).

This source further states “Political science subfields include political theory, political philosophy, political ideology, political economy, policy studies and analysis, comparative politics, international relations, and a host of related fields.”

There’s more from this site.

“Political scientists use both humanistic and scientific perspectives and tools and a variety of methodological approaches to examine the process, systems, and political dynamics of all countries and regions of the world.”

In connection with the apostles' knowledge of the machinations of government officials of the world, *Clarke's Commentary on the Bible* notes regarding those officials:

They tyrannized and exercised arbitrary power over the people. This was certainly true of the governments in our Lord's time, both in the east and in the west. The government of the Church of Christ is widely different from secular governments. It is founded in humility and brotherly love: it is derived from Christ, the great Head of the Church, and is ever conducted by his maxims and spirit.

When political matters are brought into the Church of Christ, both are ruined. The Church has more than once ruined the State; the State has often corrupted the Church: it is certainly for the interests of both to be kept separate.

This has already been abundantly exemplified in both cases, and will continue so to be, over the whole world, wherever the Church and State are united in secular matters ([Matthew 20 Clarke's Commentary \(biblehub.com\)](#)).

In summation, the reference work *Insight on the Scriptures* states "Jesus used the spirit in a governmental way" (Vol. 2, p. 1022).

Therefore, Jesus' disciples had to be politically astute, at least on some level.

They had to know how worldly politicians operated to effectively be cautioned against imitating them when it came to engaging the Christian organizational structure that was inescapably akin in specific ways to the political organizations of the world.

That certain similarities and parallels might exist between the two structures is the very reason why Jesus broached the subject of worldly political and governmental organizations.

¹⁸² [Chapter 20](#), verse 30, **Son of David**: This expression made by the crowd and recorded by Matthew in verses 30 and 31 further indicates that Matthew had a wider Jewish audience in mind when writing his Gospel.

¹⁸³ [Chapter 21](#), verse 4: See the "**Word Group**" endnote in Matthew 1:22.

¹⁸⁴ [Chapter 21](#), verse 9, **Long live the king, we pray**: The Greek word here, *hosanna* (ὡσαννά), is a transliteration of the Hebrew and Aramaic term (הושיענהּ בּא) which means "Save, we pray!" Interestingly, it has significance in all three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

¹⁸⁵ **Chapter 21**, verse 9, **Y^ehowah'**: This is the 12th of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2).

¹⁸⁶ **Chapter 21**, verse 10, **frenzy**: The original Greek word here is *σειο* (σειώ), from which the English word "seismic" is derived. Among the several definitions of this term are "upheaval" and "commotion." (See Matthew 27:51 endnote for further discussion.)

¹⁸⁷ **Chapter 21**, verse 12 [COMMENTARY]: As this incident occurred on Nisan 10, 33 C.E. (just several days before his execution on Nisan 14), Jesus was about 33.5 years old.

¹⁸⁸ **Chapter 21**, verse 13, **Hebrew Scriptures**: That Jesus quotes from the Hebrew Bible, as chronicled by Matthew, would be particularly significant to the Jewish audience Matthew's Gospel, first written in Hebrew, was initially intended to reach.

¹⁸⁹ **Chapter 21**, verse 15: **Son of King David**: See endnote for Matthew 20:30.

¹⁹⁰ **Chapter 21**, verse 16, **David's melody**: Jesus rightly expected his Jewish audience to be familiar with this Hebrew text. And in recording Jesus' words here, Matthew knew his Jewish readers would find it significant.

¹⁹¹ **Chapter 21**, verse 31, **despised prostitutes**: Insofar as sexual misconduct is concerned, Jesus recognized that force of circumstances may have led some "whores" or "prostitutes" (as well as "Sodomites") with good hearts into performing illicit and unsavory sex acts condemned in the Hebrew Bible. (See "infirmity" endnote for Matthew 9:35 and "Sodomite" endnote for Matthew 11:23. Although not related to being a sodomite, compare Matthew 19:3 regarding forced singleness for a man.)

¹⁹² **Chapter 21**, verse 42, **Y^ehowah'**: This is the 13th of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2). Jews would be keenly interested in this text as Matthew especially had them in mind when writing it in Hebrew. Mark's Gospel, which many scholars say was written first, does not contain this quote from Jesus.

¹⁹³ **Chapter 22**, verse 7, **armies**: The original Greek word here is *στράτευμα* (στράτευμα), and it simply means "an army" or "detachment of troops." (Strong's Greek: 4753. *στράτευμα* (strateuma) -- an expedition, an army, a company of soldiers (biblehub.com)) The English word "strategy" comes from this Greek word.

According to *Forbes*, Wikipedia states that strategy is:

“[A] word of military origin [that] refers to a plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal. In military usage strategy is distinct from tactics, which are concerned with the conduct of an engagement, while strategy is concerned with how different engagements are linked. How a battle is fought is a matter of tactics: the terms and conditions that it is fought on and whether it should be fought at all is a matter of strategy, which is part of the four levels of warfare: political goals or grand strategy, strategy, operations, and tactics” (5 Differences Between Strategy and Strategy (forbes.com)).

After noting that it builds “on the work of many thinkers on the subject,” the online encyclopedia then goes on to quote author Beatrice Heuser in her book, *The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 27b), as defining strategy as:

A comprehensive way to try to pursue political ends, including the threat or actual use of force, in a dialectic of wills—there have to be at least two sides to a conflict. These sides interact, and thus a Strategy will rarely be successful if it shows no adaptability.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “strategy” and “strategic” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁹⁴ Chapter 22, verse 13, **clenching his teeth**: See endnote for Matthew 8:12.

¹⁹⁵ Chapter 22, verse 16, **the surface skin color of a person’s face**: The original Greek word here is *prosōpon* (πρόσωπον) and means “the face, countenance, surface” (Strong’s Greek: 4383. πρόσωπον (prosōpon) -- the face (biblehub.com)).

That it primarily means “face” can be seen in how the *New World Translation* (and others English versions) render Jesus’ earlier words as recorded in Matthew 6:16, 17: “When you are fasting, stop becoming sad-faced like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their *faces* [πρόσωπα] that they may appear to men to be fasting. Truly I say to you, they are having their reward in full. But you, when fasting, grease your head and wash your face [πρόσωπόν].”

This word is used 77 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures (New Testament), the vast majority of which is translated as “face” by most translators. The same base word is found in Acts 10:34: “For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial [*prosōpolémpetés, προσωπολήπτης*]” (*NWT*).

The Greek word translated “partial” here literally means “taker of faces” according to the *Kingdom Interlinear* edition of the *NWT*, and “an acceptor of a face” according to *Strong’s*.

This verse says that God does not ‘take or accept a man’s skin color at face value.’ That this is implied can be seen from the next verse (Acts 10:35), which states that God “accepts men from every nation” (*New International Version*) irrespective of the color of their skin as shown on their faces.

In addition to race and skin color, facial recognition software today has many applications, not the least of which is in law enforcement. This specialized software may tell law enforcement authorities much more than meets the naked eye about a person in a way similar to Jesus being able to read a person beyond the color of their skin. Of course, unlike any human or device made by man, Jesus could read a person’s heart.

¹⁹⁶ Chapter 22, verse, **inscription**: The Greek word here is *epigraphé* (ἐπιγραφή), of which the transliterated English word “epigraphy” (*epi*, ἐπί, “upon” + *graphé*, γράφω, “to write”) is derived. It literally means “to write upon.” Both the President of the United States, who signs a bill into law, and a modern-day graffiti artist, who “tags” a wall, become “epigraphers” in carrying out these actions because they’re both writing on something.

Whenever anyone signs their name, that signature becomes an autograph (*auto*, αὐτό “self” + *graphé*, γράφω, “to write”), which literally means ‘to write yourself.’ Technically, *anything* you write is an autograph.

For example, there are no known original *autographs* of Bible books today; that is, Biblical documents written by the hand of the Bible writers themselves.

There is curious speculation that scholars may even be able to determine the mood or disposition of the apostles, prophets, and other Bible writers by examining their handwriting. The study of such is called graphology.

Britannica defines graphology as:

[I]nference of character from a person’s handwriting. The theory underlying graphology is that handwriting is an expression of personality; hence, a systematic analysis of the way words and letters are formed can reveal traits of personality” ([Graphology | handwriting analysis | Britannica](#)).

Fascinatingly, the Latin equivalent of the Greek-based English word “autograph” is “manuscript.” The Latin word *manū* (which serves as a basis for the Spanish word *mano*) means “hand,” and *scriberere* means “to write” in Latin. The Spanish expression *mano a mano* literally means “hand to hand,” as in combat.

A few English examples of words that incorporate *manū* are “manual” (as in “manual labor,” or working with one’s hands) and “manipulate” (literally, ‘a handful’). In contemporary usage, a “manuscript” is “the original text of an author’s work, handwritten or now usually typed, that is submitted to a publisher” ([Manuscript Definition & Meaning | Dictionary.com](#)).

The Greek *auto* (αὐτό) forms a basis for the compound Greek word *automatos* (αὐτόματος) as used by Matthew’s fellow Gospel writers Mark (see Mark 4:28) and Luke (see Acts 12:10); and from which we get the English word “automatic.” *Strong’s* defines *automatos* (αὐτόματος) as “acting of one’s own will, of its own accord” (*Strong’s Greek: 844. αὐτόματος (automatos) -- acting of one’s own will, of its own accord (biblehub.com)*).

Acts 12:10 is particularly interesting in that we find the first concept of a gate or door opening automatically, as if by motion detection. There the *New Living Translation* reads: “They passed the first and second guard posts and came to the iron gate leading to the city, and this *opened for them all by itself* [emphasis supplied].” So they passed through and started walking down the street, and then the angel suddenly left him.”

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “epigraphy” and “epigrapher” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

¹⁹⁷ [Chapter 22](#), verse 23 [COMMENTARY]: In verses 23-40, there are several references to the Hebrew Scriptures, illustrating further that Matthew strategically targeted the Jewish population as he translated his Gospel from Hebrew to Greek. Though other Gospel writers recorded these texts, Matthew was the first to do so.

¹⁹⁸ [Chapter 22](#), verse 35, **doctor of the Law**: The Greek word for “doctor of the Law” is *nomikos* (νομικός), meaning one “learned in the law” or “one learned in the Old Testament” (*Strong’s Greek: 3544. νομικός (nomikos) -- relating to law, learned in the law (biblehub.com)*).

According to the *King James Version*, “the Pharisees and lawyers [plural of *nomikos* (νομικός)] rejected the counsel of God” (Luke 7:30). Since “lawyers” generally rejected Jesus, he castigated these by saying:

“Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered” (Luke 11:45-52, *KJV*).

While in his parallel account, Matthew quotes Jesus as criticizing both the “scribes and Pharisees” for their hypocrisy (Matthew 23:13), Luke quotes Jesus as specifying the highly educated “lawyers [scribes]” as possessing the “key of knowledge” in contradistinction to and exclusion of the Pharisees (Luke 11:52, *KJV*; see also Luke 14:3 in the *KJV* where Jesus responded to “the lawyers”).

In Acts 5:34, Gamaliel is called a *nomodidaskalos* (νομοδιδάσκαλος), meaning, “a teacher ... of the Mosaic law” (*Strong’s Greek: 3547. νομοδιδάσκαλος (nomodidaskalos) -- a teacher of the law (biblehub.com)*), or a “doctor of the law” (Acts 5:34, *KJV, American Standard Version, Douay-Rheims Bible*).

And although the plural form of *didaskalos* (διδάσκαλος, “teacher” or “instructor”) is used in Luke 2:46 instead of *nomikos*, where a 12-year-old Jesus astounded the teachers in the temple, both the *KJV* and the *Douay-Rheims Bible* render *didaskalos* “doctors.”

Also, in another instance of using *nomikos*, Luke documents that “a certain lawyer” (Luke 10:25, *KJV*) or “scholar of the Law” (Luke 10:25 *Legacy Standard Bible*) confronted Jesus to test him.

Strong’s notes that *nomikos* stems from the Greek word for “law,” *nomos*. Interestingly, the concept of a “doctor of Law” endures to this day.

A Juris Doctorate or Doctor of Jurisprudence degree, also known as a JD Degree, is a professional degree that prepares students for a professional legal career, and it is the most common educational path to qualify for the bar examination in the US.

A Juris Doctor degree is technically a professional doctorate. But unlike other Ph.D. holders, lawyers don’t hold the title of ‘Doctor.’ Instead, they can choose to use the title ‘esquire,’ which is shortened to ‘Esq.’ and is fashioned after the lawyer’s name ([What is a JD degree? What Can You Do with a JD Degree? \(testmaxprep.com\)](#)).

While the *KJV* and most other Bible versions translate *nomikos* as “lawyer,” a number of others reflect the contextual flavor of this Greek word.

These examples illustrate the point by translating *nomikos* as “an expert in the Jewish Law” (Matthew 22:35, *Contemporary English Version*), “a doctor of the law” (Matthew 22:35, *Douay-Rheims Bible*), “a scholar of the law” (Matthew 22:35, *New American Bible*), “an expert in religious law” (Matthew 22:35, *NET Bible, New Living Translation*), and “a Law scholar” (Matthew 22:35, *New Heart English Bible*).

Jesus respectfully and directly answered the inquisitor's test question in Matthew 22:35. And although the Lord could have criticized this "doctor of the law" before the Pharisees and Sadducees for having an advanced education, he declined to do so.

Later, the apostle Paul urged Titus to "do everything you can to help Zenas the lawyer" (Titus 3:13, *New International Version*), as opposed to shunning him because of his formal education in Jewish law.

This is noteworthy, given that Paul had earlier in his letter to Titus warned him of "those Jews who insist that Gentile believers must be circumcised and keep the Law in order to be saved" (Titus 1:10, *Amplified Bible*) and to "not get involved in foolish discussions about spiritual pedigrees or in quarrels and fights about obedience to Jewish laws" (Titus 3:9, *New Living Translation*).

Significantly, Physician Luke's Gospel account contains the expression "doctors of the law" (Luke 5:17, *KJV*), as well as "physician" later in the same chapter (Luke 5:31, *KJV*.)

Interestingly, it has been argued that proportionately speaking, Jews in the United States are the most represented ethnic group among doctors and lawyers ([Why Are There So Many Jewish Lawyers In The United States? – chicagojewishnews.com](http://chicagojewishnews.com)), notwithstanding the fact that religious Jews today reject the New Testament as the inspired Word of God.

If the numbers are accurate with respect to Jewish doctors and lawyers, then this would lend weight to the historical credibility of Luke's account.

¹⁹⁹ [Chapter 22](#), verse 37, **Y^ehowah**: This is the 14th of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2). The divine name is contained within both Hebrew Scripture texts in Deuteronomy (see endnote for Matthew 22:37).

²⁰⁰ [Chapter 22](#), verse 43, **holy spirit**: See endnote for Matthew 1:18.

²⁰¹ [Chapter 22](#), verse 44, **Y^ehowah**: This is the 15th of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2). It is contained within this Hebrew Scripture text at Psalms 110:1. See endnote for Matthew 1:20 for more information.

²⁰² [Chapter 23](#), verse 5, **in public**: The original Greek word here is *theomai* (θεάομαι), which is where we get the American English word "theater." As if they were putting on a show, the scribes and Pharisees gave hypocritical performances for anyone who would pay attention.

(See the endnote for “show off” under Matthew 6:1, where the word “theater” in verb form in Greek first appears in the Gospels and the balance of the Christian Greek Scriptures. As it is here, the noun form is used with reference to a literal theater three times in Scripture in Acts 19:29, Acts 19:31, and 1 Corinthians 4:9.)

²⁰³ **Chapter 23**, verse 5, **small leather cases**: The root Greek word in the singular here is *phulaktérion* (φυλακτήριον), from which the English word “phylactery” is derived.

Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance defines a *phulaktérion* as “an amulet, a parchment capsule containing little parchment rolls with the Hebrew texts, affixed to the left upper arm or the forehead of men at morning prayer, and regarded as a protection (hence the name) against evil spirits” (*Strong’s Greek: 5440. φυλακτήριον (phulaktérion) -- an outpost, fortification, an amulet (biblehub.com)*).

Matthew is the only Bible writer to quote Jesus as using this word. This fact further proves that Matthew’s Gospel was especially written with his Jewish audience in mind.

²⁰⁴ **Chapter 23**, verse 14 [TRANSLATOR’S NOTE]: Certain Biblical manuscripts read: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you devour widows’ houses and for a pretense offer long prayers; on this account you will receive judgment more abundantly” (*New World Translation* footnote). Various other Biblical manuscripts have these words.

²⁰⁵ **Chapter 23**, verse 39, **Y^howah**: This is the 16th (hence, antepenultimate) of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2)..

²⁰⁶ **Chapter 24**, heading, **Destruction of Temple** [COMMENTARY]: The temple’s destruction would likely have little meaning to Greeks or Romans but would be a significant event to believing Jews. Hence, this further indicates that Matthew’s Gospel was originally written in Hebrew and intended for Jews and Jewish converts.

²⁰⁷ **Chapter 24**, verse 3, **presence**: The Greek word translated “presence” here is *parousias* (παρουσίας). However, most Bible translators equate “coming” with *parousias*, whereas, in actuality, the Greek word for “coming” is *erchomai* (ἔρχομαι).

One who is coming is quite different from one who is present. A Scriptural example can be seen in 2 Corinthians 13:1, 2. There, the Greek word for

“coming,” found in 2 Corinthians 13:1, is *erchomai* (ἔρχομαι) and is held in juxtaposition with “present” (Greek, *parōn*, παρῶν) found in the very next verse (2 Corinthians 13:2) and is obviously a word akin to “presence” (Greek, *parousias*, παρουσίας).

As to the original Hebrew word Matthew likely used, see the extensive commentary in the apostles’ question and Jesus’ reply. This could lead to readings such as:

‘What will be the sign of your [*boh*] and of the conclusion of the system of things?’ and, ‘As the days of Noah were, so the [*boh*] of the Son of man will be.’ What does *boh* mean? The Watchtower answers this question in a thorough commentary:

Though having various senses, the Hebrew verb *boh* basically means ‘come.’ The *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* says: ‘Occurring 2,532 times, *boh* is one of the most frequently used verbs in the Hebrew Scriptures and is at the head of verbs expressing motion.’ (Genesis 7:1, 13; Exodus 12:25; 28:35; 2 Samuel 19:30; 2 Kings 10:21; Psalm 65:2; Isaiah 1:23; Ezekiel 11:16; Daniel 9:13; Amos 8:11) Had Jesus and the apostles used a word with such a range of meanings, the sense might be debatable. But did they?

Bear in mind that modern Hebrew versions are *translations* that may not present exactly what Matthew penned in Hebrew. The fact is that Jesus could well have used a word other than *boh*, one that fitted the sense of *pa·rou·si’a*. We see this from the 1995 book *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, by Professor George Howard.

The book focused on a 14th-century polemic against Christianity by the Jewish physician Shem-Tob ben Isaac Ibn Shaprut. That document set out a Hebrew text of Matthew’s Gospel. There is evidence that rather than being translated from Latin or Greek in Shem-Tob’s time, this text of Matthew was very old and was originally composed in Hebrew. It thus may bring us closer to what was said on the Mount of Olives.

At Matthew 24:3, 27, 39, Shem-Tob’s Matthew does not use the verb *boh*. Instead, it uses the related noun *bi’ah*. That noun appears in the Hebrew Scriptures only at Ezekiel 8:5, where it means ‘entranceway.’ Instead of expressing the action of coming, *bi’ah* there refers to the start of a building; when you are in the entryway or on the threshold, you are in the building.

Also, non-Biblical religious documents among the Dead Sea Scrolls often use *bi'ah* regarding the arrival or commencement of priestly courses. (See 1 Chronicles 24:3-19; Luke 1:5, 8, 23.) And a 1986 translation into Hebrew of the ancient Syriac (or, Aramaic) Peshitta uses *bi'ah* at Matthew 24:3, 27, 37, 39. So there is evidence that in ancient times the noun *bi'ah* may have had a sense that differed somewhat from the verb *boh* used in the Bible. Why is this of interest?

The apostles in their question and Jesus in his reply may have used this noun *bi'ah*. Even if the apostles had in mind simply the idea of Jesus' future arrival, Christ may have used *bi'ah* to allow for more than what they were thinking. Jesus could have been pointing to his arrival to commence a new office; his arrival would be the start of his new role.

This would match the sense of *pa-rou-si'a*, which Matthew subsequently used. Such a use of *bi'ah* would, understandably, have to support what Jehovah's Witnesses have long taught, that the composite 'sign' Jesus gave was to reflect that he was present" (*The Watchtower*, August 15, 1996, pp. 12-13, pars. 16-19).

This assessment eloquently and comprehensively reflects the sentiments of the present translator.

²⁰⁸ Chapter 24, verse 9, **ethnic**: The Greek word here is *ethnos* (ἔθνος) and occurs first in Matthew 4:15. It is defined as "a race, people, nation; the nations, heathen world, Gentiles" (Strong's Greek: 1484. ἔθνος (ethnos) -- a race, a nation, pl. the nations (as distinct from Isr.) (biblehub.com)) and is where the English words "ethnic," "ethnicity," and the like comes.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like "ethnic" and "ethnicity" far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

²⁰⁹ Chapter 24, verse 14, **globally: earth wide**: The Greek word here is *oikoumené* (οἰκουμένη) and means "all people living on the inhabited globe" (Strong's Greek: 3625. οἰκουμένη (oikoumené) -- the inhabited earth (biblehub.com)).

That Matthew used a word that includes the characteristic shape of the earth ("globe") indicates that Christians—as well as pre-Christians servants of God—understood that the earth is spherical.

About seven hundred years before the time of Christ prophet Isaiah recorded that the earth is a sphere by using the Hebrew word *chugh* (אִינָה). While this fact

is not strikingly evident in most modern translations of the Bible, it is clearly manifest in others. The following three translations illustrate the point:

“God sits high above the *round ball* of earth” (Isaiah 40:22, *The Message Bible*). “It is he that sitteth upon the *globe* of the earth” (Isaiah 40:22, *Douay Version*). “He sits over the *round earth*” (Isaiah 40:22, *A New Translation of the Bible*).

Intriguingly, in a marginal note for Isaiah 40:22 in the *Scofield Reference Bible*, we read: “A remarkable reference to the sphericity of the earth.”

When Isaiah’s Hebrew expression for “globe of the earth” (*Douay Version*) is translated into Greek, yet another characteristic of the earth gyrates into view. The Greek equivalent for “globe of the earth” is τὸν γῦρον τῆς γῆς, which means “the *spinning sphere* of the earth.” The Hebrew word for “globe” (גִּיּוֹר) is *gyro* (γῦρον) in the Greek text of Isaiah 40:22 (LXX), and it means “to spin, rotate, or revolve.”

This translates into the original Hebrew word *chugh* (גִּיּוֹר) as having the exact same properties as *gyro* (γῦρον), a fact lost on most Hebrew scholars, Bible scholars, and Bible translators. (See commentary on Job 26:10; 22:14; 38:33; and Proverbs 8:27 in the book, *The Theology Behind Scientific Thought (Vol. 1)* by Firpo W. Carr.

A consideration of these texts would clearly show that Bible writers were the first to chronicle in detail the spherical properties of the earth and universe before any other civilization, including the Egyptians and Greeks.)

Interestingly, the footnote for “inhabited earth” in the *New World Translation* of Matthew 24:14 reads in part: “Lat[in]., *in u-ni-ver’so or’be*, ‘in the universal circle,’ that is, of the earth.”

²¹⁰ [Chapter 24](#), verse 21: See Revelation 20:7-10.

²¹¹ [Chapter 24](#), verse 27 [COMMENTARY]: Jesus indicated that evidence of his invisible presence would be felt around the world, just as the effects of lightning are a global phenomenon. Under inspiration, one of Job’s companions, Elihu, said the following:

“Under the whole heavens he lets it loose, and his lightning is to the extremities of the earth” (Job 37:3, *New World Translation*).

Astoundingly, given that he did not have access to weather instruments or a plethora of modern technological marvels, Elihu, like Jesus, knew that lightning was not a local event but occurred earth wide.

²¹² **Chapter 24**, verse 38, **Flood**: The Greek word for “flood” is *kataklysmos* (κατακλυσμός), from which the English word “cataclysm” is derived. It simply means a “deluge” or “flood” (Strong’s Greek: 2627. κατακλυσμός (*kataklysmos*) -- a flood (biblehub.com)).

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “cataclysm” and “cataclysmic” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

²¹³ **Chapter 24**, verse 51, **bruxism**: The original Greek word for “bruxism” is *brugmos* (βρυγμός). Bruxism is a symptom of mental anguish or anxiety. This verse may well be a quote from Psalm 112:10. There, in the *King James Version*, it says that the wicked will “be grieved he shall gnash with his teeth” (Hebrew, טָנַן בְּנִיבֵי וְקָטַן בְּנִיבֵי). See also Matthew 8:12 endnote.

²¹⁴ Vs. 30, **bruxism (grinding of teeth)**: See endnote for Matthew 8:12.

²¹⁵ Vs. 32, **ethnic**: See endnote at Matthew 24:9.

²¹⁶ **Chapter 25**, verse 38, **wearing a threadbare garment**: The original Greek word for this clause is *gumnos* (γυμνός). *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* defines it as “rarely: stark-naked; generally: wearing only the under-garment; bare, open, manifest” (Strong’s Greek: 1131. γυμνός (*gumnos*) -- naked, poorly clothed (biblehub.com)). The English words “gym” and “gymnasium” come from the Greek *gumnos* (γυμνός).

Today, while the gym or gymnasium is usually an actual building, the person trained and skilled in gymnastics is a “gymnast,” which in Biblical Greek is *gumnazó* (γυμνάζω).

This expression literally means, “I train by physical exercise; hence: train, in the widest sense” (*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*).

Strong’s also says that *gumnazó* means “to train, naked or wearing a loin cloth,” or “naked or lightly clad, as with an ancient Greek athlete in a sporting event,” and that figuratively it meant “to train with one’s full effort, i.e. with complete physical, emotional force like when working out intensely in a gymnasium,” insofar as an individual Christian’s activity is concerned.

It signifies that the Christian should “exert intensely, like a pro-athlete,” and “presumes full discipline, necessary to be in ‘top working condition’ (full agility, skill, endurance). This is gained only from constant, rigorous training (exercise).”

Moreover, *gumnazó* (γυμνάζω) “conveys acquiring proficiency through practice—regular exercise with graduated resistance.”

Interestingly, the apostle Paul entertained the thought of “proficiency through practice” when he wrote to Hebrew Christians:

“But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers [“sense organs”] *trained* [γεγυμνασμένα, with *gumnazó* (γυμνάζω) as its root] to distinguish both right and wrong” (Hebrews 5:14, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*). The footnote for “trained” in this translation reads: “Lit., ‘having been trained (like gymnast).’ Gr., ge·gy·mna·sme’n.”

Actually, this is one of four occurrences where *gumnazó* (γυμνάζω) stands as a root word in the New Testament (Christian Greek Scriptures).

In 1 Timothy 4:7, Paul told Timothy to “train [*gumnazó*, γυμνάζω] yourself to live a godly life” (*God’s Word Translation*).

And Hebrews 12:11 states: “No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained [*gumnazó*, γυμνάζω] in this way” (*New Living Translation*).

Finally, Peter said that unrighteous people “seduce unsteady souls and have had their hearts expertly trained [*gumnazó*, γυμνάζω] in greed” (2 Peter 2:14, *International Standard Version*).

It may be of interest to note that the gymnasium was more than just the home for the gymnast.

Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary states that the ancient Greek academy was the “gymnasium where Plato taught.”

Furthermore, the English word “academicism” is defined as “the doctrines of Plato’s Academy,” or the doctrines taught in the gymnasium where Plato taught his students to exercise their minds.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Matthew has essentially popularized words like “gym,” “gymnasium,” “gymnast,” and “gymnastic” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise.

²¹⁷ Chapter 25, verse 46, **cut off**: The Greek word for “cut off” is *kolasis* (κόλασις), and it is most often translated as “everlasting punishment” (Matthew 25:46, *King James Version*).

The *Aramaic Bible in Plain English* renders it “eternal torture.”

But there is more to *kolasis* than meets the eye.

Strong’s defines it as “correction,” and lists usage as “chastisement, punishment, torment, perhaps with the idea of deprivation” (*Strong’s Greek: 2851. κόλασις (kolasis) -- correction (biblehub.com)*).

The Bible commentary *Expositor’s Greek Testament* agrees with *kolasis* being defined as “correction,” but also acknowledges that it primarily means

“mutilation or pruning, hence suggestive of corrective rather than of vindictive punishment” (Matthew 25:46 Commentaries: “These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (biblehub.com)).

Understanding that *kolasis* means “mutilation or pruning” corresponds with the translation “cutting off” in the *New World Translation* (Matthew 25:46) and the contextual endnote that reads, “That is, from life. Lit., ‘lopping off; pruning.’”

Granted, since *kolasis* can also suggest “corrective” action (as noted above), the *Expositor’s Greek Testament* documents that those pruned or cut off can experience restoration that results in salvation.

This conclusion, however, neither aligns with Jesus’ use of the Semitic-language equivalent of *kolasis* nor how his audience understood it.

Evidence of this can be seen by examining *kolasis* in the comprehensive *Greek-English Lexicon* by Liddell and Scott (1843-1977, “with the co-operation of many scholars,” as per the title page). There, it’s defined as “checking the growth of trees, esp[ecially] almond-trees” (p. 971).

When the branches or leaves were pruned or cut off, the growth of trees was checked or retarded. In Jesus’ day, those branches were then tossed in a fire, just as unproductive trees were.

Earlier in his ministry, Jesus said, “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire” (Matthew 7:19, *English Standard Version*). And before he baptized Jesus, John warned that “every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire” (Matthew 3:10, *New International Version*).

So the concept of goat-like persons in Jesus’ illustration of a shepherd separating sheep from goats in Matthew 25:31-46 being compared to tree branches being cut off and thrown into a fire was not foreign to his four disciples there with him and the broader Jewish audience of the first century (Mark 13:3; Matthew 24:3; also, compare Mark 13 with Matthew chapters 24 and 25).

Jesus meant that, metaphorically, branches pruned, cut off, or lopped off would not be allowed to dry up, slowly shrivel, and die (compare Matthew 21:18-22). Neither would they be merely thrown into a *temporal* fire, the flames of which would eventually die out after consuming them.

Instead, the lopped-off branches would succumb to a symbolic “*everlasting* fire” (Matthew 25:41, *King James Version*), meaning there was no hope of restoration. The farmers and agriculturalists in Jesus’ first-century audience related to the illustration.

²¹⁸ **Chapter 26**, verse 7, **Alabastron**: The *King James Version* reads “a woman with an alabaster box of very precious ointment” and used it on Jesus’ head, whereas the main text of the present translation alternatively says that it was a woman with “a small expensive stone jar imported from Alabastron, Egypt, Africa” that she greased the Lord’s head with.

During Jesus’ earlier ministry, when he was dining at the house of a Pharisee, another woman “brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume” and used it on Jesus’ feet instead of his head (Luke 7:36-38, *New Living Translation*).

Expensive perfume from Africa and doubtlessly used by Black women must have been the rave at the time for women who could afford it.

Insight on the Scriptures states that alabaster was “the name of small perfume vaselike vessels originally made of a stone found near Alabastron, Egypt. The stone itself, a form of calcium carbonate, also came to be known by the same name” (Vol. 1, p. 69).

Regarding the appropriateness of using the word “Africa” in this text, please refer to the “Africa” endnote at Matthew 2:13. (See also endnote in Matthew 27:32.)

Insofar as the expensive oil is concerned, this part of ancient Africa was famous not only for its high-quality perfumes but for its colorful linens as well (see Proverbs 7:16 and Ezekiel 27:7).

What Jesus predicted has come true. “The story of what this woman did with her African oil” has been told “in memory of her” to generations throughout the world until the present time (Matthew 26:6-13, *Modern Matthew*).

²¹⁹ **Chapter 26**, verse 7, **Africa** [COMMENTARY]: Regarding the appropriateness of using the word “Africa” in this text, please refer to the “Africa” endnote in Matthew 2:13. (See also endnote at Matthew 27:32.) Insofar as the expensive oil is concerned, this part of ancient Africa was not only famous for its high-quality perfumes but for its colorful linens as well. (See Proverbs 7:16 and Ezekiel 27:7.)

²²⁰ **Chapter 26**, verse 25, **Judas** [COMMENTARY]: Was Judas present at the Last Supper? This question has been debated for centuries. Herewith is fresh information resulting from the combined tenacity of a skilled investigative journalist and the determination of a person with official Los Angeles Police Department detective training. There most certainly is a definitive answer, which is presented at the conclusion.

Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 26:

- Verse 27: “DRINK OUT OF IT, **ALL OF YOU**” (*New World Translation*). We know that “all of you” exclusively meant the 11 faithful apostles, as seen in the following entry below.
- Verse 31a: “**ALL OF YOU** WILL BE STUMBLED IN CONNECTION WITH ME ON THIS NIGHT” (*NWT*). Only the 11 faithful apostles were stumbled that night. ☞ “All of ye shall be offended because of me this night” (*King James Version*). During the time he sought a convenient time to betray Jesus up until the very moment he carried out his nefarious mission with a tender kiss on the cheek, Judas was not “offended.”
- verse 31b: “I WILL STRIKE THE SHEPHERD, AND **THE SHEEP** OF THE FLOCK WILL BE SCATTERED ABOUT” (*NWT*). ☞ “Smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered” (*KJV*). As the betrayer, Judas didn’t scatter as did “the sheep of the flock” during Jesus’ arrest.
- Verse 32: “But after I’ve been resurrected, I’ll meet up with you in Galilee” (*Modern Matthew*). Jesus said these words to the 11 faithful apostles, knowing that at the time he told them, Judas was not present.
- Verse 33: “**ALTHOUGH ALL THE OTHERS**” (*NWT*). ☞ “Peter told Him, ‘Even if everyone runs away because of You, I will never run away!’” (*Holman Christian Standard Bible*). Although the faithful 11 quickly dispersed in fear, Judas never ran away during Jesus’ arrest.
- Verse 35: “**ALL THE OTHER DISCIPLES**” (*NWT*). ☞ “All the other disciples vowed the same” (*New Living Bible*). Following Peter’s lead, as stated earlier in this verse, the rest of the faithful 11 disciples “vowed” that they would rather die than deny association with Jesus. There is no Gospel record of Judas ever lying, misspeaking, or making a vow to remain faithful to Jesus until death.
- Verse 46: “My betrayer is approaching!” (*Berean Standard Bible*). Since Judas was not with the 11 faithful disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36), he would not have been spoken of as “approaching.”
- Verse 47: “While He was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, suddenly arrived. A large mob, with swords and clubs, was with him from the chief priests and elders of the people” (*Holman Christian Standard*

Bible). Consistent with what is stated in the previous verse (46), Judas “suddenly arrived” on location, accompanied by a “large” heavily armed mob sent “from the chief priests and elders.” Judas was the key figure. All planning and organizational activity swirled around him. Since he left the Last Supper early, he gave the sizeable mob time to organize and arm themselves.

- **Verse 48:** “Judas had told them ahead of time, ‘Arrest the man I greet with a kiss’” (*Contemporary English Version*). Indeed, in his meeting with the “chief priests and elders” after his early departure from the Last Supper, “the traitor, Judas, had given them a prearranged signal” (verse 48, *New Living Translation*).
- **Verse 50:** “Fellow, for what purpose are you present?” (*New World Translation*). In other words, Jesus was saying, “You weren’t here before. Why are you here now?” The Greek word *pareimi* (πάρεμι) means “I have come” (*Strong’s Greek: 3918. πάρεμι (pareimi) – I am present, am near (biblehub.com)*), something that Judas could say in this scenario.
- **Verse 51:** “One of those who *were with* [emphasis in the original] Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear” (*New King James Version*). The unnamed assailant is Peter, as testified to by eyewitness John (John 18:10). Unlike Judas, both Peter and John (one of the sons of Zebedee according to Matthew 4:21) “were with Jesus” from the time of Judas’ early exit from the Last Supper up into this incident in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-37).
- **Verse 56:** “THEN ALL THE DISCIPLES ABANDONED HIM AND FLED” (*NWT*). ☞ “Then all the disciples left him and ran away” (*Good News Translation*). Judas, who was not counted among “all the disciples,” did not run away.

There are several paintings of the Last Supper, but none more famous than Leonardo da Vinci’s late 1490s mural of the Last Supper. It fabulously shows Jesus with all 12 apostles.

However, over 100 years earlier, the lesser-known altarpiece *Maestà* of Duccio shows Jesus giving his *Farewell Discourse* to his 11 faithful apostles. Significantly, in this piece, Judas was not present.

²²¹ Chapter 26, verse 31, **stumble**: See endnote for “stumble” in Matthew 5:29.

²²² Chapter 26, verse 56: See endnote for “**Word Group**” in Matthew 1:22.

²²³ Chapter 26, verse 63, **exorcise**: The Greek word for “exorcise” is ἐξορκίζω (transliterated *exorkizō*). This verb means to put “under strict oath” (Strong’s Greek: 1844. ἐξορκίζω (exorkizō) -- to administer an oath, to adjure (biblehub.com)), and is found only once in the Bible. Interestingly, whereas Jesus did not respond before, he did so after being put “under *strict* oath.” The noun form “exorcist,” also found only once in Scripture (Acts 19:13), is defined as one who ‘casts out evil spirits by the use of names or spells.’

²²⁴ Chapter 26, verse 63, **Son of God** [COMMENTARY]: Although Matthew documents Jesus’ response to whether he is the Christ in verse 64, said response is indirect at best and cryptic at worse. However, Mark’s version demystifies the Lord’s response:

“‘Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ And Jesus said, ‘I am’” (Mark 15:62-63a, *English Standard Version*). He answered in the affirmative, revealing that he was the *Son of God*—not *God*—who will be seen “seated at the right hand of Power” (Mark 15:63b, *ESV*).

That is to say, in Luke’s parallel account, Jesus “will be seated at the right side of Almighty God” (Luke 22:69, *Good News Translation*), who Moses identified as Jehovah “God Almighty” in Exodus 6:3, *King James Version*.

When Jesus said, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30, *King James Version*), the Jews erroneously concluded that he was making himself “God” (John 10:31-33). Jesus corrected them with the inquisitive declaration, “I am the Son of God” (John 10:36, *KJV*). Jesus’ statement registered with the Jews.

Later, shortly before his death, the Jews reported to Pilate that “he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God” (John 19:7, *KJV*).

Later still, after witnessing Jesus’ death firsthand as well as the events surrounding it, the centurion said, “Truly this man was the Son of God” (Mark 15:39, *KJV*).

Earlier in his ministry, Jesus posed a question to Martha, whose siblings were Mary and Lazarus—all of whom Jesus loved (John 11:5)—regarding his identity, to which she answered: “I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God” (John 11:27, *KJV*).

She neither believed that Jesus was God nor did Jesus correct her and say that he was God, not just His Son.

Toward the end of John the Baptist's ministry, he and one of Jesus' earliest disciples identified Jesus as "the Son of God" (John 1:34, 49, *KJV*). Even the demons said: "Thou art Christ the Son of God," yes, "they knew that he was Christ" (Luke 4:41, *KJV*).

According to most Bible translations, the Ethiopian finance minister (or "eunuch") declared, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37, *King James Version*) before being baptized by Philip.

Later, as a fresh convert under miraculous circumstances, Saul (who became the apostle Paul) "began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20, *New International Version*).

Although not applicable to once-perfect angels who became wicked spirits, humans have the opportunity to embrace Jesus as the only means of salvation. (Acts 4:12)

For, it is as the apostle John wrote: "But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31, *ESV*). Nowhere in the Gospels or anywhere in Scripture does it say you have to believe that Jesus is God to "have life in his name."

The "I AM" Controversy

Aside from the controversy of Jesus either being the "Son of God" or "God" Himself, Trinitarians believe that Jesus is God, in part, because he said "I am" in John 8:58 (*KJV*) and Jehovah said "I am" in Exodus 3:14 (*KJV*).

Of course, neither Jesus nor Jehovah actually uttered these English words.

With this thought in mind, when we look at John 8:58 in the original Greek and compare that with the Greek translation of Exodus 3:14 in what is called the Greek Septuagint (*LXX*), we find that they are not an exact word-for-word match.

It's the same with the original Hebrew of Exodus 3:14. When it is juxtaposed with the Hebrew translation of John 8:58 in the Hebrew New Testament, we discover that the texts are different.

The Greek of John 8:58 and Exodus 3:14: "I am" in the original Greek of John 8:58 is *egó eimi* (ἐγὼ εἰμί). On the other hand, "I am" in the Greek *Septuagint* (*LXX*) translation of the Hebrew of Exodus 3:14 is ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν ('Ἐξοδος (Exodus) 3 (*LXX*) - καὶ Μωυσῆς ἦν ποιμαίνων τὰ (blueletterbible.org)), that is, "I am THE BEING" (*Septuagint Version of the Old Testament*, Zondervan Edition, 1970, Published by special arrangement with Samuel Bagster & Sons, Ltd., London).

Instead of it being a proper name, "I am" in the Greek of John 8:58 means "I exist" (Strong's Greek: 1510. εἰμί (eimi) -- I exist, I am (biblehub.com)). In plain language, Jesus was saying, "I was in existence before Abraham was ever born!" (John 8:58, *The Living Bible; Worldwide English New Testament*).

Indeed, Jesus was not stating a declaration of being God. Instead, he was making a temporal statement that contrasted *being less than 50 years old* with *preexisting before Abraham was born* (John 8:57), just as the 46 years it took to build the temple was contrasted with the three days it would take to raise the temple of Jesus' body (John 2:19-20).

Similarly, insofar as linear time sequence is concerned, John said that though he came in advance of Jesus to make way for him, even being born six months before the Lord, his was an artificial seniority.

He explained, "This is the one, I was talking about when I said, 'He comes after me, but he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was born'" (John 1:15, 26-27, 30, *Good News Translation*). Or, as another translation puts it: "John spoke about him and shouted, 'This is the one I told you would come! He is greater than I am, because he was alive before I was born'" (John 1:15, 30, *Contemporary English Version*).

The English "I am," as translated from the Greek of Exodus 3:14, comprises the first two words of the complete four-word sentence, "I am the Being," as alluded to above.

Similarly, when soldiers sent to arrest Jesus said they were looking for "Jesus the Nazarene," Jesus said, according to the English translation, "I am *he*" [Greek, *egó eimi* (ἐγὼ εἰμί), Hebrew, *ani hu* (אני הוא)] three times (John 18:5, 6, 8), with "*he*" being implied.

In other words, Jesus was not saying he was Almighty God the Father. Instead, he identified himself as the person the soldiers were looking for, viz., the very human man called "Jesus the Nazarene" (John 18:5, 7).

THE HEBREW OF JOHN 8:58 AND EXODUS 3:14: "I am" in the original Hebrew of Exodus 3:14 is *eh-yeh' a-sheh' eh-yeh'* (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה אֲמַר). Jehovah, no doubt, actually spoke these words. "I am" in the Hebrew of John 8:58 of the Hebrew New Testament is *ani hu* (אני הוא), doubtlessly the actual Hebrew words that Jesus spoke (discussed further below under "Written and Spoken Hebrew in the New Testament").

In speaking the same language, Hebrew, Jehovah, and Jesus, spoke completely different words separately translated "I am" in the *KJV* and a host of other translations.

The Greek expression for the English "I am" (*egó eimi*, ἐγὼ εἰμί) regarding Jesus' words in John 8:58 does not always equate with the Hebrew expression for "I am" *ani hu* (אני הוא) in the same Scripture.

For example, after his resurrection and ascension, Jesus revealed to a stunned Saul (who later became the apostle Paul), as recorded in Greek by Luke, “I am Jesus [Greek, *egó eimi Iésous* (ἐγὼ εἰμί Ἰησοῦς)]” (Acts 9:5, 26:15, *New International Version*).

However, instead of the “I am” part of this simple statement being *ani hu* (אָנִי הוּא), “I am Jesus” is, specifically “in the Hebrew language,” *adonai Yeshua* (אֲדֹנָי יֵשׁוּעַ) (Acts 24:15-16, *Hebrew New Testament*, by Yanetz LTD. Jerusalem, produced by The United Bible Societies, Israel Agency, 1976; see also Yiddish translation at [Acts \(sarshalom.us\)](http://Acts(sarshalom.us))).

Granted, in presenting a full disclosure, it should be noted that Jehovah did say *ani hu* (אָנִי הוּא) as did Jesus at John 8:58 in three different instances in the Hebrew Scriptures, viz., Deuteronomy 32:39, Isaiah 43:10, and at Isaiah 45:18.

But, unlike the context of John 8:58, where Jesus spoke of his temporal existence that long preceded the birth of Abraham, the context in each of the above three texts had to do with the authentic one and only true God Jehovah being held in juxtaposition with false gods who were really no gods at all.

(As an aside, “I am” in Aramaic (which shares the same alphabet with Hebrew) is אָנִי הוּא נָא (exodus - What did Jesus likely say in John 8:58? - [Biblical Hermeneutics Stack Exchange](http://BiblicalHermeneuticsStackExchange.com)).

Arguing against the notion that Jesus and his Father Jehovah are the same person are Jesus’ own words. While he himself was seen and heard by people, this was not so with God his Father, of whom he said:

“And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form” (John 5:37, *New International Version*).

On the other hand, of himself, he shared:

““Do you believe in the Son of Man?’ ‘Who is he, sir?’ the man asked. ‘Tell me so that I may believe in him.’ Jesus said, ‘You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you’” (John 9:36-37, *New International Version*).

“I AM”: NOT JEHOVAH NOR JESUS: The apostle John recorded that a blind man, whom Jesus cured, said the Greek or Hebrew equivalent of “I am” [Greek, *egó eimi* (ἐγὼ εἰμί), Hebrew, *ani hu* (אָנִי הוּא)], as was the case with Jesus at John 8:58 and John 13:19.

That the blind uttered these words did not make him Jehovah nor Jesus.

The apostle Peter, whom a man “fell down at his feet, and worshipped him (Acts 10:25, *KJV*),” is also recorded as saying, “I am [*egó eimi*, ἐγὼ εἰμί]” (Acts

10:21), in the same context. Does this mean that Peter is either Jehovah, Jesus, or both?

Certainly not.

Finally, Judas Iscariot, the apostle who betrayed Jesus, used the exact same words—"I am" (*egó eimi*, ἐγώ εἰμι)—in midsentence at Matthew 26:25, as did Jehovah in the Greek of Exodus 3:14 (*LXX*), yet, one would be hard pressed to find any Bible scholar who would assert that Judas was claiming to be Jehovah during a conversation he was having with Jesus Christ himself at that.

EXODUS 3:13-15 GOD'S NAME COMMENTARY : When God selected Moses to send to the Children of Israel, Moses asked: "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" (Exodus 3:13, *New International Version*).

The following verse reads: "God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM [Hebrew, *eh-yeh' a-she'r eh-yeh'* (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה וַיֹּאמֶר)]. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:14, *New International Version*).

Significantly, at this point, God has not yet answered Moses' question. He, God, never said, "My name is I am."

God answers Moses' question in the next verse:

"And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah [יְהוָה], the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations" (Exodus 3:15, *American Standard Version*).

God instructed Moses to tell his chosen people that "Jehovah" delivered them out of Egypt and that "this [not *eh-yeh' a-she'r eh-yeh'*] is my name for ever."

God further instructs Moses:

"Go, and thou hast gathered the elders of Israel, and hast said unto them: Jehovah [יְהוָה], God of your fathers, hath appeareth unto me, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Exodus 3:16, *Young's Literal Translation*).

There was no doubt that Jehovah was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as clearly indicated in the context of Exodus 3. (See, for example, verses 6 and 18 of chapter 3). *That* was his name.

As critically important as 'I am who I am [Hebrew, *eh-yeh' a-she'r eh-yeh'* (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה וַיֹּאמֶר)] is, it occurs only once in the entire Hebrew-Aramaic and

Christian Greek Scriptures (i.e., the Old and New Testaments), God's name Jehovah (Hebrew, יהוה), by way of contrast, occurs over 7,000 times.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN HEBREW IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: It may sound exotic to imagine that Jesus and the Jews of his day spoke Aramaic or Syriac, as some scholars claim.

However, all the available Scriptural evidence points to Hebrew as the primary spoken and written language of Jews living in Jerusalem during Jesus' ministry. Scriptural evidence supporting this conclusion is presented herewith:

(a) *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34) These words, transliterated from the Hebrew (אֱלִי אֱלִי , למה עָזַבְתָּנִי), were uttered by Christ when he hangs from the torture stake (commonly referred to as "cross"; see Matthew 27:32 "torture stake" endnote). He was quoting Psalm 22:1, which has the exact same words in Hebrew (אֱלִי אֱלִי , למה עָזַבְתָּנִי). And recall that Matthew undoubtedly used these words since he first wrote his Gospel in Hebrew.

Strong's states: "ēlī—the transliteration of the Hebrew noun 'Ēl ('God') with the suffix (ī) which means 'my'; *Eli* ('my God')" (*Strong's Greek: 2241. ἠλί (éli) -- my God (biblehub.com)*). The locals thought Jesus was calling Elijah, whose name means "My God is Yahweh," or "My God is Jehovah" (Matthew 27:46-49).

But why did the Jerusalem Jews mistakenly think Jesus was calling for Elijah? Because although written Hebrew from the time of Moses could easily be read by devout Jews, those who spoke various Hebrew dialects sometimes found it difficult to understand one another completely.

Jesus *spoke* the Galilean dialect of Hebrew (Matthew 27:46-49).

This was also true of Peter, as stated in Matthew 26:73:

"A little while later some people standing there walked over to Peter and said, 'We know you are one of them. We can tell it because you talk like someone from Galilee'" (Matthew 26:73, *Contemporary English Version*).

Although there were different dialects of the Hebrew of Jesus' day, it was still *Hebrew*.

Such is the case with today's modern languages, including English.

For example, not only is English spoken differently in countries like England, Australia, Jamaica, and the U.S., it's spoken differently within the same country.

When we take a closer look at the U.S., for instance, we find that "Geographers and Social Scientists estimate there are 7 Main groups of Dialects in the United States: Western American English, North Central American English, Northern American English, Midland American English, Southern American English, New York American English and New England American English" ([How many English Dialects are there? - Complete Guide | TranslateDay](#)).

This same source reveals that “it is estimated that over 160 different English dialects exist around the world.”

Still, all these dialects are *English*.

And though *spoken* differently, when *written* or *printed*, English is the same in all these U.S. regions.

It should be clear that these *dialects* of English are *not* English spoken with an *accent*.

It is regional *English*.

For good measure, a dialect is “a particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group” ([How to Create an Accent Without Really Trying \(wou.edu\)](#)).

Accented English is English spoken by others whose native tongue is other than any dialect of English.

Accented English is English influenced through pronunciation by a non-English language. For example, there is English with a Spanish accent, a French accent, a Russian accent, or a Chinese accent.

All said, the aforementioned *regional* English is not *accented* English.

Again, it is dialectical English or English spoken in that region.

Coming full circle, Jesus did not speak Hebrew influenced by a language other than Hebrew. That is to say, he did not speak *accented* Hebrew.

He, like Peter, spoke a dialectical form of Hebrew spoken in the regions of Galilee.

Moreover, research shows that a person who speaks more than one language speaks their native or mother language, the language of their heart, when exhibiting extreme emotions. They are also more likely to dream in their native language as well.

It is highly improbable that during the most stressful and important time of his life, Jesus would suddenly, yes, abruptly, switch to a language other than his native tongue, Galilean Hebrew.

Interestingly, the accounts in Matthew and Mark indicate that only the locals couldn’t completely understand him. His mother, her sister (his aunt) Mary, the wife of Clopas, Mary Magdalene (who all were initially standing at a distance from Jesus according to Matthew 27:55-56), and the disciple John, all had no

problem whatsoever understanding Jesus as he hung there on the stake (John 19:25-27).

(b) *Jews in Jerusalem During Pentecost* (first see endnote for Matthew 27:8, “Field of Blood,” for background and context): During Pentecost, the *local* “people of Jerusalem” (Acts 1:19, *CEV*) heard Peter give an extensive sermon *in Hebrew*, even though the approximately 120 of Christ’s disciples gathered there were empowered by holy spirit to speak the multiple languages of “Jews residing in Jerusalem, devout men *from every part of the world* [emphasis supplied]” (Acts 2:1-11, *Weymouth New Testament*).

Unsurprisingly, others besides the resident Jews in Jerusalem were present at Pentecost. Jews who were “the inhabitants of...Judea,” as well as “sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,” were also in attendance (Acts 2:9-10, *New World Translation*).

All understood Peter when he spoke Hebrew in quoting the book of Joel, written in Hebrew by the Jewish prophet bearing his name, which was part of the Hebrew Scriptures (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21).

And even though the Greek *Septuagint* translation of the entire Hebrew Scriptures was in circulation, there is no reason to believe Peter quoted from it, in Greek, at this quintessential Jewish festival of Pentecost.

In directing his words to all natural Jews, but mainly to the locals (Acts 2:22-36, 39), he again speaks Hebrew in quoting King David’s words in the Hebrew hymn at Psalms 16:8-11 (Acts 2:25-28).

And after expanding on the prophesied connection between David and the resurrected Jesus (Acts 2:29-33), Peter again quotes—in Hebrew—David’s inspired Hebrew words in Psalms 110:1.

Acts 6:1 differentiates “Hebrew-speaking Jews” from “Greek-speaking Jews” (Acts 6:1, *God’s Word Translation*). That “Hebrew-speaking Jews” were not “ones who spoke Aramaic” (Acts 6:1, *CEV*) can be ascertained from the Greek word for “Hebrew-speaking Jew,” which is *Hebraios* (Ἑβραῖος).

And according to *Strong’s*, *Hebraios* means “a Hebrew, particularly one who speaks Hebrew” ([Strong’s Greek: 1445. Ἑβραῖος \(Hebraios\) -- a Hebrew or Jew \(biblehub.com\)](#)).

Soon after Pentecost ended, an Ethiopian official, a Jewish convert who attended the festival, left in his chauffeured chariot and, at some point, started to read the scroll of Isaiah.

Whether he brought the scroll to Jerusalem or obtained it at Pentecost, he was now “reading aloud the prophet Isaiah,” in Hebrew, when Philip approached him (Acts 8:27-28).

(c) *Tabitha or Dorcas?* Regarding one faithful female disciple, Luke wrote:

“Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha [Hebrew, טַבִּי תַא], which, translated, means Dorcas” (Acts 9:36, *English Standard Version*). The *New International Version* renders this verse, “In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas).” It renders it as such because “Dorcas,” in Greek, means “gazelle,” just as does “Tabitha” in Hebrew.

“Tabitha” (Hebrew, טַבִּי תַא , as noted) is based on the Hebrew word for “gazelle,” *tsebiyyah* (צִבִּיָּה), as found in Song of Solomon (Canticles) 4:5. There, in the *Septuagint*, the Greek word for *tsebiyyah* (צִבִּיָּה) is *dorkados* (δορκάδος), translated “Dorcas,” as in Acts 9:36.

Some reference works confusingly assert that “Tabitha” is Aramaic instead of Hebrew. As noted above, both languages share the same alphabet, although Hebrew is older.

For example, under the entry “Dorcas,” the Bible encyclopedia *Insight on the Scriptures* reads: “‘Dorcas’ corresponds to the Aramaic ‘Tabitha,’ both names meaning ‘Gazelle.’ Possibly Dorcas was known by both names, as it was not uncommon then for Jews, especially those living in a seaport such as Joppa with its mixed population of Jews and Gentiles, to have a Hebrew name as well as a Greek or Latin name” (Vol. 1, p. 646).

After stating that “Tabitha” is “Aramaic” sans any supporting documentation or rationale, it says that the woman so named could have gone by her “Hebrew name,” which is buttressed by the evidence presented here.

The basis for “Tabitha” being an “Aramaic” name is unclear in scholarly literature, aside from *Insight on the Scriptures*. This is especially so since there is no Aramaic example in the Hebrew-Aramaic Scriptures of “Tabitha” in Aramaic.

When persecution scattered the followers of Christ, who reached various places, among them Antioch (Acts 8:1, 4; 11:19), the Cyprians and Africans with them “began talking to the Greek-speaking people, declaring the good news about Jesus” (Acts 11:20, *NWT*).

(d) *Bilingual Paul:* The apostle Paul spoke, read, and wrote in Hebrew and Greek. Though there is solid evidence of him doing so throughout the New Testament, we will confine ourselves to chapters 9, 21, and 22 of the book of Acts, and a significant snippet from the book of Hebrews.

When the apostle Paul was called Saul shortly after his conversion, he “was always arguing with the Jews who spoke Greek” (Acts 9:29, *CEV*).

Sometime later, when the military commander who had just rescued him, thus saving him from the raving mob of Jews intent on killing him (Acts 21:30-33), Paul asked in Greek if he could speak to the crowd. Surprised, the commander, in turn, asked, “Do you speak Greek?” (Acts 21:37, *New International Version*).

Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers relates that when the commander heard Paul’s question, he “apparently expected his prisoner to have spoken Hebrew, i.e., *Aramaic*, and was surprised to hear Greek; the people expected Greek, and were surprised at Hebrew (Acts 22:2). Nothing could better illustrate the familiarity of the population of Jerusalem with both languages” (Acts 21:37 As they were about to take Paul into the barracks, he asked the commander, “May I say something to you?” “Do you speak Greek?” he replied. (biblehub.com)).

Paul indeed addressed a hostile crowd in “the Hebrew [Greek, *Hebrais*, Ἑβραϊκή] language” (Acts 21:40).

Just as the military commander was surprised that Paul could speak Greek, the intrigued mob was astonished that he could speak Hebrew, for “when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew language, they became even more quiet” (Acts 22:2, *English Standard Version*).

Hence, the Jews lent more weight to Hebrew in identifying the Son of God than gravitating to Greek.

In the book of Hebrews—arguably written by Paul in Greek to Jews converted to Christianity though there is no doubt in my mind that the apostle most certainly penned the epistle—Paul explained in Hebrews 7:2 that Melchizedek’s name is “translated, ‘king of righteousness;’ and then also, ‘king of Salem,’ which is, ‘king of peace’” (Hebrews 7:2, *Berean Literal Bible*; see also *New King James Version*).

His use of the word “translated” obviously implies a target language. *Strong’s* explains that “translate” means “to translate what has been spoken or written in a foreign tongue into the vernacular” (Strong’s Greek: 2059. ἐρμηνεύω (herméneuó) -- to interpret (biblehub.com)).

(e) *Angel’s name in Hebrew and Greek*: The apostle John, of whom it can safely be said spoke, read, and wrote Hebrew and Greek, saw in vision “the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew language is Abaddon, but in

the Greek language he hath his name Apollyon” (Revelation 9:11, *Webster’s Bible Translation*).

About 50 Bibles in various categories (e.g., Modern Translations, Classic Translations, Early Modern, Literal Translations, Catholic Translations, Translations from Aramaic, and New Testament Translations) *all* identify the angel’s name in “Hebrew”—not Aramaic or Syriac—at Revelation 9:11.

(f) *A place called Armageddon “in Hebrew”*: The apostle John, of whom it can safely be said spoke, read, and wrote Hebrew and Greek (as stated immediately above), described the eruption of a symbolic yet tangible situational global event that is a celestial and terrestrial cataclysmic war between God and the kings of the earth. The event is identified as “the battle on the great day of God Almighty” (Revelation 16:14, *New International Version*).

Where will it happen?

At a nebulous place where the physical and spiritual realms collide called, in Hebrew, “Har-Magedon” (meaning “Mountain of Magedon”).

Rather than get into the nuts and bolts of what it all means, we are focusing on the fact that the name is given in Hebrew, although John wrote Revelation in Greek. This is yet another notation of the delineation between the Hebrew and Greek languages in the New Testament.

About 50 Bibles in various categories (e.g., Modern Translations, Classic Translations, Early Modern, Literal Translations, Catholic Translations, Translations from Aramaic, and New Testament Translations) *all* identify the place called Armageddon as being a “Hebrew” word—not Aramaic or Syriac—at Revelation 16:16.

(g) *Hallelujah!*: Nestled in the book of Revelation, written by John in Greek, is the familiar Hebrew expression “Hallelujah,” occurring four times in the first few verses of chapter 19 (Revelation 19: 1, 3, 4, 6). Jah occurs 50 times in the Hebrew Old Testament, 26 times alone, and 24 times within the expression “Hallelujah.”

Under the Revelation 19:1 entry for what is commonly known as “Hallelujah,” one Bible commentary reads: “Alleluia—Hebrew, ‘Praise ye Jah,’ or Jehovah,” and then reveals that “Jah is not a contraction of ‘Jehovah’” ([Revelation 19 Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary \(biblehub.com\)](#)). However, there is a lack of consensus on this point.

For example, in the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, produced by Jehovah's Witnesses, the footnote for "Jah" in Psalm 68:4 reads, "'Jah' is a shortened form of the name Jehovah."

In volume one of their two-volume encyclopedia set, *Insight on the Scriptures*, they present the reasoning behind their conclusion: "A poetic shortened form of Jehovah, the name of the Most High God. (Ex 15:1, 2) This abbreviated form is represented by the first half of the Hebrew Tetragrammaton יהוה (YHWH), that is, the letters *yohdh* (י) and *he'* (ה), the tenth and fifth letters of the Hebrew alphabet respectively" (p. 1248).

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, the commentary quoted above, counters with the thought that "Jah" and "Jehovah" are combined as in "Jah Jehovah" (Isaiah 12:2; 26:4). *Insight* responds by saying that "a double emphasis is gained by combining both names." However, there is no explanation for why in the Hebrew of Psalms 38:11, "Jah Jah" occurs.

Whatever the case, there is no dispute that "Hallelujah," "Jah," and "Jehovah" derive from the Hebrew language and that Alleluia (written, *and sang*) and was quite familiar to the Hebrew-speaking Jews of John's day.

"A GOD," JOHN 1:1 (NEW WORLD TRANSLATION): Related, many complain that the *New World Translation*, produced by Jehovah's Witnesses, incorrectly translates John 1:1c as "the Word was a god." In contrast, the *King James Version* (and countless others) translates it as "the Word was God [Greek, *theos*, θεός, Hebrew, *elohim*, אֱלֹהִים]." The majority translation would make Jesus "God" instead of the "Son of God."

However, the *KJV* (and, again, countless others) translates the same construction in both the original Hebrew text (*elohim*, אֱלֹהִים, plural) and Greek *Septuagint* (*theos*, θεός) as "a god" in Judges 6:31.

A band of particularly generous islanders living on Malta thought that Paul was "a god" (*theos*, θεός in the accusative case) in Acts 28:6. Of this verse, Strong's documents: "(*theos*, θεός) as 'a god'" (Strong's Greek: 2316. θεός (theos) -- God, a god (biblehub.com)). When I checked 32 popular translations of the Bible, all of them rendered (*theos*, θεός) as "a god," as does the *New World Translation*.

(It should also be noted that the same can be said for a verse in Hebrews. In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul quotes an Old Testament text where God says, “I will be to them a God” (Hebrews 8:10b, *KJV*). Here we find “a God” (note the capitalization of “God”) to be θεός in the accusative case, but without the definite article in Greek.)

In short, neither Jesus in John 1:1c nor Paul in Acts 28:6 and certainly not Baal in Judges 6:31 were considered “God,” although the same Greek and Hebrew words were applied to all three personages.

In contradistinction to Jesus being “God,” throughout the New Testament, he worshipped God (e.g., John 20:17; Revelation 3:12), and many times Paul spoke of “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:31, *KJV*). Yes, Jehovah is the God and Father of the glorified Jesus.

²²⁵ **Chapter 27**, verse 2, **Pilate** [COMMENTARY]: For what seemed to be eons to some, there was no proof of the existence of Pontius Pilate outside his mention in the Bible. Then,

“In 1961,” writes Michael J. Howard, “an Italian archaeological expedition was working in the ruins of the ancient Roman theater in Caesarea. A workman overturned a stone that had been used for one of the stairways. On the reverse side was the following, partially-obscured inscription in Latin: *‘Caesariensibus Tiberium Pontius Pilatus Praefectus Iudaeae.’* (To the people of Caesarea Tiberium Pontius Pilate Prefect of Judea.) It was a fatal blow to the doubts about Pilate’s existence. For the first time there was contemporary epigraphic evidence of the life of the man who ordered the crucifixion of Christ.”—John 19:13-16; Acts 4:27.

Read the complete article that the present author penned: [Did Real Rulers Rouse a Real Jesus? \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com).

²²⁶ **Chapter 27**, verse 3, **sincerely repentant** [COMMENTARY]: Although not a popular assessment, there are compelling reasons to conclude that Judas Iscariot was sincerely repentant after betraying Jesus.

The partially quoted unedited article below, written by the present author, details such reasons.

One source defines “repentance” thusly: “In Biblical usage, [1] a change of mind accompanied by [2] heartfelt regret.... [3] Genuine

repentance produces fruitage, a changed course of action.” (Repentance - Definition and Meaning | Bible Dictionary (jw.org))

Here’s what Judas did:

[1] “Change of mind”: Judas “changed his mind” (Matthew 27:3, *English Standard Version*) and confessed: “I sinned when I betrayed innocent blood.” (Matthew 27:4)

[2] “Heartfelt regret”: After the Devil seized *and released* him, Judas “was seized with remorse” (Matthew 27:3, *New International Version*); he “deeply regretted what he had done.” (Matthew 27:3, Taylor)

[3] “Fruitage, a changed course of action”: Judas “threw the silver pieces into the temple and departed. Then he went off and hanged himself.” (Matthew 27:5, *NWT*). Judas rejected the fruitage of his betrayal; and since Jesus died because of said betrayal, Judas felt he should too. (Acts 1:16, 18)

Unlike Adam and Eve, Judas was imperfect. This begs the question: Would the shed blood of Jesus Christ cover Judas’ sin of betrayal? (Colossians 1:14; 1 John 2:1, 2) Put another way, did Judas’ death “pardon” him from his sins? (Romans 6:7, *NWT*, footnote)

In sum, by definition, Judas “repented.” (Matthew 27:3, *King James Bible, Jubilee Bible 2000, American Standard Version, English Revised Version, Webster’s Bible Translation, Young’s Literal Translation*, see also the Catholic *Douay-Rheims Bible*.) But is there further evidence of this?

Textual Evidence of Repentance?: In Jesus’ illustration of the two sons, one of them “was sorry” that he first told his father he would not go into the field but thereafter went into the field. (Matthew 21:28-32, *Weymouth New Testament*)

A good number of translations said that son “changed his mind” (Matthew 21:19, *Berean Study Bible, English Standard Version, God’s Word Translation, Holman Christian Standard Bible, International Standard Version, New Heart English Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, World English Bible*), while others say he “repented.” (Matthew 21:29, *American Standard Version, Berean Literal Bible, English Revised Version, Jubilee Bible 2000, King James Bible, Webster’s Bible Translation*).

The Greek word for “repented” at Matthew 21:29 is *metamelētheis* (μεταμεληθεῖς). “The same word is used” (*Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers*) for Judas at Matthew 27:3.

It occurs only two times in the entire Greek New Testament. Jesus acknowledged that the repentant son “did the will of his father,” thus portraying him in a favorable light. (Matthew 21:31, *NWT*)

Since “the [exact] same word is used” for Judas at Matthew 27:3 (*metamelētheis*, μεταμεληθεῖς), might a repentant Judas be viewed similarly? [[An Earthly Resurrection for Judas Iscariot? \(firpocarrar-chives.com\)](http://firpocarrar-chives.com)]

For further discussion, please feel free to read the entire article.

²²⁷ **Chapter 27**, verse 8, **Field of Blood**: There is a lack of consensus among scholars as to whether Hebrew or Aramaic was written and spoken for Jews in Jerusalem during the time of Christ. (See endnote for Matthew 26:63, “Son of God” [COMMENTARY], under the heading “WRITTEN AND SPOKEN HEBREW IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.”)

The label “Field of Blood” factors into the debate since it strongly suggests that Hebrew was the written and spoken language in and around Jerusalem.

Consider the following:

Jesus’ Life and Death: Jesus read from Isaiah in Hebrew (Luke 4:16-21).

Even though writing in Greek, the apostle John mentioned a public pool by its “Hebrew” (the Greek word for “Hebrew” in this text is *Hebraisti*, Ἑβραϊστί) name in John 5:2, *King James Version*.

John recorded that Hebrew-speaking *Greek* worshipers sought an audience with Jesus (John 12:20-22).

The inscription over Jesus’ head as he hung on the stake “was written in Hebrew [Greek, *Hebraisti*, Ἑβραϊστί], and Greek, and Latin” (John 19:20, *KJV*).

John also noted that Pilate sat on his judgment seat “in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew [Greek, *Hebraisti*, Ἑβραϊστί], Gabbatha” (John 19:13, *KJV*).

Jesus was forced to carry his torture stake to “The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew [Greek, *Hebraisti*, Ἑβραϊστί] is called Golgotha” (John 19:17, *Berean Standard Bible*).

After his resurrection, “Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turneth herself, and saith unto him in Hebrew [Greek, *Hebraisti*, Ἑβραϊστί], Rabboni; which is to say, Teacher” (John 20:16, *American Standard Version*). Mary spoke Hebrew.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence that Hebrew was the spoken and written language of Jews in Jesus' day has to do with a specific piece of property converted to a graveyard.

After traitorous and later repentant Judas returned the 30 pieces of silver to the religious leaders he conspired with to kill Jesus, they purchased real estate. It was a tract of land called the "Field of Blood," which was to serve as a graveyard for non-Jews (Matthew 27:1-9; Acts 1:15-19).

In Matthew 27:8, the Greek for "Field of Blood" is ἀγρός (*agros*, "field"), and αἵματος (*haima*, blood) (Matthew 27:8 Greek Text Analysis (biblehub.com)).

In Acts 1:19, Bible writer Luke, who wrote the book of Acts, also referenced the "Field of Blood," but used another Greek word for "field," but the same word for blood. He called the "Field of Blood" χωρίον (*chorion*, "place" or "property") αἵματος (*haima*, blood) (Acts 1:19 Greek Text Analysis (biblehub.com)).

Luke then documents that the local Jews in Jerusalem used the Hebrew designation for the Field of Blood instead of the Greek expression, whether Matthew's version or Luke's.

Luke wrote:

"And this is known to all those who live in Jerusalem, and so that field is called in the language of the region, 'Haqel Dama' [Hebrew, חַקֵּל דָּמָא], which is, in its translation, 'Field of Blood'" (Acts 1:19, *Aramaic Bible in Plain English*).

Or, as another translation explains, "When the people of Jerusalem found out about this, they called the place Akeldama [Greek, *Hakeldamach*, Ἀκελδαμά, Hebrew, חַקֵּל דָּמָא], which in the local language means 'Field of Blood'" (Acts 1:19, *Contemporary English Version*).

For clarity, "Akeldama" is the combination of the two Hebrew words *cheleq* (חֶלֶק), meaning "portion, tract, territory" (Strong's Hebrew: 2506. חֶלֶק (cheleq) - portion, tract, territory (biblehub.com)), and *dam* (דָּם), which means "blood" (Strong's Hebrew: 1818. דָּם (dam) -- blood (biblehub.com)). Significantly, these are not *Aramaic* words.

The local language designation *Haqel Dama* (Hebrew, חַקֵּל דָּמָא) in Acts 1:19 seamlessly segues into the following verse, Acts 1:20, that introduces the reader to the Hebrew (not Aramaic) text "written in the book of Psalms" (KJV).

²²⁸ Chapter 27, verse 9: See endnote for "Word Group" in Matthew 1:22.

²²⁹ Chapter 27, verse 10, **Y^ehowah'**: This is the 17th (hence, penultimate) of 18 occurrences of the divine name. It is contained in the Hebrew text at Zechariah 11:13, referenced in the previous verse (Matthew 27:9). See endnote for

Matthew 1:20. See also endnotes for Matthew 1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2 for other instances of the divine name.

²³⁰ See endnote for “torture stake” in Matthew 27:32.

²³¹ Chapter 27, verses 30-31 [COMMENTARY]: Mark adds an interesting detail in his parallel account.

Of the abusive soldiers, he writes: “And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped [*proskuneó*, προσκυνέω] him” (Mark 15:19, *King James Version*).

It is safe to say that these soldiers did not really bow their knees and worship Jesus as God, the very man they were currently brutalizing.

Unsurprisingly the *Contemporary English Version* renders *proskuneó* in this verse as “pretended to worship” (Mark 15:19), and the *New Living Translation* says the soldiers “dropped to their knees in mock worship [*proskuneó*]” (Mark 15:19). Therefore, we can confidently conclude that many Bible translations acknowledge that *proskuneó* does not always mean “worship” in the strictest sense of the word.

See Matthew 2:8, endnote, “**pay my respects**,” for a more detailed explanation. The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as “worship” in most Bible translations, in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

²³² Chapter 27, verse 32, **African native from Cyrene**: Although it may not be so obvious to some readers, the city of Cyrene is in the North African country of Libya. Over two hundred years before the time of Christ, this city was famous for its school of philosophy. Wikipedia notes that Cyrene “was also the seat of the Cyrenaics, a famous school of philosophy in the 3rd century BC, founded by Aristippus, a disciple of Socrates. It has been nicknamed... ‘Athens of Africa.’”

The online encyclopedia also says that “Cyrene (Greek: Κυρήνη, *Kyrēnē*) was an ancient Greek colony and then a Roman city in present-day Shahhat, Libya, the oldest and most important of the five Greek cities in the region. It gave eastern Libya the classical name Cyrenaica that it has retained to modern times. Cyrene lies in a lush valley in the Jebel Akhdar uplands. The city was named after a spring, Kyre, which the Greeks consecrated to Apollo.”

NEW WORLD TRANSLATION: Gospel writer, physician, and Christian historian Luke chronicles that Simon was “*a native of Cyrene,*” according to Luke 27:26 in the reputable and admirably consistent *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. Luke’s description of Simon as “a native” in the *NWT* reveals much in seeking an answer towards identifying Simon’s ethnicity—that is, as to whether he was a Jew or an African.

(Incidentally, the Hebrew expression “the native” at Leviticus 16:29 in the *NWT* is “*ha’ez-rach,*” and the Latin equivalent is “*in-di’ge-na,*” from which the English word “indigenous” and related words derive.)

Additionally (and perhaps intriguingly), a brief examination of three texts found in the *NWT* in connection with how historian Luke uses the expression “a native” (or even “a certain native”) as opposed to one’s *place of origin* (e.g., “native soil” as at Psalm 37:35, *NWT*) discloses essential clues in determining Simon’s racial makeup.

(1) In Acts 4:36-37 historian Luke writes: “So Joseph, who was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles, which means, when translated, Son of Comfort, *a Levite, a native of Cyprus*, possessing a piece of land, sold it and brought the money and deposited it at the feet of the apostles.” (*NWT*) Being, as he was, from the tribe of Levi, Barnabas inescapably belonged to the Jewish race. The place he was from, however, was Cyprus.

(2) In Acts 18:2 Luke, the historian records that the apostle Paul “found *a certain Jew* named Aquila, *a native of Pontus* who had recently come from Italy (*NWT*). While he identified Aquila ethnically as “a certain Jew,” he also separately identified him as “a native of Pontus.” This implies that one can be “a native of Pontus” and at the same time *not* be a Jew.

(3) Historian Luke speaks of “a certain Jew named Apollos, *a native of Alexandria,*” in Acts 18:24 (*NWT*). As with Cyrene, Alexandria is a city located in Northern Africa—Egypt, to be exact. And yet again, Luke juxtaposes the subject’s race (“a certain Jew named Apollos”) with his hometown (“a native of Alexandria”).

In these three instances, the conscientious and responsible inspired historian Luke carefully and methodically separates the *race* from the *place*.

Significantly, he does not make such a distinction with Simon, identifying him, for example, as “a certain Jew, a native of Cyrene.” Instead, in stark contrast to the above three instances, he simply identifies Simon as “a native of Cyrene.”

In other words, Simon was a North African man—specifically from Cyrene, Libya—with no Jewish affiliation whatsoever.

Unlike Luke, Gospel writer Mark quite possibly was an eyewitness to Simon being pressed into service to carry Jesus' implement of death. Under inspiration, Mark tells of "a certain Simon of Cyrene, coming [not from a synagogue or some other Jewish establishment, but] from the country" (Mark 15:21, *NWT*).

In short, nothing at all suggests that this man is Jewish. And being the last of the three Gospel writers (Matthew and Luke being the other two) to mention Simon, Mark elaborates where Matthew and Luke do not but still does not characterize Simon as a Jew. Given the aforementioned, one can conclude with reasonable certainty that Simon was an African from Cyrene.

AFRO-CYRENIAN PROSELYTIZERS: In contrast to African philosophers from Cyrenaic, Greek-speaking Christian Afro-Cyrenians traveled abroad to serve where there was a greater need for disciples of Christ who spoke Greek. The ever-reliable historian Luke reports:

"However, out of them there were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene that came to Antioch and began talking to the Greek-speaking people, declaring the good news of the Lord Jesus" (Ac 11:20, *NWT*).

Since Cyrenaics, the famous African school of Greek philosophy, was in Cyrene, it should not be surprising that the men of Cyrene preached the good news in the Greek language to all who would listen to them, while Jewish Christians preached to the Jews (Acts 11:19).

Significantly, historian Luke did not characterize them as "Jews from Cyrene" (compare Acts 14:19; 16:3; 17:13; 19:11, 17; 21:27; 22:12; 24:18; 25:6, 7).

Regarding Acts 11:20, the two-volume Bible encyclopedia *Insight on the Scriptures* states that "most modern translators refer to those converted with the assistance of the men from Cyrene as 'Greeks' (AS, AT, Da, Fn, JB, Mo, RS), though others prefer 'heathen' (CK) or 'Gentiles' (TEV, NE), which terms would indicate that the ones at Antioch were not adherents to the Jewish religion."

That is to say, the ones that the Greek-speaking Afro-Cyrenians preached to there in Antioch were neither Greek-speaking Jews (compare Acts 6:1) nor Jewish proselytes. (See "Africa" endnotes in Matthew 2:13 and 26:7.)

AFRO-CYRENIAN PHILOSOPHERS: Regarding the history of the Cyrenaics, the peer reviewed *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* states:

The Cyrenaic school was founded by Aristippus (c. 435-356 B.C.), a follower of Socrates and a rough contemporary of Plato. The name

‘Cyrenaic’ comes from Cyrene, Aristippus’ home town, a Greek colony in Northern Africa. Aristippus taught philosophy to his daughter Arête, who in turn taught philosophy to her son Aristippus.

Aristippus the younger formulated many of the theories of the Cyrenaic school, so that some scholars count him as being more properly the founder of the school, with Aristippus the Elder being merely the school’s figurehead. However, disentangling the exact contributions of the two to the Cyrenaic philosophy is difficult.

Later Cyrenaics, notably Hegesias, Anniceris, and Theodorus, who were rough contemporaries of Epicurus [compare Acts 17:18], modified the Cyrenaic ethical doctrines in different directions, and the school died out shortly afterwards, around the middle of the 3rd century B.C. However, it did have some influence on later philosophers.

Epicurus most likely developed some of the distinctive features of his ascetic hedonism in order to avoid what he saw as the unpalatable consequences of Cyrenaic hedonism, and many of the Cyrenaic arguments against the possibility of gaining knowledge of the external world were appropriated by later academic and Pyrrhonian skeptics” ([2005 | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy | Page 2 \(utm.edu\)](#)).

Although most scholars credit the Greeks with founding the North African Cyrenaic school of philosophy, authors of African descent charge that “Greek philosophers practiced plagiarism” (*Stolen Legacy: Greek Philosophy Is Stolen Egyptian Philosophy*, 1954).

In his book, *The African Origin of Civilization—Myth or Reality* (1974), Professor Cheikh Anta Diop of the University of Dakar charges that one prominent European Egyptologist of the nineteenth century “could not possibly rid himself of the prejudices of his day.”

Evidence shows this to be generally true of both European and Euro-American scholars then and now.

In connection with the ancient North African civilization of Egypt, Diop reveals the following disturbing pattern that has emerged over the centuries:

Egyptologists were dumfounded with admiration for the past grandeur and perfection then discovered. They gradually recognized it as the most ancient civilization that had engendered all others. But,

imperialism being what it is, it became increasingly 'inadmissible' to continue to accept the theory—evident until then—of a Negro Egypt. The birth of Egyptology was thus marked by the need to destroy the memory of a Negro Egypt at any cost and in all minds. Henceforth, the common denominator of all the theses of the Egyptologists, their close relationship and profound affinity, can be characterized as a desperate attempt to refute that opinion. Almost all Egyptologists stress its falsity as a matter of course. Usually these attempted refutations take the following form:

Unable to detect any contradiction in the formal statements of the Ancients after an objective confrontation with total Egyptian reality, and consequently unable to disprove them, they either give them the silent treatment or reject them dogmatically and indignantly. They express regret that people as normal as the ancient Egyptians could have made so grievous an error and thus create so many difficulties and delicate problems for modern specialists. Next they try in vain to find a White origin for Egyptian civilization.

They finally become mired down in their own contradictions, sliding over the difficulties of the problem after performing intellectual acrobatics as learned as they are unwarranted. They then repeat the initial dogma, judging that they have demonstrated to all honorable folk the White origin of Egyptian civilization" (Page 45).

What buttresses Diop's claims of the African origin of civilization in the minds of some—including the genesis of deep, philosophical thought—is the fact that the origin and backgrounds of famous Greek philosophers are cloaked in a dark, nebulous past that is as mysterious as it is suspicious.

Whatever the case, Wikipedia reveals that "The [North African Cyrenaic] school died out within a century and was replaced by the philosophy of Epicureanism."

AFRICAN DELEGATIONS DEBATE STEPHEN: With the preceding in mind, one can better understand the Scripture text where Afro-Cyrenian philosophers—as well as other African thinkers—join forces to debate with Stephen, a faithful disciple of Christ.

"Now Stephen, full of graciousness and power, was performing great portents and signs among the people. But certain men rose up of those from the so-

called *Synagogue of the Freedmen*, and of the *Cyrenians* and *Alexandrians* [emphasis provided] and of those from Cilicia and Asia, to dispute with Stephen” (Acts 6:8, 9, *NWT*).

Three independent groups of African men are mentioned here, viz., “those from the Synagogue of the Freedmen,” the “Cyrenians,” and the “Alexandrians.” Given the subject matter of their debate, it is probable that though these were Africans, they were either Jews or Jewish proselytes (Acts 6:8-15).

That said, the disputation of Jewish law does not preclude philosophical argumentation.

Aside from a debate format that strongly suggests the influence of philosophers, later in Acts, Luke chronicles spirited discussions that included both Jewish law and Greek philosophy, with the apostle Paul squarely at the center of the action (Acts 17:16-21).

The “Synagogue of the Freedmen” comprised formerly enslaved Africans from Libya. Absent scholarly consensus, one plausible “view is that these persons were freed slaves who had become Jewish proselytes. The reading in the Armenian Version presents these persons as ‘Libyans,’ that is, persons from Libya.” (*Insight on the Scriptures*) Intriguingly, since the “Cyrenians” mentioned in Acts 6:8 were also Libyans, there must have been at least two schools of thought there in the ancient North African country.

Whatever their differences, these two groups of Africans came together to form a united front against Stephen. As a notable aside, that formerly enslaved Africans who converted to Judaism had their own synagogue suggests a form of segregation between native Jews and these particular Jewish proselytes.

If the “Alexandrians” mentioned in the text of Acts 6:9 were Jews, they were doubtlessly well-educated and familiar with the philosophical schools of thought of the day.

Because of its famed library, Alexandria was quite famous as a college or university town shortly before the time of Christ.

“The Royal Library of Alexandria, or Ancient Library of Alexandria, in Alexandria, Egypt, was the largest and most significant great library of the ancient world. It flourished under the patronage of the Ptolemaic dynasty and functioned as a major center of scholarship from its construction in the 3rd century BC until the Roman conquest of Egypt in 30 BC” ([Library of Alexandria \(en-academic.com\)](http://Library of Alexandria (en-academic.com)))

Familiar with skilled debate, “a certain Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, an eloquent man...was well versed in the Scriptures,” “and with intensity

he thoroughly proved the Jews to be wrong publicly, while he demonstrated from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ” (Acts 18:24-28, *NWT*).

Apollos was doubtlessly named after the Greek god Apollo. One website dealing with the Classics says that “Apollo is a many-talented Greek god of prophecy, music, intellectual pursuits, healing, plague, and sometimes, the sun” (The Greek God Apollo: Sun God, God of Music, Prophecy (thoughtco.com)).

Apparently, like his namesake, Apollos also shined when it came to “intellectual pursuits.”

The conclusion is quite poignant: Whatever their religion, race, or place, the groups that coalesced against one man, Stephen, “could not hold their own against the wisdom and the spirit with which he was speaking” (Acts 6:9, *NWT*).

AN AFRO-CYRENIAN ELDER: The apostle Peter openly displayed racial prejudice toward non-Jewish Christians, probably Black Africans.

In turn, the apostle Paul—perhaps for several reasons—corrected Peter, Barnabas, and other Christian Jews guilty of perpetrating prejudice. Paul wrote to Christians in Galatia:

“However, when Cephas [another name for Peter] came to Antioch, I resisted him face to face, because he stood condemned. For before the arrival of certain men from James, he used to eat with people of the nations; but when they arrived, he went withdrawing and separating himself, in fear of those of the circumcised class. The rest of the Jews also joined him in putting on this pretense, so that even Barnabas was led along with them in their pretense” (Galatians 2:11-13, *NWT*).

Peter freely shared meals with his non-Jewish Christian brothers until Jews from the Christian headquarters in Jerusalem arrived, after which he, Paul’s former missionary companion Barnabas, and the “rest of the Jews” “went withdrawing and separating” themselves from the non-Jewish brothers. This self-imposed racist segregation was summarily unchristian; hence, “when [Peter] came to Antioch,” Paul confronted him.

Paul had worked intimately with at least two Black elders in Antioch. “Now in Antioch there were prophets and teachers in the local congregation,” writes historian Luke, “Barnabas as well as *Symeon who was called Niger*, and *Lucius of Cyrene* [emphasis provided], and Manaen who was educated with Herod the district ruler, and Saul [another name for Paul]” (Acts 13:1, *NWT*).

“*Symeon who was called Niger*,” was a Black man since “Niger” is the Latin word for “black.” Several translations reflect this reality:

“Simeon (called ‘the black man’)” (*New Living Translation*).

“Simeon (called the Black)” (GOD’S WORD® Translation).

“Symeon surnamed ‘the black’” (*Weymouth New Testament*).

And Lucius of Cyrene was obviously an African as well. Therefore, having worked with and under the God-ordained supervision of these Black Christian elders, the apostle Paul likely had a heightened sensitivity to Peter’s racist gesture (Acts 13 :1-3).

Happily, around ten or so years after Paul wrote the Christians in Galatia, God inspired Peter himself to write these same Christians (1 Peter 1:1). The intrinsically good-hearted Peter had by this time apparently gotten over his fear of men.

AFRO-CYRENIAN NAMES: In the 2009 best-selling book *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*, authors Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner assert that specific names are tied to certain ethnic groups.

For example, Megan and Tiffany are likely to be White females, whereas Pookie and Ray-Ray are probably Black males.

While some may beg to differ with these authors, there is something to be said about their conclusions. Granted, “a certain Simon of Cyrene” (Mark 15:21) has a Hebrew name. However, this does not negate the fact that he was African. Interestingly, “Symeon,” which is another name for Simon, was, as noted, “called ‘the black man’” (Acts 13:1, *New Living Translation*).

And the *Freakonomics* formula is engaged when the name of one of Symeon’s sons, “Rufus” (Mark 15:21), and the name of that Afro-Cyrenian “Lucius” (Acts 13:1), come into play. These are considered, to this day, “typical” names for Black men.

Also, “Rufus is an American funk band from Chicago, Illinois, best known for launching the career of lead singer Chaka Khan ... Rufus and Chaka Khan were one of the most popular and influential funk bands of the 1970s, with four consecutive number one R&B albums, ten top 40 pop hits and five number one R&B singles, among other accolades” ([Rufus \(band\) - Wikipedia](#)).

Some ancient Israelite women doubtlessly looked like Chaka Khan.

For example, the African king Pharaoh arranged for Joseph, a Man of Color who was a son of Israel, to marry Asanath, a classy African woman of stature who was the daughter of the African Egyptian priest Potiphera of On (Genesis 41:45). The power couple eventually had two biracial dark-skinned sons, Manasseh and Ephraim (Genesis 41:50-52; 46:20).

Female descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim, who were grandsons of Israel, also had dark pigmentation. In fact, Ephraim had a very skilled and talented daughter named Sheerah, who “built the towns of Lower Beth-Horon, Upper Beth-Horon, and Uzen-Sheerah” (1 Chronicles 7:24, *Contemporary English Version*). This Israelite woman could have looked like the women in *Figure 68*, the second graphic associated with Matthew 27:32.

Finally, spiritual Jews (Romans 2:28-29; Galatians 6:16) from the spiritual Israelite tribe of Manasseh are listed among the heavenly Twelve Tribes of Israel (Revelation 7:6c) who make up the 144,000 reigning with the glorified Christ (Revelation 7:4-8; 14:1-4).

²³³ Chapter 27, verse 32, **torture stake** [COMMENTARY]: Pilate “ordered his soldiers to beat Jesus with a whip and nail him to a cross” (*Contemporary English Version*).

In the present translation, I have used “torture stake” instead of “cross.” I explain my reasons for doing so in this unedited article:

At the center of the debate as to whether Jesus died on a cross or a stake are ancient Hebrew, Greek, and Latin words. According to Hebrew translations of the Greek New Testament, the Hebrew word for the instrument Jesus died on is “tree” (*ets*, עץ).

This word is prominent in the Hebrew Old Testament and is written and pronounced virtually the same in Arabic (a Semitic language like Hebrew), and ancient languages such as Akkadian, Aramaic, Phoenician, and Ugaritic.

The Greek words for the thing Jesus died on are *stauros* (σταυρός) and *xylon* or *xulon* (ξύλον). And the Latin word is the familiar *crux*, or a derivative thereof. Everyone agrees that whatever it was that Jesus died on, it came from a tree.

Hebrew Old Testament: Regarding the Hebrew word for “tree” (*ets*, עץ), *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* by W. E. Vines, et al. states:

“This word can represent ‘wood’ as a material from which things are constructed, as a raw material to be carved”; hence, one could make “every kind of wood product” (Exodus 31:5, *New World Translation*), including “a pole” (*ets*, עץ; Greek, *xulon* [as per the *Septuagint*, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament], ξύλον;

Latin, *cru'ce* [from *crux*], as at Genesis 40:19, *New International Version*; *New Living Translation*), on which to hang a body.

Significantly, Vines states that *ets* (רע) occurs about 325 in the Hebrew Old Testament, “in all periods.”

In line with the translation “pole,” during the period of time when the Law Code was given to the inspired Bible writer Moses, he wrote: “When a convicted person is put to death, never leave his dead body hung on a pole (or “tree,” *ets*, רע; Greek, *xulon*, ξύλον) overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day, because anyone whose body is hung on a pole (or “tree,” *ets*, רע; Greek, *xulon*, ξύλον) is cursed by God.” (Deuteronomy 21:22, 23, *God’s Word Translation*)

The “Glossary of Bible Terms” in the *New World Translation* explains these verses thusly: “In Jewish law ,... those guilty of such heinous crimes as blasphemy or idolatry were first killed by stoning or by some other method, and then their dead bodies were hung on stakes, or trees, as warning examples to others.”

Even non-Israelite persons were humiliated by being exposed on a stake or pole for all to see. “Joshua hung the king of Ai’s dead body on a pole [or “tree,” *ets*, רע; Greek, *xulon*, ξύλον; Latin, *cru'ce* (from *crux*)]” (Joshua 8:29, *God’s Word Translation*.; see also Esther 2:23 and 6:11.)

In all the above instances the tree was a “wood product” that was carved (as discussed previously), with all the branches having been cut off so as to form a stake, pole, or beam (as would be used in building a house).

With regard to a beam from a house acting as an instrument of death, two Biblical texts—Ezra 6:11 and Haggai 1:8—well illustrate the point.

Haggai 1:8 shows that *ets* (רע, “tree”), when used as carved material to construct a house, is variously translated “wood” (*English Standard Version*, etc.), “timber” (*New International Version*, etc.), and “lumber” (*Holman Christian Standard Bible*, etc.).

What was to be done with someone who defied the king’s order in Ezra’s day? “Let a beam (עק) be torn from his house and raised up; he will be impaled on it.” (Ezra 6:11, *Holman Christian Standard Bible*) But, if you look closely, you’ll notice that the Hebrew word for “beam” is עק, not רע. Why is this?

Perhaps because of an awkward translation of Aramaic into Hebrew. Ezra 6:11 was originally written in Aramaic, a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew. Oddly, the *Aramaic* word used here is *ets*, עץ, and its Greek equivalent is, not surprisingly, *xulon*, ξύλον. Fascinatingly, the Latin equivalent is *lignum*, which is a tree with very hard wood.

In the final analysis, *nowhere* in the Hebrew Old Testament do we find plural expressions of a carved instrument such as ‘double trees,’ ‘a couple of poles,’ or ‘twin timber,’ upon which a single body was hung.

And we *never* encounter the expression ‘crossed beams,’ even though in several Hebrew texts the Latin equivalent word is basically *crux*. That means, in these texts, the *crux* was *not* a “cross,” irrespective of later manipulation of the word and symbol attached to it.

All these expressions *always* mean a single, solitary, upright stake, pole, pale, beam, or lumber, which was a shaped or carved tree.

Greek New Testament: Unsurprisingly, as was the case in the Hebrew Old Testament, *xulon* (ξύλον) is the Greek word for “wood,” or “anything made of wood.”

It occurs about 20 times throughout the Greek New Testament, three of which occur in the book of Acts (5:30; 10:39; 13:29); all of which describe Jesus as having been hanged on a “tree.”

When you encounter a version of the Bible that uses “cross” in these and other New Testament texts, realize that it is an egregious mistranslation.

When a *xulon* (ξύλον) was carved and crafted with the specific purpose of hanging someone on it (as opposed to carving wooden clubs as at Matthew 26:47, or crafting ‘scented’ or ‘precious’ wooden items as at Revelation 18:12), it was called a *stauros* (σταυρός, from the root Greek word meaning to ‘lift up,’ or ‘erect’) in Greek, and occurs 27 times in the Greek New Testament (equaling the precise number of books found therein). So *stauros* (σταυρός) is a *type* of *xulon* (ξύλον), and it, too, is grossly mistranslated “cross” in most Bible translations.

Interestingly, one unique Bible version grapples with translating *stauros* (σταυρός). The *Jewish New Testament* by Jewish translator David H. Stern renders *stauros* (σταυρός) as either “stake,” or “execution-stake,” though meaning the traditional but unscriptural two-beamed “cross.”

Under the Greek New Testament entry for “tree,” Vines describes *xulon* (ξύλον) as “being the *stauros*, the upright pale or stake to which Romans nailed those who were thus to be executed.”

Hebrew Retroversion of the Greek New Testament: Some centuries after the completion of the Greek New Testament, Jewish scholars saw the need to translate these Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew.

Later still, a few translators decided to translate these Hebrew retroversions of the Greek New Testament into English. One of these Greek-to-Hebrew-to-English translations is the *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew* by Prof. George Howard. Similar to Stern in dealing with translating *stauros* (σταυρός) in his *Jewish New Testament* as discussed above, Howard wrestled with translating the Hebrew word for “tree” (*ets*, עץ) in his English translation of the Hebrew retroversion.

For example, Howard translates a form of *ets* (עץ) as “cross” at Matthew 16:24, but as “gallows” at Matthew 27:40. Finally, and most notably, he translates the last occurrence of *ets* (עץ) in the Gospel of Matthew as “tree” at Matthew 27:42.

Winding down through history closer to our day and time, Jesus said that people claiming to reverence God would “execute on stakes as criminals” (Matthew 23:34, *JNT*) those who are true worshippers of God.

Interestingly, with specific regard to this instrument of execution, (a) criminals in Biblical times, (b) Christians throughout the Inquisition, and (c) witches during the colonial America era, were all executed on stakes.

Although the meat of the article is presented above, the full article is available here: [The Question of Christ on the Cross \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com).

²³⁴ Chapter 27, verse 33, **Cranium Cap**: The Greek word here is his *kranion* (κράνιον), from which we get the English word “cranium.” (See endnote for “head” at Matthew 5:36 for further discussion.)

²³⁵ Chapter 27, verse 34, **drug**: The Greek word used here for “drug” is *cholé* (χολή), which is a sedative. One reference work identifies it as “an equivalent perhaps akin to the same as Chloe (from the greenish hue); ‘gall’ or bile, i.e. (by analogy) poison or an anodyne (wormwood, poppy, etc.)” (Strong’s Greek: 5521. χολή (cholé) -- gall (a bitter herb) (biblehub.com)).

By definition, an “anodyne” is “a medicine that relieves or allays pain ([Anodyne Definition & Meaning | Dictionary.com](#)),” one of several that a pharmacist, both ancient and modern, would doubtlessly be familiar with.

Interestingly, the related Hebrew Scripture text in Psalm 69:21 reads:

“But for food they gave me a poisonous plant, and for my thirst they tried to make me drink vinegar” (*New World Translation*).

As is the case with all the prophecies surrounding the birth, life course, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the detailed fulfillment of this Scripture verse is viewed as nothing short of remarkable.

²³⁶ [Chapter 27](#), verse 40, **one of God’s sons**: See endnote for Matthew 4:3.

²³⁷ [Chapter 27](#), verse 46, **Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?**: Until his last breath, Jesus uttered these dying words, fulfilling Scripture as he did so (Psalms 22:1). As with Matthew 1:23, Gospel writer Matthew translates for the Jewish reader. (See endnote for Matthew 1:23.)

Still, commentators are at variance regarding the exact meaning and etymology of the totality of Jesus’ final words on earth as a human.

Bible commentator Albert Barnes’ writes: “This language is not pure Hebrew nor Syriac, but a mixture of both, called commonly ‘Syro-Chaldaic.’ This was probably the language which the Saviour commonly spoke. The words are taken from Psalm 22:1” ([Matthew 27 Barnes’ Notes \(biblehub.com\)](#)).

Gill’s Exposition states that the words making up this phrase “are partly Hebrew, and partly Chaldee; the three first are Hebrew, and the last Chaldee, substituted in the room of ‘Azabthani’; as it was, and still is, in the Chaldee paraphrase of the text in Psalm 22:1, from whence they are taken” ([Matthew 27 Gill’s Exposition \(biblehub.com\)](#)).

Clarke’s Commentary goes into even more detail: “It has been asked, What language is it that our Lord spoke? *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*. Some say it is Hebrew—others Syriac. I say, as the evangelists quote it, it is neither. St. Matthew comes nearest the Hebrew, אלי אֵלִי לְמָה עֲזַבְתָּנִי *Eli, Eli, lamah azabthani*, in the words, Ἠλί, Ἠλί, λαμὰ σαβαχθάνι, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*.

And St. Mark comes nearest the Syriac, Mark 15:34, *Alohi, Alohi, l’mono shebachtheni*, in the words Ελωῖ, Ελωῖ, λαμμα σαβαχθανι, *Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabachthani*. It is worthy of note, that a Hebrew MS. of the twelfth century, instead of עֲזַבְתָּנִי *azabthani*, forsaken me, reads שכחתי *shechachthani*, Forgotten me.

This word makes a very good sense, and comes nearer to the *sabachthani* of the evangelists. It may be observed also, that the words, *Why hast thou Forgotten me?* are often used by David and others, in times of oppression and distress. See Psalm 42:9" (Matthew 27 Clarke's Commentary (biblehub.com)).

These three commentaries align partially, which is also the case with commentaries not considered here.

The present translator did not find any commentary that captures his line of reasoning as to why the local Jews did not understand Jesus when he said "*Eli, Eli,*" as they thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah (Matthew 27:47).

Regarding the possible reasons why some misunderstood Jesus' words, the publication *Insight on the Scriptures*, a Bible encyclopedia, states:

"Bystanders thought that he was calling for Elijah. Perhaps they misunderstood Jesus' words because his speech was indistinct as a result of his intense suffering or because his dialect differed from theirs" (Vol. 1, p. 707).

The latter cause seems the more probable of the two possibilities, given that a short time before, both Jesus and Peter had been identified as speaking with a Galilean dialect (Matthew 26:69-73).

Although Gospel writers Luke and John chronicle Peter's infamous denials, which he was later forgiven after repenting, Matthew alone records that bystanders characterized both Jesus and Peter as having an accent that identified them as being from Galilee.

To learn more about the commonality between Jesus and Peter and the proposed reason as to why the Jews misunderstood Jesus, see the Matthew 26:63 "Son of God" endnote under the heading "Written and Spoken Hebrew in the New Testament," first entry, "*(a) Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*"

²³⁸ Chapter 27, verse 50 [COMMENTARY]: Although Matthew doesn't mention the exact time Jesus expired, Mark and John do. However, there appears to be a discrepancy in their accounts.

I wrote the following in an article dated March 29, 2016:

"Mark 15:25 says that Jesus' execution sequence was initiated at 'nine o'clock in the morning.' (*New Living Translation*) John 19:14 asserts 'it was ... about noon' (*NLT*) when the crucifixion process began, a full three hours after the time Mark documented. So, when did Jesus actually die? Which of the 'dueling disciples' is correct?"

For the answer, read the full article here: [Jesus Christ's Time of Death: A Gospel Gaffe \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](https://www.firpocarrarchives.com)

²³⁹ [Chapter 27](#), verse 51, **quaked**: The original Greek word here is *seió* (σειώ) which translates to “quake,” “shake,” or “stir up” (Strong’s Greek: 4579. σειώ (seió) -- to shake (biblehub.com)).

In Matthew 8:24 and 28:2, the actual Greek word is *seismos* (σεισμός), from which the English word “seismic” (and related words) is derived. The *Dictionary of Contemporary English* states that it means “earthquake” ([seismic \(en-academic.com\)](#)).

As was the case in Jesus’s day, in modern times, earthquakes can wreak havoc on cemeteries by dislodging coffins, as shown in *Figure 69*. Although a flood displaced the coffins in the photograph, Matthew 8:24 indicates that raging waters caused by powerful storms qualify as a “water quake.”

In fact, the Greek word for “windstorm” in Matthew 8:24 is *seismos* (σεισμός), the same word for earthquake (see Matthew 27:51 and 28:2). This is appropriate given that any surface body of water is part of the earth’s topography. Hence, seismic activity can apply to turbulent water. For example, a tsunami may be likened to a rolling liquid earthquake.

Interestingly, both types of seismic activity—water and earth—manifested in and around Los Angeles, California, on Sunday, August 20, 2023, when Southern California was trounced by Tropical Storm Hilary when suddenly an earthquake made its presence felt. ([Earthquake hits Southern California amid Tropical Storm Hilary | The Hill](#)). The parking lot at Dodger Stadium was transformed into a moat as shown in *Figure 70*.

For almost two thousand years, down to our modern day, Mathew has essentially popularized words like “seismic,” “seismology,” and “seismometer” far more than any other written source, ancient or otherwise. (Compare “Flood” endnote under Matthew 24:38.)

²⁴⁰ [Chapter 27](#), verse 54, **Son of God** [COMMENTARY]: The centurion recognized Jesus as the “Son of God” (*King James Version*) instead of God, whom Jesus referenced as “My God” twice several verses before in Matthew 27:46.

²⁴¹ [Chapter 27](#), verse 57, **Joseph** [COMMENTARY]: Some see Joseph of Arimathea as an enigma. Why? The apostle John explains, “Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders” (John 19:38, *New International Version*).

Indeed, “Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved human praise more than praise from God” (John 12:42-43, *New International Version*; compare Acts 6:7).

While Joseph was not in fear of being expelled from the synagogue because he “loved human praise more than praise from God” (as shown below), some are nevertheless baffled by Joseph’s seeming cognitive dissonance and paradoxical perspectives. I addressed this conundrum in an article I wrote (full of editing errors) dated December 21, 2017:

The Secret about “Secret”: John 19:38 says Joseph of Arimathea “was a disciple of Jesus but a secret one because of his fear of the Jews.” (*New World Translation*) The Greek word for “secret” is *krupto* (κρυπτω).

The English word “cryptic” comes from this Greek word. Depending on what is called “mood” in Biblical Greek, this word can have a different meaning that extends to English.

Both Greek and English have an “active mood” and a “passive mood.” These “moods” mean that either someone is *actively* partaking in an action, or is *passively* doing so.

As far as Joseph of Arimathea (hereafter “Joseph”) is concerned, his secrecy was in the Greek passive mood. That means he wasn’t *actively* or purposefully being secretive.

As an example, lexicographers Liddell and Scott say the passive mood could mean “of stars not seen in any part of the night” with the naked eye. (*Greek-English Lexicon*, 1968) It is not as if God *actively* keeps the stars secret. Rather, they are a secret in that mankind is unable to detect them with the unaided eye.

Bringing the discussion back down to earth, perhaps another example will suffice. Have you heard the saying, “one of nature’s little secrets”? Again, nature may not be *actively* or deliberately keeping a secret from the probing eyes of curious inquisitors or even serious scientists. Rather, it’s just that the scientists have not yet devised a way to uncover that which is *passively* hidden.

So it is with Joseph. According to the Greek mood, he wasn’t *actively* hiding his discipleship. He just didn’t broadcast it.

But, why not?

Defining “Fear”: John reveals why Joseph was a secret disciple of Jesus. It was out of “fear of the Jews” (John 19:38), not out of fear of being expelled from the synagogue by the Pharisees! (John 12:42) But, what did John mean by “fear”? Like the Greek word for “secret,” the Greek word for “fear” can have meanings other than traditional ones.

The Greek word John used for “fear” (φοβος, *phobos*; akin to “phobia” in English) at John 19:38 means “respect that is due officials” (*Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 1957, Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich); “reverence for a ruler” (*Greek-English Lexicon*, 1968, Liddell & Scott); “respect, honour ... towards persons” (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1850, Robinson); or, “reverence, respect...for authority, rank, dignity” (*Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*).

In plain language, Joseph wasn’t fearful or afraid of his fellow Jews on the Council in the traditional sense. On the contrary, he boldly stood his ground as a fearless disciple, but circumspectly deferred to his colleagues, according them “respect that is due officials”; “reverence”; yes, ‘respect and dignity for their rank and authority.’

He didn’t unnecessarily advertise or announce his identity as a disciple. Instead of needlessly confronting them, he was judicious but courageous. Therefore, another way to read John 19:38 is that ‘Joseph did not broadcast his discipleship out of respect for his fellow Jewish rulers.’

How so?

He purposefully and deliberately—for all his colleagues to see—did not vote in the Sanhedrin’s plot against Jesus. The account doesn’t say he “was not there” (for those who say he may have been absent), it clearly says he “had not voted.” (Luke 23:51, *NWT*)

Another translation states “he had not cast his vote.” (Luke 23:51, *21st Century New Testament: The Literal/Free Dual Translation* by Vivian Capel) In other words, although he was present, he abstained or refused to vote.

If all this is true, why is he described as having called up courage?

Calling Up “Courage”?: One Gospel writer did indeed write that Joseph “took courage and went in before Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.” (Mark 15:43, *NWT*)

However, the courage Joseph mustered was going before Governor Pilot, *not coming out as a disciple*. Jesus had already commanded his disciples not to be fearful “before governors” like Pilot. (Matthew 10:17-20)

Since going before Pilot was new for him (not openly being a disciple), he called up the necessary courage to appear before the governor.

When the above material is considered in connection with the apparent contradiction of Joseph being both ‘courageous’ and at the same time ‘fearful,’ the two conflicting descriptions are easily reconciled.

Neither should it be assumed that Nicodemus was a fearful disciple because he approached Jesus “in the night.” (John 3:1, 2)

Read the entire article to learn more about Nicodemus’ position at [Joseph of Arimathea: Cowardly or Courageous? \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com).

²⁴² [Chapter 27](http://firpocarrarchives.com), verse 60, **large stone** [COMMENTARY]: For a few details on ancient Jewish burial customs and the size of some burial stones, see the article [Was Jesus Christ a Real Person? \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com).

²⁴³ [Chapter 28](http://firpocarrarchives.com), verse 1, **Mary Magdalene** [COMMENTARY]: Mary Magdalene is one of the better-known women in the Gospels.

But few commentators have pieced together details about her that give a clearer picture of her interaction with Jesus the man and the post-resurrected Jesus prior to his ascension, as shown in this article (complete with editing errors!).

Mary Magdalene “traveled from city to city and from village to village” as she cared for the needs of Jesus and his 12 apostles as these young men, full of stamina, were “preaching and declaring the good news of the Kingdom of God.” (Luke 8:1)

The Gospel record doesn’t elaborate on Mary’s particulars. Was she an older woman with motherly instincts? Or, was she young and energetic? Her mysteriousness aside, the Bible paints her as a resolutely faithful, loyal disciple of Christ.

As part of Jesus’ relatively youthful entourage, able to endure the rigors of extensive travels, Mary Magdalene was one of “certain women who had been cured of wicked spirits.” (Luke 8:2a) However, she was a standout because “seven demons had come out” of her. (Luke 8:2b)

As the apostles may have seen it, they could have reasoned that having been possessed by seven demons disqualified Mary Magdalene as a stellar candidate for reliability and credibility as a witness to an empty tomb where a couple of spirits supposedly conversed with her.

Jesus had acted as a barrier between Mary and the seven demons when he was alive, but he's gone now, and it looks like—at least to the apostles—the demons are beginning to return using the ruse of a resurrected Jesus. (Matthew 12:43-45; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

Whatever the case, gaining the trust and confidence of the youthful group of apostles was an uphill battle for the mysterious Mary Magdalene.

Demystifying Mary: The argument can be made that Mary Magdalene was a young, brave, sincere, tenacious, faithful disciple of Christ. He completely changed her quality of life for the better, and she felt forever indebted to him as shown by her actions.

To find out more about this faithful female disciple of Christ, read the complete article, [The Mysterious Mary Magdalene \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com), published on April 7, 2018.

²⁴⁴ [Chapter 28](#), verse 2a **earthquake**: The Greek word here is *seismos* (σεισμός), from which the English word “seismic” is extracted. (See related endnotes in Matthew 8:24 and 27:51 for more discussion.)

²⁴⁵ [Chapter 28](#), verse 2b, **Y^ehowah**: This is the last (18th) of 18 occurrences of the divine name in the book of Matthew (1:20, 22, 24; 2:13, 15, 19; 3:3; 4:4, 7, 10; 5:33; 21:9, 42; 22:44; 23:39; 27:10; 28:2). Interestingly, it ends as it starts in the book of Matthew (1:20), namely, in the possessive. Additionally, in both instances, the expression “**Y^ehowah's** angel” is the common denominator. See endnote for Matthew 1:20.

²⁴⁶ [Chapter 28](#), verse 2c **stone**: See endnote for “large stone” in Matthew 27:60.

²⁴⁷ [Chapter 28](#), verse 2d, **He was now sitting on it** [COMMENTARY]: At first glance, Gospel writers seem to contradict one another regarding the number of angels in the location of Jesus' tomb, and whether sitting or standing. Note this article from five years ago (typos aside).

Jesus' resurrection took place nearly 2,000 years ago today, touching off a series of stirring events. However, each of the four Gospel writers who recorded that resurrection offers different details.

For example, intriguingly, Jesus' disciple Mary Magdalene is the common denominator in each Gospel account, but is also the complicated witness described by (a) Matthew as having encountered *one angel sitting outside* the tomb on the stone used to cover the tomb entrance (Matthew 28:2), (b) Mark as having seen *one angel sitting inside* the tomb to the right (Mark 16:5), (c) Luke as having witnessed *two angels standing inside* the tomb (Luke 24:4), and (d) John as having conversed with *two angels sitting inside* the tomb. (John 20:12)

Which account is correct? Is there discordance among the Gospels? They can't all be right, or can they? If the Bible is the unerring Word of God that is "setting things straight," how can these four seemingly contradictory and apparently nonsensical Gospel accounts be reconciled? (2 Timothy 3:16)

Actually, all four Gospel accounts are correct and paint a fascinating flurry of activity surrounding Jesus' resurrection, and by critiquing these particulars, we can unravel the superficially tangled intricacies of Jesus immediate resurrection.

In short, when the dots are connected, a captivating picture emerges. With this being the case, it would have been impossible for the four Gospel writers to engage collusion circumscribing the specifics of a fictitious Jesus of Nazareth.

The reader is invited to investigate this situation further by examining the April 3, 2018, article, [Fascinating Events Immediately After Jesus Resurrection \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com).

²⁴⁸ [Chapter 28](#), verse 3 [TRANSLATOR'S NOTE]: Alternately: "He looked blazing hot and freezing cold at the same time!" or, "His countenance was of one who was blazing cold and freezing hot!"

²⁴⁹ [Chapter 28](#), verse 9, **bowed**: Greek, *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω). See Matthew 2:8, endnote, "**pay my respects**," for a more detailed explanation. The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as "worship" in most Bible translations, in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

²⁵⁰ [Chapter 28](#), verse 17, **bowed**: Greek, *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω). See Matthew 2:8, endnote, "**pay my respects**," for a more detailed explanation. The occurrences of *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω), rendered as "worship" in most Bible

translations, in texts with similar content, context, and circumstances in the complete book of Matthew are discussed in endnotes for the following verses: Matthew 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 27:30-31; 28:9; 28:17.

²⁵¹ Chapter 28, verse 17 [COMMENTARY]: In an article dated April 11, 2017, I wrote the following (typos and all) about some of the disciples' hesitancy in believing Jesus had been resurrected:

It can be argued that the apostles' immature reaction to women's role in the immediate sequence of events after Jesus' resurrection place them perhaps in their early 20s. (Numbers 1:30; John 9:21, 23; Acts 16:1-3) Even though they were in Jesus' orbit—his inner circle—age may have been a factor in the young apostles' daunting disbelief in his resurrection, which may explain why even nearly 20 years later these same apostles, now in their 40s, were teamed with inspired “older men” when a critical congregational issue arose. (Acts 15:6, 22, 23, 28) The intimidating timeline that follows illustrates the disciples' daunting disbelief, as well as how that disbelief is overcome.

To see the “intimidating timeline” and how the disciples dealt with it, read the entire article here: [The Disciples' Daunting Disbelief \(firpocarrarchives.com\)](http://firpocarrarchives.com).

²⁵² Chapter 28, verse 18, **given me**: Given that “given me” is stated passively, the person who gave Jesus all authority is not mentioned in this verse.

However, elsewhere in Scripture, there can be no doubt that Almighty God Jehovah, the Father of Jesus Christ, gave him all authority. “The Father loves the Son and has given and entrusted all things into His hand” (John 3:35, *Amplified Bible*).

Of course, by entrusting all things to Jesus, the Father of all and Creator, Jehovah God, was not abdicating his superiority over his Son, the creation.

The apostle Paul made this clear when he wrote:

“For He (the Father) has put all things in subjection under his (Christ's) feet. But when He says, ‘All things have been put in subjection [under Christ],’ it is clear that He (the Father) who put all things in subjection to him (Christ) is excepted since the Father is not in subjection to His own Son” (1 Corinthians 15:24-28, *AB*).

Or, as the *New Living Translation* puts it: “For the Scriptures say, ‘God has put all things under his authority.’ (Of course, when it says ‘all things are under his authority,’ that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.)” (1 Corinthians 15:27).