

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Introduction

As time went by, the followers of Jesus as Messiah are just one more group; there were looked upon with suspicion or tolerance. It seems that it is in this context that the gospel of Matthew finds its roots: perfectly familiar with the Jewish customs and traditions.

It presents continuity and newness. Continuity, because in Jesus, the awaited Messiah, the promises of the Scriptures are fulfilled. But it takes distance from Jewish customs and interpretations.

Matthew's community feels in continuity with Israel: they are the authentic Israel that has already entered into the final stage. Jesus has proclaimed the imminence of the "reign of God" and through his death and resurrection has performed the final act. The community gathers now in fidelity to Jesus, the Messiah and Teacher, new Moses and son of David.

Old traditions have attributed this gospel to Matthew. The infancy narratives resemble an overture announcing what will follow: identification-persecution-liberation-acknowledgement from Jews and pagans.

Announcement to Joseph

1 ¹⁸This is how Jesus Christ was born. Mary his mother had been given to Joseph in marriage but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Then Joseph, her husband, made plans to divorce her in all secrecy. He was an upright man, and in no way did he want to discredit her. ²⁰While he was pondering over this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said:

—Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. She has conceived by the Holy Spirit, ²¹and now she will bear a son. You shall call him 'Jesus' for he will save his people from their sins.

²²All this happened in order to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³*The virgin will conceive and bear a son, and he will be called Emmanuel* which means: God-with-us. ²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do and he took his wife to his home. ²⁵So she gave birth to a son and he had not had marital relations with her. Joseph gave him the name of Jesus.

Homage from the Magi

2 ¹When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judea, during the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem. ²They asked:

—Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw the rising of his star in the east and have come to honor him.

³When Herod heard this he was greatly disturbed and with him all Jerusalem. ⁴He immediately called a meeting of all high-ranking priests and the scribes, and asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

⁵They told him:

—In the town of Bethlehem in Judea; for this is what the prophet wrote: ⁶*And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means the least among the clans of Judah, for from you will come a leader, the one who is to shepherd my people Israel.*

⁷Then Herod secretly called the wise men and asked them the precise time the star appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem with the instruction:

—Go and get precise information about the child. As soon as you have found him, report to me, so that I too may go and honor him.

⁹After the meeting with the king, they set out. The star that they had seen in the East went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰The wise men were overjoyed on seeing the star again. ¹¹They went into the house and when they saw the child with Mary his mother, they knelt and worshiped him. They opened their bags and offered him their gifts of gold, incense and myrrh. ¹²In a dream they were warned not to go back to Herod, so they returned to their home country by another way.

John the Baptist

3 ¹In the course of time John the Baptist appeared in the desert of Judea and began to proclaim his message:

²—Change your ways, the Kingdom of heaven is now at hand!

³It was about him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said, *A voice is shouting in the desert: prepare a way for the Lord; make his paths straight.*

Baptism of Jesus

¹³At that time Jesus arrived from Galilee and came to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. ¹⁴But John tried to prevent him, and said:

—How is it you come to me: I should be baptized by you!

¹⁵But Jesus answered him:

—Let it be like that for now that we may fulfill the right order.

John agreed.

¹⁶As soon as he was baptized, Jesus came up from the water. At once, the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God come down like a dove and rest upon him. ¹⁷At the same time a voice from heaven was heard: “This is my Son, the Beloved; he is my Chosen One.”

Jesus being tested

4 ¹Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert that he be put to the test by the devil. ²After spending forty days and nights without food, Jesus was hungry. ³Then the devil came to him and said:

—If you are the Son of God, order these stones to turn into bread.

⁴But Jesus answered:

—Scripture says: *one does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.*

⁵Then the devil took Jesus to the holy city, set him on the highest wall of the temple, and said to him:

⁶—If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for scripture says, *God has given orders to his angels about you. Their hands will hold you up lest you hurt your foot against a stone.*

⁷Jesus answered:

—But scripture also says: *You shall not put to the test the Lord your God.*

⁸Then the devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him all the nations of the world in all their greatness and splendor. And he said:

⁹—All this I will give you, if you kneel and worship me. ¹⁰Then Jesus answered:

—Be off, Satan! Scripture says: *worship the Lord your God and serve him alone.*

¹¹Then the devil left him, and angels came to serve him.

In Galilee

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. ¹³He left Nazareth and went to settle down in Capernaum, a town by the lake of Galilee, at the border of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁷From that time on Jesus began to proclaim his message:

—Change your ways: the kingdom of heaven is near.

Calling of the first disciples

¹⁸As Jesus walked by the lake of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹He said to them:

—Come, follow me, and I will make you fish for people.

²⁰At once they left their nets and followed him. ²¹He went on from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John in a boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. Jesus called them. ²²At once they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³Jesus went around all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, and curing all kinds of sickness and disease among the people.

Sermon on the mount: the Beatitudes

5 ¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain. He sat down and his disciples gathered around him. ²Then he spoke and began to teach them:

³—Fortunate are those who are poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Fortunate are those who mourn, they shall be comforted.

⁵Fortunate are the gentle, they shall possess the land.

⁶Fortunate are those who hunger and thirst for justice,
for they shall be satisfied.

⁷Fortunate are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.

⁸Fortunate are those with a pure heart,
for they shall see God.

⁹Fortunate are those who work for peace,
they shall be called children of God.

¹⁰Fortunate are those who are persecuted
for the cause of justice,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹—Fortunate are you, when people insult you and persecute you and speak all kinds of evil against you because you are my followers. ¹²Be glad and joyful, for a great reward is kept for you in God. This is how this people persecuted the prophets who lived before you.

³⁸—You have heard that it was said: *An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.* ³⁹But I tell you this: do not oppose evil with evil; if someone slaps you on your right cheek, turn and offer the other. ⁴⁰If someone sues you in court for your shirt, give your coat as well. ⁴¹If someone forces you to go

one mile, go also the second mile. ⁴²Give when asked and do not turn your back on anyone who wants to borrow from you.

⁴³—You have heard that it was said: *Love your neighbor and do not do good to your enemy*. ⁴⁴But this I tell you: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be children of your Father in Heaven. For he makes his sun rise on both the wicked and the good, and he gives rain to both the just and the unjust.

⁴⁶If you love those who love you, what is special about that? Do not even tax collectors do as much? ⁴⁷And if you are friendly only to your friends, what is so exceptional about that? Do not even the pagans do as much? ⁴⁸For your part you shall be righteous and perfect in the way your heavenly Father is righteous and perfect.

Prayer

⁶ ⁵—When you pray, do not be like those who want to be seen. They love to stand and pray in the synagogues or on street corners to be seen by everyone. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. ⁶When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is with you in secret; and your Father who sees what is kept secret will reward you.

⁷When you pray, do not use a lot of words, as the pagans do, for they hold that the more they say, the more chance they have of being heard. ⁸Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need, even before you ask him.

⁹This, then, is how you should pray:

Our Father in heaven,

holy be your name,

¹⁰your kingdom come

and your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

¹¹Give us today our daily bread.

¹²Forgive us our debts

just as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us.

¹³Do not bring us to the test

but deliver us from the evil one.'

¹⁴—If you forgive others their wrongs, your Father in heaven will also forgive yours. ¹⁵If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you either.

Several warnings

⁷ ¹—Do not judge and you will not be judged. ²In the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and the measure you use for others will be used for you. ³Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and not see the plank in your own eye? ⁴How can you say to your brother: 'Come, let me take the speck from your eye,' as long as that plank is in your own? ⁵Hypocrite, take first the plank out of your own eye, then you will see clear enough to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

⁶—Do not give what is holy to the dogs, or throw your pearls to the pigs: they might trample on them and even turn on you and tear you to pieces.

⁷—Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened. ⁸For everyone who asks, receives; whoever seeks, finds; and the door will be opened to him who knocks. ⁹Would any of you give a stone to your son when he asks for bread? ¹⁰Or give him a snake, when he

asks for a fish? ¹¹As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

¹²—So, do to others whatever you would that others do to you: there you have the Law and the Prophets.

Healings

8 ²A leper came forward. He knelt before him and said:

—Sir, if you want to, you can make me clean.

³Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said:

—I want to, be clean again.

At that very moment the man was cleansed from his leprosy. ⁴Then Jesus said to him:

—See that you do not tell anyone, but go to the priest, have yourself declared clean, and offer the gift that Moses ordered as proof of it.

⁵When Jesus entered Capernaum, an army captain approached him to ask his help:

⁶—Sir, my servant lies sick at home. He is paralyzed and suffers terribly.

⁷Jesus said to him:

—I will come and heal him.

⁸The captain answered:

—I am not worthy to have you under my roof. Just give an order and my boy will be healed. ⁹For I myself, a junior officer, give orders to my soldiers. And if I say to one: ‘Go,’ he goes, and if I say to another: ‘Come,’ he comes, and to my servant: ‘Do this,’ he does it.

¹⁰When Jesus heard this he was astonished and said to those who were following him:

—I tell you, I have not found such faith in Israel. ¹¹I say to you, many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven; ¹²but the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown out into the darkness; there they will wail and grind their teeth.

¹³Then Jesus said to the captain:

—Go home now. As you believed, so let it be.

And at that moment his servant was healed.

Discipleship

¹⁹A teacher of the Law approached him and said:

—Master, I will follow you wherever you go.

²⁰Jesus said to him:

—Foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

²¹Another disciple said to him:

—Lord, let me go and bury my father first.

²²But Jesus answered him:

—Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.

Calming the tempest

²³Jesus got into the boat and his disciples followed him. ²⁴Without warning a fierce storm hit the lake, with waves sweeping the boat. But Jesus was asleep.

²⁵They woke him and cried:

—Lord save us! We are lost!

²⁶But Jesus answered:

—Why are you so afraid, you of little faith?

Then he stood up and ordered the wind and sea; and it became completely calm. ²⁷The people were astonished. They said:

—What kind of man is he? Even the winds and the sea obey him.

Calling of Matthew

9 ⁹As Jesus moved on from there, he saw a man named Matthew at his seat in the custom-house, and he said to him:

—Follow me.

And Matthew got up and followed him. ¹⁰Now it happened, while Jesus was at table in Matthew's house, many tax collectors and other sinners joined Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this they said to his disciples:

—Why is it that your master eats with those sinners and tax collectors?

¹²When Jesus heard this he said:

—Healthy people do not need a doctor, but sick people do. ¹³Go and find out what this means: *What I want is mercy, not sacrifice.* I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.

Two healings

¹⁸While Jesus was speaking to them, an official of the synagogue came up to him, bowed before him and said:

—My daughter has just died, but come and place your hands on her, and she will live.

¹⁹Jesus stood up and followed him with his disciples.

²⁰Then a woman who had suffered from a severe bleeding for twelve years came up from behind and touched the edge of his cloak. ²¹For she thought:

—If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.

²²Jesus turned, saw her and said:

—Courage, my daughter, your faith has saved you.

And from that moment the woman was cured.

²³When Jesus arrived at the official's house and saw the flute players and the excited crowd, he said:

²⁴—Get out of here! The girl is not dead. She is only sleeping!

And they laughed at him. ²⁵But once the crowd had been turned out, Jesus went in and took the girl by the hand, and she stood up. ²⁶The news of this spread through the whole area.

The Father and the Son

11 ²⁵On that occasion Jesus said:

—Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I praise you, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to simple people. ²⁶Yes, Father, this is what pleased you.

²⁷—Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸—Come to me, all you who work hard and who carry heavy burdens and I will refresh you. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart; and you will find rest. ³⁰For my yoke is good and my burden is light.

12 ¹⁵As Jesus was aware of the plot, he went away from that place. Many people followed him and he cured all who were sick. ¹⁶Then he gave them strict orders not to make him known. ¹⁷In this way Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled:

¹⁸*Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, and with whom I am pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him and he will announce my judgment to the nations.*

¹⁹*He will not argue or shout, nor will his voice be heard in the streets.* ²⁰*The bruised reed he will not crush, nor snuff out the smoldering wick. He will persist until justice is made victorious.*

The mother and brothers of Jesus

⁴⁶While Jesus was still talking to the people, his mother and his brothers wanted to speak to him and they waited outside. ⁴⁷So someone said to him:

—Your mother and your brothers are just outside; they want to speak with you.

⁴⁸Jesus answered:

—Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?

⁴⁹Then he pointed to his disciples and said:

—Look! Here are my mother and my brothers. ⁵⁰Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is for me brother, sister, or mother.

Parables

13 ¹That same day Jesus left the house and sat down by the lakeside. ²As many people gathered around him, he got in a boat. There he sat while the whole crowd stood on the shore, ³and he spoke to them in parables about many things.

⁴Jesus said:

—The sower went out to sow and, as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground where there was little soil, and the seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was not deep. ⁶But as soon the sun rose the plants were scorched and withered because they had no roots. ⁷Again other seeds fell among thistles; and the thistles grew and choked the plants. ⁸Still other seeds fell on good soil and produced a crop; some produced a hundredfold, others sixty and others thirty. ⁹If you have ears, then hear!

¹⁸—Now listen to the parable of the sower.

¹⁹When a person hears the message of the Kingdom but without taking it to himself, the devil comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed that fell along the footpath.

²⁰—The seed that fell on rocky ground stands for the one who hears the word and accepts it at once with joy. ²¹But this fickle and has no roots. No sooner is he harassed or persecuted because of the word, than he gives up.

²²—The seed that fell among the thistles is the one who hears the word, but then the worries of this life and the love of money choke the word, and it does not bear fruit.

²³—As for the seed that fell on good soil it is the one who hears the word and understands it; this bears fruit and produces a hundred, or sixty, or thirty times more.

³¹Jesus put another parable before them:

—The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. ³²It is smaller than all other seeds, but once it has fully grown, it is bigger than any garden plant; like a tree, the birds come and rest in its branches.

³³He told them another parable:

—The kingdom of heaven is like the yeast that a woman took and buried in three measures of flour until the whole mass of dough began to rise.

³⁴Jesus taught all this to the crowds by means of parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. ³⁵So what the Prophet had said was fulfilled: *I will speak in parables. I will proclaim things kept secret since the beginning of the world.*

⁴⁴—The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. The one who finds it buries it again; and so happy is he, that he goes and sells everything he has, in order to buy that field.

⁴⁵—Again the kingdom of heaven is like a trader who is looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶Once he has found a pearl of exceptional quality, he goes away, sells everything he has and buys it.

Miracle of the loaves

14 ¹⁴When Jesus went ashore, he saw the crowd gathered there and he had compassion on them. And he healed their sick. ¹⁵Late in the afternoon, his disciples came to him and said:

—We are in a lonely place and it is now late. You should send these people away, so they can go to the villages and buy something for themselves to eat.

¹⁶But Jesus replied:

—They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat.

¹⁷They answered:

—We have nothing here but five loaves and two fishes. ¹⁸Jesus said to them:

—Bring them here to me.

¹⁹Then he made everyone sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fishes, raised his eyes to heaven, pronounced the blessing, broke the loaves and handed them to the disciples to distribute to the people. ²⁰And they all ate, and everyone had enough; then the disciples gathered up the leftovers, filling twelve baskets. ²¹About five thousand men had eaten there besides women and children.

²²Immediately Jesus obliged his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, while he sent the crowd away.

Walking on the water

²³And having sent the people away, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. At nightfall, he was there alone. ²⁴Meanwhile, the boat was very far from land, dangerously rocked by the waves for the wind was against it.

²⁵At daybreak, Jesus came to them walking on the lake. ²⁶When they saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, thinking that it was a ghost. And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But at once Jesus said to them:

—Courage! Don't be afraid. It's me!

²⁸Peter answered:

—Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you walking on the water.

²⁹Jesus said to him:

—Come.

And Peter got out of the boat, walking on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰But, in face of the strong wind, he was afraid and began to sink. So he cried out:

—Lord, save me!

³¹Jesus immediately stretched out his hand and took hold of him, saying:

—Man of little faith, why did you doubt?

³²As they got into the boat, the wind dropped.

Peter's confession

16 ¹³After that Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi. He asked his disciples:

—Who do people say the Son of man is?

¹⁴They said:

—For some of them you are John the Baptist, for others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

¹⁵Jesus asked them:

—But you, who do you say I am?

¹⁶Peter answered:

—You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

¹⁷Jesus replied:

—It is well for you, Simon Barjona, for it is not flesh or blood that has revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And now I say to you: You are Peter (or *Rock*) and on this rock I will build my Church; and never will the powers of death overcome it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what you unbind on earth shall be unbound in heaven.

²⁰Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

First announcement about the passion and resurrection

²¹From that day Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem; he would suffer many things from the Jewish authorities, the chief priests and the teachers of the Law. He would be killed and be raised on the third day.

²²Then Peter took him aside and began to reproach him:

—Never, Lord! No, this must never happen to you.

²³But Jesus turned to him and said:

—Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path. You are thinking not as God does, but as people do.

²⁴Then Jesus said to his disciples:

—If you want to follow me, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me. ²⁵For whoever chooses to save his life will lose it, but the one who loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶What will one gain by winning the whole world if he destroys himself? There is nothing you can give to recover your own self.

Communitarian instruction

18 ¹At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked him:

—Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

²Then Jesus called a little child, set the child in the midst of the disciples, ³and said:

—I assure you that unless you change and become like little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Whoever becomes lowly like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, ⁵and whoever receives such a child in my name receives me.

19 ¹When Jesus had finished this teaching, he left Galilee and arrived at the border of Judea, on the other side of the Jordan River. ²A great crowd was with him and there, too, he healed their sick.

The rich youth

¹⁶It was then that a young man approached him and asked:

—Master, what good work must I do to receive eternal life?

¹⁷Jesus answered:

—Why do you ask me about what is good? Only one is Good. If you want to enter eternal life, keep the commandments.

¹⁸The young man said:

—Which commandments?

Jesus replied:

—*Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, ¹⁹honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.*

²⁰The young man said to him:

—I have kept all these commandments, what is still lacking?

²¹Jesus answered:

—If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all that you possess and give the money to the poor and you will become the owner of a treasure in heaven. Then come back and follow me.

²²On hearing this answer, the young man went away sad for he was a man of great wealth.

²³Then Jesus said to his disciples:

—Truly I say to you: it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴Yes, believe me: it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven.

²⁵On hearing this the disciples were astonished and said:

—Who, then, can be saved?

²⁶Jesus looked steadily at them and answered:

—For humans it is impossible, but for God all things are possible.

²⁷Then Peter spoke up and said:

—You see we have given up everything to follow you: what will be our lot?

²⁸Jesus answered:

—You who have followed me, listen to my words: on the Day of Renewal, when the Son of Man sits on his throne in glory, you, too, will sit on twelve thrones to rule the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹As for those who have left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or property for my Name's sake, they will receive a hundredfold and be given eternal life. ³⁰Many who are now first will be last, and many who are now last will be first.

The workers in the vineyard

20 ¹—This story throws light on the kingdom of heaven. A landowner went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ²He agreed to pay the workers a salary of a silver coin for the day, and sent them to his vineyard.

³—He went out again at about nine in the morning, and seeing others idle in the square, ⁴he said to them: 'You, too, go to my vineyard and I will pay you what is just.' So they went.

—The owner went out at midday and again at three in the afternoon, ⁵and he did the same. ⁶Finally he went out at the last working hour—it was the eleventh—and he saw others standing there. So he said to them: 'Why do you stay idle the whole day?' ⁷They answered: 'Because no one has hired us.' The master said: 'Go and work in my vineyard.'

⁸—When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager: 'Call the workers and pay them their wage, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' ⁹Those who had come to work at the eleventh hour turned up and were given a denarius each (a silver coin). ¹⁰When it was the turn of the first, they thought they would receive more. ¹¹But they, too, received a denarius each. So, on receiving it, they began to grumble against the landowner.

¹²—They said: 'These last hardly worked an hour, yet you have treated them the same as us who have endured the day's burden and heat.' ¹³The owner said to one of them: 'Friend, I have not been unjust to you. Did we not agree on a denarius a day?' ¹⁴So take what is yours and go. I want to give to the last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Don't I have the right to do as I please with my money? Why are you envious when I am kind?

¹⁶—So will it be: the last will be first, the first will be last.

Triumphant entry in Jerusalem

21 ¹When they drew near Jerusalem and arrived at Bethphage, on the mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ²saying:

—Go to the village in front of you, and there you will find a donkey tied up with its colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says something to you, say: The Lord needs them but he will send them back immediately.

⁴This happened in fulfillment of what the prophet said: ⁵*Say to the daughter of Zion: See, your king comes to you in all simplicity, riding on a donkey, a beast of burden, with its colt.*

⁶The disciples went as Jesus had instructed them, ⁷and they brought the donkey with its colt. Then they threw their cloaks on its back, and Jesus sat on them.

⁸Many people also spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The people who walked ahead of Jesus and those who followed him began to shout:

—*Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna, glory in the highest!*

¹⁰When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was disturbed. The people asked:

—Who is this man?

¹¹And the crowd answered:

—This is the Prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.

The main commandment

22 ³⁴When the Pharisees heard how Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they came together. ³⁵One of them, a teacher of the Law, tried to test him with this question:

³⁶—Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the Law?

³⁷Jesus answered:

—*You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind.*

³⁸This is the first and the most important of the commandments. ³⁹But after this there is another one very similar to it: *You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* ⁴⁰The whole Law and the Prophets are founded on these two commandments.

25 ¹⁴—Imagine someone who, before going abroad, summoned his servants to entrust his property to them. ¹⁵He gave five talents of silver to one, then two to another, and one to a third, each one according to his ability; and he went away.

¹⁶—He who received five talents went at once to do business with the money and gained another five. ¹⁷The one who received two did the same and gained another two. ¹⁸But the one with one talent dug a hole and hid his master's money.

¹⁹—After a long time, the master of those servants returned and asked for a reckoning. ²⁰The one who received five talents came with another five talents, saying: 'Lord, you entrusted me with five talents, but see I have gained five more with them.' ²¹The master answered: 'Very well, good and faithful servant, since you have been faithful in a few things, I will entrust you with much more. Come and share the joy of your master.'

²²—Then the one who had two talents came and said: 'Lord, you entrusted me with two talents; I have two more which I gained with them.' ²³The master said: 'Well, good and faithful servant, since you have been faithful in little things, I will entrust you with much more. Come and share the joy of your master.'

²⁴—Finally, the one who had received one talent came and said: 'Master, I know that you are an exacting man. You reap what you have not sown and gather what you have not invested. ²⁵I was afraid, so I hid your money in the ground. Here, take what is yours.' ²⁶But his master replied: 'Wicked and worthless servant, you know that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not invested. ²⁷Then you should have deposited my money in the bank, and you would have given it back to me with interest on my return.'

²⁸—Therefore, take the talent from him, and give it to the one who has ten. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who are unproductive, even what they have will be taken from them. ³⁰As for that useless servant, throw him out into the dark where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The judgment of nations

³¹—When the Son of Man comes in his glory with all his angels, he will sit on the throne of his Glory.
³²All the nations will be brought before him, and as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³so will he do with them, placing the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴—The King will say to those on his right: ‘Come, blessed of my Father! Take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. ³⁶I was a stranger and you welcomed me into your house. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to see me.’

³⁷—Then the good people will ask him: ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you food; thirsty and give you drink, ³⁸or a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and go to see you?’ ⁴⁰The King will answer, ‘Truly, I say to you: whenever you did this to these little ones who are my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.’

⁴¹—Then he will say to those on his left: ‘Go, cursed people, out of my sight into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels! ⁴²For I was hungry and you did not give me anything to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink; ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me into your house; I was naked and you did not clothe me; I was sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’

⁴⁴—They, too, will ask: ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, thirsty, naked or a stranger, sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ ⁴⁵The King will answer them: ‘Truly, I say to you: whatever you did not do for one of these little ones, you did not do for me.’

⁴⁶—And these will go into eternal punishment, but the just to eternal life.

Plot to kill Jesus

26 ¹When Jesus had finished all he wanted to say, he told his disciples:

²—You know that in two days’ time it will be the Passover and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.

³Then the chief priests and the Jewish authorities gathered together at the palace of the High Priest whose name was Caiaphas, ⁴and they agreed to trap Jesus and kill him. ⁵But they said among themselves: ‘Not during the feast, lest there be an uprising among the people.’

Annoiting at Bethany

¹⁴Then one of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went off to the chief priests and said:

¹⁵—How much will you give me if I hand him over to you? They promised to give him thirty pieces of silver, ¹⁶and from then on he kept looking for the best way to hand him over to them.

Passover and Eucharist

¹⁷On the first day of the Festival of the Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and said to him:

—Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal for you?

¹⁸Jesus answered:

—Go into the city, to the house of a certain man, and tell him: ‘The Master says: My hour is near, and I will celebrate the Passover with my disciples in your house.

¹⁹The disciples did as Jesus had ordered and prepared the Passover meal.

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said a blessing and broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying:

—Take and eat; this is my body.

²⁷Then he took a cup and gave thanks, and passed it to them saying:

—Drink this, all of you, ²⁸for this is my blood, the blood of the Covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

³¹Then Jesus said to them:

—You will falter tonight because of me, and all will fall. For the Scripture says: *I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.* ³²But after my resurrection I will go ahead of you to Galilee.

³³Peter responded:

—Even though all doubt you and fall, I will never fall. ³⁴Jesus replied:

—Truly, I say to you: this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.

³⁵Peter said:

—Though I have to die with you, I will never deny you. And all the disciples said the same.

Jesus before the Sanhedrin

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus brought him to the house of the High Priest Caiaphas, where the teachers of the Law and the Jewish authorities were assembled.

⁵⁸Peter followed him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the High Priest; he entered and sat with the guards, waiting to see the end. ⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole Supreme Council needed some false evidence against Jesus, so that they might put him to death. ⁶⁰But they were unable to find any, even though false witnesses came forward. ⁶¹At last, two men came up and declared, ‘This man said: I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’

⁶²The High Priest then stood up and asked Jesus:

—Have you no answer at all? What is this evidence against you?

⁶³But Jesus kept silent.

So the High Priest said to him:

—In the name of the living God, I command you to tell us: Are you the Messiah, the Son of God?

⁶⁴Jesus answered:

—It is just as you say. I tell you more: from now on, you will see *the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Most Powerful God and coming on the clouds of heaven.*

⁶⁵Then the High Priest tore his clothes, saying:

—He has blasphemed. What more evidence do we need? You have just heard these blasphemous words.

⁶⁶What is your decision?

They answered:

—He must die!

Jesus before Pilate

27 ¹¹Jesus stood before the governor who questioned him:

—Are you the King of the Jews?

Jesus answered:

—You say so.

¹²The chief priests and the Elders accused him, but he made no answer. ¹³Pilate said to him:

—Do you hear all the charges they bring against you? ¹⁴But he did not answer even a single question, so that the governor wondered.

The scorn of soldiers

²⁷The Roman soldiers took Jesus into the palace of the governor and the whole troop gathered around him. ²⁸They stripped him and dressed him in a purple military cloak. ²⁹Then, twisting a crown of thorns, they forced it onto his head, and placed a reed in his right hand. They knelt before Jesus and mocked him, saying:

—Long life to the King of the Jews!

³⁰They spat on him, took the reed from his hand and struck him on the head with it.

³¹When they had finished mocking him, they pulled off the purple cloak and dressed him in his own clothes again, and led him out to be crucified.

Death of Jesus

³²On the way they met a man from Cyrene called Simon, and forced him to carry the cross of Jesus. ³³When they reached the place called Golgotha (or Calvary) which means *the Skull*, ³⁴they offered him wine mixed with gall. Jesus tasted it but would not take it.

³⁵There they crucified him and divided his clothes among themselves, casting lots to decide what each should take. ³⁶Then they sat down to guard him. ³⁷The statement of his offense was displayed above his head and it read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' ³⁹People passing by shook their heads and insulted him, ⁴⁰saying:

—Aha! So you will destroy the Temple and build it up again in three days. Now save yourself and come down from the cross, if you are Son of God.

⁴¹In the same way the chief priests, the Elders and the teachers of the Law mocked him. ⁴²They said:

—The man who saved others cannot save himself. Let the King of Israel now come down from his cross and we will believe in him. ⁴³He trusted in God; let God rescue him if God wants to, since he himself said: I am the Son of God.

⁴⁴Even the robbers who were crucified with him insulted him.

⁴⁵From midday darkness fell over the whole land until mid-afternoon. ⁴⁶At about three o'clock, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, '*Eloi, Eloi, lamma Sabbacthani?*' which means: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? ⁴⁷As soon as they heard this, some of the bystanders said:

—He is calling for Elijah.

⁵⁴The captain and the soldiers who guarded Jesus were greatly terrified when they saw the earthquake and all that had happened, and said:

—Truly, this man was a Son of God.

Burial of Jesus

⁵⁷It was now evening and there arrived a wealthy man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and the governor ordered that the body be given him. ⁵⁹So Joseph took the body of Jesus, wrapped it in a clean linen sheet ⁶⁰and laid it in his own new tomb which had been cut out of the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance of the tomb and left.

⁶²On the following day (the day after the Preparation for the Passover), the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate ⁶³and said to him:

—Sir, we remember that when that impostor was still alive, he said: I will rise after three days. ⁶⁴Therefore, have his tomb secured until the third day, lest his disciples come and steal the body and say to the people: He was raised from the dead. This would be a worse lie than the first.

⁶⁵Pilate answered them:

—You have soldiers, go and take all the necessary precautions.

⁶⁶So they went to the tomb and secured it, sealing the stone and placing it under guard.

Resurrection

28 ¹After the Sabbath, at the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to visit the tomb. ⁵The angel said to the women:

—Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here, for he is risen as he said. Come, see the place where they laid him; ⁷then go at once and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead and is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there. This is my message for you.

⁸They left the tomb at once in holy fear, yet with great joy, and they ran to tell the news to the disciples.

⁹Suddenly, Jesus met them on the way and said:

—Peace.

The women approached him, embraced his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰But Jesus said to them:

—Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to set out for Galilee; there they will see me.

Mission of the disciples

¹⁶As for the Eleven disciples, they went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷When they saw Jesus, they bowed before him, although some doubted.

¹⁸Then Jesus approached them and said:

—I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go, therefore, and make disciples from all nations. Baptize them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teach them to fulfill all that I have commanded you. I am with you always until the end of this world.

The other gospels have their own interpretation of these events and have their own particularities as well. We have chosen the most representative of each one, and in the passages that are common we have chosen those that have a special characteristic.

THE CONCISE BIBLE

Christian Community Bible

Catholic Pastoral Edition

Copyright © 2002 by **Claretian Publications**

A division of Claretian Communications, Inc.

U.P. P.O. Box 4, diliman 1101 Quezon City, Philippines

TE: 921-3984 • FAX: 921-6502

Email [mailto:: cci@claret.org](mailto:cci@claret.org) Website: <http://www.bible.claret.org/>

Claretian Publications is a pastoral endeavor of the Claretian Missionaries in the Philippines. It aims to promote a renewed spirituality rooted in the process of total liberation and solidarity in response to the needs, challenges and pastoral demands of the Church today.

Originally published by

Ediciones Mensajero, Spain