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Daily Bible Notes/Highlights Genesis through Revelation 2014 (update 2015)
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Matthew

Matthew
C1-3

C1 Vss 1-24 It has been four hundred years since any word from The Lord has been proclaimed by a prophet. Matthew the tax collector opens with the faith lineage of Jesus. He begins with Abraham. Matthew was one of the twelve. As a public official and a hates tax collector, it is ironic that he writes the gospel to convince the Jews that Jesus is the one they seek.

Some names in the lineage Jacob and Judah. Tamar who conceived by her father in law (Judah) and had twins. Boaz whose mother was Rahab the prostitute. Ruth the Moabite and great grandmother of David. Another woman who is an adulterer in this lineage is mentioned. David had hundreds of wives, but this woman has the son who continues the royal promise.

Notice we see Zerrubabel who has a central role in the return to Jerusalem and rebuilding.

It is so important to note that while it is appropriate to call the period between the testaments the silent period. It is not a period when God's plan of salvation is delayed. The

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gospel leads finally to Joseph, Mary's husband.

The writer alludes to three fourteen generation periods.

The child is born. Given the pregnancy without a man, we can imagine Joseph's pain. As betrothed and by law all he had to do was to report her to the priests. But he did not desire to do it. An angel intercedes and he believes the angel's account (20-21). Joseph is told do not fear to take her as a wife. So this clearly identifies the relationship as a betrothal.

Matthew

C2 Vss 1-18. It is clear where Jesus is born. Wise men seek him. Herod hears about it. He asks the religious leaders and the religious leaders knew. We see in the life of Jesus evidence that the religious leaders had the knowledge of who he was. Here it begins (3-4). Herod also meets with the wise men, and commands that they return with the whereabouts of the child. They do not.

The parents and child escape to Egypt. How ironic that they find refuge in Egypt. Angels are a major theme early on in Jesus' life. Satan being fooled calls for the massacre of the male-boys.

Matthew demonstrating that Jesus is the Messiah uses words from Jeremiah as evidence (18). It's so unfortunate that they held the prophets in such low regard. After Herod's death the family returns to Nazareth.

C3 Vss 1-17 Now, the first public voice, John! Clearly John is preaching repentance and sin cleansing (2). John early-on identifies the issues with the religious leaders. John can be seen has a no-nonsense, confrontational truth-bearer. There's no question about the condition of the religious leaders.

John's baptism is in the imagery of Elijah, but a whole new administration will take place with the one to come (11). The one coming will have not only a proclamation ministry, but a ministry of implementation (12).

John baptized Jesus and He is authorized and anointed by a voice from heaven proclaiming Jesus as Son! There has never been any designation like this in all of history.

C4 Vss 1-25 Jesus is driven into the wilderness. Now, it is ministry baptism. He's tempted. Noteworthy, the first is food as with the first sin. Each consequent temptation is more powerful. Whereas Jesus defeats the first temptation by relying on the written word of God (4). Satan presents the Word of God as the authority to follow him-Satan (7). Finally, offering all the temptations of the world if He'll worship him-Satan. This is what the whole story of sin is about. Sin represents obedience to Satan with his primary objective of being God.

When John is arrested Jesus heads to Nazareth first. Then from there the region of death. What a launch for a His ministry. He didn't seek the lights and glitter, but headed to where

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spiritual decay was at its greatest. His message, repent from sin (12-17).

He encounters His first disciples. We focus here on the qualifications. The only qualification was to follow Him (19). This is so important and must not be overlooked. We don't believe that it says that people need no qualifications to be leaders, because it's clear they need extensive training. They were taught and observed Jesus for an estimated 15000 hours over a three year period.

The point here is they were to follow Him with their problems and issues. And these issues and problems would be addressed and overcome as they followed Him.

Note as He taught, He healed (23). As a result the news about Him spread.

C5 Vss 1-48. Jesus would set the foundation for a refreshing mental and spiritual renewal with the beatitudes. Actually, all He was doing was restoring every mental and behavioral concept that had been degraded by the religious leaders with the passage of time.

It is a litany of blessings that can be reached by anyone. No status or position was required. Hope and opportunity was available to everyone (3-10).

Speaking of overcoming the victim's spirit. We're blessed when people lie and persecute us. Jesus gives clarity to the words over centuries from kings and prophets not to esteem evil doers who seem to prosper (11-12).

It's clear that God's people are light and salt bearers. And His followers are to let or broadcast their faith (16). Let everyone see.

Jesus is not a Law abolisher. He is the Law in-persona. Jesus juxtaposes following the Law with the version the religious leaders taught. What's the difference? The religious leaders taught Law to observe as acts of self-righteousness, but the purpose of the Law was for a people who belong to God. They observe it out of their family relationship with God. They are demonstrating that they love God (17-20).

Jesus identified anger as a serious personality and relational enemy. He 's able to prioritize religious activities with relational accountability. Resolve matters first with each other before bring an offering (23-24).

Another significant historical problem was adultery. According to Matthew's account Jesus addressed the problem early in His ministry

Jesus addresses the slippery slope of adultery. Looking upon a woman. What Jesus means is the mental preparation for the physical participation. It's adulterous when the activity is preparatory to physical consummation. Saying, "we didn't touch each other" is not the standard of denying an adulterous relationship. Jesus follows this standard of adultery with the inability to control imagery and conceptualization.

The religious leaders did not know the sin of divorce. There is no sin in divorcing. The sin is to divorce for anything but a breach of the covenant relationship and then to remarry

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(see Christ based Counseling Handbook, Marriage). It is adultery a corporal sin calling for the death penalty.

He expects His followers to keep their vows, manage the eliminate wrathfully conduct, and be a difference maker with persons who would misuse us (38-47)

C6 Vss 1- He was concerned about the poor, but also knew the prideful motives in dark humanity. Concerning the poor we are not to do it to be seen. The same can be said about fasting. These are issues about motives. Managing our hearts and objectives (1-17)

Jesus' knew humanity's obsession with wealth and notoriety. When money or wealth is the driver of life's purpose it is ruinous with no eternal value.

Jesus provides the appropriate focus for every believer. Seek the will of God and His principles above all else (33).

C7-9

C7 Vss 1-28 Jesus words concerning judging others are the most manipulated. Admittedly, if you only read one verse without all Jesus says on the topic you'll be left thinking it is not right to judge at all, which would leave the church completely vulnerable. Jesus is concerned about the system that we use to judge people (2). And gives clarity when He says, "first get the log out of your own eye," then you will see well enough to help (3-5). Again, if every believer is self-examining, they have the ability to correct others. Jesus' words were directed against the Pharisees who would attempt to correct the people when their sins were the same or greater than those they attempted to correct.

The optimal word on asking is to keep doing so. God will respond (9-11)

Jesus provides a litany of concepts. How we treat others should be the same standard as what we expect (12). The juxtaposition of heaven and he'll cannot be more clear. There are plenty of avenues to hell, but the path to heaven is narrow (13-14). So much for those who are proponents of many religions leading the way.

Jesus is so pragmatic. Watch the results prophets. Watch their acts. You identify people by what they do (20).

He continues by providing a warning and standard to measure everyone. Only those who do the will of my father will enter. Notice, many will say what they "did", but not how they lived! Obedience is greater than sacrifice.

He concludes His disciple standards emphatically with a marvelous illustration. It's about hearing God 'a word and living it. These persons withstand the floods of life.

C8 Vss 1-34 Matthew begins to focus on people healing and relationships. Jesus heals

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leprosy. A man knelt and called Jesus to be cleansed. Notice the fellow said, "if you are willing, you can heal me." This is what no one asks today. They don't ask you are willing. Here's a sad fact, everyone does not need healing or their circumstances changed. This writer has a saying, 'hitting the lottery is the worst thing that can happen to most people. The Lord would never get their attention. ' Jesus healed the man, and directed him to honor the Law by showing himself to the priests.

One of the great healing experiences in the life of Jesus is the "heathen" Roman officer with an ill servant. The officer understood authority and testimony. He understood based on testimony that Jesus had God-given authority to heal. He became an example to every Jew and Gentile about faith. He caused Jesus to marvel (10).

Every believer must understand the sacrificial cost of following Jesus. The illustration and response about the son who desired to bury his dad sounds harsh and insensitive. However, it demonstrates that nothing is more important than following Jesus, and most importantly motive is everything. Why didn't the young man ask if he could bury his dad? This gives Jesus the place of Lordship. There's no question in this writer's mind that the young man had a heart issue. He was giving an excuse and following Jesus was not his primary desire. Jesus' knows our motives (18-22).

Jesus clearly has authority over both the natural and spiritual. Every believer needs to be completely focused on Jesus when he/she believes his/her ship of life is sinking. Jesus is completely aware of our circumstances (22-26)

Concerning demon possession, note their our circumstances within human beings that not even swine can tolerate. Also, when Jesus is present around demon activity, the demons scream out. This is a characteristic of demon activity in the presence of Jesus (29)

C 9 Vss 1-38

If there is ever evidence that sin can make us physically sick, the experience with the paralyzed man is evidence. Jesus forgave his sins. The religious leaders took exception to Jesus' act of forgiving sin. The leaders knew it meant Jesus was doing only what God could do. Given their unbelief Jesus step to a higher level. He commands the man to walk (1-6)

Notice the call to Matthew. There were no conditions other than to follow. People are to follow Jesus before they actually discover completely who He is. Invited to dinner with the tax collector the Pharisees ridiculed Jesus, but Jesus' response must stay with every believer. We are here for the sinner 12-13).

Jesus' word concerning fasting is that it is to be a personal experience and not done for show.

We are able to see Jesus healing to and fro. Called to see a man's sick daughter a woman reaches out to touch the hem of his garment. She's healed! If we'll reach out to Him, he'll meet us in some way.

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Arriving at the synagogue leader's home Jesus removes the faith-killers! When it comes to the most difficult experiences where healing is required excuse the faith-killers. Then God will do His work (23-25).

He opens the eyes of the blind, and though he tells them not to tell anyone. They disobeyed Him, understandably. Our faith is personal but not private. When a person encounters Jesus they will tell somebody (27-32).

The Pharisees charge Jesus with operating under the authority of Satan. Mark records that Jesus calls this blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, and unforgivable (.). That is, to continue with the conduct is unforgivable.

C10-12

C10 Vss 1-42. Disciples are followers subject to an instructional discipline. Apostles are those who are sent out. Jesus sends His disciples in their first apostolic campaign. Their first assignment was to Jews. It is the precedent commission to heal and cast out demons. They are to shake those who refuse their message.

Jesus gives a word of persecution. Again leaders need to count the cost of ministry. True leadership will lead to periods of persecution (18-20). He includes a look at apocalypse. It is an act of enduring (22).

The reality is that believers must understand that we are no better than Jesus. He was crucified (24-25). They called Jesus prince of demons, we should not expect anything better but worse (25).

Denying Jesus on earth will be a devastating result. Jesus will not acknowledge before show father.

Again, sacrifice is indicated by Jesus. Following Jesus requires us to lose our personal self will (38-39).

C11 Vss 1-30

John hears about Jesus and sends messengers Jesus answers with actions and not words. "Tell John what you have seen." The question is curious since John is the one who Baptized Jesus. However, John might be suffering with cabin fever. When we are under duress, we are not clear about things we were so clear about at one time (4-6)

Jesus gives this startling revelation about John. None is greater than John, but he makes every person who follows Him as important as John in value to the kingdom. This should raise the kingdom esteem of every believer (10-11).

Jesus also has a striking comparison of those who complained about He and John. It's a

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direct hit on religion. They said John was possessed with demons because he apparently had a very narrow diet. Jesus on the other hand had a much larger diet so He was a glutton and drunk. One who occasioned with sinners. Jesus called it child's play (16-18).

We'll see often in the Gospels that while Jesus did miracles there were many who did not believe. Here's an often missed citation. Jesus declares, Sodom a city destroyed by God will be better off on Judgment day. How persons can think there will be no final judgment, or that a loving God will not allow people to go to a place of eternal torment is refuted here. However, throughout His life Jesus will give more clarity (

Here's a prayer often missed. There is so much on the "Lord's Prayer." It is a prayer of thanks. And the prayer addresses God's revelation to every day people. Following the prayer, there is the appeal to the burdened. He defines Himself as humble and gentle of heart. This is in direct opposition to the religious arrogance of the Pharisees and others.

C12 Vss 1-50. The Sabbath was not a religious observance day, it was a day designed for man's health and well being (3-8). Jesus affirms this position by healing on the Sabbath (11-13).

Jesus flees knowing there plans ahead of time. This is an excellent example that believers need to avoid dangers to keep their mission alive. He did not deny who He was. Eventually the time does come when He would give Himself (15).

Matthew points out Jesus' fulfillment of prophecy in Isaiah. Some reference to Matthew as the door from the Old Testament to the New Testament. He'll not fight or shout. He'll crush the weakest reed.

Jesus is accused of operating for Satan since He cast out demons. There is at least three principles here: 1. Anyone thinking Satan did not have authority over demons should reconsider. Jesus' response is clear that Satan and demons are on the same team or in the same camp. Jesus' response is that what the Pharisees said is faulty. Satan would not exorcise demons, it would be fighting against himself (25-27). 2. Jesus proves Himself to be more powerful than Satan's authority (28-29). 3. Jesus was operations as a man under the operation of the Holy Spirit. The most reprehensible unforgivable sin is to deny the works of the Holy Spirit. Even if one does not believe the Son of Man (Jesus), to deny what He was doing was simply unforgivable. This is what some call the unpardonable sin. It's a established denial of the works of God (29-32).

Jesus speaks of the heart condition or motives. Motives create actions (34-35).

This is one of the most overlooked, abused principles of Scripture. "Only an evil adulterous generation would demand a miraculous sign." People are gullible sign magnets. Comparably, God's word is more important. If there is ever an experience in the life of Jesus expressing this point this is it (39-40). Overcoming death in three days is the sign if signs.

Jesus explains the activity of evil spirits like rodents. They return to their previous host.

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The host must be prepared and never allow them (43-45).

Here Jesus identifies his true brothers and sisters. Anyone doing the will of His Father. Mary was His earthly mother. But she is not the mother of God, which is a preposterous statement no matter how it is explained (48-49).

C13 This chapter begins with Jesus revealing four types of followers. He disclosed these to a huge crowd. He knew everyone following Him was not with Him. They are: Wayside or footpath, shallow or stoned, thorns and thistles, and good ground. He explains all four to His disciples. Three of four are non-producers an impossibility when God's word is in the heart. These three are church-goers. But the fourth produces (18-23).

Following the four types of hearers, Jesus tells a cautionary parable to allow the four to grow together. The wheat and tare are so close in comparison it is often difficult to tell them apart. However, when the tare distinguishes themselves by their conduct, they can be removed (see Matt 18:15-18).

The sphere or presence within of Kingdom of a Heaven is so valuable, it's worth giving everything else away. It is an eternal reality as opposed to all if the temporary surroundings. It has its own eternal esteem.

The fish net parable is more evidence that there is a hell. As shared before, and in this case good fish are separated from wicked fish. Righteous people will be separated from the wicked (49-50).

Jesus is rejected in Nazareth His home town. The people refused to believe Him because He grew up around them. They knew His family. Their prior knowledge screened out anything he said or did. This is a human characteristic, and demonstrates why it is so important not to violate people's thinking. When a leader falls as an example, it creates an enduring image and thought pattern in the mind. People can forgive, but the imagery remains. While Jesus did not do anything wrong, He (Jesus) could not overcome the imagery in the people's mind of the carpenter's son. If Jesus experienced this difficulty everyone needs to stand and take notice (54-58).

C14 The Chapter begins with the death of John the great prophet. This should be enough of a testimony that believers give their lives literally. He was hated because of his indictment against Herod for marrying his brother's wife. He finally has the opportunity and there is no Cinderella reduce. John dies a martyr (3-12).

Once Jesus heard about John he launched out in a boat desiring to be alone, but the crowds followed. He fed thousands of them. He used the available resources. God says use the resources in your hands (16-21).

Again on the water the disciples were in trouble. They could see what they thought was a spirit. Again, the mind screens out what it is seeing and only allows what is believable or logical. We all have and need this filtering. But it was Jesus! They all have an opportunity to do the same but only Peter is able to leverage the opportunity. And asking Jesus, Peter

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walked on the water. But he did not exercise the principles of faith. He needed to know faith meets opposition and not be dismayed by counter-faith activities. The wind picked up and down he went. Faith requires investment from beginning of the faith episode to the ending. He called out when he began drowning. "Save me!" Jesus saves again and again (26-30). Beginning as mere followers and seeing all Jesus said and did, they worshipped Him (32)

Arriving in Gennesaret the news spreads that He's there. Just touching the end of His garment people were healed.

C15 The characteristic of the religious is their majoring in minorities. They were concerned about hand washing before they ate. While they omitted the greater issues: honoring parents. God is more concerned with obedience to His word as opposed as our personal traditions. Jesus called them hypocrites! The disciples were concerned about the Pharisees being offended.

Jesus said ignore them! This is a word to each person doing the will of God. Calling them blind guides. This is said considering His words saying not to judge others. He clearly judged and judged righteously. What he said was accurate and deserved. Jesus is concerned about bias judgment and judgment without personal accountability (5-7).

It's not what goes in that defiles (spiritually). Clearly spoiled food can make a person sick. But Jesus was more concerned with the condition of a person's spiritual heart. Words represent the heart (spiritual heart). It is the seat of all sins (16-19). These defile in a far greater way than spoiled or corrupted food.

A gentile woman cries for her daughter, she humbled herself completely before Jesus. It didn't matter that she was a gentile. She stayed before Him. Her plea was answered (21-28).

C16 Vss 1-28 Again we see those who look for signs (See Matt. 12:39-40). Jesus warns the disciples to be aware of the Pharisee's condition as liars and hypocrites. Jesus was speaking in metaphors and we learn from Him that we need to understand how He teaches. He uses metaphors. They understood what leavening action does to bread. They took Jesus too literally. This is a problem for anyone who does not consider all the methodology Jesus uses to reach people (7-11).

Jesus ask the question that every believer must answer. Who do you say that I am. These followers (disciples) continue to learn about Jesus. Remember they were only called to follow Him as any believer and to learn about Jesus. Peter responds, "the Messiah, Son of the living God" (14-16). Only God reveals this truth.

The keys of the kingdom always mean the authority to govern, control, or administrate. By extension today the Church is allowed or given permission to adjudicate its affairs. But it is limited to the framework that God has given (18-19).

Peter reprimands Jesus for saying He would be killed. Then these incredible words, "you

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are only seeing things only from a human point of view." Jesus called it a trap.

C17-19

C17 Vss 1-27 What an extraordinary experience when Jesus was transfigured. This is the point. Believers have extraordinary experiences in Christ. We have the experiences when it is as if we can hear the voice of the Father as they did literally (1-6). Jesus gives the writing disciples instructions not to say anything until after He is resurrected. He tells them but they don't understand (9).

The disciples, still learning could not exorcise a demonic. Jesus' answer demonstrates the need for daily prayer and regular fasting. Persons need spiritual muscle with many circumstances. These youngsters did not realize the importance of being persons in daily fellowship with The Lord (14-20). Matthews account uses the term "faith" as what they lacked. But other writers identified the lack of faith by their poor prayer-life (14-20).

Jesus continues throughout His ministry to let His disciples know His destination with death. He came to die like a choice animal prepared for sacrifice (22).

Jesus always knows the issues before we call upon Him, but will we call and He honors the tax system. We see these truths on the temple tax experience. The point is to be lawful so there won't be issues presented as obstacles to ministry. There would be times when presenting the word was the issue. Therefore it is important to mitigate other hindrances. Pay taxes (24-27). The Lord will make a way.

C18 Vss 1-35. The "who is the greatest in the kingdom" is an ego issue that confronts everyone. But each believer must listen and make Jesus' answer a reality. Humility as an objective is far more godly than seeking who is going to be the greatest. Interestingly, Jesus connects the question with causing people to stumble (1-6). Today, the monarch or king leader mentality with the rich and posh treatment is a major stumbling block. It creates "who is the greatest" copycats, and largely presents a poor impression of the faith. Literally, Jesus is talking about having the appropriate perspective of children while he also addresses a sober perspective of ourselves among fellow believers (7-10).

Concerning the lost sheep, Luke died a more extensive presentation (Luke 15).

Jesus recognized the need for correcting interpersonal issues. The offended goes to the offender. If there is acceptance great. If not other witnessed should be invited. If there is still no acceptance the matter is taken before the church. The church is always understood as persons with a record of faithfulness. There's no such thing as placing matters before people who do not have a complete commitment to the church. The church at the time were persons in the community residing daily. Nothing is more unfortunate than to have a critical decision decided by persons who are on a local church's membership rolls (15-19).

One of the most misunderstood text concerning forgiveness is in Matthew's version of forgiveness. Although the question concerns how often a person should be forgiven, the subsequent parable concerns the size of the debt or sin. This incongruence depends on

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Luke to give the clarity concerning forgiveness where repentance is required (21-27, See Luke 17:14).

C19 Vss 1-18. Jesus revisits the matter of divorce. This was addressed in Chapter 4. Here his disciples see Jesus' perspective as extremely difficult. They reasoned it was not good to get married . Jesus Parable of the Eunuchs is clear and infers the disciple would still be involved in sex. Figuratively, they needed to be as Eunuchs who had no sexual genitalia if they were going to serve the kingdom of a God.

Now this is where it is clear that Jesus previous discussion concerning children was more figurative addressing all believers and focused on the "who is greater" mentality. It is a stumbling block (Matthew 18). Here Jesus is literally talking about children and not simply the spirit of children that adult leaders need to have (13-14).

The rich have no special place with The Lord because of their riches.

He was not ready or willing to give all. His riches prevented him. However, one does not have to be rich to have a similar problem.

The disciples thought it was impossible if the rich could not make it. Jesus reply is another keeper. Nothing is impossible with God (25-30).

C20 Vss 1-33. Here's a view of God's fairness and justice. The focus of the parable is not on how others are treated in comparison, but based upon what each one's personal agreement. It has to do with service, and specifically a comparison of Jews and Gentiles. Regardless of when begins the work as opposed to those already involved, what was the agreement. When people are paid what they agreed too, they are not treated unfairly if others are paid similarly. This means to stay focused in self concerning compensation for service in The Lord (8-16).

Now the Jesus and disciples head to his final visit and death (17-19).

Jesus now clearly wants the disciples to understand service. Again two disciples seek an opportunity to upstage the other disciples interjecting their mother to plea. They want special seating places in the kingdom. The others became upset. Jesus was consistent. The greatest must be the servant (24-28)

Jesus heals two blind men. They yelled louder for His help even when people were telling them to shut-up. This kind of persistent will always be met with God's approval. He healed them.

C21 Vss 1-46. While the typical king would be on an extraordinary stallion Jesus seek a beast of burden, a donkey. As he rode into Jerusalem with Herat adulation (8-10).

Entering the temple he sanctified the temple recognizing the cheats within. Scandals in the temple has always been an issue and every ministry has to do all possible to protect itself against scandal. It's so important to note that he restores the temple and heals there (14-15). Nevertheless there are haters there. No matter how valuable the work, there will be haters.

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Not to bear fruit when this was the purpose of the fig tree was reprehensible. It withered quickly in the disciples perspective. It's an object lesson for everyone in the kingdom to bear fruit by being faithful (18-22).

The antagonist and haters are forever challenging (23).

One memorable examples of faith and action vs. faith and talking is here. One said he would not do what his father asked, but changed his mind and obeyed. The second said he would do what his father asked, but didn't. The obedient son is the first. It was not what he said, but what he did. It is an example of sinners who obey versus the religious who say, but do not have faithfulness (28-32).

What an indictment, the parable of the evil farmers. The parable is eve fiancé that the religious leaders knew the a Son of a God but could care less. They were protecting their turf (34-40). They knew they were the wicked followers (45-46).

C22 Vss 1-46 Jesus continues his words of hope for the hopeless. His own people rejected Him both in terms of race and religion. But the sinner, downcast, and Gentiles received Him (1-9). Whosoever will is there fire invited.

The religious leaders continue their hate efforts. Jesus reminds them that they need to pay taxes. Pay the Caesar since his face is on the coins (15-21).

Jesus overcomes the Sadducees with a response to their silly effort to disprove resurrection. We learn about marriage as well through Jesus' response. Marriage is not a part of God's original design. The instruction will not continue in heaven. Secondly God is God of the living. That is Abraham and others will live again (31-32). They didn't know Scripture intimately.

Love God, love your neighbor is the command to believers. The whole law and prophets are framed on these two principles (37-40).

Jesus confounds the Pharisees. He asked them the Messiah, whose some is He? But twisted them by asking so why did David called the Messiah Lord, how could the Messiah be his son. The answer is rather straight forward spiritually. But to the religious mind it's not possible to answer (41-45).

C23 Vss 1-39 It is a long time problem with leaders who don't practice what they preach, and how true it is when they have greater demands than they place upon themselves (1-4).

Jesus spends extraordinary time talking about the condition of religious hypocrisy (6-7).

There's so much controversy concerning what Jesus said about being called a rabbi, father or teacher. This must be viewed in the context of Vss 1-5. It's the kind of approach used

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with plucking out an eye if it causes one to sin. This illustration is concerned with those who insist on some kind of platitude. This is juxtaposed with being humble. (12).

Leaders are blind guides and bound for sorrow when they can't enter heaven themselves and prevent others (13-23). They master in minor things (24). They are concerned about hand washing but not heart washing (25-28).

Thru speak as they have been faithful alone with their ancestors when they killed them just as they hate Jesus. There's nothing like Christ haters in the Church (29-32).

As shone previously Jesus judges them. They are snakes! They have executed God's spokespersons. They will be judged based on it (36). Again we emphasize that Jesus judged. He was concerned about biased judgment or judgment out of ill-will.

C24 Vss 1-50 Jesus made what appeared to be an apocalyptic statement, "not one stone upon another." His disciples were curious "when would this be?" Please see (Milk to Maturity, Eschatology section). It's not clear what period or ages He is addressing but one thing is clear, He is ambiguous by design. Here's what every believer can conclude and this does not change. No one knows the day or hour. The time will always rest with God almighty, but what we can do is be ready and found faithful (42-50).

C25 Vss 1-46 Jesus continues with a parable that affirms what He taught in the previous chapter. Again the object of the parable is to be ready (13).

Jesus turns His attention to final accountability. This is masterful instruction by the Master. There is a day when followers will need to give account. The parable also suggest that there are those who will be weeded out at the last opportunity. Those who literally did nothing with all that God have them. Then to be useless is met with disaster (30). Again this matches with all of the apocalyptic teachings.

Continuing, no should misunderstand. Jesus will judge nations (31-33). There will be many who are deceived. Jesus identifies the litmus test as those who helped the downtrodden. This is the Old Testament parallel to providing for the foreigner, orphan and widows. Today. The focus is too much on morals and not enough on care for those who are less fortunate other than lip service.

C26 Vss 1-75. Jesus finished His advanced course on end times. The religious leaders plan their final assault. The enemy of our souls is a relentless foe (3-5).

Jesus dines at the lepers home where a woman ministers to Him with fine perfume. Here, we witness coy and slick religious piety in His disciples. They (in their envy) argue the money could have been given to the poor. Let's give them the benefit of doubt here on the other hand. They had been with Jesus and learned their lessons well concerning the poor and humility. They wanted to show Jesus they learned the lesson. They were not accustomed to seeing Jesus bathe in luxury (figuratively), but this time Jesus wanted them to know it is different. He was being prepared for His ultimate challenge, death (10-12).

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Judas thereafter one of those disciples seeking money and most likely the one complaining about the expensive perfume plots to betray Jesus (14-16).

Now the final supper. As with all who filled Jesus when He told the story of the four types of hearers He knew. Everyone following Him was not with Him. He concludes with these words, it would have been better if he had not been born. This could be said of countless people who reject the love of Jesus (23-24).

Jesus breaks bread and speaks of His body. And share wine and related it to His blood. He further shares they will all betray Him. Peter more than all promises alliance and loyalty. It's not long before they are all fleeing.

Jesus prayer at Gethsemane is the model crisis prayer when the pressures of life are at a crushing level. He asks that there be another way. This means God is open to suggestions, or alternatives. Jesus asks the will of His Father. Even Jesus did not claim or presume He would not face the cross. He trusted His Father. And when He saw the men arrive. He had His answer. He would die.

Judas greets Jesus with a kiss. The disciples were ready to fight and did inflict damage, but Jesus told them to put away their swords. When they said they would be with Jesus they meant they would fight. But it was not Jesus' way. Jesus has a manner of calling His captors cowards. They had plenty of opportunity to arrest him in the temple, but they came at night to His secret place.

If we are not careful the enemy will intrude our secret places of refuge if allowed, but this was by design for the hour in history (55-56).

Jesus is taken where? He's taken to the High Priest. This represents the sickness of the religious order. It was in the "highest" place of the faith. He prejudged Jesus and they hit Jesus in violation of the Law they were called to uphold (67-68).

The youthful Peter watching at a distance even denies any association with Jesus. Willing to fight for Jesus in one instance, but won't even claim an association with Jesus when it appeared it would cost his life (69-75).

C 27 vs 1-65 Jesus goes from the religious leader Jewish to the political leader Gentile. There is this movement in both worlds and Jesus is rejected by all. Meanwhile Judas hangs himself (1-14). Complete rejection happens when the people are persuaded to choose Barabbas over Jesus (20-22).

He's stripped and beaten. It is noteworthy that Simon a black man is linked with carrying the cross for Jesus. What a distinguished and honorable calling. Jesus is crucified. The chief priest and other haters exalted in His death (39-44).

He cries out clearly indicating His aloneness between man and his Father. He died and the curtain was torn dividing the Holy of Holies. No more holiness in the temple. The holiness

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if within each believer in the work of Jesus on the cross. He's buried.

Joseph of Arimathea wraps Jesus. He was both a disciple and rich man. He carried out service even when it appears all was lost. It so important to note the religious leaders safeguard against anyone taking Jesus body. So the body is under guard (57- 59; 62-66).

C28 Vss 1-20 Note the women continue to exercise their responsibility. The men are in their pity and denial. This cannot be forgotten and therefore is recorded. The women are the first with the good news as a result. Much like Jael getting the victory over Sisera. Jesus tells them to tell His inner circle (8-10).

The guards are paid to lie and say Jesus was stolen. It's a story that continues (11-15).

The disciples gather with Jesus and they are given their final instructions. They've witnessed in word and deed. They now are ready to turn the world upside down (16-20).

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