

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

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LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published January Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

There was a certain rich man who lived in great luxury and at his gate laid a beggar named Lazarus, whose body was covered with sores. He was hoping that he might receive scraps from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

After a while the beggar died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man died, was buried and from his torment in hell raised his eyes to see Lazarus sitting next to Abraham up in heaven. He cried out, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip his finger in water to cool my tongue and stop this burning!"

But Abraham said, "Remember, my son, when your life was filled with all good things while Lazarus had a bad life and no one cared. Now Lazarus is being comforted while you are being tormented. Also, there is a deep pit between us so anyone who would pass from here to you cannot, and no one can cross from where you are to us."

The rich man said, "Then I beg you father Abraham, send Lazarus to my five brothers at my father's house to warn them so they will not end up here where I am being tormented!"

Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them."

The rich man answered, "That is not enough of a warning, father Abraham! But if someone were to rise from death and go to them, then they would repent."

But Abraham said, "If they do not take the words of Moses and the prophets seriously, then they will not be convinced even if someone were to rise from death."

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 16, Verses 19-31

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published February Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

A teacher of the Law asked Jesus, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" (Not counting the Ten Commandments, Moses and the Prophets gave the people hundreds of laws that dealt with morality, social laws about civil matters, and religious laws.)

Jesus replied, "The most important one is this: ***'Listen, Israel! There is only one God who is your Lord!***

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

The second most important commandment is this: ***'Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.'***

All the laws that have been given to you by Moses and the Prophets are based on these two commands. There is no other commandment more important than these two."

The teacher was impressed with Jesus' answer and said, "Then it is more important to obey these two commandments than to offer on the altar animals and other sacrifices to God"

Jesus noticed how wise his answer was and told him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God."

New Testament, Book of **Mark**, Chapter 12, Verses 28-34, also found in
(Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 22, Verses 34-40 and **Luke**, Chapter 10, Verses 25-28)

THE LOST SHEEP AND THE LOST SON

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published March Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

THE LOST SHEEP

Many tax collectors and other people who were considered the outcasts of society came to listen to Jesus speak. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law who were there grumbled, "This man welcomes outcasts and even eats with them!"

Jesus seeing their attitude asks them, "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, would not leave the ninety nine sheep in the pasture and go look for the one who is lost. Finding him, he returns and tells his family and friends how happy he is to have found the one who was lost.

In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one who gives up their life of sin and seeks God's ways than the ninety nine who have been living faithfully in God."

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 15, Verses 1-7
(also found in the Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 18, Verses 12-14)

THE LOST SON

Jesus told the story of a man who had two sons. The younger son asked his father to give him his share of the property he would inherit and the father divided a portion of the property between his two sons. The younger son sold his portion and went to another country where he wasted his money on wild parties and careless living. Soon all the money was gone and he was left with nothing!

There was a famine in the land where he was living so he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country who sent him into his fields to feed the pigs.

He was getting hungry, but no one gave him anything and he was thinking about eating the corn husk and bean pods the pigs were eating, then he came to his senses and said, "All my father's hired servants have more than they can eat and here I am about to starve!"

I will go to my father and say, 'Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son, make me one of your hired servants.'" He started the journey back to his father house.

He was still a distance from home when his father saw him. Filled with pity, he ran and threw his arms around his son and began to kiss him. The son said, "Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son." The father told his servants to bring the best robe and put it on him, and a ring for his finger and shoes for his feet. Then he told his servants to prepare a feast with the prize calf saying, "For this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found." So the celebration began!

Now the older son was coming in from the fields and heard the music and dancing. He asked one of the servants what was going on. The servant replied, "Your brother has come back home and your father has killed the prize calf, because he got him back safe and sound." The older brother was angry and would not go in. So the father came out and begged him to come in, but he said to his father, "All these years, I have worked for you like a slave and I have never disobeyed your orders. You have not even given me a goat, so that I could have a feast with my friends! But my younger brother wastes his inheritance and comes back home and you kill the prize calf for him?"

"My son," the father said, "you are always here with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be happy, because your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found."

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 15, Verses 11-32

The Meaning Of Easter / Three Examples From Jesus

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published April Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

THE PARALYZED MAN

Jesus had come back to his own town of Capernaum after teaching in other towns and a crowd had assembled at a house where he was teaching. There were teachers of religious law (scribes & Pharisees) present among the people who came to listen to Jesus. Some men brought a man who was paralyzed to Jesus, but couldn't get near the house because of the crowd of people. They brought him up to the roof of that house and lowered him down on his mat to Jesus.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "My son, your sins are forgiven." The scripture says that though the scribes and Pharisees kept it to themselves, Jesus was aware that they were asking themselves, 'Why does this man talk this way, he is speaking as if he were God.' (He is committing blasphemy) 'God is the only one who can forgive sins.'

Jesus said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven', or to say 'Get up, pick up your mat and walk' "?

"So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,"

He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I tell you, get up, pick up your mat and go home." While they all watched, the man got up, picked up his mat and went outside in sight of everyone. The people were completely amazed and praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

New Testament, Book of **Mark**, Chapter 2, Verses 1-12, also found in the (Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 9, Verses 9-13 and **Luke**, Chapter 5, Verses 17-26)

JESUS BRINGS LAZARUS BACK TO LIFE

A friend of Jesus named Lazarus was sick and about to die. The sisters of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, sent word to Jesus to come and heal him, but he stayed where he was two more days saying to his disciples, "The final result of this sickness will not be the death of Lazarus; this has happened in order to bring glory to God, and it will be the means by which the Son of God will receive glory."

(All could believe that God sent his son Jesus... and gave him authority over death!)

Jesus told his disciples he was going to Judea because Lazarus had fallen asleep and he was going to wake him. The disciples reminded Jesus that the people in that area wanted to stone him and if Lazarus was just sleeping, he would wake up! So Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, but for your sake I am glad that I was not with him, so that you will believe."

Lazarus had been buried four days when Jesus had arrived and many Judeans had come to comfort Martha and Mary. When Martha heard that Jesus was there, she went out to meet him while Mary remained in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died, but I know that even now God will give you what ever you ask him for."

"Your brother will rise to life," Jesus told her. "I know," she replied, "that he will rise to life on the last day." Jesus said to her,

"I am the resurrection and the life.

Whoever believes in me will live even though he dies;

and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord!" she answered. I do believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

Then Martha went back and told Mary that Jesus was asking for her. She hurried to meet him and the people who were there followed her. She met Jesus with the same words 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died', and the people that followed her echoed the same words. Scripture says when he saw her crying and heard what she said, he wept too! But the scripture also says that he was troubled in spirit because of their unbelief. Jesus asked where Lazarus was buried and had them remove the large stone covering the cave. Martha told Jesus that there would be a bad odor because Lazarus had been buried four days ago. Jesus said to her, "Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believed?"

Then Jesus looked up and said, "I thank you, Father, that you listen to me. I know that you always listen to me, but I say this for the sake of the people here, so that they will believe that you sent me." After he had said this, he called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus come out!"

He came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

New Testament, Book of *John*, Chapter 11, Verses 1-44

Many people who saw what Jesus had done put their faith in him, and some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. The Pharisees plotted to kill Jesus and even Lazarus because they worried that the Roman authorities would take action to destroy the Temple and the nation of Israel.

New Testament, Book of *John*, Chapter 11, Verses 45-57

THE UNBELIEF OF THE DISCIPLE THOMAS

Jesus was put to death by crucifixion because he posed a threat to the chief priests and elders of the people. They were worried that Rome would see Jesus as a new popular leader who would start an uprising against their occupation of Israel. This in turn could cause the Roman army to destroy not only the Temple, but the nation of Israel.

A rich man named Joseph of Arimathea came secretly to Pilate, the Roman governor, to beg for the body of Jesus. He had just had a new tomb carved out in a large rock for himself that was in a garden near the crucifixion site and Pilate agreed to let Joseph have the body of Jesus. Joseph along with another man named Nicodemus wrapped Jesus in clean linen strips with perfumed oils made from a mixture of myrrh and aloes and laid him in the tomb.

On what is now referred to as Easter Sunday, the third day from when Jesus was buried, it was discovered that Jesus had risen from death and left the Roman guarded tomb. He had appeared to two women who came to see the tomb and saw the large rock rolled away from the entrance and to two disciples walking on the road to a small village seven miles away from Jerusalem. When Jesus left them, they went back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples how Jesus talked and ate with them. By now, the other disciples knew that Jesus' body was not in the tomb and they did not believe the story told by the women about Jesus' appearance to them. The scripture says, '...as yet they did not understand the scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead'. They locked themselves in their homes, afraid the Jews would come after them because they were disciples of Jesus.

While they were talking together, Jesus appeared to them saying, "Peace be with you" and then he opened their minds to the scripture and imparted the Holy Spirit upon them saying, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." One of the disciples named Thomas was not there and when the other disciples told him what happened, he said, "I will never believe it without seeing and feeling the holes in his hands where they nailed him to the cross and wound in his side where the Roman spear pierced his body."

A week later when the disciples were all together, Jesus came and stood before them saying, "Peace be with you", and then he said to Thomas, "Take your finger and examine my hands. Put your hand into my side. Do not persist in your unbelief, but believe!"

Thomas said, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus said to him:

"You became a believer because you saw me. Blessed are they who have not seen and have believed."

New Testament, Book of **John**, Chapter 19, Verses 38-42 and Chapter 20, Verses 1-29 (also found in the Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 27, Verses 57-66, and **Mark**, Chapter 15, Verses 42-47 and Chapter 16, Verses 1-19 and **Luke**, Chapter 23, Verses 50-56 and Chapter 24)

THE WORRY OF DAILY LIFE

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published May Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

DO NOT WORRY

Jesus went throughout Galilee and the surrounding regions, preaching the good news about God's kingdom and healing everyone who was brought to him. Large crowds followed him, so he went up a hill, sat down and began to teach them. One of the lessons had to do with worrying about the daily needs of life.

Jesus told them, "No one can serve two masters; you will end up hating one and loving the other, or you will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. This is why I tell you, do not be worried about the things in your life. Don't worry about what you will eat or drink; or about what clothes you will wear. Isn't life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds: they do not plant seeds, harvest the food and put it in barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them every day! Aren't you worth more than the birds? Who of you, by worrying, can add one moment to your life-span?"

And why do you worry about the fashions or the clothes you will wear. Take a look at the various wild flowers in the many fields around you. They do not sew or shop for the latest fashions, but I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. If God can clothe the fields with such splendor, which blooms today and is gone tomorrow, won't he take care of providing the clothes that you need? What little faith you have!

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we wear?' (The people living in the world who don't have any use for God are always concerned about these things) Your Father in heaven knows all the things you need.

First seek God's kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Do not worry about tomorrow's trouble; live one day at a time and know that each day will bring its own challenge."

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 6, Verses 24-34

(also found in the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 12, Verses 22-31 and Chapter 16, Verse 13)

THE TEN LEPERS

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published June Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

As Jesus was walking to Jerusalem, along the border between Samaria and Galilee, he was met by ten men suffering from a dreaded skin disease known as leprosy. They called out to Jesus, "Master! Please heal us!"

It was the Jewish custom to go show the priest at the temple what you were suffering from and he would determine if it could be treated or would be too advanced for treatment. If it was too advanced for treatment, he would have you sent to a place where only people with this disease could live together. Some of the ten men were Jews and some were foreigners, considered Gentiles who were not of the Jewish faith.

Jesus saw them and told them, "Go and let the priest examine you." On their way to the priest, they were healed and made clean. When one man saw that he was healed, he came back, praising God in a loud voice and threw himself on the ground at Jesus' feet and thanked him.

The man was a foreigner from Samaria and Jesus said, "There were ten men who were healed; where are the other nine? Why is this foreigner the only one who came back to give thanks to God?" And Jesus said to the man, "Get up and go; your faith has made you well."

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 17, Verses 11-19

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published July Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

A lawyer, who was a teacher of the law of Moses, posed a question to Jesus. "Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life? Jesus asked him, "How do you read what is written in the law?"

The lawyer responded,

"You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your strength
and with all your mind;
and you shall love your neighbor
as you love yourself"

Jesus said, "You have answered correctly. Do this and you shall live."

The man being a lawyer was seeking to define the term 'neighbor' and he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied: "There once was a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and on the way robbers attacked him, took what they could use of his clothing, beat him up and left him for dead. There was a priest who happened to be traveling the same road and when he saw the man, he walked by on the other side of the road. Not much later, a Levite walking on the same road saw the man who had been robbed and kept on going.

A Samaritan was traveling that way, and when he saw the man who had been robbed, his heart was filled with pity. (Samaritans were considered unclean by the Jews) He went to the man's aid, dressed his wounds, put him on his donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he gave the innkeeper two silver coins and said, 'Take care of him and when I come back this way, I will pay you whatever else you spend on him.'

And Jesus concluded, "In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a neighbor toward the man attacked by robbers?" The lawyer answered, "The one who was kind to the man and treated him with compassion."

Jesus replied, "Go, then and do the same."

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 10, Verses 25-37

HOW TO GIVE AND HOW TO PRAY

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published August Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

HOW TO GIVE

Jesus tells his disciples and the crowds who have gathered to hear him, "Do not expect a reward from your Father in heaven when you give charity to those in need publicly, just to show people what a good person you are."

"When you give charity, do not blow a horn before you in houses of worship and public places, like the hypocrites looking for applause. You can be sure of this much, they are already repaid."

"When you help those in need, do it such a way that even your closest friend will not know about it, Keep your deeds of mercy secret, then the Father, who sees in secret will repay you."

HOW TO PRAY

Jesus said, "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites who love to stand up and pray in the houses of worship and on street corners, in order to be noticed. I give you my word, they are already repaid."

"When you pray, go to a room, close the door, and pray to your Father alone. And your Father who sees what no person sees, will hear your prayer and repay you."

"Do not pray like the pagans who use a lot of meaningless words in their prayers and think that God will hear them because their prayers are long. Do not be like them."

"When you pray, keep in mind that the Father knows what you need before you ask him. This is how you should pray."

***Our Father in heaven,
Holy is your name
May your kingdom come,
your will is done
on earth as it is in heaven
Give us today, the food we need,
And forgive us our wrong doing
As we forgive those who do wrong against us
Help us not to be tempted,
But deliver us from evil"
For yours is the Kingdom
And the Power
And the Glory forever - Amen***

"If you forgive the people who have done wrong to you, your Father in heaven will also forgive you. If you do not forgive others for the wrongs they have done to you, the Father in heaven will not forgive the wrongs you have done."

New Testament, Book of *Matthew*, Chapter 6, Verses 1-15
(also found in the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 11, Verses 2-4)

THE UNBELIEVING TOWNS

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published September Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

The people who lived in the towns where Jesus performed most of his miracles did not turn away from their sins.

The cities of Capernaum, a town on the North West shore of the Sea of Galilee; Chorazin, which was north of Capernaum, and Bethsaida, a town close to Capernaum came under the rebuke of Jesus, who put them to shame saying, "How terrible it will be for you Chorazin! How terrible it will be for you too, Bethsaida! If the miracles which were performed in you had been performed in Tyre or Sidon, the people there would have put on sackcloth and sprinkled ashes on themselves long ago, to show that they had turned from their sins! I assure you that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to the people of Tyre and Sidon than to you!"

"And as for you, Capernaum," Jesus said, "You see yourself being a well known city and a popular destination for many people, but you will come down to nothing! If the miracles which were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would still exist today! You can be sure that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to Sodom than to you!"

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 11, Verses 20-24
(also found in the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 10, Verses 13-15)

SIGNS REVEALING CHRIST'S RETURN TO EARTH

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published October Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

Jesus was leaving the temple in Jerusalem when his disciples called his attention to the buildings that were in the temple area. (The Romans had a passion for constructing large buildings and Herod decided he would build the most significant structure ever to stand in the Holy city of Jerusalem. The building would be known as Herod's temple, which started construction in 20 B.C., and was finished in 62 A.D., even though Herod had died in 4 B.C.)

This information found in *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, eleventh printing, copyright 1963.

Jesus said, "You may look at all these buildings and marvel at the workmanship, but I tell you this: not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one of them will be thrown down." (Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70 by the Roman Titus and his legions and completely leveled it to the ground. The next time Rome attacked Jerusalem in 137 A.D., they plowed up its foundations so there was nothing left.)

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives and while he was seated facing the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew began to question him privately. "Tell us, when will this occur? What will be the sign that all this is coming to an end?"

With the exception of Andrew, these were the same disciples that were on the mountain with Jesus when Moses and Elijah appeared and talked with Jesus about what was to happen to him in Jerusalem. Jesus made the disciples promise not to tell anyone about it until he had risen from death.

Jesus answered, "Be on guard and don't let anyone fool you. Many men will come attempting to impersonate me, saying, 'I am the Messiah!' and they will fool many people. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but do not be troubled. Such things are bound to happen, but they do not mean that the end has come. Countries will fight each other; nations will rise against other nations and kingdoms will attack one another. There will be hunger and starvation, there will be fatal contagious or infectious diseases, and earthquakes all over the world. All these things are like the first pains of childbirth."

"Then you will be arrested and handed over to be punished and be put to death. All mankind will hate you because of me. Many will give up their faith at that time; they will betray one another and hate one another. Then many false prophets will appear and fool many people.

Because of the spread of wickedness and evil, the love of most people living in the world will grow cold, but whoever stands firm in faith to the end will be saved. After the good news about the Kingdom is preached through out the whole world as a witness to all mankind, the end will come."

"You will see 'The Awful Horror' of which the prophet Daniel spoke. It will be standing in the holy place"

(Note to the reader: understand what this means) This has a strong reference to the Anti-Christ, the 'man of sin' who is given power by Satan to lead the kingdoms of the world in rebellion against the Lord and against his anointed. He will oppose and exalt himself above God and will actually sit in the temple of God and claim to be God. With Satanic power he will perform signs and lying wonders, bringing great deception to men who reject God's truth.

This information found in The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, eleventh printing, copyright 1963.

Jesus said, "Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. A man who is on the roof of his house must not take the time to go down and get his belongings from his house. A man who is in the field must not go back to get his cloak. How terrible it will be for pregnant or nursing mothers. Pray to God that you will not have to run away during the winter or on a Sabbath. For the trouble at that time will be far more terrible than any there has been since the beginning of the world nor will there be anything like it again. But God has already decided to shorten the time period of those awful days for the sake of the chosen, otherwise, no one would be saved."

"Then, if anyone says to you, 'Look, the Messiah is here' or 'He's there!'---- do not believe him. For false Messiahs and false prophets will appear performing signs and wonders so great that they would fool or mislead the chosen, if that were possible. Remember, I have told you about it before it happens: so if they tell you, 'Look, he is in the desert,' do not go out there; or 'He is in the city inside a big building,' do not believe it."

***"For The Son Of Man Will Come Like The Lightning,
Which Flashes Across The Whole Sky From The East To The West."***

"Soon after the trouble of those days, the sun will grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers in the universe will be driven from their courses. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky; and all the peoples of earth will cry in fear as they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. He will send out his angels with a mighty trumpet blast and they will gather his chosen from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."

"From the fig tree learn a lesson. When it's branches grow tender and sprouts leaves, you realize that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all these things happening, you will know that end of this age is near, and a new age is about to begin. I assure you, the generation that sees these signs will not pass away until all this takes place. The heavens and the earth will pass away but my words will not pass away."

"As for the exact day or hour, no one knows it, not the angels in heaven nor the Son, but it is known only to the Father. When the Son of Man comes, it will be like it was in the days when Noah lived on the earth. Before the flood, people were eating and drinking, getting married, right up to the day Noah entered the ark. They were totally unconcerned until the flood came and destroyed them."

"So it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be out in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal; one will be taken and one will be left. Watch out, then, because you do not know what day your Lord will come. If the owner of the house knew when the thief was coming he would keep a watchful eye and not allow his house to be broken into. So then, you must always be ready,"

***"Because The Son Of Man Will Come At
An Hour When You Are Not Expecting Him."***

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 24, Verses 1-44, also found in the
(Book of **Mark**, Chapter 13, Verses 1-37 and **Luke**, Chapter 21, Verses 5-33 and Chapter
17 Verses 26-30 & 34-36)

THE LAST SUPPER

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published November Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when the lambs for the Passover meal were to be killed, Jesus instructed Peter and John to make arrangements so the room and the meal would be ready for him and the disciples.

"Where do you want us to get it ready?" Peter and John asked him. Jesus answered, "As you go into the city, you will come upon a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him into a house that he enters and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks you: Do you have a guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' That man will show you an upstairs room, spacious and furnished. This is where you are to get everything ready."

They found everything just as Jesus had told them and prepared the Passover meal.

Jesus and his disciples were now at the supper table and he breaks some bread, gives it to his disciples and says, "This is my body which is given for you. Every time you eat bread, think of me." Jesus takes a cup of wine and gives it to the disciples and tells them to drink from the cup and says, "This wine is my blood that will be shed to remove the sins of all who come to believe in me and it is the start of a new agreement between God and mankind."

Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. The Devil had already put the thought of betraying Jesus into the heart of Judas, but Jesus knew that he had come from God and was going to God and that the Father had given him complete power. He cared for and loved those in the world who were his own....so he rose from the table, and with a towel tied around his waist, he began to wash the disciple's feet.

Simon Peter said to Jesus when he came to wash his feet, "Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?" Jesus answered him, "You do not understand now what I am doing, but you will understand later."

Peter declared, "Never at any time will you wash my feet!" "If I do not wash your feet," Jesus answered, "you will no longer be my disciple."

Simon Peter answered, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but my hands and my head too!" Jesus said, "Anyone who has taken a bath is completely clean except for his feet because they get dirty from walking in sandals. All of you are clean...all except one." (He was talking about his betrayer)

After Jesus had finished washing their feet and took his place at the table, he asked them, "Do you understand what I have just done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and it is right that you do, because that is what I am. But I, your Lord and Teacher have just washed your feet. You, then should wash one another's feet. What I did was to give you an example: what I have done, you must do. I am telling you the truth: no slave is greater than his master; no messenger is greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know this truth, how happy you will be if you put it into practice!"

Then Jesus grew deeply troubled and said, "But look! The one who betrays me is here at the table with me! The son of Man will die as God has decided, but how terrible for that man who betrays him!" Then they began to ask among themselves which one of them it could be who was going to do this.

This led to an argument among the disciples about who was more faithful to Jesus and who was the greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the pagans have power over their people, and the rulers claim the title 'Friends of the People.' But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the leader must be like the servant. Who is greater, the one who sits down to eat or the one who serves him? The one who sits down, of course. But I am among you as one who serves. You have stayed with me all through my trials; and just as my Father has given me the right to rule, so I will give you the same right. You will eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom, and you will sit on thrones to rule over the twelve tribes of Israel."

Then he tells Judas to do quickly what he must do and Judas leaves. The rest of the disciples think Judas, who holds the purse, was sent to buy something in preparation for the Passover festival and did not perceive that he was about to betray Jesus.

After Judas leaves, Jesus gives the disciples a new commandment: "As I have loved you, so you must love one another." He tries to make them understand that he is going away to prepare a place for them in heaven, but they must stay and bear fruit for the kingdom of heaven. He puts this analogy before them: I am the real vine, and my Father is the gardener. He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me."

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 22, Verses 7-30 and **John**, Chapter 13, Verses 1-17, Verse 21, Verse 34, and Chapters 14 and 15 (**Matthew**, Chapter 26, Verses 17-30 and **Mark**, Chapter 14, Verses 12-26)

WHY WE SHOULD CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Commentary by Carl Vasta - Published December Of 2006 by carlvasta.com)

In the Jimmy Stewart movie "It's A Wonderful Life", we are told, "Every time you hear a bell ring, an angel gets his wings". Christmas is the bell God uses to remind us a savior was born, and by our faith in Jesus, we have been redeemed to live forever. - Carl Vasta

Jesus was born 2000 years ago and yet we continue to celebrate his birthday every year with a world-wide celebration known as Christmas. There were over 300 scriptures from the Old Testament that foretold of his coming even as far back as the Book of Genesis.

Adam and Eve were born sinless and were suppose to live forever, but they brought the curse of death upon themselves and all generations by believing Satan and not believing God. This curse of death was not taken away by the sacrifice of animals on the altar or good deeds. The only thing that had the promise of restoring the relationship between man and God was faith... like the faith of Abraham or Moses.

God has revealed from the scriptures that He has a Son, the Messiah, who is Jesus. Another part of God is the Holy Spirit. All three persons, **Father, Son,** and the **Holy Spirit is God!**

If this is starting to sound like science fiction, keep one thing in mind. God created the universe and everything in it. It's his game board and we are his pieces even though God has given us free will! We are like the ant searching for food. It crawls across a computer keyboard and has no idea what it is, how it's used, and who is using it. In the same way we have no idea of God's plans or how he makes them work! What we know about God is what He has revealed to us through scripture.

Much has been revealed in the scriptures about the Messiah: They say, God will send his son Jesus to live on the earth as a man and announce the coming of a New Kingdom, where the curse of death does not exist. Jesus will reign there as King forever. But before the curse of death can be wiped out, Jesus, the sinless man, will be tempted by Satan and be found worthy to be called 'Son Of God'. Since it is sin that causes death, only Jesus, who is without sin, would have to suffer and be put to death by a world that was deep in sin.

Let me add here that **GOD DOES NOT DO WHAT HE HATES**, and he did not kill his only son! It was the free will of Jesus to do this. Jesus knew what was going to happen to him and told his disciples many times. He could have avoided it, but being the second part of the Trinity that is God, he knew the only way to wipe out death was to take the sin of the world upon himself and die. When he did this, he was victorious over death and was raised back to life. Now, anyone who believes that the Father sent Jesus to take our sins, has been put right with God, just like it was before Satan deceived Adam and Eve.

That is why Jesus told his followers when he raised Lazarus from death:

[\(read April's Paraphrased Quotes\)](#)

"I am the resurrection and the life.

Whoever believes in me will live even though he dies;

and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

(Found in the [New Testament](#), the Book of **John**, Chapter 11, Verse 25-26)

We still live in a world that is under the curse of death, but we've seen Jesus' victory over death. If we believe that the Father sent Jesus to take our sins, even if we die in this world and go to him, we can be certain that we will return with him when he comes to set up his Kingdom here on earth.

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYBODY!

THE THINGS THAT MAKE A PERSON UNCLEAN

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published January Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

The Pharisees and the Lawyers (Teachers of the Law) came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of our ancestors? They do not wash their hands, for example, before eating a meal."

Jesus replied, "And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For example, God has said, 'Honor your father and your mother' and 'Whoever curses father or mother shall be put to death.' Yet you declare a person will not have to honor his father or mother if he says to them, 'Any support you might have had from me is dedicated to God'. This means for the sake of tradition, you have canceled out God's word. You Hypocrites! How accurately did Isaiah prophesy about you when he said:

***'These people, says God, honor me with their words,
but their heart is really far away from me.
It is no use for them to worship me,
because they teach man-made rules
as though they were my laws!'***

Then Jesus called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand. It is not what goes into a man's mouth that makes him unclean; rather, what comes out of it makes him unclean."

The disciples came to Jesus and told him that the Pharisees were offended by what he had said. Jesus answered, "Every plant which my Father in heaven did not plant will be pulled up. Don't worry about them! They are blind leaders of the blind; and when one blind man leads another, both fall into a ditch."

His disciples asked him to explain this saying. Jesus said, "Why are you having trouble understanding this? Anything that goes into a person's mouth goes into his stomach and then on out of his body. But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and these are the things that make a person unclean. For out of the heart come the evil thoughts of murder, adultery, fornication, thefts, false witness, wickedness, sensuality, and deceit. To covet, envy, slander, rob and lie. To be filled with great pride and live foolishly.

These are the things that make a person unclean. But to eat without washing your hands as they say you should-- this doesn't make a person unclean."

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 15, Verses 1-20
(also found in the Book of **Mark**, Chapter 7, Verses 1-23)

MARRIAGE, ADULTERY, and DIVORCE

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published February Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

MARRIAGE IN HEAVEN

The Sadducees, who claimed that there was no resurrection or life after death, came to Jesus with a question: Teacher, "Moses said, 'If a man dies without children, his brother must marry the widow and produce children for his brother.' Once there were seven brothers. The oldest got married, but died before having any children. So the next brother married the widow and he died without having children. The same thing happened to the third brother and so on till all seven brothers had married the widow and died without producing any children. Last of all the widow died. At the resurrection, whose wife will she be, since all seven of them married her?"

Jesus answered them, "The men and women of this age marry, but the men and women who are worthy to rise from death and live in the age to come will neither marry or be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are the children of God, because they have risen from death. And Moses clearly proves that the dead are raised to life. In the passage about the burning bush he speaks of the Lord as 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' He is the God of the living, not of the dead, for to him all are alive."

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 20, Verses 27-39, also found in the Book of (**Mark**, Chapter 12, Verses 18-27 and the Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 22, Verses 22-33)

MARRIAGE IN THE LAST DAYS

Jesus tells his disciples about the troubles, persecutions and signs that will precede his return to earth and says, "No one knows, however, when that day and hour will come-- neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, for the Father alone knows. The coming of the Son of Man will be like what happened in the time of Noah. In the days before the flood people ate and drank, men and women married, up to the very day Noah went on the boat; yet they did not realize what was happening until the flood came and swept them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man comes."

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 24, Verses 36-39

ADULTERY

As Jesus was teaching in the Temple, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught committing adultery, and they made her stand before them all. "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. In our Law, Moses commanded that such a woman must be stoned to death. Now, what do you say?" They said this to trap Jesus, so they could accuse him.

Jesus bent over and wrote on the ground with his finger. As they were pressing him for an answer, he straightened up and said to them. "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." A second time he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard this, they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone with the woman, who continued to stand before him.

Jesus finally straightened up and said to her, "Woman where did they all disappear to? Has no one condemned you?"

"No one, sir," she answered.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and sin no more."

New Testament, Book of *John*, Chapter 8, Verses 1-11

DIVORCE (Jesus Defines Adultery)

Some Pharisees came to Jesus and tried to trap him by asking him if it was permissible for a husband to divorce his wife.

In reply he said, "What command did Moses give you?"

Their answer was, "Moses gave permission for a man to write a divorce notice and send his wife away."

Jesus told them, "Moses wrote that commandment for you because of your stubbornness. At the beginning of creation God made them male and female; for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. They are no longer two but one. So man must not separate what God has joined together."

When they went back into the house, the disciples asked Jesus about this matter. He said to them, "A man who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against his wife. In the same way, a woman who divorces her husband and marries another man commits adultery."

New Testament, Book of **Mark**, Chapter 10, Verses 2-12 (also found in the Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 19, Verses 1-12 and the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 16, Verse 18)

From The Book of Matthew (Jesus is speaking) "It was also said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce. But now I tell you: if a man divorces his wife for any cause other than her unfaithfulness, then he is guilty of making her commit adultery if she marries again; and the man who marries her commits adultery also.'"

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 5, Verses 31-32
(Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 19, Verses 1-12 and **Mark**, Chapter 10, Verses 11-12 and **Luke**, Chapter 16, Verse 18)

JESUS CHOOSES THE APOSTLES

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published March Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

THE FIRST APOSTLES - JOHN, ANDREW, JAMES, and SIMON PETER

The book of John tells where the first disciples met Jesus. John, the brother of James, and Andrew, the brother of Simon, were disciples of John the Baptist. Both were fishermen who with their brothers, were business partners.

John and Andrew heard John the Baptist speak about Jesus being God's chosen one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Immediately they began to follow Jesus and realized that he was the Messiah. Andrew told his brother Simon they had found the Messiah and he took him to meet Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "Your name is Simon son of John, but you will be called Cephas." (This is the same as Peter and means "a rock.")

New Testament, Book of *John*, Chapter 1, Verses 35-42

PHILIP and NATHANAEL (Bartholomew)

The next day Jesus went to Galilee and found Philip who was from Bethsaida, the town where Andrew and Peter lived. Jesus said to him, "Come with me!" Philip went and told his friend Nathanael, "We have found the one whom Moses wrote about in the book of the Law and whom the prophets also wrote about. He is Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

"Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see." answered Philip.

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, he said this about him, "Here is a real Israelite, there is nothing false in him! Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?" Jesus told him he had seen him under a fig tree before Philip came to him.

"Teacher," answered Nathanael, "you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

Jesus said, "Do you believe just because I told you I saw you under the fig tree before Philip had come to you? You will see much greater things than this!"

New Testament, Book of *John*, Chapter 1, Verses 43-50

JAMES and SIMON PETER (*Simon finally believes*)

After Jesus returns from being tested by Satan in the desert, he learns that Herod has John the Baptist arrested and thrown into prison because he claimed it was wrong of Herod to marry his brother's wife. Jesus decides to leave Nazareth and go to Galilee and live in Capernaum by the sea. He began to preach with the same words that John spoke: "Turn away from your sins, for the Kingdom of God is near."

As he was preaching on the shore of Lake Gennesaret, people pushed their way up to him to hear the word of God. He saw two boats pulled up on the beach and the fishermen were washing their nets. Jesus got into a boat belonging to Simon Peter and asked him push out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

When he finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Push the boat out further to the deep water, and you and your fishermen let down your nets for a catch."

Simon answered, "Master, we worked hard all night long and caught nothing. But if you say so, I will let down the nets." They did as Jesus had told them and caught such a large number of fish that their nets were about to break. They called to the fishermen on John's boat to come and help them and they filled both boats with so many fish that they were about to sink.

When Simon Peter saw what had happened, he fell on his knees before Jesus and said, "Go away from me Lord! I am a sinful man!"

Simon Peter, his brother Andrew, and the others with him were all amazed at the large number of fish that they caught. This included Simon's fishing partners, James and his brother John, who were on the other boat with their father Zebedee.

Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."

On that day Simon, Andrew, James, and John pulled up their boats on the beach and left everything with Zebedee and the hired fishermen and followed Jesus.

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 5, Verses 1-11, also found in the (Book of **Mark**, Chapter 1, Verses 14-20 and the Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 4, Verses 18-22)

THE CALLING OF MATTHEW (Levi)

The disciples that Jesus chose, (In scripture, they are called disciples until Jesus rises from death, then they are referred to as Apostles) accompanied him to a wedding he and his mother Mary had been invited to in Cana. Mary persuaded him to quietly make more wine from water for the guests because the hosts ran out of wine.

New Testament, Book of **John**, Chapter 2, Verses 1-12

They also saw Jesus speak in the synagogues and heal many people. One of the people Jesus healed was Simon's mother-in-law.

New Testament, Book of **Mark**, Chapter 1, Verses 29-34, also found in the (Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 8, Verses 14-17 and **Luke**, Chapter 4, Verses 38-41)

They saw Jesus challenged by the Pharisees, Scribes and Priests. When people brought a paralyzed man to Jesus, he told him, "Your sins are forgiven."! Jesus knew their thoughts and said, "Why do you question your hearts, asking whether it is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you', or 'Stand up and walk'? "In order that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins," (Jesus said to the paralyzed man) "I say to you: Stand up, take your mat, and go home" The man stood up, picked up his mat and started home, glorifying God. All who saw this were amazed and they gave glory to God. The disciples' faith in Jesus was strengthened by all these things.

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 5, Verses 17-26 also found in the (Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 9, Verses 1-8 and **Mark**, Chapter 2, Verses 1-12)

The news about Jesus spread widely, and crowds of people came to hear him and be healed from their diseases. Matthew, who was a tax collector, must have heard of his work and may have already decided to respond quickly to his call. The scripture says that after Jesus healed the paralyzed man, he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting in his office. (It was common among the Jews to have two names: Levi was another name for Matthew) Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Levi got up, left everything, and followed him.

Then Levi had a big feast in his house to introduce Jesus to his friends, and among the guests were a large number of tax collectors and other people. Some Pharisees and some teachers of the Law who belonged to their group complained to the disciples asking, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and other outcasts?"

Jesus answered them, "People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous people to repent, but the outcasts.

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 5, Verses 27-32, also found in the (Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 9, Verses 9-13 and **Mark**, Chapter 2, Verses 13-17)

JESUS CHOOSES THE TWELVE APOSTLES

Jesus continued teaching and healing on the Sabbath and great multitudes of people were coming to see him. This caused trouble for the religious authorities like the Priests, Pharisees, and teachers of the Law. They were jealous of the popularity of Jesus because they had no power to heal or bring a person back to life, but they couldn't ignore the fact that Jesus did all this. Soon they started planning a way to get rid of Jesus.

At this time Jesus went up a hill to pray and spent the whole night praying. In the morning, he gathered all of his disciples together and chose twelve men to be his Apostles who would spread the good news about the Kingdom of Heaven. He gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve Apostles chosen by Jesus:

- 1) **Simon**, who he named "Peter", the fisherman
- 2) **Andrew**, brother of Peter, also a fisherman
- 3) **James**, Son of Zebedee, a fisherman
- 4) **John**, brother of James, also a Son of Zebedee and a fisherman
- 5) **Philip**, was first a disciple of John the Baptist, then followed Jesus.
- 6) **Bartholomew**, also known as Nathanael and brought to Jesus by Philip
- 7) **Matthew**, also known as Levi, the tax collector
- 8) **Thomas**, was also known as Didymus or "the twin"
- 9) **James**, son of Alphaneus
- 10) **Simon**, (who was called the Zealot)
- 11) **Judas**, son of James
- 12) **Judas Iscariot**, who became the traitor of Jesus

New Testament, Book of **Luke**, Chapter 6, Verses 12-16, also found in the Book of (**Mark**, Chapter 3, Verses 13-19 and the Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 10, Verses 1-4)

THE COMING PERSECUTIONS FOR THE BELIEVERS

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published April Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

These are the words Jesus told the men he picked to continue his ministry and these are the words that all who decide to follow Christ can take to heart.

The Mission Of The Twelve Apostles

Jesus sent the twelve disciples (referred to as Apostles after his death and Resurrection) to the Jewish towns to preach the good news that the Kingdom Of Heaven was near. He gave them the power to heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, heal those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases, and drive out demons.

Jesus told them, "You have received without paying, so give without being paid." They were not to take any money with them and only the clothes they were wearing. He instructed them to stay with someone who was willing to welcome them till they left the town. If the town did not welcome them or listen to them, they were to leave that place and shake the dust from their feet. Then Jesus told them, "I assure you that on the Judgment Day, God will show more mercy to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah than to the people of that town!"

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 10, Verses 5-15, also found in the
(Book of **Mark**, Chapter 6, Verses 7-13 and the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 9, Verses 1-6)

Jesus Tells Them What To Expect

"Listen!" Jesus said, "I am sending you out just like sheep to a pack of wolves. You must be cautious as snakes and gentle as doves. Watch out, for there will be men who will arrest you and take you to court, and they will whip you in the synagogues. For my sake you will be brought to trial before rulers and kings, to tell the Good News to them and to the Gentiles. When you are before them, do not worry about what you will say or how you are going to say it; when the time comes, you will be given what you will say. For the words you will speak will not be yours; they will come from the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Men will hand over their own brothers to be put to death, and fathers will do the same to their children; children will turn against their parents and have them put to death. Everyone will hate you because of me. But whoever holds out to the end will be saved.

When they persecute you in one town, run away to another one. I assure you that you will not finish your work in all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

No pupil is greater than his teacher; no slave is greater than his master. So a pupil should be satisfied to become like his teacher, and a slave like his master. If the head of the family is called Beelzebul (lord of flies), the members of the family will be called even worse names!"

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 10, Verses 16-25, also found in the (Book of **Mark**, Chapter 13, Verses 9-13 and the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 21, Verses 12-17)

Who To Be Afraid Of

Jesus said, "So do not be afraid of people. Whatever is now hidden will be revealed, and every secret will be made known. What I am telling you in the dark you must repeat in broad daylight, and what you have heard in private you must announce from the housetops.

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather be afraid of God, who can destroy both body and soul in hell. For only a penny, you can buy two sparrows, yet not one of them dies without the Father's permission. As for you, even the hairs of your head have been counted. (The number of days you will live is known to the Father) So do not be afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows!"

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 10, Verses 26-31
(also found in the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 12, Verses 2-7)

Accept Or Reject Christ

"If anyone declares publicly that he belongs to me," Jesus said, "I will do the same for him before my Father in heaven. But if anyone rejects me publicly, I will reject him before my Father in heaven."

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 10, Verses 32-33
(also found in the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 12, Verses 8-9)

Not Peace, But A Sword

Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the world. No, I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. I came to set sons against their fathers, daughters against their mothers, daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law; a man's worst enemies will be the members of his own family.

Whoever loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; whoever loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up his cross and follow in my steps is not worthy of me.

Whoever tries to gain his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will gain it."

If you try to preserve your life by following the ways of the world, everything you have gained will perish when you die; but if you give up the great plan you have for your life and follow me, you will gain all the real treasure that everlasting life has to offer.

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 10, Verses 34-39
(also found in the Book of **Luke**, Chapter 12, Verses 51-53 and Chapter 14, Verses 26-27)

About Rewards

Jesus said to the disciples, "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet because he bears the name of prophet will receive a prophet's reward. And whoever welcomes a holy man because he is known to be holy receives a holy man's reward. You can be sure that whoever gives a drink of cold water to one of the least of my followers because he is my follower, will certainly receive a reward."

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 10, Verses 40-43
(also found in the Book of **Mark**, Chapter 9, Verse 41)

Final Words Of Jesus At The Last Supper To The Disciples

If the world hates you, just remember that it has hated me first. If you belonged to the world, then the world would love you as it's own. But I chose you from this world, and you do not belong to it; that is why the world hates you. Remember what I told you: 'No slave is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you too; they will respect your words as much as they respected mine. All this they will do because of my name, ... for they know nothing of him who sent me. They would not have been guilty of sin if I had not come and spoken to them; as it is, they no longer have any excuse for their sin. To hate me is to hate my Father also. If I had not performed such works among them as no one has ever done before, they would not be guilty of sin; but as it is, they have seen, and they go on hating me and my Father. However, this only fulfills the text in their law: 'They hated me without cause.'

But there is help for you which will come, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father - and who I will send from the Father to you. He will speak to you about me and you will speak to all about me, because you have been with me from the very beginning.

I have told you this, so that you will not give up your faith. You will be expelled from the houses of worship, and the time will come when anyone who kills you will think that by doing this he is serving God. People will do these things to you because they have not known either the Father or me. But I have told you this, so that when the time comes for them to do these things, you will remember what I told you.

New Testament, Book of *John*, Chapter 15, Verses 18-27 and Chapter 16, Verses 1-4

JESUS FEEDS 5000 Men
(not counting the women and children)
Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus
(Published May Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

Jesus Meets With His Disciples And Sails To A Remote Area

Jesus had sent the disciples to the Jewish towns to preach the good news, heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, heal those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases, and drive out demons. On their return, they met with Jesus and told him all they had done and what they had taught. Jesus had just learned of John the Baptist death from John's disciples who buried his body.

The gospel of Mark says, 'There were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his disciples didn't have time to eat. So he said to them, "Let us go off by ourselves to some place where we will be alone and you can rest awhile." So they started out in a boat by themselves to a lonely place.'

(**Author's Note:** The Sea of Galilee is only thirteen miles long and eight miles wide, and at that time, nine cities with a population of 15,000 or more stood on it shores. When Jesus and his disciples left in a boat and sailed a small distance to a remote area, people on the shore could see where they were heading.)

Mark goes on to say that 'Many people, however, saw them leave and knew at once who they were; so they went from all the towns and ran ahead by land and arrived at the place ahead of Jesus and his disciples. When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw this large crowd, and his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he healed their sick and began to teach them many things.'

New Testament, Mark, Chapter 6, Verses 30-34, / **Matthew**, Chapter 14, Verses 12-14
(**Luke**, Chapter 9, Verses 10-11 and **John**, Chapter 6, Verses 1-2)

Jesus Feeds 5000 Men (not counting the women and children)

When it was getting late, Jesus went up a hill and sat down with his disciples. The time for the Passover Festival was near. Jesus looked around and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, so he asked Philip, "Where can we buy enough food to feed all these people?" (He knew well what he intended to do but he asked this to test Philip's response.)

Philip replied, "Not even with two hundred days' wages could we buy enough loaves to give each of them a mouthful!"

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother said, "There is a boy here who has five loaves of barley bread and two fish. But it certainly won't be enough for all these people."

Because it was the time of year when grass covered the landscape, Jesus told the disciples to get the people to sit down in groups so they could be served easily. He took the bread, gave thanks to God and gave it to the disciples who brought it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish, and they all had as much as they wanted. All four gospels say that the number of men there were 5000. (And Matthew adds: 5000 men, not counting the women and children)

When everyone was full, Jesus told the disciples, "Gather the pieces left over, let us not waste a bit". So they gathered them all and filled twelve baskets with the pieces left over from the five barley loaves which the people had eaten.

And the people seeing this great miracle were talking among themselves saying, "This is the prophet Moses told us about who was to come into the world!" Jesus realized they were ready to come and carry him off to try and make him king, so he told his disciples to take the boat back across the lake and he went to the hills by himself.

New Testament, Book of **John**, Chapter 6, Verses 1-15, also found in the Book of (**Matthew** 14, 13-21 and the Book of **Mark** 6, 30-44 and the Book of **Luke** 9, 10-17)

(**Part 2 continued in June's reading: "Jesus Walks On Water")**

JESUS WALKS ON THE WATER

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published June Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

After Jesus fed 5000 men, not counting the women and children, the people seeing this great miracle were talking among themselves saying, "This is the prophet Moses told us about who was to come into the world!" Jesus realized they were ready to come and carry him off to try and make him king, so he told his disciples to take the boat back across the lake to Capernaum and he went to the hills by himself.

It was evening when Jesus' disciples went down to the lake, got into the boat, and started back across the lake. A strong wind had come up stirring up the waves and pushing the boat far out in the lake. The boat was there most of the night, being tossed about and the disciples were straining to row the boat against the wind. It was still dark and in the early hours of the morning. They had rowed about three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the water coming near the boat, and they were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said, and screamed with fear.

Jesus spoke to them at once. "Courage!" he said. "It is I. Don't be afraid!" Then Peter spoke up. "Lord, if it is really you, order me to come out on the water to you."

"Come!" answered Jesus. So Peter got out of the boat and started walking on the water to Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he was afraid and started to sink down in the water. "Save me, Lord!" he cried.

At once Jesus reached out and grabbed hold of him and said, "What little faith you have! Why did you doubt?"

They both got into the boat, the wind died down, and immediately the boat reached land at the place they were heading for. Then the disciples in the boat worshiped Jesus. "Truly you are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

New Testament,

Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 14, Verses 22-32 and Book of **John** Chapter 6, Verses 16-21
(also found in the Book of **Mark**, Chapter 6, Verses 45-52)

(Part 3 continued in July's reading: "The Bread Of Life")

THE BREAD OF LIFE

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published July Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

Jesus Offers The Bread Of Life

The next day the crowd that Jesus fed on the other side of the lake realized that he was in Capernaum, and when they found him, they asked him, "Teacher when did you get here?" Jesus answered, "I am telling you the truth: you are looking for me because you ate the bread and had all you wanted, not because you understood my miracles. Do not work for food that spoils; instead, work for food that lasts for eternal life. This is the food which the Son of Man will give you, because God, the Father, has put his mark of approval on him."

(**Author's Note:** When you read the next passages, please keep these most important points in mind..)

*The book of John is the only gospel where Jesus refers to himself as the "bread of life."

*John starts his gospel by introducing Jesus as the Word Of God. (Book of John, Chapter 1, Verses 1-18)

*In Matthew 4:4, The Devil came to Jesus in the desert after 40 nights without food and said, "If you are God's Son, order these stones to turn into bread." Jesus answered, "The scripture says, 'Man cannot live on bread alone, but needs every word that God speaks.'" (Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3 from the Old Testament)

*Within the Holy Trinity, (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) Jesus is identified as the Son Of God, and the Word Of God. When he says; 'whoever eats my flesh', he is referring to the scripture above. Bread is for the nourishment of the body, the Word Of God is for the nourishment of the soul. The bread we eat nourishes the body and passes through it, but the Word Of God, that we take in us, remains dormant until it is given life by the blood. As blood gives life to the flesh, so BELIEVING that 'God sent his son Jesus to take our sins' is the 'blood of Christ' that we drink. Our BELIEF gives life to the 'Word Of God' that we take in. And it becomes the living and growing 'Word Of God' which is able to change us from our sinful nature to God's nature.)

So they asked Jesus what God would have them do and Jesus answered,

"What God wants you to do is to believe in the one he sent."

They asked Jesus to perform a miracle so they might believe in him, saying, "Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, just as the scripture says, 'He gave them the bread from heaven to eat.'

Jesus tells them that what Moses gave them was not the bread from heaven. Jesus added, "For the bread that God gives is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

"Sir," they asked him, "give us this bread always."

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE," Jesus told them. He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never be thirsty."

Jesus tells them, "You have seen me and the miracles I performed and you still do not believe, but everyone that my Father chooses will come to me and I will not turn anyone away. I have come down from heaven not to do my will, but the will of the one who sent me. And it is the will of him who sent me that I should not lose any of those he has given me, but that I should raise them all to life on the last day."

The people started grumbling because he said, "I am the bread of life that came down from heaven." So they said, "This man is Jesus son of Joseph, isn't he? We know his father and mother. How, then does he now say he came down from heaven?"

Jesus tells them, "The prophets wrote, **'Everyone will be taught by God.'**

([Old Testament](#), *Isaiah* 54:13)

Anyone who hears the Father and learns from him comes to me. This does not mean that anyone has seen the Father; he who is from God is the only one who has seen the Father. I am telling you the truth: he who believes in me has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate manna in the desert, but they died. But the bread that comes down from heaven is of such a kind that whoever eats it will not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. The bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I give so that the world may live."

This started an angry argument among them. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" they asked.

Jesus said to them, I am telling you the truth: if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him to life on the last day. For my flesh is the real food; my blood is the real drink. **Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me, and I live in him.**

Many of his followers heard this and said, "This teaching is too hard. Who can listen to it?"

Jesus knew that they were grumbling about this, so he said to them, "Does this make you want to give up? Suppose, then that you should see the Son of Man go back up to the place where he was before? What gives life is God's Spirit; man's power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you bring God's life-giving Spirit. Yet some of you do not believe." (Jesus knew from the very beginning who were the ones that would not believe and which one would betray him.) And he added, "This is the very reason I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father makes it possible for him to do so."

Because of these words, many of Jesus' followers abandoned him, so he asked the twelve disciples, "And you... do you want to leave me too?"

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. And now we believe and know that you are the Holy One who has come from God."

Jesus replied, "I chose the twelve of you, didn't I? Yet one of you is a devil!" He was talking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. For Judas, even though he was one of the twelve disciples, was going to betray him.

New Testament, Book of *John*, Chapter 6, Verses 22-71

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published August Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

The Bronze Snake

After giving the Israelites the Ten Commandments, God led Moses and the Israelites to the hill country of the Amorites and told them to occupy the land He promised to them. Because they were afraid, the Israelites refused to take the land and they tried to choose another leader to take them back to Egypt!

God wanted to destroy these unbelieving people, but Moses asked God to pardon the wickedness of these people saying, "If you slay these people, the nations who have heard how you brought them out of Egypt and remained in their midst will say, 'The Lord was not able to bring these people into the land he swore to give them; that is why He slaughtered them in the desert.'"

God pardoned the people, but He told Moses to lead these unbelieving people back into the desert until the new generation of people were ready to take the promised land that their ancestors refused to take! They wandered forty years and encountered much resistance from the nations surrounding them. They did battle and God protected them, but they constantly complained against God and Moses.

Then one day, the Lord sent poisonous snakes among the people and many Israelites were bitten and died. The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Forgive us and pray to the Lord to take these snakes away." So Moses prayed for the people.

Then the Lord told Moses to make a metal snake and put it on a pole, so that anyone who was bitten could look at it and be healed. So Moses made a bronze snake and put it on a pole and anyone who had been bitten would look at the bronze snake and be healed.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Even though the Israelites constantly saw the miracles that God performed, their hearts remained unchanged. God referred to them as "unbelieving" and that is what they were, yet God provided them "**an escape from death**" by looking at a metal snake on a pole! This may have looked like nonsense to those who did not get bitten, but those who were dying from the snake bite experienced God's power by believing.

Old Testament, Book of **Numbers**, Chapter 21, Verses 4-9, also found in (**Exodus**, Chapter 19 through the books of **Leviticus**, **Numbers**, and **Deuteronomy**)

Jesus said this to Nicodemus after he told him he must be born again to see the Kingdom of God,

"As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.

For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life."

(**New Testament**, *John*, Chapter 3, Verses 14-16)

God's Promise To Send A Prophet

Moses told the Israelites as they were about to take the promised land, "In the land you are about to occupy, people follow the advice of fortune tellers and look for omens, but the Lord your God does not allow you to do this. Instead, he will send you a prophet like me from among your own people, and you are to obey him.

On the day that you were gathered at Mount Sinai, you heard the Lord speak and saw his fiery presence and you were afraid you would die. You begged not to see or hear him again. So the Lord said to me, 'They have made a wise request. I will send them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will tell him what to say, and he will tell the people everything I command. He will speak in my name, and I will punish anyone who refuses to obey him.'

Old Testament, Book of *Deuteronomy*, Chapter 18, Verses 9-19

The Meeting On The Mountain (Jesus, Moses, and Elijah)

Some 1400 years later, Jesus takes three disciples, Peter, John, and James, up a mountain to pray. While they are there, the appearance of the face of Jesus changes and his clothes become dazzling white. There appears with him Moses and Elijah, talking about the events that are about to take place in Jerusalem concerning Jesus' death.

The disciples are amazed, and as they are discussing what they see, a cloud appears and they are afraid as it comes over them. A voice from the cloud says, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen -- listen to him!" The disciples are so terrified when they hear the voice, they throw themselves face down on the ground. Jesus comes up to them and touches them saying, "Don't be afraid!" So they look up and see no one there but Jesus. Then he tells the disciples not to say anything to anyone about this until the Son of Man has risen from death.

The disciples obey Jesus order and they ask why the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first before the Messiah. Jesus answered, "Elijah has already come and people did not recognize him, but they put him to death. In the same way they will also mistreat the Son of Man." Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist who was killed by Herod.

(**New Testament**, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 17, Verses 1-13, also found in the (Book Of **Mark**, Chapter 9, verses 2-13 and the Book Of **Luke**, Chapter 9, verses 28-36)

More Quotes By Jesus About The Cross

Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the world. No, I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. I came to set sons against their fathers, daughters against their mothers, daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law; a man's worst enemies will be the members of his own family.

Whoever loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; whoever loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up his cross and follow in my steps is not worthy of me.

Whoever tries to gain his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will gain it. If you try to preserve your life by following the ways of the world, everything you have gained will perish when you die; but if you give up the great plan you have for your life and follow me, you will gain all the real treasure that everlasting life has to offer."

(**New Testament**, **Matthew**, Chapter 10, Verses 34-39 / **Luke**, Chapter 14, Verses 26-27)

Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget himself, carry his cross, and follow me. For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

(**New Testament**, **Matthew**, Chapter 16, Verses 24-25 / **Mark**, Chapter 8, Verses 34- 35 / **Luke**, Chapter 9, Verses 23-24)

The Foolishness Of The Cross (by Paul the Apostle)

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church, "For the message about Christ's death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved it is God's power. The scripture says,

***'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise
and set aside the understanding of the scholars.'***

Old Testament, *Isaiah*, Chapter 29, Verse 14

So then, where does that leave the wise? Or the scholars? Or the skillful debaters of this world? God has shown that this world's wisdom is foolishness!

For God in his wisdom made it impossible for people to know him by means of their own wisdom. Instead, by means of the so-called "foolish" message we preach, God decided to save those who believe.

Jews want miracles for proof, and Greeks look for wisdom. As for us, we proclaim the crucified Christ, a message that is offensive to the Jews and nonsense to the Gentiles; but for those whom God has called, both Jews and Gentiles, this message is Christ, who is the power of God and the wisdom of God. For what seems to be God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and what seems to be God's weakness is stronger than human strength."

New Testament, *Paul's First Letter To The Corinthians*, Chapter 1, Verses 18-25

JONAH AND THE WHALE

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published September Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

Jesus had cast out a demon from a blind man who could not speak. The man began to speak and could see, but the Pharisees and teachers were skeptical and even accused Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Satan!

([Read October's 2007 Paraphrased Quotes](#))

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law had already seen Jesus heal a man with a withered hand before this man, but they wanted to trap him. They said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you. And Jesus answered, "An evil and adulterous generation asks for miracles but none will be given except for the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

"On the Judgment Day the people of the town of Nineveh will stand up and accuse you, because they turned away from their sin when they heard what Jonah had to say to them; and I tell you there is one here ([Jesus](#)) greater than Jonah! On the Judgment Day the Queen of Sheba will stand and accuse you, because she traveled all the way from her country to listen to King Solomon's wise teaching; and I assure you that there is one here ([Jesus](#)) greater than Solomon!"

AUTHOR'S NOTE: In the answer that Jesus gives the Pharisees and teachers:

1. Jesus affirms the authenticity of the Old Testament Story of Jonah as a historic fact. There are many people who think the stories of the bible like 'Jonah And The Whale' and 'Noah's Ark' were glorified fairy tales, but Jesus believed that those people and events did happen.
2. Jesus affirms his resurrection after three days and three nights.
2. Jesus affirms the final resurrection and judgment by saying to them, "The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here."

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 12, Verses 38-42, also found in the (Book of **Mark**, Chapter 8, Verses 11-12 and **Luke**, Chapter 11, Verses 29-32)

JESUS AND THE DEVIL (SATAN)

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus

(Published October Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

Some people brought a man to Jesus, who was blind and could not talk because he had a demon. Jesus healed the man, so he was able to talk and see. The crowd of people who saw this were all amazed and wondered if Jesus was the Son Of David. (*The Messiah*)

The Pharisees heard the people talking about this and they replied, "Jesus drives out demons only because Satan, who rules the demons, gives Jesus the power to do so."

Jesus knew what they were thinking, and so he said to them, "Any country that divides itself into groups which fight each other will be brought to desolation. And any town or family that divides itself into groups which fight each other will bring ruin to the town or to the family; they shall not stand. So if Satan is casting out Satan, he is divided against himself and how can his kingdom stand!"

"You say that I drive out demons because Satan gives me the power to do so. By whose power do your followers drive out demons with? Let them be the ones to judge you. But If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you."

"No one can break into a strong man's house and take away his belongings unless he first ties up the strong man; then he can rob his house."

Jesus leaves no middle ground by telling them, "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me those people who would enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, sends them away from God. For this reason I tell you: people can be forgiven any sin and any evil thing they say; but whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who says something against the Son of Man can be forgiven; but whoever says something against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven-- now or ever." (Jesus said this because some people were saying, "He has an evil spirit in him.")

Know A Tree By It's Fruit

"You can tell the condition of a tree by it's fruit. A good tree bears good fruit and a bad tree bears bad fruit. You snakes-- how can you say good things when you are evil? For the thoughts that are in the mind and heart are spoken by the mouth.

The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. You can be sure that on the Judgment Day everyone will have to give account of every careless word he has ever spoken. Your words will be used to judge you-- to declare you either innocent or guilty."

The Return Of The Evil Spirit

Jesus talks about driving out a demon. "When an evil spirit goes out of a person, it travels over dry country looking for a place to rest. If it can't find one, it says to itself, 'I will go back to my house.' so it goes back and finds the house empty, clean, and all fixed up. Then it goes out and brings along seven other spirits even worse than itself, and they come and live there. So when it is all over, that person is in worse shape than he was at the beginning. This is what will happen to the evil people of this day."

AUTHOR'S NOTE: If the light of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit comes into a heart where there is darkness, the darkness will flee, and not return.

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 12, Verses 22 - 37 & 43 – 45, also found in the (Book of **Mark**, Chapter 3, Verses 20 - 30 and **Luke**, Chapter 11, Verses 14 – 26)

JESUS AND THE SABBATH DAY OF REST

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus (Published November Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

Jesus was walking through some wheat fields on the Sabbath. (Saturday, The Jewish Day Of Rest) His disciples felt hungry, so they began to pick the heads of wheat, rub them in their hands, and eat the grain. There were some Pharisees who were watching this and they said to Jesus, "Why are your disciples doing what our Law says you cannot do on the Sabbath?"

Jesus answered them, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his men were hungry? He went into the house of God, took the bread offered to God, ate it, and gave it to his men to eat. Yet it is against our Law for anyone except the priest to eat that bread."

AUTHOR'S NOTE: This happened when David was fleeing from King Saul who wanted to kill him out of jealousy and the reading can be found in the **Old Testament** Book, **1st Samuel**, Chapter 21, Verses 1-6.

Jesus continued, "Or have you not read in the Law of Moses that every Sabbath the priest in the Temple actually break the Sabbath law, yet they are not guilty?"

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Jesus refers to the **Old Testament** Law found in the Book of **Numbers**, Chapter 28, Verses 9-10. The priests were not preparing the lambs for sacrifice the way it was prescribed in the Law.

Jesus continued, "I tell you that there is something here greater than the Temple. The scripture says,

'It is mercy that I want, not animal sacrifices.'

(**Old Testament**, Book of **Hosea**, Chapter 6, Verse 6 and 1st Samuel, Chapter 15, Verse 22)

If you really knew what this means, you would not condemn people who are not guilty; for the Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath." And Jesus concluded,

***"The Sabbath was made for the good of man;
man was not made for the Sabbath."***

New Testament, Book of **Matthew**, Chapter 12, Verses 1-8
(Book of **Mark**, Chapter 2, Verses 23-28 and **Luke**, Chapter 6, Verses 1-5)

THE CHRISTMAS STORY (The Birth Of Jesus)

Paraphrased Quotes From Jesus (Published December Of 2007 by carlvasta.com)

This is a selection from the "Storyline Of The Bible" that you can read, hear, or download as an [Adobe Reader File ...FREE](#) on the website carlvasta.com

The New Testament begins with two writers: **Matthew**, the tax-collector who was chosen by Jesus to become his apostle and **Luke**, who was not one of the twelve apostles but through close association wrote the events related to him by those who were there.

GABRIEL ANNOUNCES JOHN THE BAPTIST'S BIRTH *The book of Luke* starts with the story of a priest of the Temple in Jerusalem named Zachariah, who is told by the angel Gabriel that his wife Elizabeth, is going to bear a child even though they are both very old. Gabriel tells Zachariah the child's name shall be called John and he shall call many people to return to God and announce the coming of the Messiah! Zachariah finds these things hard to believe and for his disbelief, the angel makes him unable to speak until the baby is born!

GABRIEL ANNOUNCES THE BIRTH OF JESUS The angel Gabriel appears to a young virgin girl named Mary, who lives in the city of Nazareth and is engaged to a man named Joseph, of the family of David. Gabriel tells Mary that she will conceive and bear a son and give him the name Jesus. "He will be worthy of great honor and will be called, 'Son of God'. The Lord God will make him a king like his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; and his kingdom will never end."

Mary is troubled and surprised by Gabriel's words and she says to the angel, "How can this be, for I am a virgin and have not slept with any man?" The angel tells her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will put the child in you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God.' Then Gabriel tells Mary about her relative Elizabeth who is now six months pregnant even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do."

Mary says to Gabriel, "I am the Lord's servant, may it happen to me as you have said." Mary goes to see Elizabeth and remains with her for about three months, then returns home.

ELIZABETH GIVES BIRTH TO A SON and when the neighbors and relatives assemble for the circumcision of the child, they intend to name him after his father, Zachariah. Elizabeth says, "No! His name is to be John." They point out to her that none of the relatives have that name, then using signs they ask Zachariah what he wishes the child to be called. On a writing tablet he writes, "His name is to be John." All are astonished and at that moment Zechariah's mouth is opened and he begins to speak in praise of God.

(Found in the [New Testament](#), Book of **Luke**: Chapter 1)

The book of Matthew starts with the genealogy from Abraham to King David and through to Joseph, husband of Mary, who is the Virgin Mother of Jesus Christ. This is where Matthew joins Luke in telling the story of Jesus birth.

JOSEPH DECIDES TO BREAK THE ENGAGEMENT to Mary quietly and not expose her to public ridicule because she is pregnant. The angel of the Lord comes to Joseph in a dream and tells him: "Joseph, son of David, have no fear about taking Mary as your wife. It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this child. She is to have a son and you are to name him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins."

All this happened to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet Isaiah concerning the birth of the Messiah:

***"A virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son,
and they shall call him Emmanuel"***

([Old Testament](#), **Isaiah** - Chapter 7: verse 14)

a name which means **"God is with us"**. Joseph does as the angel of the Lord tells him and accepts Mary as his wife.

(Found in the [New Testament](#), Book of **Matthew**: Chapter 1)

EMPEROR AUGUSTUS ORDERS A CENSUS to be taken throughout the Roman Empire, so everyone has to return to his ancestral home for registration. Joseph, who is a descendant of David, returns to his native city of Bethlehem in Judea to register. Traveling with him is Mary, who is soon to have a child. The city is crowded with others who have come to register and no rooms are available so they take shelter with the animals.

MARY GIVES BIRTH TO A SON and she wraps him in bands of cloth and lays him in a manger. Angels appear to shepherds tending flocks in the fields near there and say to them: "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David's town your Savior is born--Christ the Lord! And this is what will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (A manger is a feeding trough or box to hold hay for horses or cattle to eat)

Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God:

***"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased"***

The shepherds hurry off to Bethlehem and find the baby lying in a manger. They tell Mary and Joseph what the angels had told them and all who hear what the shepherds say are amazed. After the eighth day, the baby is circumcised and given the name Jesus as the angel had told Mary and Joseph. The time came for them to take Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, because every first born is to be dedicated to the Lord according to the law of Moses. (Found in the **New Testament**, Book of **Luke**: Chapter 2)

AUTHOR'S NOTE: In the ancient times near the beginning of creation, mankind's calendar was measured by length of the days and nights, the position of the stars and the cycle of the moon. The Chaldean and Egyptian astrologers became quite learned on the movement of the astronomical bodies. The Jewish calendar was measured in terms of harvest times, the ripening of the fruit on the trees, the rainy winter months and religious festivals.

In 46 B.C., Julius Caesar's calendar made a great advance over contemporary calendars and had 365 and 1/4 days a year. This was to be the start of the Christian Era calendar meaning everything that happened before the birth of Christ was noted B.C., and everything that happened after the birth of Christ was noted A.D. (Anno Domini) Latin for "in the year of our Lord".

This Christian Era calendar was introduced to the world in the sixth century or 600 A.D. There was a start error in this calendar and it is now agreed that the beginning of the era should have been fixed at least four years earlier. So instead of Jesus being born at 1 A.D., it is thought he was born in 5 B.C.

(Found in the Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary)

ASTROLOGERS COME FROM THE EAST to King Herod asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We observed his star at it's rising and have come to pay him honor."

("his star" foretold in the **Old Testament**, Book of **Numbers**: Chapter 24:verse 17)

King Herod is greatly disturbed along with the rest of Jerusalem and asks the priest and scribes where the Messiah was to be born?

They reply, "In Bethlehem of Judea, and here is what the prophet Micah has written:

'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the princes of Judah, since from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'

(Found in **Old Testament**, **Micah** - Chapter 5: verse 1)

Herod sends the astrologers to Bethlehem and instructs them to return with information about the child so that he can pay homage to the Messiah too.

THE ASTROLOGERS FIND THE BABY JESUS with Joseph and Mary, and present their precious gifts. They are warned in a dream not to return to Herod and they return to their country by another route. Joseph receives a message from an angel of the Lord in a dream: "Get up and take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you otherwise. Herod is searching for the child to destroy him." Joseph takes Mary and the baby Jesus to Egypt.

Herod realizes he has been deceived by the astrologers and becomes furious. He orders the killing of all the male babies younger than two years old in Bethlehem and the regions surrounding the city. Then what was said by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

"A cry was heard at Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation: Rachel bewailing her children; no comfort for her, since they are no more."

(The **Old Testament**, **Jeremiah**: Chapter 31:verse 15)

HEROD DIES and is succeeded by his son, Archelaus, as king of Judea. Joseph is told by an angel of the Lord in a dream to take Mary and the child and return to Israel, fulfilling what was said by the Lord through the prophet Hosea:

"Out of Egypt I have called my son."

(The **Old Testament**, **Hosea**: Chapter 11: verse 1)

Joseph hears that Herod's son is now king and he is afraid to go back to Judea, but he is guided by God to settle in the city of Nazareth, in Galilee.

(Found in the **New Testament**, **Matthew**: Chapter 2:verses 22 - 23)

MARY AND JOSEPH LOSE JESUS in Jerusalem at the feast of Passover when he is twelve years old. On the third day searching, they find him in the temple, sitting with the teachers, listening and asking questions. All who hear him are amazed at his understanding and his answers.

When his parents saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him: "Son why have you done this to us? You see that your father and I have been searching for you in sorrow." His parents did not understand when Jesus asks them,

" Why didn't you know that I would be in my Father's house? "

Author's Note: Notice that Jesus asks them why they didn't know that he would be in his father's house? Mary and Joseph were told by the angel Gabriel that Mary was pregnant with God's son, Jesus! This is the first quote by Jesus in the New Testament.

I would also like you to notice that even though Mary and Joseph did not understand what Jesus had asked them, the scripture says,

'Jesus returned with his parents and was obedient to them.'

As Jesus, the Son Of God, was obedient to his earthly parents, let us strive to be obedient to God.

(Found in the **Old Testament**, Book of **Luke**: Chapter 2: verse 41)

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES THIS CHRISTMAS