

MARK

You, God, and a KJV Bible

By Eric Neumann

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Quotations

The only material quoted in this book is the Word of God in the King James Version. No commentaries or scholars are quoted, because God's Word is important, not man's word. As such, I encourage all readers to be good Bereans by searching the scriptures to see if what I have said is true (Acts 17:11). It is okay if you do not agree with what I say, but it is not okay if your disagreement is not based upon the Word of God in its proper context, which involves "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

Goal

The goal of this Bible study is to cast "down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and [bring] into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Corinthians 10:5) so that members of the body of Christ may "come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4).

Contact the author

Therefore, the author encourages any disagreements be brought to his attention so that future versions of this Bible study can be changed if deemed necessary.

You may e-mail the author at Bibledivider@gmail.com.

Books by Eric Neumann

All books are available in paperback and in Kindle formats by going to: www.amazon.com/author/bibledivider. You may also access the author's sermons by going to: <http://www.youtube.com/user/bibledivider/videos>.

Eric has been working on a Bible study guide since 2011. So far, the following books are available:

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

Acts

Hebrews

James & I Peter

Coming in 2017:

Romans

Genesis

In addition, the following books are available:

A Bible Believer's Bible Summary: How to Understand the

Bible – Section 1 is a narrative of the Bible from beginning to end, while section 2 gives a one-sentence summary and a key verse from each book of the Bible. (84 pages)

Bible Per-VERSIONS: How Satan Changes God's Word to

Lead You Astray – Over 850 Bible verses are listed in the KJV, NIV, NKJV, and NLT with comments to show how modern versions stray from the truth of God found in the KJV. A topical guide and an explanation of why modern versions are perverted are given. (248 pages)

How to Be Led by the Holy Spirit: Discerning God's Will for

Your Life – This book examines a megachurch pastor's decision-making process, compares this process to scripture, and shows God's way to be led by the Spirit in making decisions in your life. (34 pages)

A Bible Believer's Critique of Ironside's "Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth": A Defense of Paul's Mystery – (150 pages)

Mark Introduction

The book of **Mark** shows Jesus as the perfect servant, as prophesied in Zechariah 3:8: “I will bring forth my servant the Branch.” When you hire an employee, you do not care about his genealogy. You only care about him doing the job. Therefore, Mark is the only one of the four gospels that does not contain genealogical information about Jesus. Rather, it shows Him working. Therefore, 12 of Mark’s 16 chapters begin with the word “and.” 32 of the 37 verses of 1:9-45 start with “And.”

By the time we get to Mark 1:14, Jesus has already been baptized, tempted for 40 days, and has started working in His earthly ministry. He picks disciples (1:16-20), and starts casting out the enemy (1:23-26,34). The instructions Jesus gives healed people in Mark often include, “see thou say nothing to any man” (1:44), because a servant is not supposed to be recognized for his work (Luke 17:10). The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) is not included, because a servant is not in a position of authority. Mark shows Jesus performing the signs of the kingdom, using parables, being crucified, and rising from the dead. When Jesus commissions His disciples, He tells them to work (Mark 16:15-20). Thus, the signs of the kingdom are appropriate here, and should not be excluded as modern versions like to do.

Summary: The Christ comes as Israel’s servant, taking their sin payment through His death, and preparing them to enter the kingdom through physical miracles that are types of what God wants to do for Israel spiritually.

Key passage: 15:34 & 16:6 (34) And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (6) And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

1 Jesus begins to do the Father’s will right away by healing the sick, casting out devils, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

1:1 Matthew – John are called the four gospels in the Bible, but Mark is the only one that begins with the word “gospel.” The reason Mark is called “the gospel of Jesus Christ,” when the other three are not, is because proclaiming the good news involves work, and Mark is the one out of the four that shows Jesus working as the perfect servant.

Mark tells us in the first verse that the Messiah is also God.

1:2-3 1:2 is a quote of Malachi 3:1, and 1:3 is a quote of Isaiah 40:3. Both pertain to the forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptist. Since they come from different books, the KJV says, “as it is written in the prophets.” Both the NIV and the NLT say that the entire quote comes from Isaiah. As such, these translations are not the Word of God, because they contain an error.

1:4-5 The gospel of the kingdom was to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Note that the call was for the faithful in Israel to come outside the camp, outside of the religious system of the Jews, in order to be saved (Hebrews 13:12-14). Confession of sins is for Israel's program, not for us today. The nation needed to confess the sins of the nation in order to be saved, as we see Daniel do in Daniel 9:3-19 and as John said in I John 1:9 that Israel needed to do, which relates back to what God said in Leviticus 26:40-42 that they must do. Today, God does not deal with us as nations because the middle wall of partition is down (Ephesians 2:14). Rather, we only need to believe in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection as atonement for our sins in order to be saved (I Corinthians 15:3-4).

1:6 John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17), and he even looked like Elijah with the hair that he wore and with his girdle of skin (II Kings 1:8).

1:7 Why would John want to unlatch Jesus' shoes? The reason is because Jesus came as Israel's kinsmen redeemer. They had been taken captive by Satan (Isaiah 49:24-25), and Jesus came to bind Satan (Matthew 12:29), "preach deliverance to the captives" (Luke 4:18), and redeem Israel (Luke 1:68, 24:21; Revelation 5:9). Ruth 4:7-8 says, "Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore, the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe." Boaz was the kinsmen redeemer of Ruth, and another kinsman took off Boaz's shoe to confirm that Boaz was redeeming Ruth. Therefore, what John the Baptist is saying is that, not only is he not the Messiah, but he is not even worthy to be a part of the kinsmen-redeemer process of Jesus redeeming Israel.

1:8 Israel would be cleansed from their idolatry by being baptized with water (Ezekiel 36:25), but Jesus would baptize them with the Holy Ghost to give them the necessary power to obey God's law covenant, preach the gospel, and have faith in God's Word.

1:9 The "and"s begin now that Jesus is on the scene. Mark starts talking about Jesus' ministry after just 8 verses, because Mark is concerned with showing the work that Jesus does, whereas Matthew takes about 3 chapters, Luke takes about 3 chapters, and John takes 28 verses to get to this point.

1:10 Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit, beginning His ministry.

1:11 In John 12:28-30, when the Father speaks from heaven, Jesus says that the voice came for their sakes. So, too, both believing and apostate Israel had come out to John in the wilderness (Matthew 3:5-8). Therefore, this voice here that Jesus is the Father's Beloved Son is for the benefit of Israel so that they may recognize Him as their Messiah and believe the gospel of the kingdom.

1:12-13 "Immediately" and "straightway" are characteristic words in Mark,

because a servant keeps working. The first thing the Holy Spirit has Jesus do is go into the wilderness and complete a 40-day journey back to Israel without food or water (Matthew 4:2). In doing so, Jesus, by faith, completes the journey to the Promised Land that Israel failed to do. After just a couple of days without food and water, Israel was already complaining to God, not trusting in His provision (Numbers 10:33; 11:1-4). Jesus had faith in God and had, for His meat and drink, the will of His Father, which sustained Him throughout the 40 days (John 4:34). Not only did Jesus trust in the Father without food, but He also trusted Him to keep Him safe from the wild beasts in the wilderness. Mark's account of the temptation is the only one that mentions "wild beasts." As such, they are a physical picture of the spiritual battle that Jesus faced.

Also, Matthew, Mark, and Luke all mention the temptations Jesus faced, but only Mark does not mention the specific temptations. That is because he is only concerned with Jesus, as the perfect servant, getting the job done.

1:14-15 John's being put in prison signals the start of Jesus' healing the sick, casting out devils, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom to Israel, as John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). This gospel is that the time is fulfilled, meaning that the 69th week of Daniel is fulfilled with Messiah's crucifixion (see Daniel 9:26). As such, there is just the 7-year tribulation period remaining before God's kingdom begins. This is why the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The gospel they are to believe is the gospel of the kingdom, which is to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38). It is not the gospel for today, which is believing in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection for salvation (I Corinthians 15:3-4).

1:16-18 This is not the first time that Peter and Andrew have seen Jesus. Peter and Andrew were disciples of John the Baptist and started following Jesus before, when they heard John point to Him as the Messiah (John 1:35-37). Here, in Mark 1, is Jesus' official call for them to be His disciples. Jesus said that, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). That is why "straightway they forsook their nets, and followed Him" (1:18). A servant has no excuse for not working.

1:19-20 James and John were willing to forsake their father and follow Jesus. This is in contrast to the man who used his father as an excuse not to follow Jesus (Matthew 8:21-22).

1:21-24 In just 4, short verses, God tells us more about the spiritual condition of the nation of Israel than a human author could tell in several pages. We find out that the scribes are not teaching God's Word correctly, and that the Jewish synagogues were full of doctrines of devils and devils themselves. As God's perfect servant, Jesus has His work cut out for Him.

1:21-22 The scribes sat in Moses' seat (Matthew 23:2-3). Therefore, they had authority. However, they did not teach like people with authority because they taught the commandments of men. Since Jesus taught the commandments of God, He taught authoritative words that they were not used to hearing, because

the Word of God is quick and powerful (Hebrews 4:12). Thus, the scribes did not teach with authority because they were “teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (7:7). This is not unlike today where churches use scripture in their teaching, but they are “destitute of the truth” (I Timothy 6:5) because they change God’s Word around to fit man’s beliefs. Therefore, they deny the power of God in their teaching (II Timothy 3:5)

1:23-24 What is a man with an unclean spirit doing in the synagogue? If God’s Word was taught in God’s temple, a fallen angel would not come near it. But, it was not God’s temple; it was “THEIR” synagogue. So evil was the human-good system of the Pharisees that devils were in their churches! You can see there were multiple devils in the synagogue by their plea of “let US alone.” Also, note the question. It is as if Jesus walked into a drug ring, and those filled with devils want to know what God is doing in an evil place like that. He could only be there to judge them. Jesus did not walk into a prostitution ring though; He walked into church! Jesus did not come to destroy Israel, as the devil suggested; He came to SAVE Israel. Mark’s first portrayal of Israel is that it is so evil that devils are prevalent in the synagogues!

Note also that the devils know exactly who Jesus is. He is not a mere man, but He is “the Holy One of God.” This is significant, because most Christian churches today tell you to “believe in Jesus” in order to be saved. James 2:19 says, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.” In other words, believing that Jesus is God will not save you, because the devils believe that, more than man does, because they actually see Him in their realm, demonstrating His power over them as God. To be saved today, we must trust in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection as atonement for our sins (I Corinthians 15:3-4). For Israel in their dispensation, they had to “repent,... and believe the gospel” (1:15).

1:25 More than any other gospel writer, Mark shows Jesus telling the devils to be quiet about Him being God. One reason Mark shows this is because Mark portrays Jesus as the perfect servant. A servant does not take accolades for himself. Rather, He points to His Master, God the Father. Jesus came “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Romans 8:3) to “give His life a ransom for many” (10:45). Therefore, this suffering servant would work, rather than shouting across Israel that He is God.

1:26 Jesus’ casting out of the devil shows to Israel what He wants to do for them spiritually. He does not want to destroy them (1:24). He wants to save them to bring them into the kingdom.

1:27 Jesus taught the people God’s law, which was so far different from man’s commandments taught by the Pharisees, that the people recognized Jesus’ teachings as “new doctrine.” The same holds true today when we teach sound, Pauline doctrine for this dispensation, because it is “new,” in contrast to the typical, red-letter teachings from Matthew – John of mainstream Christianity.

1:29-31 Jesus’ healing of Simon’s mother in law is the second sign that the

kingdom of heaven is near (the first was the casting out of devils). The devil and physical sickness will not be present in God's kingdom.

1:32-34 Jesus does the two signs of the kingdom: 1) Healing the sick, and 2) Casting out devils. Again, we see that Jesus tells the devils not to speak about Him. I mentioned in 1:25 that Mark shows Jesus as the perfect servant, and that a servant does not get recognition. Therefore, He did not want to be recognized by the devils as being God. However, there is also a bigger reason why Jesus asks the devils to keep silent. That reason is that they are seducing spirits (I Timothy 4:1). If people believed in their testimony, they would lead people astray, causing men to believe in a wrong gospel. An example of this is found in Acts 16:16-18 where a spirit of divination proclaims that Paul was a servant of God, shewing the way to salvation. Satan likes to use truth to gain credibility. Once that credibility is gained, he brings about lies that people believe. Therefore, Jesus told the cast-out devils not to be telling people that He is God.

1:35-39 Speaking prophetically of the Messiah, Isaiah 50:4 says that God the Father wakes Him "morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." Jesus, as the perfect servant, got up early in the morning for a personal Bible study with the Father. The result of the study in Mark 1:35 was that He was to "go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth." So, while men were asking Jesus to stay there in that town and do some more healings, Jesus went to the next town to preach the gospel of the kingdom, heal the sick, and cast out devils. This is the same commission Jesus gave to the 12 apostles in Matthew 10. He told them to preach the gospel in the cities of Israel (Matthew 10:5-8). Once the lost sheep were found in that city and given the gospel (Matthew 10:11), they were to move on to the next city (Matthew 10:14), because they would not finish going through all the cities of Israel before Jesus' second coming (Matthew 10:23). Therefore, we see Jesus doing the same thing here. While men want more miracles and are calling for Him, He realizes, from His morning Bible study with the Father, that the Father's will is for Him to move on to the next city, preaching the gospel, healing the sick, and casting out devils there.

1:39 Note that Jesus' ministry was primarily in Galilee. Although Galilee was part of Judah, many Jews there did not attend the synagogue regularly, such that the region was called, "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Matthew 4:15). It was much easier to reach the lost sheep of Israel there, because they did not have hardened hearts, since they did not follow the Jewish religion as much as other parts of Judah did, especially Jerusalem. This should be a lesson for us that it is much easier to reach a wicked person with the gospel than it is to reach a religious person with it.

1:40-44 Leprosy is a type of sin under Israel's program. The healing of the leprous man, then, is a picture of what God wanted to do for the nation as a whole; He wanted to cleanse them of their sins to be a kingdom of priests to reach the Gentiles with the gospel to reconcile the earth back to God for all the earth is the Lord's (Exodus 19:5-6). The charge to show himself to the priest and offer what was commanded by Moses shows that Jesus did, in fact, teach obedience of the law (Leviticus 14:1-32). It was also meant to show the priest that the Messiah

must be on the scene. The priest should then seek out the Messiah and tell everyone in his synagogue that the Messiah is there. Sadly, Israel was not interested in accepting their Messiah for cleansing of the nation.

Also, note that, just like with the one possessed with devils, Jesus tells the former leper to be quiet about his healing. Isaiah 42:1 talks about the Messiah being God's servant. Isaiah 42:2 says that "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street." As the perfect servant, portrayed by Mark, Jesus just did the work of His Father without any fanfare. He would preach the gospel of the kingdom and do the work of a servant. It was up to Israel to believe the gospel or not.

1:45 This verse gives yet another reason why Jesus did not want His healings publicized. He was supposed to go to the cities of Israel to preach the gospel of the kingdom, but, if His healings were publicized, He had to hang out in desert places because of so many people coming to Him for physical healing.

2 God's power is present to heal spiritually the religious leaders, but they refuse to be healed. Therefore, Jesus focuses His attention on "publicans and sinners" with whom to fill God's eternal kingdom on earth.

2:1-2 Luke 5:17 tells us that the multitude gathered were of the Jewish religious leaders who had come from many other towns. "The power of the Lord was present to heal them" spiritually (Luke 5:17), because Jesus "preached the word unto them" (2:2). However, they were not healed because they were in unbelief.

2:3-4 Religion was standing in the way of this man sick of the palsy getting to Jesus, but faith found a way to get him to Jesus through a hole cut in the roof. This is similar to the spiritual condition of Christianity today. Churches stand in the way of believing the truth of God's Word by using man's philosophies, commentaries, original language differences, version differences, and everything else they can find to keep you from hearing and believing the truth of God's Word.

2:5 Jesus had already preached the word to the Jewish religious leaders there, and they did not believe. Therefore, Jesus gives them a demonstration of what could be done for them by forgiving the sins of the man sick of the palsy.

2:6-7 The Jewish religious leaders' reaction to Jesus' forgiving of the man's sins was, again, unbelief. In their hearts, they accuse Jesus of blasphemy, claiming that He is God when He is really only a man, according to the Jewish religious leaders. The funny thing is that it is in His capacity as a man that Jesus forgives the man's sins, as He says in 2:10: "That ye may know that the Son of MAN hath power on earth to forgive sins." In John 20:23, this same power to forgive sins is given to the apostles. (We do not have this power today in the dispensation of grace.)

In other words, in the Pharisees' religion, they would "heal" people physically so that people would keep coming to their synagogues and giving them money, much

like Pentecostals do today. But, they would not forgive someone's sins, and they really did not care about that, because they were after money, not godliness (I Timothy 6:5). Therefore, when Jesus healed someone physically, they did not object. However, when He healed someone spiritually by forgiving their sins, they accused Him of blasphemy. The ironic thing is that God's concern was with forgiveness, not with physical healing. Therefore, God gave the man, Christ Jesus, the power to forgive sins. The only reason for the physical healings was to get Israel's attention so that they would look to Him for forgiveness of sins. Therefore, when Jesus forgave the man's sins, Israel should have recognized that God was bringing His kingdom to them (Luke 17:20-21). The fact, that they accused Him of blasphemy, shows that they did not even want God's kingdom to come down to them!

2:8-11 The answer to the question of verse 9 of which is easier to say: 1) I forgive your sins, or 2) Rise and walk is that rise and walk is easier to say. The reason is that the religious leaders claimed to perform miracles, but they did so through the power of Satan (see Matthew 7:21-23), which made it difficult to distinguish if it was God's power or Satan's power behind a physical miracle. However, only God could grant the power to forgive sins. If Jesus forgave sins and THEN performed the miracle of rising and walking, it would show that Jesus is from God; otherwise, He would not have been able to make the person rise and walk because He could not forgive sins. Thus, it is easier to say "rise and walk." Now, the Jewish religious leaders "know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" by the fact that He performed the miracle AFTER forgiving the man's sins. Thus, the Jewish religious leaders now have undeniable proof that Jesus came from God, and that God did physical miracles and forgave sins through the man, Christ Jesus. This is "the power of the Lord [that] was present to heal them" spiritually (Luke 5:17).

2:11 By the way, the commandment to "go thy way into thine house" carries with it the idea that, now that the man has forgiveness of sins, he needs to get out of this house of religion so that he may learn the sound doctrine of God's Word for him.

2:12 Note the comment of: "We never saw it **on this fashion**." In other words, they had seen a physical miracle performed before through the Satanic power that the Jewish religious leaders possessed, but they had never seen someone forgive sins first. Clearly, Jesus performed the miracle with the power of God, and that is what has scared the Jewish religious leaders to the point that they will want to kill Him.

2:13-15 The Jewish religious leaders came "out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem" (Luke 5:17) and saw the forgiveness of sins and the healing of the sick of the palsy that Jesus performed. They had been given clear evidence that He is the Messiah, the Son of God. Their reaction should have been to lead the Jewish common people into believing in the Messiah so as to build Israel into a kingdom of priests to reach the Gentiles with the gospel to reconcile the earth back to God (Exodus 19:5-6). However, they rejected Him. Therefore, Jesus turns away from the religious leaders and goes to the common people

Himself.

It is important to note that, because the Pharisees are self righteous, Jesus has given up on them now and shifts His focus to reaching the common people of Israel with the gospel of the kingdom. Therefore, He calls Levi (also called Matthew, who wrote the gospel of Matthew) to be one of His 12 disciples. Levi was considered the scum of the earth by the Jews, because he had supposedly betrayed his Jewish heritage by collecting taxes from the Jews on behalf of the ruling Roman government. Therefore, he was despised. Jesus proceeds to have dinner with Levi's friends, who are also outcasts by the Pharisees' standards.

2:16-17 The Pharisees object to Jesus' dinner with sinners. However, the Pharisees have already rejected the imputed righteousness that comes by faith in the gospel of the kingdom, as they believe they can make it into God's kingdom by their own righteousness (Matthew 5:20). As such, they have sealed their eternal fate in the lake of fire. Therefore, Jesus focuses on the sinners to see if they will repent and believe the gospel of the kingdom, because they are the only ones who recognize that they are spiritually sick (v. 17).

2:18 Matthew 9:14 tells us that the question of fasting came from the disciples of John. John the Baptist prepared the way for the Messiah (1:3-5). When he was cast in prison, Jesus began His public ministry (1:14). This was how John decreased, while Jesus increased (John 3:30). When this happened, the disciples of John the Baptist should have become disciples of Jesus. Instead, this particular group of John's disciples became disciples of the Pharisees. Now, they are questioning why Jesus does not fast like they and the other Pharisees do. Thus, we see that many who came to John's baptism ended up being led astray by the Pharisees. The Pharisees probably got the disciples of John to follow them by performing physical miracles and then showing them how Jesus did not teach following the traditions of the elders, which most Jews would consider to be not following God.

By the way, fasting was one of those religious things that man did to look good to other men. Jesus said as much in Matthew 6:16-18. Also, in Isaiah 58:3-7, God criticizes Israel for their fasts, saying that they take pleasure in how they appear to be serving God, when they are not. Zechariah 8:19 mentions that they had four fasts per year. They were careful to observe those, but they were not as careful to observe the seven feasts that God ordained for them each year (Leviticus 23). Therefore, at the root of their question about fasting is the fact that they were offended when others did not observe religion, but they were not offended when others did not believe God's Word.

2:19-20 Jesus' answer is that the little flock will fast during the last 3 1/2 years of the tribulation period because they will not be able to buy and sell food and water because they will not take the mark of the beast (see Revelation 13:16-17). Therefore, their time to fast is in the future, not in the present. John the Baptist did not teach fasting for he ate "locusts and wild honey" (1:6). It was the Pharisees who taught fasting, which they did to look good to men (see Matthew 6:16-18 and

Isaiah 58:3-5).

2:21-22 These illustrations are Jesus' way of telling these former disciples of John that God has rejected the Jewish religious leaders. If Jesus took the traditions of the Pharisees and tried to modify them to match God's law, it would not work, much like new wine cannot be put into old bottles. Therefore, Jesus has moved on from preaching the gospel to the Pharisees to preaching the gospel to the common Jew, who does not embrace the traditions of the Pharisees. These disciples of John need to abandon the traditions the Pharisees are teaching and follow Jesus. They need to continue with the program they accepted under John of repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, rather than switching back to the self-righteous program of the Pharisees, which will lead to their own eternal destruction.

2:23-28 We are now given an illustration of how the Pharisees "reject the commandment of God, that [they] may keep [their] own tradition" (7:9). To answer the Pharisees' question, Jesus points them to scripture. "Have ye never read" (2:25) proves that their accusation of it not being lawful to pick corn on the sabbath is incorrect (2:24). The scripture Jesus points them to also teaches the Pharisees a lesson about what is going on. The Pharisees think the disciples are common Jews. How then does an illustration of David eating shewbread that "is not lawful to eat but for the priests" apply to the disciples? It is because the disciples ARE priests. They have repented and have been water baptized. Thus, they are part of the kingdom of priests that God is trying to build to reconcile the earth back to God. Therefore, by mentioning one story in the Old Testament, Jesus teaches: 1) The Pharisees teach vain traditions to replace the commandments of God, and 2) The true priests of Israel are those who believe the gospel of the kingdom, not the Jewish religious leaders in their synagogues with their fancy garments and pious attitudes.

Also, note that man is Lord of the sabbath. It is not because the disciples are with Jesus that they are okay to pick ears of corn. It is because "the sabbath was made for man" to rest in God, not for man to be restricted (2:27). Therefore, man can pick food to eat on the sabbath, rather than starving all day.

3 Jesus picks the religious leaders' replacements in positions of authority in God's eternal kingdom and shows the Pharisees they will not even make it into the kingdom unless they believe the gospel of the kingdom.

3:1 In 2:7, the Pharisees reasoned that Jesus committed blasphemy by forgiving sins. He then healed the sick of the palsy so that they know He does have the power to forgive sins (2:10). In 2:25-28, Jesus teaches the Pharisees that it is lawful to do things on the Sabbath that they consider work. Now, Jesus goes into the synagogue to heal a man with a withered hand to test if they have learned this lesson.

3:2 The answer is found in this verse. The Pharisees are not interested in being forgiven of their sins, as we saw with the man sick of the palsy. Now, we see that

they are not interested in correcting their bad doctrine. Instead, they are looking for reasons to accuse Jesus so that they can get rid of Him. The religious leaders were supposed to point the Jews to the Messiah, not drive them away from Him. Therefore, they will be replaced with "a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matthew 21:43), i.e., the little flock (Luke 12:32).

3:3-5 Jesus teaches the common Jews in the synagogue not to follow the religious leaders, because the religious leaders teach bad doctrine. If the common Jew examines the Pharisees' doctrine, they will rightly recognize them as being a "generation of vipers" (Matthew 12:33-37). Jesus' feelings toward the Pharisees are of anger and grief. He is angry because they are leading Israel astray, such that Israel is without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36). He is grieved because the religious leaders will not make it into the kingdom of God due to their hard hearts.

Jesus' question, in 3:4, is the fundamental issue when it comes to the sabbath. Although the sabbath is made to rest, it is a rest in God. As such, doing good and saving life are not considered working on the sabbath, because they are in line with that rest in God that the sabbath is all about.

3:6 The Herodians are political leaders. Already, the Pharisees are plotting how to trap Jesus so that they may "lawfully" condemn Him to death. We will see this effort in 12:13-17, where they try to trick Jesus into saying that it is okay not to pay taxes to the Roman government. They will fail at this trip, but it will still not stop them from accusing Jesus of saying not to pay taxes to the Roman government anyway (Luke 23:2).

3:6-15 The Pharisees' going away to plot their killing of Jesus gives Jesus the time to replace them with 12 apostles to judge the 12 tribes of Israel in the millennial kingdom (Matthew 19:28). Jesus heals sicknesses (3:10) and casts out devils (3:11), which are the two signs of the kingdom of God. Then, He goes to a mountain and calls to Himself those who have believed the gospel of the kingdom. Although a great multitude follows Him (3:8), very few believe, and only 12 are chosen to be His apostles. Jesus ordains them as the new religious leaders, although technically the Pharisees will remain in power until the millennial reign begins. Note, from Luke 6:12, that Jesus "continued all night in prayer to God" before picking the 12. This shows that it was the man, Christ Jesus, Who picked the 12, although He got God's approval on who He picked by praying all night about it.

Now, Jesus gives the apostles the same power to perform the two signs of the kingdom: "heal sicknesses and" "cast out devils" (3:15). They will also preach the gospel of the kingdom (3:14) so that more can join the little flock in God's kingdom on earth. Note the confession of the devils in 2:11 that Jesus is "the Son of God," and that Jesus silences them (3:12) since, among other reasons: 1) His Father should get the credit during His first coming. The servant does not get credit over His Master, 2) The Pharisees would try to kill Him sooner and corrupt the common Jews further with bad doctrine if His popularity spreads, and 3) Believing devils about this may cause people to believe "doctrines of devils" (I Timothy 4:1) that

would lead them astray. Jesus' calling the saved up to a mountain is a foreshadowing of the kingdom, since Jesus' kingdom on earth will be on Mount Zion, and the little flock will dwell with Him there.

3:16-17 From the beginning, Jesus picks His top three apostles, giving them surnames to reflect their roles in the kingdom. Peter, James, and John are the three, central apostles used by Jesus Christ throughout His ministry to build God's kingdom. Simon is surnamed Peter, which means rock. Jesus will give the keys to God's kingdom to Peter so that he can build God's kingdom upon the Rock that is the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18-19). Thunder is the voice of God (II Samuel 22:14, Psalm 18:13, and John 12:28-29). Therefore, Jesus is giving James and John a name that reflects how they will be God's voice, speaking the Word of God. This is the only place in scripture where they are called "the sons of thunder."

3:18 Note that one of the 12 apostles is "Simon the Canaanite." (In Luke 6:15 and Acts 1:13, he is called Zelotes.) God had commanded Israel to utterly destroy the Canaanites (Deuteronomy 20:17). Since the 12 apostles represent the 12 tribes of Israel, we must conclude that "Simon the Canaanite" was not from the nation of Canaan that God told Israel to destroy. Rather, he is of a tribe of Israel, and he must have lived in an area that was called "Canaan."

3:21 This is an interesting verse that is not found in any other gospel account. This is the only time we are told that Jesus had friends. The fact that they are not there among the multitude, but "went out to lay hold on Him" shows that they were not His disciples. Based on that, these "friends" are probably people who were His friends before He began His earthly ministry. They are probably His mother and half brothers (see 3:31-35). They have probably decided that, based on the reports they have heard, He is crazy and they have come to commit Him to a mental hospital. If His mother is included here, we see a completely different picture of the "virgin Mary," than the sinless one, portrayed by the Catholics.

3:22 Now, the Pharisees return from their meeting with the Herodians, where they tried to figure out how to destroy Jesus. Their conclusion must have been to say that His power comes from Satan, not from God. This conclusion means that they have already rejected Jesus as their Messiah. How interesting that, when we share the truth of right division with other Christians, they also accuse us of having doctrines of devils. The reason, in both cases, is that they cannot refute the truth of God's Word; therefore, they attack the messenger.

3:27 In 3:23-26, Jesus answers the Pharisees argument by saying that Satan casting out Satan only destroys Satan's kingdom. Then, in 3:27, Jesus says what He is doing. He has entered the house of Satan (the house of Israel is the house of Satan because Israel belongs to Satan at this time (see Isaiah 49:25, Jeremiah 31:11, and Luke 4:5-6).) to bind him (with His death and resurrection) and take his goods (lead captivity captive (Ephesians 4:8) or free God's saints from Satan's grasp). Therefore, Jesus is casting out devils in order to give spiritual victory to Israel in order to bring them into God's kingdom. Thus, He is working for God, not

Satan.

3:28-30 The Pharisees blasphemed God the Father by beheading John the Baptist (6:24-28), a man sent from God (John 1:6). They blasphemed God the Son by attributing His works to Satan, ultimately crucifying Him by wicked hands. Now, Jesus warns them that there is only one member of the Godhead left. If they commit the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost by rejecting the ministry of the apostles in early Acts, they will be judged by God into the lake of fire for eternity, as there is no additional member of the Godhead to send to them. Individuals, in Israel's program, commit the unpardonable sin by taking the mark of the beast or by worshipping his image (Revelation 14:9-11).

Therefore, although Israel's program will be set aside with the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7, individuals in Israel can still be saved in the dispensation of grace, since the mark of the beast is not instituted until halfway through the tribulation period. This is seen in Stephen's statement of: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). Forgiveness, in the dispensation of grace, is seen in that Saul was there at the stoning of Stephen, "consenting unto his death" (Acts 8:1), and Jesus called him in Acts 9 to be His apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13). Paul "was before a blasphemer" (I Timothy 1:13), but now he is "a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on [Jesus] to life everlasting" (I Timothy 1:16).

3:31-35 His half brothers and mother are probably the "friends," in 3:21, who have heard about Him being thronged by the multitude. They have probably arrived to commit Him to the funny farm. This is seen by the fact that they were "standing without" (3:31), meaning that they would not even go in to where Jesus was. I think His mother, Mary, thinks He is crazy, too. Although there are a few Marys around Jesus, it seems that the only mention of Jesus' mother during His ministry is here and at the beginning of His ministry when He performs His first miracle of turning water into wine and He rebukes His mother for getting Him to do so (John 2:3-4). She is not mentioned again until at the cross (John 19:25). It is at that time that Jesus has John take Mary in and take care of her (John 19:27). It seems that John straightened her out for she was a follower of Jesus on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:14). Here, in Mark 3:31-35 though, she and her sons have probably come because they think Jesus has lost His marbles. After all, at the beginning of His ministry, Jesus went into his home church and proclaimed Himself to be the Messiah, and they tried to kill Him for making such a claim (Luke 4:16-30). At the least, this event embarrassed Mary. At the worst, she thought He was not the Messiah after all.

The latter seems to be more likely, based on Mark 3:31-35. If Jesus wanted to prove to Mary that He does not belong on the funny farm, He does not accomplish that here, as He essentially says that they are not His brothers and mother, but that His 12 apostles are His mother and brothers. We are never told what their reaction was to this, but they did not commit Him, although they probably tried to. Jesus' point in identifying His 12 apostles as His brothers and mother is that, when considering eternity, physical ties mean nothing. Those obeying God's Word will make it into God's kingdom on earth. Being a physical relative of someone in

the kingdom has nothing to do with it. His physical brothers and mother will not make it into the kingdom if they do not obey God's Word by believing the gospel of the kingdom, even if they are physically related to the King of that kingdom! Jesus makes this point for the Pharisees here. They will not make it into the kingdom if they do not do these things, even though they are, religiously speaking, in the highest position possible. The little flock will sell all they have (Luke 12:32-33) and have all things in common during the tribulation period (Acts 2:44-47). Fathers will have their sons killed, and brothers will have their brothers killed (Matthew 10:21). Therefore, a tribulation saint's true family is his spiritual one. This is true for the body of Christ today, too, as we will spend eternity with the other members of the body of Christ, while physical relatives will be in the lake of fire if they do not believe the gospel.

4 Jesus uses three parables of seeds to show how: 1) Some of Israel will believe the gospel of the kingdom before the tribulation period begins (vs. 3-20), 2) These believers will preach the gospel during the tribulation period (vs. 26-29), and 3) All the saved of Israel will be a kingdom of priests during Jesus' millennial reign to bring all nations into God's eternal kingdom (vs. 30-32). Then, He shows them He has the power to bring God's kingdom to fruition through them (vs. 35-41).

4:1-2 Somehow, Jesus escaped His mother and half-brothers trying to admit Him to the loony bin. He probably slipped through the crowd, much like He did when His hometown folks tried to kill him (Luke 4:28-30). To prevent them from taking Him captive, Jesus creates a buffer zone by getting into a ship in the sea and teaching the multitudes from there, and He teaches in parables. Jesus had come to free Israel from being Satan's lawful captive, but Israel has rejected Him. Therefore, He teaches in parables so that only His little flock get His teaching (4:11-12), and He has to do that from a safe distance because of the crowd, including His own mother, trying to put the kibosh on His ministry. What a sad state the nation of Israel is in!

Jesus was teaching the mysteries of the kingdom because the kingdom was at hand (1:14-15). This was new doctrine that was not previously revealed by God. That is why we are told that Jesus taught "His doctrine." Note how, when Jesus teaches new doctrine that belongs to Israel's program, Christians say it is the start of a new dispensation, and so they try to follow what Jesus says in Matthew – John, although He began His ministry by reading Isaiah 61:1-2a, showing that He was fulfilling prophecy and NOT starting something new. Jesus actually came "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Romans 15:8).

On the other hand, Paul says that Paul's doctrine "was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed" (Ephesians 3:5). Paul received his doctrine "by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:12). He also says that "a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me" (I Corinthians 9:17). His epistles have been verified by prophets (Ephesians 4:11-13) that his doctrine is the word of God for us today (I Corinthians 14:37). Yet, man chooses to discard what Paul says, in favor of what Jesus says in Matthew – John. So, man rejects Romans – Philemon because it does not match what Matthew – John says. And, in Jesus' day, man

rejected Matthew – John because it was new doctrine as compared with the Old Testament. We should not be surprised then, that, during the tribulation period, man will teach Romans – Philemon and discard Hebrews – Revelation as not applicable.

4:3-8 The parable of the sower. The context is Israel's program and the gospel of the kingdom going out to Israel during the tribulation period. This parable teaches that most in Israel will not make it into God's eternal kingdom. The sower would be those who preach the gospel of the kingdom to Israel. The seed sown on the way side represent those who believe the lie program of Satan over the truth of God's Word (4:15). Thus, the fowls of the air, who devour the seed, represent the religious leaders and those who place their faith in the false Babylonian system of the Antichrist (Satan's lie program). The seed sown on stony ground represents those who believe the gospel of the kingdom, but they later reject the gospel and take the mark of the beast. They choose life in the tribulation period and eternal death in the lake of fire instead of life in God's eternal kingdom and death in the tribulation period. Thus, "they are offended" by the gospel of the kingdom (4:16-17). Therefore, the sun scorching the stony-ground seed represents the Antichrist and his minions threatening persecution and death for those not worshipping the image of the beast. Also, note that it is the religion that claims to be God's religion that brings persecution upon the saved. This is true both in the dispensation of the kingdom and in the dispensation of grace.

The seed falling among thorns represent those who believe the gospel of the kingdom, but they abandon it for the rewards offered by the Antichrist to apostate Israel for joining him. Therefore, the thorns represent material rewards offered by the Antichrist (4:18-19). Finally, the good-ground seed represent the believing remnant. Only a few will believe the gospel of the kingdom and endure unto the end to be saved (Matthew 10:22). These are the only ones who produce fruit, meaning that they are the only ones who preach the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, resulting in the lost sheep being saved and entering into God's eternal kingdom. Note that some produce 30 souls saved, some 60, and some 100. The more souls saved, the greater the realm of authority in God's kingdom for that member of the little flock, as seen in Luke 19:16-19. The more sound doctrine the member of the little flock believes, the better his result will be. Thus, believing God's Word is vitally important.

4:9 Since Israel, as a whole, has rejected the gospel of the kingdom, Jesus is concentrating on teaching the little flock, i.e., those who have believed the gospel of the kingdom. However, a "great multitude" (4:1) is listening to Him. Thus, He begins speaking in parables to the crowds so that only those with "ears to hear" will understand. Romans 10:17 says that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Therefore, only believers will have the "ears to hear" this parable. In that way, they will be the only ones understanding "the mystery of the kingdom of God" (4:11).

4:10 The little flock does not understand at the time being. So, Jesus has to explain the parables to them in private (4:34). After the Holy Ghost comes upon

them in Acts 2, He will bring to their remembrance the things Jesus taught, and they will have the understanding of His parables to them during the tribulation period as they preach the gospel of the kingdom (John 14:26).

4:11-12 It is not that God does not want to forgive apostate Israel of their sins and bring them into the kingdom, but it is that they are in unbelief. They cannot enter God's kingdom because of their unbelief (Hebrews 3:19). Without forgiveness, they would not understand the mysteries of the kingdom because I Corinthians 2:14 says that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Therefore, God conceals the mysteries of the kingdom from the unbelievers with parables.

4:13 This question by Jesus shows that, if the disciples understand this parable, they will understand the rest of His parables. This shows why Jesus does not explain all of His parables. If they understand one, they can understand them all.

4:17 When you share sound doctrine from this dispensation to "Christians," they are usually immediately offended, as are these stony-ground people here. That is because their flesh lusts after the things of the Spirit (Galatians 5:17), such that the flesh will persecute the spirit for believing in sound doctrine (Galatians 6:12). We need to recognize this as an attack of the flesh and have faith in God's Word, regardless of what man says.

4:21-23 Jesus has just started sharing the mysteries of the kingdom with the little flock. He now says that ALL of the mysteries of the kingdom will be revealed, but the only way to learn them is to have the ears to hear. Having the ears to hear means having faith in what God says. The more faith they have, the more they will understand and believe what Jesus is sharing about the kingdom.

Churches like to use 4:22 to scare people in the church, saying that, whatever secret sin they have will, one day, be manifested for all to see. However, that is not the context. The context is sound doctrine being taught. This doctrine is hid to apostate Israel, because they do not have the ears to hear. A good, parallel passage is II Corinthians 4:3-4, which says that the gospel is hid from unbelievers by Satan so that they do not believe. Similarly here, Jesus is saying that the mysteries of the kingdom are hid to unbelievers now. These mysteries will be revealed to them at Jesus' second coming, but it will be too late for them to be saved then. However, right now, the mysteries are put into parables so that believers will understand these mysteries to motivate them to preach the gospel of the kingdom throughout the tribulation period.

4:24-25 Therefore, the more faith that the little flock has, the more sound doctrine they will receive of God, and the more fruit they will produce for God's kingdom, as a result. Then, they will receive a greater reward in the kingdom. By contrast, the one, who hears the gospel but does not believe it, will have his reward taken away from him, such that he will not even enter the kingdom of God due to his unbelief. Jesus expounds upon this reward system in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. Specifically, Matthew 25:28-30 details the eternal

damnation of the one who does not believe the gospel of the kingdom.

The favorite Bible verse of the unbeliever is Matthew 7:1, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." They will say that, "Jesus taught you to love, not to judge me. So, you are a hypocrite if you condemn my lifestyle." However, the context of Mark 4:21-25 shows that the judging or measuring is in relation to sound doctrine. If a Jew judges the gospel of the kingdom as being false, then he will be judged into the lake of fire. Even if he believes the gospel but refuses to believe more sound doctrine, he will never bring forth fruit. Therefore, the true meaning of "judge not, that ye be not judged" is found in Mark 4:24-25. If you believe sound doctrine, you will learn more and bear fruit. If you do not believe, the sound doctrine given to you will be taken away by Satan, and you will bear no fruit from it.

4:26-29 Jesus tells the little flock through this parable that faith in God's Word is what will bring forth fruit, i.e., lost souls coming into the kingdom. Every day, they are to preach the gospel of the kingdom. It is not until the end of the tribulation period when they will see who made it into the kingdom and who did not. Therefore, it requires faith on the part of the little flock to continue to preach the gospel of the kingdom throughout the tribulation period. Even though they do not see the fruit, they need to keep trusting God that fruit is being produced through their faith in God's Word to them.

4:30-32 This parable of the mustard seed is different from the parable in Matthew 13:31-32 and Luke 13:19. The Matthew and Luke parables show the mustard herb growing into a tree with birds lodging it, which represents the Antichrist taking over the tree with the Babylonian religious system in the tribulation period. The parable in Mark, however, does not show this corruption. Here, the mustard herb does not turn into a tree, and the birds lodge underneath it, rather than in the branches of it. Therefore, what this parable in Mark is saying is that, once the harvest is come (4:29), the kingdom of God is established. Then, the nation of Israel will go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (16:15). Their going out as a kingdom of priests to the world is represented here by the grain of mustard seed. Just like the "grain of mustard seed...is less than all the seeds that be in the earth" (4:31), the nation of Israel "were the fewest of all people" (Deuteronomy 7:7). Yet, Israel, as a kingdom of priests, will reach the entire earth for God, such that the kingdom of God will give rest, even to the Gentiles. All nations will be blessed through Israel (Genesis 12:3), much like the mustard seed grows "greater than all herbs" (4:32).

4:33-34 Most Christians believe that Jesus taught in parables to make things easier to understand. These verses show that the opposite is true. Jesus concealed the truth in parables. He only spoke plainly when He was alone with the little flock. He did this because the nation of Israel, as a whole, had rejected Jesus (John 12:37). Therefore, "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart" (John 12:40) with the truth of God's Word being concealed in parables.

4:37-41 The ship is full of water, yet Jesus is asleep. As such, Jesus is a type of believers who, regardless of persecution, will not be swayed from having faith in

God's Word to them. By contrast, it seems like the little flock has only believed in the gospel of the kingdom. They have not moved on to trust God in other areas. It seems they are lacking faith in their resurrection into eternal life in the kingdom, because, if they had faith in that, they would not fear dying. Then, when the threat of dying is over, they fear the Lord's power. They still are recognizing Him as a man. When He calms the sea on a later occasion, they will recognize Him as "the Son of God" (Matthew 14:32-33).

The main point of 4:37-41 is that the little flock will go through the trials of the tribulation period. During that time, it will look like God is not helping them through the storm, even though He is with them the whole time, because it will appear like they will perish. However, when the tribulation period is over, Jesus will appear, destroy Satan and Babylon, and bring believing Israel into God's eternal kingdom on earth.

5 Jesus shows it is still not too late for Israel to be cleansed of their sins and enter God's kingdom, as evidenced by His casting out of devils and swine (vs. 1-13), healing the woman with tainted blood (vs. 25-29), and raising a girl from the dead (vs. 41-42). These stories did actually happen. It is just that the Holy Spirit has picked out real-life stories to convey the deeper spiritual meanings of Israel being in bondage to Satan, and God being there, ready to deliver them and bring them into the kingdom.

5:2-4 In 3:27, Jesus talked about having to bind the strong man and then spoiling his house. This is a picture of Satan being bound by Jesus so that He can take the saints of Israel into the kingdom. Now, in 5:2-4, we see a man who cannot be bound with chains by another man. This is a picture of Satan, as Israel was not able to bind Satan, who was stronger than Israel. Therefore, he needed God to come and ransom him "from the hand of him that was stronger than he" (Jeremiah 31:11).

5:5-10 Although no man could bind with chains this man possessed with a legion of devils (5:9), he immediately recognizes Jesus as God, pleading with Him not to throw him into torments. This is a great lesson to the disciples. They have just seen Him calm the wind and waves and wonder "what manner of man is this" (4:41). Now, they are told by devils that He is not just a man, but He is also "Son of the most high God" (5:7).

"Crying, and cutting himself with stones" (5:5) is a type of how Jews went to the Jewish religious system for salvation, but they found none. Running and worshipping Jesus (5:6) is a type of how the lost sheep of the house of Israel will flee religion and believe the gospel of the kingdom, once they hear it.

Note, from 5:7, that the devils recognize that Jesus is the Son of God, and yet they adjure Him by God not to torment them. This shows how that, even the devils recognize that God is still over them, even though they rebelled against Him by siding with Satan (Revelation 12:3-4). In other words, the devils have to obey the Son of God, even though Satan is their master.

Jesus' casting of the unclean spirit out of the man is a picture of what He wants to do for the nation of Israel as a whole. He wants to cast the devil and his forces out of Israel to make them a holy nation, set apart for God's service. We see this also in the plea of the devils not to be sent "away out of the country" (5:10).

5:11 Swine are unclean animals under God's law (Leviticus 11:7). Therefore, the "great herd of swine" here represent Israel's uncleanness due to their disobedience of God's law.

5:12-13 Jesus' casting out of the devils represents Jesus' ability to cleanse Israel of Satan's power, and He does so by getting rid of the uncleanness of Israel, as represented by the swine being destroyed. The sea is a type of Satan's domain, and so them running into the sea and drowning shows how Jesus wants to drown the religion of Israel into Satan's realm.

5:14-17 The swine also represent the economic system of the Antichrist in the tribulation period. Believing the gospel of the kingdom in the tribulation period means giving up on economic prosperity under the Antichrist. Therefore, apostate Israel will kick out the little flock, much like they kicked out Jesus here.

5:17 Israel's reaction to Jesus' being able to cleanse the nation of Satan's power and religion and to get them to obey the law is for them to kick Him out. Therefore, Israel remains apostate and dead in their sins. They would rather have a devil-possessed man in their midst that they cannot bind with chains than to have God in their midst, having soundly defeated Satan's power over that man (5:15).

5:18-20 The man, cleansed of the devils, is a picture of a Jew in the tribulation period released from Satan's power by believing the gospel of the kingdom. Jesus then sends him out to preach the gospel so that others might enter the kingdom, just like the little flock is to do among the cities of Israel during the tribulation period (Matthew 10:5-8).

5:22 Although the Jewish religious leaders, as a whole, have rejected their Messiah and Jesus is now concentrating on edifying His little flock of believers, individuals among the religious leaders may still join the little flock as shown by Jairus here and by Nicodemus in the book of John (see Nicodemus' progression to salvation from John 3:3-4 to John 7:50-51 to John 19:38-39).

5:23 Jairus' daughter lying at the point of death represents Israel when Jesus began His ministry. The kingdom of heaven was at hand, but they did not have strength to make it into the kingdom themselves, because they have followed man's religion. Jesus would have to provide that strength by giving them the gospel of the kingdom to get them back under God's law covenant with Israel.

5:25-29 The woman's issue of blood represents the nation of Israel with the "twelve" years of her condition, representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Spiritually speaking, Israel's blood is tainted with Satan's blood. Just like God heals the

woman's issue of blood, He can heal the nation of Israel if only they believe the gospel of the kingdom. The physicians she went to represent the Jewish religious leaders. Because they taught the traditions of man and not the commandments of God (7:7-9), spending time with them only made her, and the nation of Israel, worse. Only faith in God's Word to them could heal them spiritually.

5:27-28,30-34 This woman has faith in God, but, as represented by the physicians she has gone to, she is still steeped in religion. Therefore, she makes up a work she can do to be made whole. She thinks her work of touching Jesus' garment will make her whole. When she is made whole (5:29), there is the danger that she will think her religion—her work—brought her healing. Therefore, Jesus finds her and tells her specifically, “thy FAITH hath made thee whole.” This woman, then, is a picture of the little flock. They have the faith in the gospel of the kingdom to be saved, but they are still trusting in the mountain of religion, such that they do not understand the parables Jesus teaches them (4:10) and do not understand that Jesus is more than just a man when He calms the winds and the waves (4:41). In fact, the disciples' not noticing the woman's religious act (5:31) shows how the disciples are hindered in advancing in kingdom doctrine, and they do not even realize that their religion is that hindrance.

Similarly today, people try to add water baptism, church membership, making Jesus the Lord of their lives, turning from their sins, and a host of other works to the finished work of Christ, so that man can brag in what he has done to earn eternal life. Yet, scripture plainly tells us that “by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Galatians 2:16).

5:35-36 During John the Baptist's ministry, the Pharisees came to his baptism in unbelief (Matthew 3:5-8). This is represented by the religious leader's daughter being sick. Then, Jesus came, and the Pharisees completely rejected their Messiah. This is represented by the religious leader's daughter's death. But, Jesus' message to the nation is that it is still not too late—“only believe.” The ministry of the Holy Ghost is still to come in early Acts. God can still resurrect His dead nation, just like He raises this religious leader's daughter from the dead.

5:37 The reason why Peter, James, and John are the only ones who see the girl raised from the dead is the same reason why they are the only ones who witness Jesus' transfiguration in Matthew 17:1-2. They are God's appointed leaders of the little flock for the tribulation period. Therefore, they need great faith. If too many people see the resurrection from the dead, word will leak to the Pharisees, and they will try to kill Him before His time (see the nation's reaction to Lazarus' resurrection in John 11:46-50).

5:39 When someone is going to have eternal life in the kingdom, their death, in God's eyes, is just sleep. That is why the term “slept with his fathers” is used in the Bible for someone who dies. That is why Jesus refers to this girl and to Lazarus in John 11:11 as sleeping.

5:40 The laughing of the people shows their unbelief in the resurrection power of

God. Granted, they may not know that she will be raised up right then. However, if their eternal hope is in God's kingdom on earth, they would acknowledge she is sleeping because she will be raised from the dead by God eventually. This is seen in Martha's statement in John 11:24: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection in the last day."

The fact that they laugh here shows the unbelief of these people, which, in this story, stands for the unbelief of the nation of Israel as a whole. Specifically, it stands for the unbelief of the Jewish religion, as seen in the fact that this took place at the house of the ruler of the synagogue.

5:42 Her age of 12 years, like the woman with the issue of blood for 12 years (5:25), represents the 12 tribes of Israel. As such, her rising from the dead represents the nation of Israel being able to rise from the dead if they "only believe" (5:36). The kingdom of God is still at hand, but they must believe the gospel of the kingdom in order for it to come right then.

5:43 Her eating after being raised from the dead represents the new covenant that will be written up the heart of the nation of Israel so that they will live forever with God in His kingdom. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).

6 Jesus calls 12 apostles to continue His ministry. Even this "cream of the crop" lacks faith in Jesus' teachings. That is understandable, considering that Israel, as a whole, lacks faith in God, coming to Jesus for physical miracles and not for spiritual healing.

6:1 Since Jesus left the city where God resurrected the girl through Him, that city must have rejected the gospel-of-the-kingdom message.

6:2-3 The people ask, "From whence hath this man these things?" When Jesus first came to His hometown synagogue, He answered their question by reading Isaiah 61:1, where it says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me" (Luke 4:18). The result was that they tried to kill Him (Luke 4:28-30). This means that they already knew the answer to their question, but they refused to believe it.

This time, however, they have authoritative teaching and physical miracles to contend with, which is much tougher to reject. But, they were used to hearing the traditions of men, and they believed those traditions over the Word of God. Therefore, they were offended by what He taught, assuming He could not be the Messiah since they knew His family. Therefore, Jesus' hometown will not believe the gospel.

The problem is that they looked at the flesh. They said, "I know Jesus. He is a carpenter. Therefore, He cannot be the Messiah." Today, the same often holds true with unsaved family members of saved individuals. They say, "There is nothing special about John Doe. He grew up in the same environment as I did, and he is

not any better than I am.” Only by looking at who their family member is in Christ will someone believe the gospel and be saved. As long as they love their flesh more than their spirit, they will come up with excuses not to believe.

The idea that Mary was a virgin throughout her whole life is rejected by 6:3 since she had at least 4 sons and 2 daughters by natural means.

6:4 Jesus had been rejected by His own city. 3:21,31-35 tells us that He was also rejected by His own mother and brother. That is what Jesus is referencing, here, when He says He is "without honour...among his own kin, and in his own house."

6:2,5 6:5 says, “He could there do no mighty work, save” that He healed a few sick folks. However, the people say, in 6:2, that He did “such mighty works.” This shows the difference between God’s perspective and man’s perspective. From God’s point of view, a mighty work is someone believing the gospel and receiving eternal life. From man’s point of view, a mighty work is a physical healing. So, today, many Christians look for a physical healing and get excited when they hear that one has happened, yet they have very little excitement when someone believes the gospel and receives eternal life in Christ.

6:7-13 Jesus sends the 12 apostles out to preach the gospel of the kingdom to the cities of Israel and to do the signs of the kingdom. They were not to take any possessions with them, but instead rely upon those, who would believe the gospel of the kingdom, to provide for them. If a city rejects them, they were to flee to another city, because they would not be able to go through all the cities of Israel before Jesus' second coming (Matthew 10:23). So, why waste time in an unbelieving city.

The reason it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorha on the day of judgment than for a city that rejects the gospel of the kingdom is that a city in Israel has greater responsibility, being on the right side of the middle wall of partition and having the gospel preached to them in that city (v. 11). The more light an unbeliever rejects in this life, the more darkness the unbeliever will experience in the life to come.

The anointing with oil to heal the sick (v. 13) is a visual representation of the physical healing taking place by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is NOT for today, as Pentecostals like to claim it is, although the Pentecostals like to quote James 5:14-15 instead. That way, they do not have to come to the people, but the people can come to their church.

6:14 In spite of Jesus telling people not to tell others of the physical healings they received, word got around.

6:15 It is a religious superstition to declare someone to be God when they perform a physical miracle (see Acts 14:8-12). The Jewish religious leaders had elevated Elijah to God status. We see this in Matthew 27:46-49, where Jesus calls upon God, and they think He is asking for Elijah. It is no wonder then, that the religious

leaders think that Jesus is Elijah. The sad thing is that no one even suggests He could be the Messiah, since they expected the Messiah to deliver them from Roman oppression, not deliver them from Satanic, religious oppression. Therefore, they ended up rejecting Jesus as their Messiah. This shows that the Jews were very religious, but they did not have faith in the Scriptures.

6:17-29 Mark goes back in time to tell us of John the Baptist's death. I believe this story is here to demonstrate that Israel will have two, negative reactions to the power that God has given to His little flock for the tribulation period.

The first reaction is seen in Herod. Herod feared John and did many things for him while he was in prison (v. 20). Herod feared killing John the Baptist (v. 26) because he knew him to be just and holy (v. 20). Now, when he hears of Jesus' ministry, he thinks John the Baptist has risen from the dead (v. 14). The point is that Jesus has just anointed the apostles with the same power Jesus has to heal the sick and cast out devils (v. 12-13). Given what happened with John the Baptist, Jesus' disciples need to be aware that people will think them to be Jesus risen from the dead when they preach the gospel of the kingdom and perform mighty works among the cities of Israel, such that they will want to worship the messenger, rather than worshipping God.

The second reaction is one of jealousy to the point of trying to murder members of the little flock. This reaction is seen in Herodias. She is jealous of the power of God working through John the Baptist and despises his holiness, especially given her adulterous behavior. Therefore, she wants to kill him. Note the pure evil of Herodias and her daughter, as they obtain John's head by subtility (vs. 19, 22, 24-25), and then have no adverse reaction to seeing his head in a charger (v. 28). So, too, many in Israel will seek to kill the little flock over the power of God working through them.

Note that neither one of these reactions brings salvation, as man is either worshipped or hated. It is the third, positive reaction of being pricked in the heart and believing the gospel that will bring the little flock into the kingdom (Acts 2:37-41).

6:30 After the parenthesis of 6:14-29, the story picks up where it left off in 6:13 with the 12 apostles telling of the results they had of preaching the gospel, healing the sick, and casting out devils.

6:31 With the miracle performing ability of the 12 apostles, they are now surrounded by people just like Jesus was, so much so that they were not even able to eat!

6:33 Jesus is so popular at this point that He cannot escape the multitude. He tries to get away by ship, and the people run alongside on the coast.

6:34 The people followed Jesus because of the physical miracles He performed. However, what they really needed was spiritual restoration through believing the

gospel of the kingdom and then being taught the law so that they can follow God's law covenant with Israel. The Jewish religious leaders were not teaching the law. They taught the tradition of the fathers instead (7:7). Therefore, the people were sheep without a shepherd. In fact, Jeremiah 23:1 says, "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! saith the Lord." Therefore, the common Jews were in worse shape under the Jewish religious leaders than they would have been under no religious leaders at all.

6:35-37 Where is the faith of Jesus' apostles? Jesus had just given them power to cast out devils and heal the sick (6:13), yet, when Jesus tells them to feed the multitude, they wonder how they are going to buy all the food they need to feed these people. The apostles still need their faith to grow. Spiritually speaking, in the kingdom, the Jews will feed the Gentiles by giving them the word of the Lord (Zechariah 8:23). The little flock does not have enough faith to do this yet.

6:38-40 The disciples do not need to count their food to see if they have enough or not. It's not like it is close. Not one of them went over to count thinking, "Maybe we can make this stretch out over all the people." The point of Jesus telling them to "go and see" is so they will understand that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). They had just returned from preaching the gospel. In the tribulation period, they were to go out to the cities of Israel and "take no thought" of what they shall eat (Matthew 6:31). If they learn that lesson now, they will not be tempted to take the mark of the beast, since not taking the mark means they are not able to buy food (Revelation 13:16-17).

Also, note that the disciples had not eaten, and they had gone to the desert place to rest and probably also to eat (v. 31). Now, they are still hungry, and, instead of eating, they are feeding others. This is a physical representation of what the believing remnant does spiritually for the lost sheep of Israel during the tribulation period. The fact, that the people sit down in groups of hundreds and fifties (v. 40), is supposed to represent the governmental structure in the kingdom. The 12 apostles will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28). Beneath the 12 will be judges, who rule over thousands, hundreds, and fifties (Exodus 18:21). Thus, we see Jesus as the king, the 12 apostles as being under Him, and the groups of people under them, not unlike what will be seen in God's eternal kingdom on earth.

6:41-44 This miracle of feeding 5,000 men with five loaves and two fishes is a foreshadowing of the tribulation period. During the first half of the tribulation period, members of the little flock will sell what they have, lay it at the apostles' feet, and the apostles will distribute food according as each person has need (Acts 4:34-35). Then, during the last half of the tribulation period, since the little flock will not take the mark of the beast, they will not be able to buy food (Revelation 13:16-17). As such, they will have to rely upon their heavenly Father to feed them (Matthew 6:25-26). They will ask their heavenly Father for food (Matthew 7:7-11), and He will sustain them through the tribulation period. Thus, this feeding of the 5,000 is a picture of that time. Jesus' asking the Father to bless the food shows

how it is truly a miracle of God to stretch limited food to thousands of people. The 12 baskets left over are symbolic of the 12 tribes of Israel making it through the tribulation period being filled spiritually (Matthew 5:6) after being sustained physically by God the Father.

6:41,44 It is interesting that Jesus gave the 5 loaves to the disciples for them to set before the 5,000 men, but that Jesus Himself divided the 2 fish among the 5,000 men. Perhaps the loaves are a reference to God feeding the little flock during the tribulation, while the fish refer to the fruit of the labor of the little flock, preaching the gospel of the kingdom during the tribulation period. After all, Jesus told Peter and Andrew that He would make them "fishers of men" (1:17). Maybe that is why we are told that the men ate of the loaves, while there is no mention of them eating of the fish (v. 44).

6:45-52 Jesus sent the disciples out on the sea by themselves to show them what the tribulation period will be like. During the tribulation period, the little flock will have God's Word, but God will seem to be far from them, just like Jesus was not with the disciples on the ship. (Jesus' going to a mountain to pray signifies how He will not be with them physically in the tribulation period, although He is really with them in the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:20). But, this also shows the humanity of Jesus, since Jesus the man needed instructions from God the Father.) The tribulation saints will be surrounded by Satan's kingdom and sin, much like the disciples are surrounded by water here. They are out at sea during the night, and the tribulation period is represented by night. Jesus will come to rescue the little flock at the end of the night, just like Jesus came to them here in the fourth watch of the night, which is just before dawn (Psalm 30:5). Note that Jesus only rescues those who trust in Him, as evidenced by the fact that He would have passed by them, except that they cried out to Him. Once Jesus comes to the little flock, the storm is over, just like the tribulation period will be over once Jesus comes back to earth.

The parallel passage in Matthew 14 tells us that Peter walked on the sea with Jesus for a bit, until he looked at the storm around him. Then, he began to sink (Matthew 14:28-31). This shows that the tribulation saints can survive in a world full of sin as long as they keep looking to God's Word to sustain them. Once they began looking at the world around them, they will succumb to the temptations of the Antichrist's kingdom. Yet, if they are trusting in the gospel of the kingdom, God will save them and bring them into the kingdom. They just will not be effective in preaching the gospel of the kingdom in the tribulation period if they doubt God in other things.

6:52 Note the unbelief of the disciples. Jesus is trying to show them that He is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that they need to believe everything He says in order to understand the mysteries of the kingdom in order to endure through the tribulation period. However, they are still trusting in religion, such that most of Israel entering the kingdom will not even preach the gospel of the kingdom as shown by their slumbering and sleeping during the tribulation period (Matthew 25:5).

6:53-56 The crowds in Israel follow Jesus solely for the physical miracles He does. No mention is made of Israel believing the gospel of the kingdom and following Him to receive edification in order to endure through the tribulation period and reach the lost sheep of Israel with the gospel. They are only concerned with physical healings. You can also see them hanging onto religion by their being made whole by touching His garment. Jesus clearly told the woman with the issue of blood that it was her faith that made her whole, not touching His garment (5:34). However, religion says that "I must do something." Therefore, Israel has created the religious work of touching Him as something THEY do to receive a physical healing. It is no wonder, then, that most will come to the Antichrist in the tribulation period to receive physical health and material wealth, since they care nothing about the doctrine behind the miracle worker.

7 The Jewish religious leaders have led Israel astray by teaching traditions to replace God's commands (vs. 1-23), such that the Jews only come to Jesus for physical healings (v. 37), while a Gentile woman understands more doctrine than they do (v. 28).

7:1 Multitudes were coming to Jesus for physical miracles. The Pharisees are now coming to Him to put a stop to this and to try to trap Him and His disciples in the Pharisees' religion, so that the Pharisees do not lose the money from and the power over the multitudes.

7:3 All of Israel is following the tradition of the elders, but they do not follow the commandments of God (7:9). That is because the power of the flesh is very strong. The flesh wants to do evil things (Jeremiah 17:9). At the same time, they will have guilty consciences if they do evil things. So, they substantiate what they do by following religion. Religion sears their consciences (I Timothy 4:2), making them think they are okay with God, in spite of their evil deeds, if they do what religion says. And, religion's requirement to wash their hands before they eat is something the flesh does not mind obeying. Religion has no problem tithing spices, but it has problems with providing justice, mercy, and faith (Matthew 23:23). Therefore, it is the commandments of God that are contrary to the flesh's desires that the Jews will not do. Their cleansing of their hands is symbolic of what religion does. To man, they look clean. To God, they are still unclean because their hearts are not right before God. As such, they "are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Matthew 23:27).

7:5 So engrained are the traditions of the elders that the Pharisees identify them as the authority, not caring that the Word of God does not address these traditions, and so they do not have to be followed. Man takes God's commands, that are contrary to the flesh, and replaces them with man's commands that satisfy the flesh (Colossians 2:23). Then, he uses scripture to deceive man into thinking he is following God (Ephesians 4:14). That way, man's seared conscience does not feel guilty over following the flesh, and the flesh does not suffer the persecution of having the spirit control the soul, rather than the flesh controlling

the soul.

Today, an example of this is baptism. As members of the body of Christ, we are baptized into Jesus' death (Romans 6:4) by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13) the moment we believe the gospel (Ephesians 1:13-14). This baptism enables us to live in Jesus' resurrection life, which means reckoning the flesh to be dead (Romans 6:6-11). Since man wants the flesh to be alive (Ephesians 5:29), he has replaced this Spirit baptism with a water baptism that accomplishes nothing except to keep people from seeing the truth of the Spirit baptism that we have in Christ. Therefore, water baptism is a rite of most churches to get Christians into a lifelong service of the flesh, ignoring who they are in Christ and the ability of the Spirit to live through them. For the Pharisees, the rite of passage into their fleshly religion was circumcision (Galatians 6:12).

7:6-9 This is the primary problem with the Pharisees and the nation of Israel as a whole. They think they are okay with God because they follow commandments. However, the commandments they follow are man's law, not God's law, and, by following them, they believe they are okay with God. Therefore, they have made the Word of God of none effect through their tradition (7:13). This is why it is so hard for Jesus to find anyone to believe the gospel of the kingdom. Israel's response is: "I'm okay with God. I'm following the law. I don't need to repent and be baptized." Therefore, religion is Satan's way of getting people to reject God's Word, lulling them into a false sense of security, only to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

Jesus' quote of Isaiah is from Isaiah 29:13. The passage in Isaiah says that, because they honor God with their lips only, two things will happen: 1) The religious leaders will not be able to understand God's Word (Isaiah 29:11-14), and 2) The little flock will be the new religious leaders (Isaiah 29:19,22-23). Therefore, if the Pharisees are familiar with this passage in Isaiah, they know that Jesus is saying they had better reject their own traditions and believe the gospel or else they will not make it into God's kingdom. The state of the religious leaders also explains why the disciples had hard hearts when it came to learning mysteries of the kingdom (6:52)—the prevailing religious system led them to ignorance.

"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12), "but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Romans 7:14). Since "there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Romans 3:12), God gave the good law as a perfect standard for man to realize that he is in need of a Saviour. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). Instead of learning this lesson from the law, the Pharisees rejected God's law and replaced it with their own law that made them look good so that they could continue to sin without suffering persecution for it (Galatians 6:12). In other words, God gave the law so that Israel may have faith in God to give them His righteousness. Instead, the Pharisees got rid of that law and replaced it with their law, so that they would appear to be righteous in the eyes of men (Matthew 23:5-7).

7:10-13 Jesus gives an example of how the religious leaders have taken a

commandment of God and have replaced it with their own tradition. Exodus 21:17 says that you are to be killed for cursing your parents, which Jesus interprets to mean that you are to take care of your parents when they are no longer able to take care of themselves. However, the Pharisees have said that life is a gift; therefore, children do not have to help their parents. As such, they have made "the Word of God of none effect" (7:13).

7:14-23 According to 7:17, 7:15 is a parable. Jesus is NOT saying that all foods are clean, because that would be contrary to the law (see Leviticus 11). What He is saying is that what causes a man to be unclean in the eyes of God is what is in his heart, i.e., "evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts," etc. In other words, the Jewish religious leaders are defiled because they have these evil things in their heart, and have changed God's laws around so that they can justify acting upon their evil thoughts. Instead, they should have faith in God by believing the gospel of the kingdom and teaching the law. It is that faith response to the law that will cause them to obey the law of God not to eat unclean animals. Eating unclean animals is still a sin, because Israel is still under the law, but it is the evil thought of eating an unclean animal that is what defiles the man, not the actual eating of it.

This is in line with what Jesus taught in Matthew 5:21-48. For example, Jesus said in Matthew 5:27-28 that the Pharisees said the sin comes in committing adultery, while Jesus said "that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Thus, it is the evil thought that is the breaking of God's law, not the physical act of breaking God's law. Therefore, Jesus is saying that the reason the Jewish religious leaders teach the traditions of the elders and have made God's law void is because they are evil.

What Jesus is saying is vitally important to understand because all translations, except the King James Version, state in 7:19 that Jesus had declared all foods unclean (The New King James Version says this in a footnote, not in the text.) Jesus said in Matthew 5:19 that anyone teaching contrary to God's law will be least in God's kingdom. If Jesus did this, as all modern translations claim He did in Mark 7:19, Jesus is not God, which means He could not save us from our sins, our faith is in vain, and all mankind will end up in the lake of fire. Therefore, on the basis of **this point alone**, all modern translations should be rejected. Jesus' disciples did not understand the parable. It had to be explained to them. All modern translators also do not understand the parable, even with the explanation being in the text in 7:18-23!

7:24 In Matthew 10:11-14, Jesus told His apostles that they were to enter into a town, find out who is worthy, and stay at that house only if the person is worthy. The fact, that Jesus enters into a house here but wants no one else to know about it, tells us that those in the borders of Tyre and Sidon have rejected the gospel of the kingdom except for the house He stays in. Thus, they are the only ones worthy of Jesus being there and are the only ones who should know about Him being there. However, He is so popular that He cannot hide His presence.

7:25-30 "The children" of 7:27 are the nation of Israel. "The dogs" are the Gentiles. Jesus was sent "unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24). Israel, in turn, was supposed to be a kingdom of priests to reach the Gentiles (Exodus 19:5-6). Because of this, Jesus does not heal this Gentile woman's daughter at first. However, once she answers that she understands the proper order of Israel first and then the Gentiles (v. 28), Jesus heals her daughter (v. 29). She, more than likely, had no Jew to present her request to Jesus like the Roman centurion had in Luke 7:3. Thus, this was the best she could do. She stands to the shame of Israel because they do not believe God's Word, even though they have it and were supposed to be God's holy nation, while this Gentile woman, knows and believes God's Word. Even though she is on the wrong side of the middle wall of partition, she will be in the kingdom, while the Pharisees will not be.

7:32 Three times already in Mark, Jesus has said, if any man have ears to hear, let him hear (4:9,23, 7:16). Now, we see a deaf man. The deaf man, then, is a picture of the nation of Israel. They do not have ears to hear the gospel of the kingdom and the mysteries of the kingdom because of their unbelief. The speech impediment of this man represents the inability of Israel to speak the gospel to the Gentiles, also because of unbelief.

7:33,36 Jesus' taking the man away from the multitude and His telling them not to tell others about the healing are probably done because of the unbelief of the nation. The signs were supposed to point them to believing the gospel. If they were not going to have faith in God, then the signs would work against Jesus in that they would stir up the religious leaders even more so against Jesus. Therefore, spreading the news of miracles to unbelievers does not help matters.

7:33 The people had thought that, by touching Jesus, they would receive physical healing (3:10, 5:28, 6:56, and 8:22). In other words, they had created religion or a work that would bring healing to them. It is something they did to be healed, not God alone. To show that there is no work they can do to be healed, Jesus is the One Who does the touching here. By putting His fingers in the man's ears, spitting, and touching his tongue, Jesus does all of the work. It is nothing that the healee does; it is what the healer does.

7:34 Jesus' sigh probably reflects how He wishes He could open the eyes and tongue of the nation of Israel spiritually, instead of only having them come to Him for physical healing. Jesus' looking up to heaven shows that it is God Who opens the man's ears.

7:37 Israel is concentrating on the physical miracles Jesus does. They do not care that He can bring spiritual healing to them to release them from being Satan's lawful captive (Isaiah 49:24).

8 The crowds do not believe the gospel of the kingdom (vs. 1-9); the religious leaders do not believe the gospel of the kingdom (vs. 10-13); and the little flock do not have the ears to hear and the eyes to see the mysteries of the kingdom (vs. 14-21). The nation will not be saved (vs. 22-26) and acknowledge Jesus as their

Messiah (vs. 27-29); therefore, Christ warns Israel to follow Him during the tribulation period in order to enter the kingdom (vs. 34-38).

8:1-9 Jesus feeds 4,000. Note in 8:9 that, after feeding them, He sends them away. This shows that they did not believe the gospel of the kingdom, even though they were dedicated enough to follow Jesus around for 3 days without food (vs. 2-3). If they did believe the gospel, they would have sold everything they had and followed Jesus (vs. 34-35). This shows that religion has too strong of a hold on the Jewish multitude.

8:4 Religion still has a stronghold on the 12 apostles, as well. They have seen many miracles by Jesus. Jesus even told them on a previous occasion to give the 5,000 food to eat (6:37), as a way for them to learn to trust in God the Father's provision of food during the tribulation period. They did not have the faith to feed the 5,000; therefore, Jesus had to do it. Now, Jesus gives them another opportunity (vs. 2-3), and they STILL ask Jesus how they can have enough bread to feed the 4,000!

8:5,8-9 The seven loaves at the beginning and the seven baskets left over at the end represent the seven years of tribulation Israel will go through. Note that they were filled. In the tribulation period, the little flock may have to fast and not have physical food, but they will have spiritual food, feasting on God's Word. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

8:11 In 3:6, the Pharisees began seeking how they would destroy Jesus. We are told here that they are tempting Jesus with their question. Therefore, their motives are not correct. But, they look for a sign from heaven, when Jesus had said that it is correct doctrine that determines if a person is from heaven or not (Matthew 12:33-35). Therefore, their request of a sign from heaven is faulty.

8:12 "This generation" is a generation of vipers (Matthew 12:34). They are of the devil.

8:13 When Jesus got off of the ship in Dalmanutha (8:10), He was immediately confronted with unbelief. Therefore, He sighs deeply (8:12). He wanted to preach the gospel so that people may be saved, and He has already been rejected before He starts to preach and to perform miracles. Therefore, He just gets back on the ship and leaves.

8:14-21 Jesus has been trying to get His disciples to look at things spiritually, instead of just taking physical miracles at face value. The disciples have not learned that the healing of the sick and the casting out of devils represent what God wants to do spiritually for the nation of Israel. Then, Jesus tried to get them to trust in the Father's provision to feed the 5,000, and they did not do this. Then, He tried the same thing with the feeding of the 4,000, and they still did not rely upon the Father's provision to feed them. Now, Jesus tells them that the bread represents sound doctrine, and they still do not get it. It is only after Jesus

explains that they finally understand that the “leaven of the Pharisees” represents their false doctrine (Matthew 16:12).

Leaven is a type of sin in the Bible. If the disciples take the pure bread of God’s Word and add the religion of the Pharisees, their leaven will leaven the whole lump (I Corinthians 5:6-7), such that the gospel of the kingdom and the sound doctrine of God’s Word will be destroyed. They will then be trusting in religion, instead of in God. The disciples’ lack of complete faith in God’s Word is keeping the mountain of religion in their way of believing everything Jesus tells them, such that they will not believe in His death, burial, and resurrection, until after they physically see that He has risen from the dead (John 20:9).

This principle of “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (I Corinthians 5:6) is why Satan’s lie program is so effective in hiding the truth from people (II Corinthians 4:2-4). Satan has transformed his ministers to look like “ministers of righteousness” (II Corinthians 11:13-15) by taking the truth of God’s Word and using “the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness” (Ephesians 4:14) to twist the truth just a little so that it still appears to be true, when it is really a lie, since it just takes a little leaven to leaven the whole lump.

8:19-20 Note how Jesus calls out the specific information from the two, different feedings that are the most important for them to pick up. 12 baskets were left after feeding the 5,000, and 7 baskets were left after feeding the 4,000. These numbers represent how the 12 tribes of Israel will endure the 7 years of tribulation and enter God’s kingdom, if they believe in God’s provision, i.e., the gospel of the kingdom, unto the end.

8:22-26 The blind man represents the nation of Israel. The nation does not have the eyes to see the truth of God’s Word and is not trusting in the gospel of the kingdom. Even the little flock does not have eyes to see (v. 18) the mysteries of the kingdom. Jesus’ taking him “out of the town” (v. 23) represents how spiritual healing only takes place if Israel will come outside of Israel’s religious system. That is, “without the camp” (Hebrews 13:11-14). Jesus’ spitting on the man’s eyes and putting His hands upon him represent, as it did in 7:33, Jesus showing that it is not by works that man is healed. Man’s touching of Jesus does not make them whole. It is faith that makes them whole spiritually. The physical miracles, though, are signs of the kingdom and are not signs of faith or lack thereof. If they were signs of faith, then only the believing remnant would have experienced physical miracles, instead of the great multitudes. Therefore, the blind man’s not being healed at first is not a sign of a lack of faith. Since he stands for the nation of Israel, his only being able to see partially at Jesus’ first touch represents Jesus’ first coming. Only a little flock of Israel believed the gospel of the kingdom and were saved, just like the man could only see a little bit. Then, at Jesus’ second coming, the nation, as a whole, will believe the gospel and enter the kingdom, just like this blind man’s sight was fully restored by Jesus touching him a second time.

In 8:26, Jesus tells the healed man not to “go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.” The reason is because of the hardness of the heart of the people there in

Bethsaida, such that Jesus has already pronounced judgment against the town, as seen in Matthew 11:21: “Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”

8:27-29 The last story was of a blind man, and of how, at Jesus’ first coming, Israel was still blind, but, at His second coming, they will see. 8:27-29 explains this further. Whom men say that Jesus is at His first coming is that He is just a man. Not seeing Him as their Messiah, they are still blind. Peter sees Jesus as “the Christ,” which is how Israel will see Jesus at His second coming. (Zechariah 12:10 “They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son.”) Thus, Israel is spiritually blind in Mark. They will not spiritually see until Jesus’ second coming.

8:30 Again, Jesus says not to make His identity known. They are only to preach the gospel of the kingdom for now. They are not to identify Jesus as the Messiah until after His resurrection, when the 12 apostles give the indictment to Israel that THEY have crucified their Messiah and are worthy of God’s wrath (Acts 2:23,24-26). Since the 12 apostles were not to tell anyone that Jesus is the Messiah and they had already been preaching the gospel of the kingdom to Israel (Luke 9:2,6), the gospel the 12 apostles preached was NOT to trust in Jesus as the Messiah. The gospel was to “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17).

Since this goes against what Christianity teaches, this charge, by Jesus to His disciples not to tell any man that He is the Christ, is conveniently overlooked. If Christianity was to recognize the different gospels, they would have to start following Paul’s epistles, instead of Matthew – John, and that would ruin their guilt-based religion to get people to attend their churches and give them money. They cannot have that!

8:31 The gospel the 12 apostles preached also was not to trust in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection for atonement of sins, as it is today (I Corinthians 15:1-4), because it is not until now that Jesus “BEGAN” to teach them this. Therefore, the disciples preached a different gospel for eternal life than what we must trust in today for eternal life.

8:32 This is confirmed by Peter’s reaction. If Peter had been preaching Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection for atonement of sins, he would have said, “Duh! I already knew that.” However, Jesus’ death was NEW information for the 12 apostles, such that Peter rebuked Jesus for saying it. The 12 apostles firmly believed that Jesus would establish His eternal kingdom on earth RIGHT THEN without dying (Luke 19:11; 18:31-34), and He certainly would not be killed by the religious leaders. Therefore, they could not have been preaching what they did not know. The 12 apostles preached a different gospel than today’s gospel.

8:33 Although the disciples had the faith to trust God that Jesus is their Messiah (Matthew 16:16-17), they did NOT have the faith to trust that Jesus would die and rise from the dead the third day as atonement for their sins (8:33). They were still

trusting in religion at this point. That is why they were not able to cast out the lunatick devil in 9:18. "All things are possible to him that believeth" (9:23).

Mark leaves out the information found in Matthew 16:17-19 that Peter was blessed with having the keys of the kingdom and with the ability to forgive or retain sins, based upon the fact that he had faith in God that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). This blessing is important to note in light of the fact that, when Peter rebukes Jesus for saying He would die, Jesus calls Peter "Satan" (8:33). Certainly, Jesus would not give the keys of the kingdom to Satan!

This illustrates a very important principle that Christians often overlook. That principle is that, because you have faith in God, God recognizes your flesh to be dead, but your spirit to be alive unto God (Romans 6:11). Therefore, when you are in unbelief over something, God recognizes that that unbelief comes from you yielding your flesh over to Satan. Since your flesh is dead anyway, that sin is attributed to Satan, not to you. However, if you do believe something God tells you, God attributes that belief to your spirit, which is alive in Christ. Therefore, you are rewarded for it. Therefore, Peter could be in unbelief and still have the keys to God's kingdom.

8:34-38 Based on the unbelief of the disciples, Jesus gives a warning to both them and the people around Him. This warning is of the tribulation period. The Antichrist will offer material wealth and a place in his kingdom to the nation of Israel. Those in Israel, who reject this offer, will, for the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation, be running for their lives if they do not take the mark of the beast in order to buy food and water. Succumbing to the Antichrist's temptations will mean spending eternity in the lake of fire. Thus, the warning not to exchange their souls for the material possessions of this world (vs. 35-37).

The way to save their souls in the tribulation period is to be willing to give up their lives for the Messiah and the gospel of the kingdom. They need to: 1) Come after Christ, 2) Deny themselves, 3) Take up their cross, and 4) Follow Christ (v. 34). 1) Coming after Christ means believing the gospel of the kingdom. 2) Denying themselves means denying themselves of those material possessions and positions of power the Antichrist will offer Israel. 3) Taking up their cross means forsaking the religion of the Jewish religious leaders in favor of God's Word to them. The 12 apostles have not done this yet, thus, the warning to them. They must believe in resurrection life by God in order to be willing to receive capital punishment from the Antichrist for not taking the mark of the beast. The cross for Christ was a literal cross to defeat sin. The cross for the little flock of Israel, then, was the cross of religion. They must crucify religion in order to enter God's kingdom. 4) Following Christ means preaching the gospel of the kingdom during the tribulation period. The 12 apostles have only accomplished the first step, and they will need to believe more sound doctrine in order to accomplish steps 2-4.

The cross of religion is also big today. It must be crucified by believing the gospel of trusting in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection in order to receive eternal life. Then, it must be crucified by believing God's Word as your final authority and

rightly dividing it in order to understand it. You will then accomplish God's twofold will for your life, which is for you to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:3-4).

9 Jesus shows Peter, James, and John His kingdom glory (vs. 1-9) so that they will overcome religion in the tribulation period (vs. 14-29), and endure unto the end in order to enter the kingdom (vs. 43-50).

9:1 It is statements like this that cause people to believe that Jesus is referring to a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men, rather than a physical kingdom on the earth. However, such a belief goes against God's promise to bring Israel into their land and rule and reign with Him there forever (Revelation 21:1-2 and 22:1-6). Jesus' statement does physically come true just six days later, when Jesus is transfigured before them (9:2). II Peter 1:16-18 confirms that the transfiguration event of 9:2-8 is the time when Peter, James, and John saw the kingdom of God come with power.

9:2-8 Jesus just began to teach His apostles of His impending death (8:31). Since they thought He was going to bring in the kingdom now, hearing of His death may crush their belief in Jesus establishing God's kingdom on earth. Therefore, He gives them a foretaste of His kingdom to show that, while He will die first, He will still bring in God's eternal kingdom on earth. Therefore, when Jesus dies, they can remember what they saw here to give them the confidence they need to believe God's Word to them.

9:2 I am sure the six days of waiting have some significance. I am not sure what, since the tribulation period lasts 7 years, not 6 years. The high mountain of this verse symbolizes the kingdom of God, since it will be on Mount Zion. Jesus' transfiguration shows Him in His glorified state, as He will be in God's kingdom.

9:3 The whiteness of Jesus' garment beyond what any man could make it shows His purity and holiness that exceeds the righteousness of the Pharisees (Matthew 5:20).

9:4 Elias, Moses, and Jesus represent prophet (Elias), priest (Moses), and king (Jesus) in God's kingdom, although I must mention that Jesus will embody all three in the kingdom, as well. Some use this passage to say that Elias and Moses will be on Jesus' right and left hand in the kingdom, or that they will be the two witnesses in Revelation 11. These are possibilities, but I think the real reason they are seen here is so the apostles will recognize that belief in resurrection is essential to having faith in God. After all, the mark of the beast with the threat of physical death will come midway through the tribulation period. If the believing remnant knows that saints of old, such as Elijah and Moses, are resurrected to be with Christ in the kingdom, then they need not fear physical death at the hands of the Antichrist and they should not stop believing in Jesus as the Messiah, even though He is crucified.

9:5 Peter's statement represents believing Gentiles in Jesus' millennial kingdom.

The Gentiles will not have the law written on their hearts as part of the new covenant. Therefore, they will follow Jews back to Zion to be instructed in God's law (Zechariah 8:23), since the Jews will be "the Priests of the Lord" (Isaiah 61:6), and it will be good for them to be there.

9:7 It is so important that the disciples understand the cross that God has a voice come to them from heaven that tells them to listen to what His beloved Son is telling them, and yet they still do not know what Jesus means by resurrection (9:9-10)!

9:9 The apostles are not to reveal the mysteries of the kingdom until after Jesus' resurrection, since the nation has rejected the gospel of the kingdom. They will get another chance with the Holy Ghost's ministry in Acts 1-7.

9:10 In 5:41-42, Peter, James, and John saw Jesus raise Jarius' daughter from the dead. Therefore, they knew what it meant to rise from the dead. The reason they are questioning its meaning here is that they think that Jesus is going to overthrow the Romans and establish God's kingdom on earth right then, especially in light of what they just saw on the mountain. To them, death means Jesus would be defeated, Satan would win, and God's kingdom would never come. Therefore, they refuse to believe that Jesus will die, and they try to figure out what He could really mean here. In other words, they think that "rising from the dead" must be symbolic for something else.

9:11 Since they expect Jesus is going to bring in God's kingdom right now, the disciples are thinking through doctrine that they know. They have not seen Elijah yet and they know he must come before the kingdom is brought in, so they ask about it now to see if the delay in the kingdom coming is because Elijah has not shown up yet.

9:12-13 Jesus tells them that Elijah has already come, which means He was speaking of John the Baptist (Matthew 17:13). So, now they know they are not waiting for Elijah to come. Again, Jesus provides the answer that He must suffer before He can bring in God's kingdom. Note that He also says that He must "be set at nought" first. Peter, James, and John are thinking of His glorious body in the kingdom, and Jesus says that He must first be counted as nothing before God can glorify Him. (His being set at nought was fulfilled in Luke 23:11, when He was mocked before Herod.)

9:14-19 The lunatick devil could not be cast out of the boy by the 9 apostles (Jesus, Peter, James, and John were not there at the time.). "This kind" (9:29) of devil is the kind representing the Jewish religious system. This system has torn Israel. It foams, gnashes with its teeth, and pines away. The foaming represents it being of the Devil. The gnashing with teeth represents the anger of the religious system when confronted with God's truth, e.g., Acts 7:54 and Proverbs 30:14. Pining away represents how religion wears Israel out such that they will eventually perish under that system. Because the disciples are still clinging onto religion, they are not able to cast out religion. In other words, because they do not believe

in the Messiah's death, they cannot cast the lunatick devil out of the boy.

9:15 Why were the people “greatly amazed” to see Jesus? Could it be that the 9 disciples thought Jesus was killed while He was on the mountain in 9:2-10? When Moses went to the mountain to receive commandments from the Lord, that is what Israel thought happened to him. After all, the mountain shook and burned with fire. So, they said, “for as for this Moses,... we wot not what is become of him” (Exodus 32:1). So, they formed golden calves and started worshipping them (Exodus 32:2-8). Perhaps here in Mark, the people asked the 9 disciples what happened to Jesus, and they assumed that He was killed with all that happened on the mountain. So, when Jesus came down, they were “greatly amazed.”

9:19 Another way of wording Jesus' question of: “How long shall I be with you?” may be: “How long until this faithless generation crucifies Me, due to their unbelief?”

9:21 Israel has been plagued with religion since he was born as God's son, coming out of Egypt (Exodus 4:22), such that they never fully possessed the promised land. So, too, this boy has been plagued by this lunatick devil since he was a child.

9:22-23 Satan had sought to destroy the nation of Israel through religion, but there is still a believing remnant, just like this dumb spirit has sought to destroy this boy all his life but has been unsuccessful (v. 22). Understanding this helps us to understand verse 23.

“Faith healers” of today like to use verse 23 for their name-it-and-claim-it philosophy. If the person appears to be healed, more money flows into their pockets. If the person does not appear to be healed, they can use this verse to blame it on a lack of faith by the person seeking healing. However, we have already seen that physical healings are predicated on the faith of the healer, and not on the faith of the person being healed. We see that here as the disciples could not cast out the devil (vs. 17-18), but Jesus does so (vs. 25-27). (Verse 29 shows that Jesus tells His disciples that the reason they could not cast that devil out was because it would take prayer and fasting on their part in order to believe advanced doctrine for their program so that they could cast out the devil. Jesus does not say, “If only that boy's father had the faith, you could have cast the devil out.”)

Therefore, Jesus is NOT telling the man that he needs to have more faith in order for the physical healing to take place. Rather, Jesus is talking about the more important, spiritual healing of the nation. Jesus is there among a “faithless” generation. Jesus can do all physical miracles, regardless of Israel's faith, because the physical miracles are signs that the gospel He preaches is true (16:17-20). However, spiritual healing only takes place for the nation if they believe the gospel. That is what Jesus is talking about here. Jesus came to bind the strong man (Satan) so that Israel could enter into God's kingdom (3:27), but the only way this would happen is if they believe the gospel of the kingdom (v. 23).

9:24 The father's statement represents the little flock. They are the little flock because they have believed the gospel of the kingdom. However, they have unbelief in other things Jesus has taught which means that religion still has a hold on them. Only by God helping their unbelief will they believe He is the Messiah and that He can raise them from the dead, so that they will not worship the image of the beast or take his mark during the tribulation period.

9:25-27 The great multitude running together toward Jesus is a type of how religion will try to snuff out the gospel of the kingdom so that people will not believe. Jesus' healing the boy before the crowd got to Him is a type of how, if the little flock does not reach Israel with the gospel of the kingdom before the religion of the Antichrist gets to them, they probably will not be saved. The fact, that the boy looked like he died, symbolizes how, to apostate Israel, the believing remnant will look like they are spiritually dead, when it is apostate Israel that is really dead. The devil tearing the boy sore shows how Israel will be torn sore by religion in the tribulation period, such that many will lose their souls (8:36) and not enter the kingdom.

9:29 The prayer and fasting required of the little flock to cast out religion is what they will do in the tribulation period. They will pray for God's help, and they will have a forced fast because they will not have food because they will not take the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:17). What Jesus is saying is that religion has such a stronghold over Israel that it will take the nastiness of the reign of Satan through the Antichrist in the tribulation period for the true believers of Israel to set aside religion and trust in God's Word instead of religion. Then, they will believe what God has revealed to them, which means they will be able to cast out dumb and deaf spirits, because signs only follow those that believe (16:17).

9:30-32 Since the disciples are part of this "faithless generation" (9:19), they are in a status of unbelief with regard to Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. In fact, they did not even understand what He was talking about. Given that they had been preaching the gospel prior to this (Luke 9:6), the gospel of the kingdom must not contain any information about Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. Only today's gospel of grace contains this information. In fact, even after they understood those things and Peter preached Jesus' death in Acts 2, he preached it as BAD news, not as good news (Acts 2:22-23).

9:33-34 Jesus told them of the tribulation period they will have to go through (9:29), and how they will suffer like He suffers (Matthew 10:24-25). However, they do not believe this, because they have a conversation over who will be greatest in the kingdom. They are thinking about the transfiguration (9:2-8) and not about the suffering (9:31).

9:35 Having faith in God's Word and preaching the gospel of the kingdom is what will give the little flock higher positions in God's kingdom. The work of preaching the gospel of the kingdom requires them to be servants.

9:36-37 One, who has faith in God's Word, setting aside religion, is like a child in

that they believe what their Father tells them over what man tells them. Because of this faith, they will go from city to city in Israel, preaching the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 10:5-7,23). Therefore, receiving a child is equated to believing the gospel of the kingdom, which means they will enter God's kingdom.

9:38-40 John confesses that the disciples had done the opposite of what Jesus taught in 9:36-37. They tried to stop a member of the little flock from performing miracles. The reason is because they still have the Jewish-religion mentality. The Jewish religion only allows people, who have jumped through all of their hoops, to be part of their club. Therefore, when the disciples see someone, who is not part of their club, they try to stop him from doing the work of the kingdom. This shows that the disciples still have a long ways to go.

9:41-42 During the tribulation period, the little flock will preach the gospel of the kingdom. If someone gives them water to drink, they have blessed the Israel of God. Therefore, God will bless them in the kingdom, according to the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:3). The Abrahamic covenant also holds true for those who cause the little flock to stop believing in God's Word, as they will be cursed by God for cursing Israel.

It is no accident that the cursed man is likened unto someone with a millstone around his neck who is cast into the sea. Revelation 18:21 has an angel taking a great millstone, throwing it into the sea, and saying that "thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down." This pictures Jesus' second coming, when Jesus will "grind to powder" (Luke 20:18) the unbelievers. In other words, Jesus' second coming will be a violent destruction of the unbelievers.

9:43-50 During the last half of the tribulation period, the Antichrist will persecute and kill those who do not worship the image of the beast (Revelation 13:15). During that time, a member of the little flock may be captured and threatened with having a hand cut off (v. 43), a foot cut off (v. 45), or an eye plucked out (v. 47) if he does not deny Christ and worship the image of the beast. Since worshipping the image and taking the mark means eternal damnation in the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11), it is better to lose that hand, foot, or eye and make it into God's eternal kingdom, than to keep the body part but burn in the lake of fire for all eternity. Therefore, Jesus is telling the little flock not to be offended by Him, regardless of the cost of non-offence, because the cost of denying Jesus before apostate Israel will be that He denies that person before His Father (Matthew 10:33).

We should also note that 9:43 and 9:45 talk about entering into life, and 9:47 talks about entering into the kingdom of God. This tells us that the great hope for saved Israel is eternal life in the kingdom.

9:44, 46, and 48 The worm refers to the state of the body in the lake of fire (See Isaiah 66:24, where the charred carcasses of men are referred to as undying worms.). A person's body will burn to the point of being just a worm in hell (We also understand this from Jesus saying that God would not leave His soul in hell (Psalm 16:10) and that He was a worm (Psalm 22:6).). Since the worm does not die

and the fire is not quenched, all people, going to the lake of fire, will burn for all eternity there. Therefore, it is important not to give up eternal life in the kingdom for temporarily having a hand, foot, or eye with you for the last few years of the tribulation period. In God's kingdom, the hand, foot, or eye will be restored. In the lake of fire, the whole body will burn into a worm.

We should also note that most modern versions completely omit verses 44 and 46, because they do not want you to know how bad hell really is. Although they do keep verse 48 in the text, they change it from the people in hell being the worm to actual worms being there, as they also do in Isaiah 66:24. Therefore, you do not learn that an unbeliever's body burns in hell to the point of degenerating to a worm, if you have a modern translation. Man's pride keeps him from devolving. He wants to evolve instead.

9:49-50 Salt refers to the little flock preaching the gospel of the kingdom in the tribulation period (Matthew 5:13). Being salted with fire refers to going through the fire of the tribulation period with the persecution they will receive for trusting in and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom (Malachi 3:2-4). Losing their saltiness refers to being offended by the gospel and abandoning it (Matthew 13:20-21). Thus, they need to continue to trust in God's Word throughout the tribulation period, regardless of the fiery trials that come their way.

10 Israel is self righteous (vs. 1-12), thinking they can make it into the kingdom on their own (vs. 17-27). Even the disciples do not believe that Jesus will die (vs. 32-34), and they are concentrating on being great in the kingdom (vs. 28-31 and 35-45), instead of being a servant. However, there will be a believing remnant to carry the gospel of the kingdom to Israel when the Holy Ghost is come (vs. 46-52).

10:1-2 With the nation as a whole having rejected Him, Jesus goes to Jordan, where John the Baptist was. However, the crowds follow Him out there. He teaches the people in parables in order to conceal the truth from unbelievers. The Pharisees have come up with another question they think they can trick Jesus into answering incorrectly so that they can accuse Him.

10:2-4 The Pharisees were caught up in what they could or could not do. If the law said they could not do something that they wanted to do, they changed the law. The result was that their traditions had made the commandments of God of none effect (7:13). When the Pharisees ask Jesus if it is lawful to put away your wife, Jesus asks, not what they can get away with, but "what did Moses command you?" Moses commanded to "love thy neighbour as thyself" (Leviticus 19:18), and "thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14). If they did divorce their wives, they would break the seventh commandment because, by putting away a spouse and marrying another, the divorcer commits adultery against his first spouse (10:11-12). Therefore, it is not lawful to put away your wife. However, the Pharisees answer with what "Moses suffered." He "suffered" or allowed them to write a bill of divorcement due to the hardness of their hearts (Deuteronomy 24:1).

This hardness of hearts is what we see in Christianity today. Christians do not

ask, "What does God want me to do?" Rather, they ask "What can I get away with?" "Oh, the Bible does not say I cannot gamble, so, I will go to the casino. Oh, the Bible does not say I cannot watch an R-rated movie, so, I'm going to the theatre." Then, when the Bible does speak on something that they do not like, such as "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination" (Leviticus 18:22), they say, "Oh, that's in the Old Testament. It does not apply today. Besides, God made me that way, and God wants me to be true to who I am." This represents the hardness of man's heart. Loving your neighbour as yourself says, "I know my wife is not saved, but I will stay with her anyway, because maybe she will become a Christian if she sees Christ living through me" (I Corinthians 7:12-14). The hardness of man's heart says, "That's a fine looking woman over there. How can I get out of my marriage so I can be with her?"

10:5-8 Jesus' response is that, because of the hardness of the hearts of Israel, God allowed divorce to take place, even though it was against His design for marriage. He then goes back to God's establishment of marriage with Adam and Eve. God designed marriage to last a lifetime, according to Genesis 2:23-24. Note the trickiness of the Pharisees' question. If Jesus said you can divorce someone, He would be teaching against the seventh commandment. If Jesus said you cannot divorce someone, He would be teaching against Deuteronomy 24:1. By having the Pharisees answer with Deuteronomy 24:1, Jesus can then answer with the design of marriage and not teach something contrary to God's Word. This shows that the Pharisees knew what the law says; they just did not obey it so that they could justify their unlawful behavior.

10:9 Man putting asunder what God has joined together includes the man and woman who are part of what God has joined together. In other words, a man should not divorce his wife and vice-versa. Today, man has taken sex and separated it from marriage. Sex has become a recreational activity that is done for the fun of it. But, God says that sex = marriage. "He which is joined to a harlot is one body. For two, saith He, shall be one flesh" (I Corinthians 6:16). If sex with a prostitute equals marriage. Surely, any other sexual relationship equals marriage, as well. Since sex is how God joins together a man and a woman in marriage and no man is supposed to put asunder what God has joined together, it means that sexual infidelity is how man puts asunder a marriage relationship. That is why sexual infidelity was punishable by death under the Mosaic law (Leviticus 20:10-21). "Oh, but I am so unhappy with my wife, and this other woman makes me happy. God would not want me to be unhappy, so, I think I will be with the other woman." But, God's word says, "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife,... the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death" (Leviticus 20:10). That is how serious adultery is, and, according to 10:11-12, the person, who divorces his spouse, has committed adultery. Therefore, divorce should never happen.

10:10-12 Because the Pharisees were apostate and were not seeking a true answer to their question, Jesus never answered their question. He then answers the question to the little flock in private so that they may follow what God's law says, instead of following man's traditions. This shows that the traditions of the

Jewish religion must have been contrary to God's law in this matter. Otherwise, the disciples would not have asked Jesus again about it. The Jewish religion did not teach that you were committing adultery if you divorced your spouse, and the Christian religion today does not teach this. This goes back to the hardness of man's heart.

10:13-15 When a child breaks a law he has been taught, he knows it and feels bad about it. He also has faith in whatever his parents tell him. When an adult breaks the law, the adult tries to cover it up so that he does not feel bad about it any more. He also tries to change what God has told him so that he does not feel guilty. The cover up and the change are both done with the invention of religion. Jesus is saying that, in order to enter the kingdom, adults have to become like children in that they stop trusting in religion and start trusting in the gospel of the kingdom and God's law. Therefore, young children represent those receiving eternal life in the kingdom of God. Adults represent those who have a sophisticated way of substantiating their evil thoughts and behavior. Therefore, they do not have faith in God and will spend eternity in the lake of fire.

10:16 9:36-37 may give us a clue as to what is happening here. That passage says that Jesus took the children in His arms and used them as an example, saying that those, who receive "such children in My name, receiveth Me." In 10:14-15, Jesus has just said that Israel must receive the kingdom as a little child in order to enter it, and we have seen that that means that they must have faith in the gospel of the kingdom. Therefore, the blessing of the children by Jesus in 10:16 is probably an example of how those with faith in God will be blessed by the Lord Jesus Christ with an eternal reward in the kingdom.

10:17-22 Jesus has just explained that the way to enter into God's kingdom is to have the faith of a little child instead of trusting in your own works. Obviously, this man has not learned from what Jesus just said, because he seeks to enter into the kingdom by what he can DO to inherit eternal life. The first word he utters gives away his self-righteous attitude. He calls Jesus "good." Jesus points out that the only one good is God. The question, then, is: "Is he calling Jesus 'God'?" More importantly, is the man calling himself "God" by saying that he is good in himself by his supposed perfect obedience of the law? Perfection is what is required if he is going to get into the kingdom on his own merit. He must have "patient continuance in well doing" (Romans 2:7). In other words, he must be perfect (Matthew 5:48). The problem is that no one is righteous on his own (Romans 3:10). Therefore, he must have God's imputed righteousness to enter the kingdom. The man claims to be perfect, because he says he has had perfect obedience of the commandments since he was a kid (vs. 19-20). Although we know this is not true, Jesus does not question him. Instead, he adds the commandment for the tribulation saints to "sell that ye have, and give alms" (Luke 12:33). Since he is not willing to obey this commandment, he is guilty of breaking all the commandments (James 2:10) and will not make it into the kingdom of God.

10:21 "Take up the cross" means to get rid of the cross of religion and substitute it with the cross of Jesus Christ. There is imputed righteousness with Jesus' cross,

but the righteousness of your own cross is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). They were "heavy laden" with religion, but Jesus' cross is light for the believer, because Jesus is the One Who bore it (Matthew 11:28-30).

10:23-25 Since it is impossible for "a camel to go through the eye of a needle," it is impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God in Israel's program. The reason is that, if someone is rich, his riches will be taken away from him by the Antichrist if he does not take the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:16-17). If he maintains his riches by taking the mark of the beast, he will burn forever in the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11). This is why God commands for the tribulation saints to "sell that ye have" (Luke 12:33). If they do not sell, their riches will be taken away from them, unless they take the mark of the beast. If they do that, they will lose their soul, and "what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (8:36).

10:26-27 Jesus now gives the disciples the lesson of this rich man. The religion of the Pharisees said they would make it into the kingdom if they kept their traditions. God says you must be perfect (Matthew 5:48); therefore, the Pharisees' righteousness is not enough (Matthew 5:20). The lesson to the disciples is to stop trusting in the religion of the Pharisees, and start believing what Jesus is telling them. Entering God's kingdom comes only by imputed righteousness from God, which comes to those in the kingdom dispensation by believing the gospel of the kingdom. Therefore, salvation is impossible with man, but "with God all things are possible." Christians quote this verse all the time to say that God can heal what doctors cannot heal, or God can make a way where there is no way. But, this verse is referring to eternal life in the kingdom. It is not concerned with such carnal things as whether or not someone is healed of a physical ailment!

10:28 Peter's response shows that the disciples did not understand the lesson Jesus was trying to teach them. The lesson was that they must have faith in God to receive imputed righteousness in order to enter into eternal life. Therefore, their works, no matter how good they are, will not gain them entrance into God's kingdom. Peter, though, is still concentrating on works. He wonders what he is going to get for giving up everything to follow Jesus.

10:29-30 Matthew's account focuses on the eternal kingdom (Matthew 19:28-29), while Mark's account focuses on the tribulation period. Here, in Mark, Jesus says that "now in this time," they will receive an hundredfold of what they gave up, "and in the world to come eternal life." Since they will sell all they have (Luke 12:33) and it is impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God (vs. 23-25), what they receive "now in this time" cannot refer to physical possessions. Rather, they refer to spiritual possessions. The little flock will give up their material goods and preach the gospel, resulting in saved souls. Those saved souls are the spiritual possessions that replace their material possessions, being worth 100 times the value of those material possessions, because these spiritual possessions will last eternally. Because these spiritual possessions last eternally, Matthew's account is also true in saying they will receive an hundred fold in God's eternal kingdom. Because Mark focuses on the tribulation period, he says that these spiritual

possessions will come "with persecutions," as apostate Israel and the Antichrist's kingdom persecute the little flock during the tribulation period.

Also, note that there are two things that they give up in verse 29 that they do not receive an hundredfold of in verse 30: 1) Father, and 2) Wife. They do not receive 100 fathers because, spiritually speaking, they only have one Father, which is God (Matthew 23:9). They do not receive 100 wives because, spiritually speaking, marriage is done away with (12:25), since they will be joined to Christ as His wife for all eternity (Revelation 21:9-10).

10:31 Now, looking at the kingdom, in this context, last and first refer to positions in the Antichrist's kingdom during the tribulation period versus positions in God's eternal kingdom on earth. In other words, if they put themselves first and try to gain a high position in the Antichrist's kingdom, they will get the last position in God's kingdom. But, if they put themselves last, not worrying about doing well in the Antichrist's kingdom, they will get the first position in God's kingdom.

This goes back to 9:35, when Jesus told them that "if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." Therefore, if they are to receive an hundredfold for what they have given up, they must serve by going to the cities of Israel throughout the tribulation period with the gospel, while being persecuted by apostate Israel (putting themselves last), in order to receive the spiritual fruit that more than makes up for the material possessions they have given up (being first in the kingdom). If the 12 apostles continue with their "me first" attitude, they will be last, i.e., at the bottom rung of authority in God's eternal kingdom. But, if they are servants, as Jesus was, they will be great in the kingdom. We see this also explained in Matthew 5:19 where Jesus says, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

10:32-34 The disciples are probably afraid because they have given up everything for Jesus, and Jesus has just told them that they will suffer persecutions. Now, Jesus again tells them that He will be killed and rise again the third day. Note how Jesus knows exactly what will happen. He knows the Jewish religious leaders will condemn Him to death, but it will be the Gentiles, i.e., the Romans, who will kill Him. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise to the 12 apostles when He is arrested, condemned to die, given over to the Gentiles, and crucified.

Note also that the disciples are amazed (v. 32). The Jewish religion has taught them all their lives that, if they obey the traditions of the elders, they will do well in this life and in the life to come. Now, Jesus has told them to stop trusting in what they have been told, have faith in God's Word as a child has faith in his father's word to him, and those great in God's kingdom will give up everything in this life. The disciples, then, are amazed at how the Messiah's teachings are so different from the Jewish religion's teachings. Similarly today, God's Word says that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12), but

the Christian religion teaches that God does not want you to suffer.

10:35-37 However, Jesus' death DOES come as a surprise to the 12 apostles because they are not paying attention to the bad news. Their hearts are hardened (6:52 and 8:17). Therefore, they are only thinking of Jesus' coming kingdom that they saw on the mountain in 9:1-8. This, in spite of the fact, that Jesus had already addressed this issue. In 9:33-34, they disputed among themselves who would be greatest in the kingdom. Jesus told them that they needed to be servant of all to be great in the kingdom (9:35). Yet, they ignored this, and are still asking to be the greatest in the kingdom. What hard hearts they still have!

10:38-39 Again, Jesus goes back to the last being first. They must be willing to die, or put themselves last, in order to rise to a high position of authority in the kingdom.

Jesus' cup refers to Him drinking of the cup of God's wrath (Revelation 14:10), when He takes sin upon Him (II Corinthians 5:21). When that happens, He says, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (15:34). His baptism is His taking on death so that God may give eternal life to believers (Psalm 16:9-10; Romans 6:23). Jesus admits that James and John will drink of that cup and be baptized with that baptism, but they do so by being identified with Christ by believing the gospel of the kingdom, not by actually going to the cross themselves. The Lord Jesus Christ takes their place.

10:40 Since Jesus will sit at the right hand of the Father (16:19), we know that the One sitting on His left hand is God the Father. The one on His right hand may be David, since he will be co-regent with Jesus in the kingdom (Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25), or it could be the Holy Ghost, completing the Trinity. Regardless, Jesus had just told them that they can become first if they make themselves last, and James and John are trying to become first by making themselves first. Therefore, they have not paid any attention to what Jesus just said. They hear what they want to hear, just like Christians today only believe what they want to believe.

10:41 The disciples are acting like children. Their lack of maturity in the things of God is evident due to their hard hearts. They are too steeped in religion to let go of it for the truth of God's Word.

10:42-45 Again, Jesus reminds the disciples that, if they are going to fight, it should be over who will be the greatest servant, not over who will be the highest master. If Jesus Himself is the greatest servant of all by giving His life so that Israel might have eternal life, how can the disciples expect to become great themselves without serving (Matthew 10:24-25)?

10:45 In the dispensation of the gospel of the kingdom, we are told that Jesus gave "His life a ransom for many," as Isaiah 53:11-12 prophesied would be the case. In Israel's program, it is only revealed that Jesus died for the many believers in Israel. Isaiah was written "concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (1:1), and Isaiah 53:5 says that "He was wounded for OUR transgressions," meaning the

transgressions of Israel. It is not until the mystery is revealed to the apostle Paul that we find out that Jesus gave His life a ransom for all (I Timothy 2:6), which includes the Gentiles.

10:46 Jericho was the first, big city that Israel conquered when they came into the Promised Land (Joshua 6:24). Now, there is no land that belongs to the Israel of God due to their sin and religion. They are all blind to the truth like Bartimeus was physically.

10:47-48 Bartimeus' recognition of Jesus as the Son of David symbolizes the believing remnant, who recognize their sinful condition and call upon Jesus for righteousness, knowing that, as the Son of David, Jesus will sit on God's throne forever (II Samuel 7:12-13). The ones telling the blind man to be quiet symbolize apostate Israel, who will try to silence the believing remnant in the tribulation period. Apostate Israel are the ones who are spiritually blind, but they refuse to recognize their sinful condition.

10:50-52 The blind man casting away his garment symbolizes how the believing remnant casts away the filthy rags of their own righteousness (Isaiah 64:6) to take up the white robes given them that are washed in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:9,14). Note that Jesus asks the man what he wants because it is up to each Israelite to come to God, confessing his sins, in order to be cleansed from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9). The man has his sins forgiven, as Jesus tells him that his faith has made him whole.

Note that Jesus told him to "go thy way," and he ends up following "Jesus in the way," because he recognizes that Jesus is the way to God (John 14:6). Because he believes, Bartimeus' way is now God's way. Here we are just before Jesus' crucifixion, and the state of the nation is that it is lost. However, there is a believing remnant to carry the kingdom message to the nation of Israel as a whole once the Holy Ghost comes in Acts 2.

11 Some welcome their King into Jerusalem (vs. 1-11), but religion has got a stronghold in Jerusalem (vs. 12-19). This shows that the disciples will have their work cut out for them in the tribulation period (vs. 20-26). The only way to overcome religion is by faith in God and His Word.

11:1-7 Jesus' riding on a colt into Jerusalem fulfills Zechariah 9:9. That scripture says that "He is just, and having salvation." The disciples' finding the colt "in a place where two ways met" symbolizes the two directions Israel can take. They can either believe in Him for salvation and enter God's eternal kingdom, or they can reject Him, not receive His salvation, and spend eternity in the lake of fire. The Zechariah passage also tells us that the colt is "the foal of an ass." This means that it is a baby ass. Probably the reason why no man had ever sat on the colt (v. 2) is because it was too small for someone to ride on. The fact that their Saviour rode on something too small for Him symbolizes how Israel was not ready to receive their Saviour. They had a religious system that rejected God and His law, rather than a support system of faith in the coming Messiah. Therefore, they had rejected

Him.

Also, note the difference between God's way and Satan's way. Satan wants everything to be big and noticeable. God, on the other hand, sent His Son in a body that had no beauty to make Israel desire Him (Isaiah 53:2). Then, instead of coming with trumpets blaring in a majestic chariot, God the Son came into Jerusalem on a baby ass that was barely big enough to support His weight! It should be no surprise, then, that the things that man records as "church history" is the history of man's religion and not of the believing remnant that is the true "pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15).

11:8-10 Those in Israel, who believed in Jesus as their Messiah, expected Him to take the throne right then. Therefore, they give Him a king's welcome into Jerusalem, proclaiming Him to be the one of "the kingdom of our father David." Although that is true, He came first to be a sacrifice for sins. He would not take the throne until His still-future second coming. Their proclaiming of "blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" fulfilled Psalm 118:26.

11:11 According to Psalm 118:26-27, the people blessing Him would bless Him "out of the house of the Lord." He would then go into the temple and be bound on the altar with cords as the complete Passover Lamb (John 1:29). Knowing this scripture and having been blessed already, Jesus goes into the temple. He "looked round about upon all things," and waited all day there. Since the nation did not respond in faith and fulfill Psalm 118:27, He left the temple, recognizing that Israel has rejected the salvation He brought.

11:12-14 Although Jesus knew that Israel had already rejected Him as their Messiah, He came to Jerusalem if haply (by chance) they may receive His salvation. They did not; therefore, He left the temple. The story of the fig tree in 11:12-14 tells this story in parable form, although Jesus did literally curse the fig tree. A fig tree represents religion. So, Jesus came to the fig tree (the temple), if haply (by chance) there might be some fruit. He found the fig tree flourishing, as the Jewish religious system was thriving. However, He found no fruit because the Jewish religious system did not produce people believing in the gospel of the kingdom. Therefore, He cursed the fig tree (the religious system), saying that it would not bring forth fruit, since it would be the little flock leading people into the kingdom by preaching the gospel. In fact, Jesus specifically tells the Jewish religious leaders that the kingdom would be taken from them and given to a nation, which is the little flock, that brings forth the fruits of the kingdom (Matthew 21:43).

11:15-17 Just as He cursed the fig tree, Jesus curses the religious system in Jerusalem by overthrowing their moneymaking schemes. They were selling animals in the temple at crazy high prices, rejecting the animals that were brought in by the common Jews, because those animals had not been blessed by the priest, like the temple animals had. They were also taking up the place in the temple where the Gentiles could come for worship. Therefore, "the house of prayer" for "all nations" had become "a den of thieves."

11:18 The scribes and chief priests taught lies, instead of God's law, to have power over the people and get their money. Jesus came in and taught God's law. Since there was no way they could refute the truth, they sought to destroy Him. This happens today in the dispensation of grace with those who teach the Word of God rightly divided (II Timothy 2:15). Because Christian leaders cannot refute the truth you teach, they will seek to destroy you by discrediting you, finding flaws in your life, and by trying to silence the message you teach by kicking you out of their churches.

11:19-20 Exodus 12:3-6 says that Israel is to choose their passover lamb on the tenth of the month, but they are not to kill it until the fourteenth of the month. The reason for the four days in between is so that they can inspect it to make sure it is without blemish. Since Jesus is the complete Passover Lamb, He comes into the temple in the morning and leaves the temple in the evening for the four days before passover in order to give Israel the opportunity to inspect Him to make sure He is without sin before they bind Him on the altar and sacrifice Him for their sins. Of course, since Israel is steeped in their religion, they have no idea that this is what He is doing.

It is interesting to note that "the fig tree dried up from the roots," meaning that God will cut off the Antichrist's religious system as its very source of life, which is Satan, by throwing Satan into the bottomless pit (Revelation 20:3) and subsequently into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

11:20-22 The disciples are still looking to religion for edification, instead of believing what Jesus has told them. This is shown by Peter still looking at the fig tree. Jesus responds that, instead of having faith in the Jewish religious system of the day, they need to have faith in God. If they do, they will not have hard hearts, they will understand what Jesus teaches them, and they will never abandon Him, as they are about to do when He is arrested to be crucified.

11:23 In the Bible, a fig tree represents religion (Genesis 3:7), and a mountain represents a kingdom (Revelation 17:9-10). The religion of the Pharisees will turn into the mountain of Satan's kingdom when the Antichrist makes a covenant with Israel and establishes their religion to be followed in the tribulation period (Daniel 9:27). Therefore, the "mountain" Jesus refers to is the Jewish religious system. It is in their way of reaching the lost sheep of the house of Israel. However, if the little flock has faith in God (v. 22), rather than in religion, they will remove that mountain of religion standing between Israel and the kingdom.

11:24 As the little flock goes through Israel and preaches the gospel of the kingdom, God promises that there will be signs accompanying the gospel (16:17-18), since Jews look for a sign (I Corinthians 1:22). This verse is saying that God will give the little flock whatever sign they ask for in the tribulation period in order to validate the truth of the gospel that they preach. They only need to ask (Matthew 7:7-11). Therefore, this verse cannot be used today to ask for the winning lottery numbers or even for physical healing for someone.

11:25-26 The conditional salvation of Israel's program is seen here. They are saved by faith in the gospel of the kingdom, but they also have to demonstrate their faith by their works (James 2:20,22,24). If they will not forgive men of their sins, they will lose their salvation. Unity is very important among the little flock in the tribulation period, because all they will have is God's Word and each other. Therefore, it is important that they forgive each other to maintain fellowship. Unity is also important for them to have an effective witness for God so that the lost sheep of Israel might be saved.

11:27-33 The religious leaders want Jesus to say that He is of God. Then, they can sentence Him to death for blasphemy. However, He is to die on Passover as the complete Passover Lamb. Because it is not Passover yet, Jesus does not answer their question. He avoids their question by revealing their religious front. As mentioned previously, they should be inspecting Jesus to make sure He meets the requirements of the Passover Lamb, but they are actually inspecting Him according to their religion so that they may trap Him and have justification from their own religion for putting Him to death. The religious leaders are evil people, but they appear to be righteous to the people. This is a reputation they intend to maintain in order to continue to have the people follow them and give them money. Being evil, the religious leaders did not believe the gospel of the kingdom that John the Baptist taught. Therefore, they would not reveal their true feelings to Jesus and would not answer His question.

Note also from verse 31 that, before the Pharisees answered, "they reasoned with themselves." They know that John the Baptist was from heaven, but such a revelation would destroy their religion. Therefore, they use man's reasoning to keep from believing the truth. Contrast this with Peter in 8:29. When Jesus asked who He is, Peter immediately said, "Thou art the Christ."

All of us know that telling a lie is much more complicated than telling the truth. Once you tell a lie, you have to remember the lie you told, you probably have to tell more lies to cover up the original lie, and you may have to get other people to go along with your story. By contrast, telling the truth is very easy. You just state it, and you do not need to remember what you said. God's Word is true (John 17:17), and Satan's word is a lie (John 8:44). Since the Pharisees are telling the lies of Satan, they have to cover it up with more lies. Since Peter told the truth, he did not have to reason about what he would say. This is referred to as "the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Corinthians 11:3).

12 God has rejected the religious leaders (vs. 1-12), and they try to trap Him (vs. 13-27). Some in Israel may be saved, though, if they believe God's Word (vs. 28-34), which is why Jesus shows the people the false religion of the Pharisees (vs. 35-44).

12:1-12 Jesus curses the religious leaders of Jerusalem via a parable. This parable is also found in Isaiah 5:1-7 as a warning to the religious leaders of Israel. Therefore, the religious leaders understand that He is speaking "the parable against them" here (v. 12). "A certain man" is God the Father. "A vineyard" is the

nation of Israel (Isaiah 5:7). The hedge around the nation refers to God's protection of the nation of Israel from other nations (See Job 1:9-11 for this use of the word "hedge."). "A tower" is the old covenant, i.e., God's law that God gave to Israel so that they may be God's holy nation (Exodus 19:6 and I Peter 2:9). "The husbandmen" are the religious leaders of Israel. The servants sent refer to the prophets God sent to Israel. "The fruit" are the people in Israel who believe the gospel to them. The religious leaders' catching the servants, beating them, persecuting them, wounding them, shaming them, and killing them refer to their treatment of the prophets God sent (Hebrews 11:35-38). God the Father's "one son" refers to Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God.

Although Jesus is still alive at the time He speaks this parable, He tells of how they will take Him, kill Him, and cast Him out of Israel (v. 8). Therefore, the parable is also prophetic of Jesus' impending death. Since He was "cast out" of Israel, Israel needs to go "without the camp" (Hebrews 13:12-14) in order to enter God's kingdom. The point of this parable is that the Jewish religious leaders rejected God and His Son FIRST; therefore, God has rejected them and will give the spiritual leadership of the nation over "unto others", who are the 12 apostles (v. 9). The Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, is "the stone which the builders rejected" and "is become the head of the corner" (Psalm 118:22-23). Deuteronomy 32:21, Isaiah 5:1-7, and Psalm 118:22-23 gave the Jewish religious leaders advance warning. Therefore, they can only blame themselves for losing their leadership position over the nation. It is ironic that they want to kill Jesus for saying that they have lost their leadership position, but they will not arrest Him in front of the Jewish crowd, because they are afraid of the people rejecting them as their leaders if they do so. In other words, they fear what man MIGHT do to them, but they have no fear over what God has said He WILL do to them for their unbelief.

12:12-13 The Jewish religious leaders seek for a way to arrest Jesus and kill Him and, at the same time, be justified in the eyes of man for doing so. Thus, they must find a "lawful" way to arrest Him. Therefore, the ones sent to Him were probably lawyers, and what they tried to do to Jesus is not unlike what a lawyer does in court, trying to trick a witness into saying what they want him to say.

12:14 The Pharisees' and Herodians' statement before their question of Jesus, while meant to butter Him up for the literal kill, is a very accurate statement of the Pharisees' problem. They only care what man thinks; therefore, they teach traditions that are against God's law, while Jesus teaches "the way of God in truth."

12:14-17 They seek to put Jesus in a catch-22. The Mosaic law established the religious nation of Israel, and the "tax" that Jews paid to support that nation was the tithe that they paid to the temple. At the current time, Israel was under Roman oppression and was required to pay taxes or tribute to the Caesar. Therefore, if Jesus says to pay tribute to Caesar, He, by implication, says to betray fellow Jews and the religious nation that God set up in the Mosaic law. If He says not to pay tribute to Caesar, He is guilty of treason, and they could deliver Him up to the Romans to be killed. Jesus' answer is to pay both tributes (v. 17). Thus, He avoids

guilt both under the Jewish law and the Roman law, which is why they marvel at His answer. Nevertheless, the Pharisees will still falsely accuse Jesus to Pilate that He taught not to pay tribute to Caesar (Luke 23:2).

12:18-27 The Sadducees use scripture (Deuteronomy 25:5-6) to try to prove to Jesus that there is no resurrection of the dead. Jesus says, “Ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God.” “Religious Christianity” does the same thing today. They do not care about the truth of God’s Word. Rather, they care about perpetrating their own doctrines in order to maintain THEIR power over the congregation, rather than God having the power over them. They may use a verse of scripture to prove their point, but their doctrine is contrary to sound doctrine for the current dispensation. So, too, the Sadducees quoted scripture, but they do not really know the scripture. They took Deuteronomy 25:5-6 to say something it did not say, and they skipped over Exodus 3:6, which shows there has to be a resurrection of the saints, because God uses the present tense to show that He IS the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Life in the kingdom is essentially predicated upon resurrection. “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins” (I Corinthians 15:17). Therefore, the Sadducees “do greatly err” (12:27). It is also important to note how the doctrine of resurrection is taught by the Old Testament, but those without faith in God’s Word do not see it. No verse in the Old Testament clearly says, “God will resurrect His saints to be in the eternal kingdom.” This illustrates the point that God often hides essential doctrines so that only believers will see and believe them. “It is the glory of God to conceal a thing” (Proverbs 25:2a).

12:28-34 The fact, that this scribe only asked Jesus a question after he perceived that Jesus had answered the other scribes well, shows some sincerity behind his question. He is not just asking to tempt Jesus. At the same time, he knows the answer to the question. It seems that this scribe, in an effort to look good to the religious leaders, has studied his Bible and learned it well. As such, he will not rise in the ranks of the religious leaders, because they lay aside God’s Word in favor of their own traditions. Therefore, this scribe is at a critical point. He will either lay aside religion and trust God’s Word for salvation, or, he will seek the favor of men and abandon God’s Word in order to be popular. So far, he has trusted God’s Word over religion, which is why Jesus tells him: “Thou art not far from the kingdom of God” (12:34). We can see this by his comment that to love God and neighbour are “more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices” (12:33). This is a point the religious leaders did NOT get. They were trusting in works and their own righteousness to make it into the kingdom, while neglecting the more “weightier matters of the law” like “judgment, mercy, and faith” (Matthew 23:23). If this man believes the gospel of the kingdom until the end of the tribulation period, he will make it into the kingdom.

12:34 Since the religious leaders could not get Jesus to say something against the law, they stop asking Him questions. This goes to show that Jesus did NOT teach His disciples something contrary to the law in Mark 7:19, as modern Bible versions say He did.

12:35-37 Jesus now shows the common, Jewish people that the scribes do not have all the answers. They recognize the Christ as the Son of David, but not as Lord, because they do not pay attention to Psalm 110:1. The point is that the Jewish religious leaders follow their own traditions, rather than God's Word. Therefore, the common people need to be reading God's Word for that is the only way they will recognize Jesus as their Messiah and believe the gospel of the kingdom for their entrance into God's eternal kingdom.

12:38-40 Having shown how the religious leaders do not care about God's Word, Jesus now tells the common people why. It is because they only care about what man thinks of them. Therefore, they put on a good show for man (vs. 38-39), but they do not follow God's law, as they steal from widows (v. 40), rather than showing them mercy (Matthew 23:23).

We also see from verse 40 the idea that hell has degrees of punishment. The fact, that the Jewish religious leaders will receive "greater damnation," shows that it is better to be an evil unbeliever than a religious unbeliever. Both end up in hell, but hell fire is a little hotter for the religious unbeliever.

12:41-44 The widow's-mites story is used by preachers to try to squeeze every last cent out of their congregations. How sad! This story is really here to demonstrate the faith of a widow. She should have her dead husband's inheritance, but she has nothing, because the religious leaders "devour widows' houses" (12:40). The religious system has stolen everything she has, yet she gives what little she has to that same religious system. Although that religious system would now get her last two mites, she is really giving them to God in faith obedience to the law. As such, she represents the little flock. Although she knows the system is corrupt, she does not rebel. She has faith in God. So, too, in the tribulation period, although the Antichrist's religious system is corrupt, the little flock will have faith in God to see them through the tribulation period and bring them into God's kingdom. The rich people, by contrast, do give a lot, but it is to be seen by men (Matthew 6:1-2). Also, they will get the money back since the reason they are rich is because they are part of the religious system that steals from widows and the poor. Therefore, the money in the treasury will go back to them, as they take it from one pocket and put it in the other pocket. So, too, in the tribulation period, apostate Israel will get rich by robbing the little flock. They will give a lot of money to the Antichrist's system to look good in the eyes of men, only to get it right back when the money in the treasury is divided up.

13 Jesus tells four of His disciples of the events of the tribulation period so that they may know what is going on in order to make it into the kingdom and to help others enter in.

13:1-2 Since the Jewish religious leaders will not sacrifice Jesus as the complete Passover Lamb, He leaves the temple. Note that, although Jesus had been going up to the temple three times per year, as required by the Mosaic law (Deuteronomy 16:16), He had not paid attention to the temple buildings. Meanwhile, the disciples

were impressed by them, because the disciples wanted to show Jesus these great buildings. Jesus is not interested because He knows that “heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away” (13:31). Therefore, Jesus’ focus is on God’s Word, not on some man-made buildings. Similarly today, many people go to their church because it has stained-glass windows or steeples (which are male phallic symbols) and looks very nice, while God’s Word is not being taught, and they do not care. They make sure the church building looks nice, while their inner man is “full of extortion and excess” (Matthew 23:25).

13:2-4 Here, we find out that Jesus gave the details of the events of the tribulation period and its end to just four of His disciples—Peter, Andrew, James, and John. Keep in mind that they are still in unbelief about His death. They believe that He is the Messiah and will bring God’s kingdom to pass, but they expect Him to bring God’s kingdom right then. Even after Jesus’ resurrection, they ask the question, “Lord, wilt Thou **at this time** restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). Therefore, they believe that He will accomplish the destruction of the temple buildings, but they expect Him to do it right then. Jesus told them, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power” (Acts 1:7). Therefore, Jesus only gives them signs to look for of the deception program of Satan and of the end of Satan’s rule.

13:5 The first warning to take heed of in the tribulation period is not to be deceived by the Antichrist, his religious system, and the apostate nation of Israel, since only those enduring unto the end will be saved (13:13).

The Antichrist will be doing “lying signs and wonders” to prove that he is the Christ (II Thessalonians 2:8-10), the false prophet will do “great wonders” and cause the image of the beast to talk (Revelation 13:13-15), and three, unclean spirits will do miracles in the whole world during the tribulation period (Revelation 16:13-14). Therefore, the deception program of Satan during this time will be so strong that “if it were possible” the elect would be seduced to follow Satan, and no flesh would be saved if God did not shorten the time of the tribulation period (13:20-22). Therefore, Israel needs to watch at all times to make sure they are not deceived.

13:6 In the tribulation period, many will claim to be the Christ. The one who fools most of the nation is the Antichrist. If they follow him and take his mark, they will burn forever in the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11). Therefore, they need to heed Jesus’ warning here not to follow anyone claiming to be the Christ.

13:7-8 The “wars and rumours of wars” are how the Antichrist will rise to power. Daniel 11 talks about these wars. A king will rise against Greece (Daniel 11:2). A mighty king’s dominion will be divided (Daniel 11:4). Then, someone comes out of a king’s house and prevails (Daniel 11:7). Then, this man’s sons will come against him (Daniel 11:10), etc. Jesus is referring to Daniel 11, not to world wars 1 and 2 of our day. Our wars are in the dispensation of grace. Thus, they are not prophesied. Therefore, we cannot see the signs of the end of the world as Jesus is

speaking about in Mark 13. Rather, the disciples need to be looking for the events of Daniel 11 to take place.

“The beginning of sorrows” refers to the first four seals of Revelation 6:1-8. Death by wars, by the earth, by famine, and by humans take place in the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation, and they are just the beginning of sorrows.

13:9-11 The “Great Tribulation” is the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period, which starts after the beginning of sorrows is completed. The beginning of Great Tribulation is when the Antichrist sits in the temple and proclaims himself to be God (II Thessalonians 2:4). He tries to do this during the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation period, but the two witnesses keep him out of the temple (Revelation 11:3-6). Once their time is up, the beast (the Antichrist) kills the two witnesses, and he is able to go into the temple and start the Great Tribulation (Revelation 11:7).

The false prophet will then arise, set up the image of the beast in the temple, and require all to worship the image or be killed (Revelation 13:14-16). Therefore, the little flock will be arrested and beaten. Notice who captures them. It is the religious leaders, who are supposedly representing Christ, but they are really representing the Antichrist. They will be delivered to religious councils. They will even be beaten in synagogues! That is the place where God’s love should be, not where those trusting in God are beaten. Since the Antichrist will have one world religion and will be over the world, the whole world will hear the gospel of the kingdom from the little flock through their being brought before rulers of all countries. Therefore, while the little flock is only sent to the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 10:6) and they will not finish going through all the cities of Israel before the tribulation period ends (Matthew 10:23), the whole world will have the gospel preached to them through the persecution of the little flock at the hands of the religious leaders who are also world leaders through the Antichrist’s system.

The way the gospel is shared is through the Holy Ghost speaking through members of the little flock as they speak in their public trials that the whole world hears. This is where the gift of tongues is used so that Jews hear the gospel spoken in their own language, while the broadcasters of these trials do not silence the little flock since they cannot understand what they are saying (Acts 2:4-11). Therefore, the reason God gives the gift of tongues is so that Jews all over the world can hear the gospel of the kingdom. It is not some mumbo-jumbo that no one understands, as is portrayed by Pentecostals today. Therefore, while the Antichrist intends to make a public example of what will happen to those who do not take the mark and do not worship the beast’s image, he is actually giving a forum for the whole world to hear the gospel and decide if they are going to trust God’s Word over the Antichrist or not.

As such, the gospel is “published among all nations” (13:10) without believing Israel actually going on missionary trips to other nations. Also, note that the gospel is “AMONG” all nations. It is not “TO” all nations. That is because God is saving Israel during the tribulation period (Romans 11:26), and Israel is scattered

“among the heathen” (Leviticus 26:33) during this time, as God said would happen under Israel’s fifth cycle of chastisement.

13:12-14 Family turning on each other refers to the last half of the tribulation period when many in Israel will be apostate, joining themselves to the Antichrist. Then, in the name of doing service to God, they will turn in the members of the little flock who refuse to follow the Antichrist. Therefore, Jesus says that, when the Antichrist institutes capital punishment for not take the mark or worshipping his image, the little flock should flee to the mountains. If they do not, their own family and “friends” will turn them in to the authorities to be killed.

13:13 Faith plus works is required in order to be saved (James 2:24). If they believe in the gospel of the kingdom and are water baptized but then later take the mark of the beast, they will still be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11). They must endure unto the end of the tribulation period in order to be saved.

13:14 “The abomination of desolation” is the same thing as “the image of the beast” in Revelation 13. It is an abomination to God, because it causes people to worship a false god. It is “of desolation” because, since those worshipping it will be thrown into hell, it makes apostate Israel desolate of God. Because of Israel’s unbelief, just before His crucifixion, Jesus said of Jerusalem: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate” (Matthew 23:38). Because God is not in the temple, this abomination can come in there. Thus, it is “the abomination of desolation.”

Note the emphasis of the abomination is that it is “standing where it ought not.” Obviously, an idol should not stand anywhere, but it certainly should not be standing in the temple. The Antichrist will have idols set up already, because he worships the god of forces (Daniel 11:38-39), but he will not be able to set up this abomination in the temple until he himself comes into the temple halfway through the tribulation period, after he kills the two witnesses.

All indications seem to be that this image of the beast is the queen of heaven and will look similar to statues of the virgin Mary that we see today. Since this verse mentions this abomination “standing where it ought not,” it implies that an image of Mary will be part of the Babylonian religious system of the Antichrist during the first half of the tribulation period, as well. Then, once the Antichrist kills the two witnesses, he is finally able to go into the temple, proclaim himself to be God, and the world makes him a new image of Mary that goes in the temple. The false prophet then gives life to the image and begins full-blown idol worship in the temple. Since capital punishment will be instituted for those not worshipping the image, the little flock had better head for the mountains.

A side note is that most people do not think the image could be of Mary, because it is the image OF the beast, so they say that it looks like the beast and not Mary. However, Revelation 13:14 says that the world makes an “image TO the beast,” and what better gift could there be to the Antichrist than an idol of his own mother. Therefore, once he accepts this gift, the image TO the beast becomes the

image OF the beast, meaning, not that it bears his image, but that it is an image **belonging** to the beast.

13:15-18 There will be very quick enforcement of the Antichrist's capital punishment as shown by the fact that, once he sets up the image in the temple, the little flock should not even go back into the house to get some clothes. They need to run immediately to the mountains. Women with babies will have a hard time getting away because the babies will slow them down. Thus, the Antichrist's setting up of the false god in the temple shows him turning his favor away from anyone who has anything to do with God and His Word.

13:19-20 The 12 apostles, Paul, and others suffered great persecution for Christ in the years after His death. However, that was nothing compared to the great tribulation. It is no wonder, then, that all of the little flock would go astray and not endure unto the end of the tribulation if they had to endure any more than the 3 ½ years of the great tribulation. This shows the great severity of the persecution of the little flock, and the great deception of Satan under the Antichrist.

Note also that 13:19 says that God created the earth. Therefore, although the Antichrist may rule over the whole world during the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period, because God created the earth, He is still in control during that time, and He alone will be the One Who overthrows the Antichrist, installs His kingdom on earth, and eventually overthrows this earth, replacing it with a new one at the end of the millennial reign.

13:21-22 What makes the false Christs and the false prophets particularly deceptive is that they can "shew signs and wonders." These false Christs and false prophets will do these miracles in God's name, but they are not of God (Matthew 7:22-23). The way to tell who is of Christ or not is by the doctrine that they profess. Someone of the devil will not profess sound doctrine (Matthew 12:34). Therefore, in the tribulation period, the little flock must be careful to follow only those who teach sound doctrine and not those who do miracles in God's name but teach things like following the Antichrist.

13:24-26 Note that it is "**after** that tribulation" that God will turn out all the lights. The sun, the moon, and the stars will all go dark. The world will be in complete darkness, and "then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds." He will come in complete darkness, which is why the Bible says He will come "as a thief in the night" (II Peter 3:10). This is an important thing for the tribulation saints to keep in mind because many false Christs will arise. If people know God's Word they will know that these are false Christs, regardless of what they say or do, because Christ will not come back until the world is in complete darkness.

13:27 The fifth cycle of chastisement for Israel shows that they will be scattered among the Gentiles (Leviticus 26:33). This will especially be true during the Antichrist's reign of terror upon the little flock. Therefore, Jesus will have to gather the little flock from all over the earth. Hebrews 7:24-25 says that Jesus has the

power to save the little flock from all over the earth because He is the eternal high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

13:30 Jesus is not saying that the disciples will not die before the tribulation period ends, because it has been 2,000 years since Jesus spoke these words and these things have not come to pass. “This generation” refers to the “generation of vipers” (Matthew 23:33-36), which are the Jewish religious leaders. In other words, although God has already rejected them and will replace them with the 12 apostles and other members of the little flock, the Jewish religious leaders will continue to exercise their authority over Israel until Jesus’ second coming. In fact, they will be thriving under the Antichrist, as they persecute and kill members of the little flock. Therefore, “this generation shall not pass” is a very important thing for the members of the little flock to keep in mind during the tribulation period. If they think evil will be done away with before Jesus’ second coming, they will assume that the Antichrist is the true Christ and will end up worshipping the image of the beast and going to hell. This shows how important it is to have sound doctrine built up in the inner man.

13:31 This verse speaks of God’s promise to preserve His Word for all eternity. Heaven and earth will pass away at the end of the tribulation period to be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1). However, God’s Word will endure through the tribulation period. They can trust in God’s Word to sustain them, and it will not be taken away from them. Therefore, whenever someone tries to steal God’s Word away from you by saying that the Bible could not possibly be 100% correct without a single error or translation issue in it, you can point them to this verse and stand firm in God’s promise to preserve His Word forever, even down to the very letter (Matthew 5:18)!

13:32-33 This is one of those great mysteries of the Bible. God is all knowing, and He is three in one—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If God is all knowing, how could the Son not know when He would come back to earth? Also, if God is one, how could the Father keep a secret from the Son? We just have to take it by faith that both conditions of both questions are true, even though we cannot understand how that is so. The point of verse 32, though, is found in verse 33. The little flock should watch what is going on during the tribulation period to determine how close they are to Jesus’ second coming, and they are to pray for God’s provision for them to endure unto the end of the tribulation period.

13:34-37 Watching during the tribulation period also has the sense of working by healing the sick, casting out devils, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom so that the lost sheep of Israel may be saved (16:15-20). Doing these things will also insure the little flock’s own entrance into the kingdom. If they are not serving, they are sleeping. Of those sleeping, half will not make it into the kingdom, and the other half barely make it in (Matthew 25:2-13). Therefore, it is better to be those watching for Jesus’ second coming so that they can be sure to make it into the kingdom and to help those sleeping to make it in (Matthew 25:6-7).

14 This chapter starts with a faithful woman, believing in Jesus’ death (vs. 1-9),

but it is followed by the unfaithful apostles. Judas seeks to betray Him (vs. 10-11); the disciples are concerned about religion (v. 12); they contradict Jesus' words to them (vs. 27-31); they sleep when they should be praying (vs. 34-41); Judas betrays Jesus (vs. 43-45); Peter rebels against Jesus' words (v. 47); they all forsake Jesus and flee (v. 50); and Peter denies Jesus three times (vs. 66-72).

14:1-2 The Pharisees would have killed Jesus a long time ago except that they are afraid of the people rebelling against them. Therefore, they have to figure out a crafty way of arresting Jesus so that they can justify killing Him, while still maintaining control over the people's wallets.

You can also see where people's priorities are. The religious leaders know that they can have Jesus killed before the passover, but they cannot have Him killed on the passover. If the masses revere Him as the Messiah, they would not let Him be killed on ANY day. This shows that they care more about the flesh than they do about the spiritual. Jesus even told them as much when He said, "Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled" (John 6:26).

14:3-5 Simon must have been healed of his leprosy by Jesus, and he followed Jesus from then on. From John 12:4-6 we find out that the one who complained about the waste of ointment was Judas Iscariot, and Judas Iscariot had been stealing money from Jesus and the disciples all along. Therefore, he is not upset that the money did not go to the poor. Judas is upset that it did not go into his own pocket. When Judas sees that he missed a bunch of money by the ointment not being sold, he decides to betray Jesus (Matthew 26:14-16). Thus, "the love of money is the root of all evil" (I Timothy 6:10).

14:6-9 This woman is a great example of someone who believed Jesus when He said He would be killed. Her faith was so great that she spent very costly ointment on Jesus, while the 12 apostles do not even believe Jesus will die (Luke 18:31-34). It is because of her faith, in contrast to the lack of faith of the 12 disciples, that, when the gospel is preached, what "she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

14:10-11 Luke 22:2-4 says that Satan literally entered into Judas Iscariot at this point in order to agree to betray Jesus Christ. Therefore, the religious leaders made a deal with the devil and "were glad" about it. That is because they are of their father the devil, and the lusts of their father they will do (John 8:44).

You may wonder why the religious leaders needed someone to betray Jesus. After all, the leaders obviously know which one of them is Jesus. There are two reasons that I see for this. 1) It is beneath the religious leaders to arrest Jesus themselves. They will send some lackeys to do their dirty work for them. These lackeys, then, need Judas to identify Jesus for them (14:43-46). 2) They need to arrest Jesus in secret so that there is no uproar by the people. This means that He will need to be arrested at night, and the religious leaders do not know what Jesus does or where He goes when a crowd is not around. Therefore, they need Judas' knowledge to

help with this secret arrest.

14:12 Even after the disciples have been given a vivid demonstration of Jesus' impending death by the woman spending a lot of money to anoint Jesus' body for burial, they still have no clue that He is going to die. The disciples are following religion into wondering where they will eat the passover, when their Messiah has "steadfastly set His face" (Luke 9:51) "like a flint" (Isaiah 50:7) to go to the cross as the complete Passover Lamb to die for their sins.

14:13-17 Based on the information in verses 13-15, God must have sent an angel or appeared to someone in a dream to let him know to prepare a room for Jesus and His disciples to eat the passover in and then to go to a certain location with a pitcher of water. Note also that Jesus did not go into Jerusalem until night. That way, Jesus could eat the Passover with the disciples before His death, and it would give Judas an opportunity to betray Him at night afterward.

14:19-20 John 13:25-30 tells us that John asked who would betray Jesus. Mark 14:20 says that Jesus told all 12 disciples that the one who would betray Him would be the one "that dippeth with me in the dish." Then, John 13:26-27 says that, immediately after dipping with Jesus in the dish, Jesus told Judas Iscariot to do quickly what he was going to do. Yet, the disciples have such hard hearts that not a one of them figured out that Judas was about to betray Jesus! Jesus told them what would happen, they see the events unfold before their eyes, and they still did not know! Also, note from John 13:27 that Satan entered into Judas Iscariot. Therefore, Satan entered into Judas Iscariot at least twice—once when he made the deal (Luke 22:2-4) with the religious leaders and once now. Satan was not about to mess up his chance to kill the Messiah, because he also did not know that Christ's death would mean the world's salvation. Otherwise, he "would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (I Corinthians 2:8).

14:21 The Mormons teach that God wanted Adam to sin. Otherwise, he could not have known joy because he must fall first. This idea is ludicrous, as seen here. Jesus had to have been killed to save the world, but you do not see God giving Judas Iscariot a badge of honor and a special place in His kingdom for making sure Jesus is killed! Rather, Jesus says it would have been better "if he had never been born." God is "not willing that any should perish" (II Peter 3:9), including Judas Iscariot.

14:22-25 When the Passover Lamb was killed, a Jew would eat of the lamb in order for that lamb's blood to cover his sins (Deuteronomy 16:6-7). Since Jesus is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), the only way a lamb could take away sin is if a Jew, by faith, ate of that lamb. That is why Jesus said that they eat His flesh and drink His blood in order to have eternal life (John 6:53-56). Therefore, the disciples' participation in this passover is part of them entering God's kingdom. That is why Jesus said, "with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God" (Luke 22:15-16). It is in the kingdom that Jesus will drink of the fruit of the vine new (14:25). So, too,

will the rest of Israel that has endured unto the end, because it is at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9) that they participate in His sacrifice, thereby receiving eternal life. Therefore, this passover feast with His disciples before His death is a foreshadowing of that time.

Also, note that this was a passover **feast**. It is clear from the text that they are eating the passover meal. However, Christianity would have us believe that Jesus started something new here that is called the Lord's Supper, and that is what is observed today. True, God did start something called the Lord's Supper, but it is only called that once in scripture (I Corinthians 11:20). The Lord's Supper is something for the dispensation of grace that was not revealed until given to Paul. For Israel, this meal that Jesus had with His disciples was clearly the passover. Also, note that this is not communion as most churches observe with a cracker and some grape juice. Rather, they were eating a full meal, and this partaking of the passover Lamb was part of the full meal.

14:24 Note that Jesus' blood was "shed for many." He died for Israel. We do not find out that He died for all, until it is testified in due time by the apostle Paul in the current dispensation of grace (I Timothy 2:6).

14:26 This hymn was probably Psalm 92, which is a song specifically for the sabbath day.

14:27-29 Jesus has told His disciples on many occasions how He will die and then rise from the dead on the third day. Now, for the first time, Jesus tells His disciples that He will be arrested and beaten that night, and Peter only thinks about himself. He does not thank Jesus for being willing to die in his place. He does not pray with Him to have the strength to go through the punishment of the cross and the faith to trust in the Father's plan, even though Jesus prayed for Peter at this time (Luke 22:31-32). Instead, he says, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." Therefore, during Jesus' most trying time, His closest companion contradicts the Word of God and only thinks about himself, which makes it even more difficult on Jesus. (It is hard enough to die for someone, who thanks you for doing so. It is even harder to die for someone who is not grateful.) Peter and the other apostles **STILL** do not understand that Jesus will die and rise from the dead on the third day (John 20:8-9).

14:30-31 Peter continues to deny the Word of God. The apostles' refusal to believe God's Word about Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection is the reason they will scatter when Jesus is arrested. The apostles still hold on to religion and the traditions of the fathers above the Word of God, which is why Peter will deny his Lord. Now, Peter gets criticized for denying his Lord. However, we should also note that **ALL** of the disciples here promised not to deny Him, even if it meant they would die, even though Jesus just told them that they would all forsake Him (14:27). Therefore, it is all of the apostles who deny God's Word.

14:32-33 Based on John 13:26,27,30, Judas Iscariot left to go betray Jesus before everyone else left from the passover meal. Therefore, Jesus is with the 11

disciples at this point. So, how did Judas Iscariot know to lead the mob to Gethsemane? Luke 22:39 says “as He was wont.” This tells us that, while He was in Jerusalem, Jesus had been going to Gethsemane with His disciples every night to pray. Therefore, Judas Iscariot knew he would find Him there.

Of the 11 disciples with Jesus at the time, 8 of them sit in one place, and Jesus only takes His three, main guys—Peter, James, and John—with Him to pray. Jesus sometimes does things with just those 3 disciples, probably because they are the main leaders of the 12.

14:33 is the only place in scripture where we are told that Jesus was amazed. It could be that Jesus was amazed at the great fight that His flesh was putting up, trying to overcome the spirit in not going to the cross. Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities” when we sin. This sore amazement at how strong the flesh really is may be what He thinks about when we sin and is why He has compassion on us in our fallen state.

14:34-36 Jesus is fully God, but He was also fully man. His flesh rebelled against His going to the cross every step of the way, such that He literally almost died from the anguish. He was sweating great drops of blood (Luke 22:44), and an angel had to come and strengthen Him physically in order to survive long enough to die on the cross (Luke 22:43). This was NOT an easy thing for Jesus to go through. Yet, He yielded His fleshly will to the will of the Father.

“Abba, Father” or “Dear, Father” is only found in scripture three times: 1) Here, 2) Romans 8:15, and 3) Galatians 4:6. Only the Lord Jesus Christ and the body of Christ address God the Father as being Dear. That is because it is only those, who are holy (Colossians 3:12), who can address the Father as such.

We should also note that Jesus says that all things are possible for Abba, Father. Therefore, it was possible that the Father could have kept Jesus from going to the cross. However, the Father did not take the cross away from Jesus, since He had met all the requirement of the Redeemer that God promised to man, once man had sinned (Genesis 3:15).

14:34,38,40 Three times, Jesus tells Peter, James, and John to watch. Watching does not mean looking around to see what is going on in the garden. Jesus is speaking spiritually. They are about to be tempted to deny their Lord. Therefore, they should be praying, like Jesus, for the faith to trust in God's Word regardless of what man may do to them.

14:37,40-42 All three times, when Jesus told them to watch, they slept instead. Verses 41 and 42 tell you that the sleep is spiritual, because Jesus tells them to "sleep on now" and also to "rise up." You cannot physically do both at the same time. They were to remain in their spiritually inept state of slumber while they physically rose to meet the temptation of denying their Lord.

Jesus' coming to them to tell them to watch and pray is symbolic of the little flock

during the tribulation period coming to Israel to tell them to get ready for their Messiah. Israel will sleep spiritually during the tribulation period (Matthew 25:5), such that some will barely make it into the kingdom (Matthew 25:10) while others do not make it in at all (Matthew 25:11-12), just like Peter, James, and John sleep here. Their spiritual sleep results in them all forsaking their Messiah and fleeing (14:50). Similarly, many of Israel, because they are spiritually asleep, not trusting in God's Word, will deny their Messiah by taking the mark of the beast.

14:37 Note that Jesus calls Peter "Simon." He did this earlier when He said He was praying for him (Luke 22:31). This is because Peter is in the flesh.

14:38 In the tribulation period, those with a ready spirit but weak flesh are those who believe the gospel of the kingdom but do not serve the Lord, because they do not preach the gospel of the kingdom and go through the associated trials.

14:39 In Jesus' most trying hour, He is still thinking about His followers. This is what the perfect servant does. He goes to check on them, urging them to pray so that they will not fall into temptation. However, the apostles have such hardened hearts that they do not even know that Jesus will soon be arrested and crucified, and they are only thinking of their own, tired flesh by snoozing.

14:40 Their eyes being heavy is symbolic of the disciples not having the eyes to see what is about to happen (Isaiah 6:9-10).

14:41-42 The disciples are still so clueless that, even when Jesus says that "the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners," they still do not understand what He just said. Jesus then has to tell them specifically, "he that betrayeth Me is at hand." They are still in a spiritual daze with their hard hearts and eyes that do not see.

14:43-44 The Jewish religious leaders certainly knew who Jesus was, but they hired a bunch of people who did not know Him, such that Judas has to kiss Jesus to identify Him. 14:47 says they are servants of the high priest. Jesus says in 14:49 that He was daily with them in the temple. Therefore, these people are probably Jews, who did not go to the temple. Perhaps they were "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort" (Acts 17:5). Whoever they are, the fact that Jesus' own do not recognize Him is a picture of how Israel, as a whole, did not recognize Him as their Messiah.

14:45 Jesus is not Judas' master, as he says here, or else he would not have betrayed Him. Satan is Judas' master for Satan has entered Judas on at least two occasions (Luke 22:3-4 and John 13:26-27).

14:46 Because Mark shows Jesus as the perfect servant, it looks like taking Jesus was an easy task. However, John, showing Jesus as God, shows that those, coming to arrest Him, actually "went backward, and fell to the ground" (John 18:6) when Jesus spoke to them!

14:47 The one, who drew a sword and cut off the servant's ear, was Peter, as John 18:10 points out. It is hard to blame Peter, since Jesus had told the disciples to bring swords with them (Luke 22:36-38). However, Jesus wanted to show them that, in spite of having the swords, they would not fight, because His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36), giving even these hired servants of the high priest the chance to repent and believe the gospel. Luke 22:51 says that Jesus healed the man whose ear had been cut off. Therefore, while Peter and the rest of the disciples are scared and see the danger in this situation, the Lord Jesus Christ sees this as an opportunity for people to be saved.

14:48-49 Satan is the thief. He has stolen eternal life from Israel. Jesus is the Redeemer, not the thief. The spinelessness of the Jewish religious leaders is seen in that they would not even arrest Jesus in front of the common people. They did it in secret, because they feared men. In fact, they did not even arrest Jesus themselves but hired a bunch of thugs to do their dirty work, people who did not even know who Jesus was. Jesus knows the answer to His question already. He only asks it to convict their hearts, so that they might be saved.

14:50 Contrast this with the disciples, who slept instead of praying. They fight against the Father's will by cutting off a servant's ear. Then, they forsake Jesus. Note the two actions of the disciples. First, they forsake their Messiah and Lord. Second, they flee for their lives. These represent the two actions of members of the little flock who take the mark of the beast in the tribulation period. They had believed the gospel of the kingdom, but then they forsake their Messiah and Lord by taking Satan's mark. In doing so, they are fleeing for their lives. But, Jesus said, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it" (8:35).

14:51-52 This seems like an odd detail to tell us. While the disciples flee from Jesus, a young man follows Him. Revelation 19:8 says that "fine linen is the righteousness of saints." His leaving the linen cloth behind when the men grabbed him may be symbolic of those going through the tribulation period leaving behind their righteousness and not entering into the kingdom by taking the mark of the beast and worshipping the image of the beast. The men grabbing him, then, may be symbolic of apostate Israel taking away the righteousness of those who succumb to the temptation of joining themselves with the Antichrist.

14:53 It is the middle of the night before passover. The religious leaders have a busy day ahead of them, since it is passover. Yet, ALL of them are assembled to kill Jesus. This shows how man's heart is so wicked (Jeremiah 17:9) that he will go without sleep to do his evil deeds. "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

14:54 Peter's warming himself at the fire is symbolic of how he has forsaken Jesus and is in danger of hell fire, as Jesus said, "whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:33). After His resurrection, Jesus will restore Peter's position over the little flock through admitting three times that he loves Jesus (see John 21:15-17).

14:55 All of the great religious minds of the day are united in their desire to kill Jesus but not a one can find fault with Him. This shows that Jesus obeyed God's law covenant perfectly.

14:56-59 Contrast Jesus' perfection with the sinfulness of the religious leaders. Because they cannot find fault with Him, they start making stuff up. Because they are making things up, they cannot get their stories straight. Therefore, they cannot even sentence Jesus to death through lies. Jesus never said that HE would destroy this temple. He said that THEY would destroy this temple (John 2:19-21). The ironic thing is that they are about to fulfill Jesus' proclamation, and they are trying to justify their destroying His temple by lying about what Jesus said.

14:60 Not even the high priest understands the confusing testimony. He even asks Jesus to explain what the accusations are that the people are making against Jesus!

14:61 Jesus does not open His mouth, fulfilling Isaiah 53:7. The only reason He answers the high priest's question about Him being the Christ is because the high priest prefaced the question with "I adjure thee by the living God" (Matthew 26:63). If Jesus did not answer his question, the high priest would have broken the third commandment of taking God's name in vain. Thus, Jesus indicts Himself to be killed in order to keep the high priest from breaking God's commandment! This perfect Servant does not complain about the injustice of it all. He just perfectly obeys God's law and His Father's will.

Also, note that the high priest asks Jesus if He is "the Son of the Blessed." Now, we assume that the high priest is referring to God as "the Blessed," and that could be the case. However, he could also be referring to the queen of heaven. Jeremiah 7:18, 44:17, and 44:25 show that Israel burned incense to the queen of heaven. This was a pagan deity that Satan created to mock the seed-of-the-woman promise of Genesis 3:15. We see Catholics today, continuing this tradition when they worship the Virgin Mary as the queen of heaven. Pagan theology of the time revered the goddess Easter as the queen of heaven, who gave birth to her son Tammuz, by dropping an egg into the ocean, which is why people paint eggs to celebrate Easter. Ezekiel 8:14 shows that the Jewish religion also wept for Tammuz. Since Israel was involved in this pagan worship, the high priest's question may have been: "Are you the Son of the queen of heaven?" At the very least, Catholics today would interpret his question as such, since they give the title of "Blessed" to Mary, since she gave birth to the Messiah, while people very rarely refer to God as "Blessed."

14:62 Note that Jesus says that the high priest will "see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Revelation 19:11 says that, at His second coming, Jesus will come on a white horse. Therefore, Jesus is not referring to His second coming here. Rather, He is referring to the Great White Throne Judgment. After the millennial reign is over, all of the unsaved will rise from the dead and be judged to eternity in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15). Therefore, Jesus is telling the high priest that He is the Messiah, and,

the next time they see Him will be when He judges them to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

14:63-64 “Further witnesses?” They have not had two witnesses agree together (14:59), and a matter is only established by the mouth of at least two witnesses. “At the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death” (Deuteronomy 17:6). Therefore, the whole council breaks the law by condemning Jesus to death, when they do not have at least two witnesses to refute Jesus’ claim of being the Messiah. Also, the law states that false witnesses are to get the punishment that they are trying to inflict upon the innocent party (Deuteronomy 19:16-19). Thus, the ones, who should have been killed, are the false witnesses here, and not Jesus, the innocent.

14:65 Even if they had lawfully condemned Jesus to death, their behavior here is not lawful. Once a person was condemned to death, they were supposed to put him to death, not taunt him (Deuteronomy 17:7).

Also, note that the servants did not know God’s Word. They ask Jesus to “prophecy,” meaning that they want Him to say who just struck Him. However, the word “prophecy” means to speak what the Lord says, usually about the future. It is not to say what just happened. The fact, that they did not know this, shows that “prophecy” was used as a religious term, probably like used for a psychic, rather than using the Bible definition of the word.

14:66-72 Peter denies Jesus three times before the cock crew twice, just as Jesus had said he would (14:30). This shows Jesus as the Lord for He knows even when a cock will crow. By his denials, Peter breaks at least three of the 10 commandments by having himself as a god before God (Exodus 20:3), by taking God’s name in vain (Exodus 20:7), and by lying (Exodus 20:16).

15 Jesus takes the sins of all mankind upon Himself (v. 34) and pays the eternal punishment for their sins (v. 37).

15:1 Once the religious leaders had condemned Jesus to death in their religious court, they have a conference to determine what they will do with Jesus. They decide a simple stoning to death, which they could do themselves, is not sufficient punishment for their Messiah, the Son of God. They want Him crucified, which only the Romans can do. Therefore, they figure out what lies they will tell and bring Him to Pilate, the Roman governor.

Note that this verse says that “the whole council” was involved in binding Jesus and carrying Him to Pilate. Most of Christianity believes that the Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek by a council of 70, Jewish scholars, about 250 years before Jesus’ birth. They call this translation the “Septuagint,” and they rely upon this translation to come up with modern Bible versions. The origin of the Septuagint is really from the Greek philosopher, Origen, and not from the Jewish council. However, given that, less than 300 years later, the Jewish religion condemned their own Messiah to death, if this Septuagint did come about as they

say it did, why would they rely on such a translation, since it must be corrupt?

15:2 The religious leaders must have told Pilate that they want Jesus crucified for trying to get the Jews out of Roman rule and that He, as king, would rule over the Jews Himself. This is based on their accusations in Luke 23:2 and on Pilate's question: "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" The ironic thing is that Israel was looking for their Messiah to overthrow the Roman government. So, the Jews turn Jesus in to be crucified for supposedly trying to do what they want the Messiah to do! In other words, the very fact that the Jews are accusing Jesus of trying to overthrow the Roman government, shows that their accusation is false, because, if it were true, they would not try to stop it. The real reason the Jews did not accept Him as their Messiah is because He did not do what they wanted Him to do for He came to die for their sins first and will come as their King later.

15:2-5 "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7). Jesus answers Pilate because he is the governor, but He does not have to answer the Jewish religious leaders any more because He is not on trial before them now. Therefore, He does not respond to their false accusations.

15:6,15 Pilate's release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Jesus mirrors Leviticus 16. In Leviticus 16:7-10, the high priest (Aaron) was instructed to take two goats to the tabernacle and cast lots. One goat would be killed as a sin offering, while the other goat would "be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement for him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness." As such, the scapegoat represented the nation of Israel that God allowed to go free, not having to pay for their sins, because a goat was sacrificed for them (Leviticus 16:15-16). Similarly, Barabbas, a man worthy of death, goes free, while Jesus is crucified. Therefore, Barabbas' release represents those in Israel who would believe the gospel of the kingdom and have eternal life in the kingdom instead of being killed for their sins.

15:7-11 Barabbas was guilty of murder in an insurrection, but the people ask that he be released, while Jesus is crucified. The official reason the religious leaders want Jesus killed is because He started an insurrection. Jesus was innocent of that charge, but Barabbas was guilty and had even murdered someone. This shows that the religious leaders did not care about squashing insurrections. They just wanted Jesus killed. Note that, while before, the religious leaders would not arrest Jesus in front of the crowd for fear that they would rebel, they now use their power over the people to get them to say they want Jesus crucified. The crowd gathered here is probably more anti-Jesus than the crowd in the temple. After all, most of those in the temple were either following Jesus or they were devout Jews. John 19:14 says it was preparation day for the Passover, and John 18:28 says that the Pharisees would not go into Pilate's judgment hall so that they would not be defiled from eating the Passover. Therefore, the pro-Jesus crowd are probably still in bed, or they are making ready the lamb for the Passover. The people at Pilate's hall, then, would have been mostly unbelievers, which makes it easier to convince them to ask for Jesus' crucifixion.

15:12-14 The people cannot answer Pilate's question of why Jesus should be

crucified, because Jesus had done no evil. They just cry for His crucifixion. This is what religion does when faced with the truth of God's Word: 1) They refuse to address the truth, and 2) Try to stop it from ever being brought up again.

Note the sarcasm in Pilate's statement of "whom YE call the King of the Jews?" He knows Jesus has done no wrong, and that they delivered Him to be crucified because they were envious of Jesus' sway over the people (15:10). Therefore, he acknowledges that the title of "King of the Jews" is what they are calling Jesus, not what Jesus is calling Himself.

15:15 The only people wanting Jesus to be crucified were the religious leaders. They were able to get their desire because they were able to convince both the common people below them (15:11) and the governor above them (15:15).

15:16-20 The Roman soldiers are mocking Jesus, but there are some elements of truth to what they are doing. First, He is the King of Kings and King of the Jews. Second, He died for the sins of the world. Thorns is a symbol of the curse of sin (Genesis 3:18), and they placed a crown of thorns upon His head. Third, they bowed their knees and worshipped Him, and Isaiah 45:23, Romans 14:11, and Philippians 2:10 all say that every knee will bow to the Lord.

15:16 All of the soldiers being called together, here, is proof that Jesus' crucifixion is the first one of the day.

15:21 Simon of Cyrene carried Jesus' cross, but he did so because they forced him to. He did not volunteer for the job. He was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Or, in hindsight, he would probably say he was in the right place at the right time. If he was the father of the Rufus of Romans 16:13, Simon probably believed the gospel as a result of carrying Jesus' cross and taught it to his sons, which would explain why Rufus is said to be "chosen in the Lord."

15:23 Myrrh was used as a medicine to help the stomach. This shows how man eases his guilty conscience by giving medicine to a man he is killing. But, Jesus had already surrendered to the will of the Father, meaning that He is ready to die. Therefore, He did not take the medicine.

15:24 Every detail prophesied about the Messiah came true, including Psalm 22:18's twofold prophecy that they would part the Messiah's garments and cast lots for His vesture.

15:25 Jesus was crucified at 9 AM.

15:26 With this superscription of "The King of the Jews," we see Jesus identified as such from birth (Matthew 2:2) to death. They rejected God as their king in I Samuel 8:7, and now they reject God in the flesh as their king here.

15:27-28 Jesus was numbered with the transgressors, fulfilling Isaiah 53:12. That scripture also says that He "made intercession for the transgressors." Not

only did Jesus do this by dying for their sins, but He also interceded for them in giving them a chance to be forgiven of their crime, which He did when He said, “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34). This changed the Jews’ guilt from murder, which is punishable by death (Exodus 21:12), to manslaughter, because they did it in ignorance (Acts 3:17).

15:29-30 The best accusation they could hurl at Jesus was a false one. He said that THEY would destroy the temple of His body, and HE would raise it up in 3 days (John 2:19-21). However, even if they got His prophetic statement correct, He could not fulfill it by coming down from the cross since: 1) His body was not destroyed yet, and 2) It was not the third day yet. Therefore, Jesus fulfilled their request of building up His temple again in three days by staying on the cross in order for it to be destroyed so that He could build it back up again.

15:31 The religious leaders mock Jesus among themselves. They would not do so in the open among the common people, because they had to keep up their reputation of being good, religious people. The funny thing is that their mocking is actually true. If He saved Himself, He could not save others. He came “to save that which was lost” (Matthew 18:11). Therefore, He saved others, but not Himself. He had to die in their place.

15:32 The only time the religious leaders call Jesus the Christ or the Messiah was in mocking Him. They said they would believe Him if He came down from the cross. However, they did not believe Moses’ law because they forsook it for the traditions of the fathers, and Luke 16:31 says “if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” They heard that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and they concluded that He must die (John 11:47-51). Therefore, they would not believe in Jesus Christ, even if He came down from the cross.

15:33 After Jesus hung on the cross for three hours, the next three hours were filled with darkness, probably as a sign of the spiritual darkness that was in the land. None of the gospel writers tell us what happened during those three hours. However, since the gospel was written in the stars (Psalm 19:1-4) and the wise men traveled 2 years to find the King of the Jews based on seeing HIS star (Matthew 2:2,16), these three hours of darkness probably gave all the people the chance to see the gospel in the stars and see the Redeemer dying so that they might live. The religious leaders’ reaction was still one of unbelief (15:36), but a Gentile’s reaction was: “Truly, this man was the Son of God” (15:39).

15:34 It is at this point that God made Christ to be sin that we might be made the righteousness of God (II Corinthians 5:21). Because a holy God cannot have fellowship with unholy man, for the first time ever, fellowship is broken between God the Father and His Son. Therefore, Jesus cries out that God has forsaken Him. This being forsaken by God is the real pain of what hell is like.

15:35-36 So that you see it is clear that Jesus called “My God, My God,” the original Hebrew is also given here. However, the religious leaders think He called

for Elijah. This shows that, in their religion, they had elevated Elijah to God status. Romans 1:23 says that man has “changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man.” That is exactly what they had done by making Elijah out to be God. Yet, when God comes “in the likeness of sinful flesh” in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, they do not recognize Him as such (Romans 8:3).

15:34,37 Twice, Jesus cried with a loud voice from the cross. The first time was when the sins of all mankind were placed upon Him (v. 34). The second time was when He suffered death as the payment for those sins (v. 37). Note that Jesus “gave up the ghost.” Even in His most physically weak state, He still had control over His body. “No man taketh it [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” (John 10:18).

15:38 The vail of the temple being torn from top to bottom is NOT the middle wall of partition being torn down between Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:14), because the apostles’ ministry after His death was to Israel only (see Matthew 10:6,23; Acts 1:8; 2:14,22,36). The vail being torn means that the JEWS can now “boldly approach the throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16) rather than having to have a priest once per year risk his life by coming into God’s presence to have the nation’s sins covered (Leviticus 16:29-34). Jesus did that work for them as their eternal, Melchisedecian priest, rather than as the lower rank of Levitical priest (Hebrews 7:26-8:1; 10:10-14).

The fact that the vail was torn “from the top to the bottom” shows that God ALONE did the work to reconcile man to Himself. Man can add nothing!

15:39 Mark tells us that, based on seeing Jesus cry out and give up the ghost, this centurion said, “Truly this man was the Son of God.” Perhaps the clearest statement in the Bible about Jesus being both fully God and fully man was made by a pagan Gentile, and the reason he said this was by observing how Jesus died. No doubt this centurion had seen many people crucified before. Everyone else hung on to life. Only Jesus “gave up the ghost.” Jesus’ giving up His life, as opposed to it being taken away from Him, was visible to this Gentile such that he made the statement that He was the Son of God. Only God would die willingly.

15:40-41 Jesus’ 12 apostles were with Jesus at His arrest, but they forsook Jesus and fled before He even got to the cross (14:50). By contrast, women, who were not even with Him at His arrest, came to Him and observed His crucifixion. In His darkest hour, men ran from Jesus, while women ran toward Him.

15:43 The reason it is said that Joseph of Arimathaea (not Mary’s husband, Joseph) “went in boldly unto Pilate” is because Joseph was a Jewish religious leader, who had forsaken religion for the sake of the kingdom of God. As such, he was probably in danger of being persecuted and even killed by the Jewish religious leaders for defecting. In fact, Luke 23:50-51 says “he was a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them).” As such, Joseph of Arimathaea is a type of how individual members of the religious leaders could

enter the kingdom of God by believing the gospel of the kingdom and forsaking their own religion.

15:44 Jesus died much earlier than most, who were crucified, such that Pilate marveled. This is because Jesus “gave up the ghost” (v. 37), rather than having His life taken from Him. His early death also kept His bones from being broken (John 19:31-34), fulfilling that specific prophecy about the Messiah (Psalm 34:20).

15:46 Revelation 19:8 says that “fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” Therefore, although Joseph probably did not know it, he was really giving Jesus’ body a garment appropriate to His righteous standing before God.

16 Jesus rises from the dead (v. 6), ascends to heaven (v. 19), and the gospel of the kingdom continues to be preached with the little flock (v. 20). Their message is confirmed through the signs of the kingdom (vs. 17-18).

16:1-3 The women may have run to Jesus at the cross, but they still did not believe in His resurrection, as they went to anoint His body in the grave, but He had already risen from the dead.

16:4,6 Jesus got out of the tomb with the stone still in front of it. The stone was rolled away by an angel (Matthew 28:2), not so Jesus could get out of the tomb, but so people could look into the tomb and believe in His resurrection “for as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise again from the dead” (John 20:9). They needed to “behold the place where they laid Him” (16:6). A special blessing is reserved for those who “have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:29).

16:5 This “man” was the angel of the Lord (Matthew 28:2-6), which makes things really confusing for us, when we realize that the angel of the Lord is probably God (see Exodus 3:2-6), taking on the form of a man. So, Jesus the man rose from the grave in His glorified body. Then, God the Son took on another body as the angel of the Lord, rolled the stone away, and then told the women that Jesus was not there any more!

16:7 Because Peter denied Jesus three times (16:66-72), he was no longer a disciple of Jesus. Jesus said “But whomsoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 10:33). Therefore, the angel said to “tell His disciples and Peter.” However, Jesus will soon restore Peter (John 21:15-17), and Peter will have the authority on earth to forgive sins after Jesus ascends to heaven (Matthew 16:19).

16:9-20 618 manuscripts of Mark 16 contain this passage, while only 2 omit it. Therefore, the OVERWHELMING evidence is to keep the passage in the Bible. However, all modern translations question its reliability. The New King James puts it in brackets, the NIV footnotes it by saying that “The most reliable early manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9-20,” and the NLT says “The most reliable early manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark end at verse 8.” Since only 2 out of 618 manuscripts omit Mark, wouldn’t that, by default, make

those 2 manuscripts the most unreliable ones, not the most reliable ones?

The fact is that modern versions dismiss the passage because they do not like it. It says you must believe and be baptized to be saved (16:16), which most Christian denominations reject. However, the main reason for the passage being rejected is that it says that the signs of casting out devils, taking up serpents, and drinking poison without harm “SHALL follow them that believe” (16:17-18). Since those things are not happening today, Christians either have to reject the truth of God’s Word or change their way of thinking, and we all know that man’s pride precludes him from thinking he is wrong. Therefore, man rejects God’s Word by taking out the part he does not believe, which is how those 2 manuscripts had this passage omitted in the first place!

However, since we believe the Bible rightly divided and all of it is true, we can properly recognize these words as God’s authoritative Word, being just as much true as the rest of His Word. We just know that this particular passage applies only to Israel’s program when the kingdom of heaven is at hand, where salvation is by believing the gospel and being water baptized and God gets the lost sheep of Israel to believe the gospel by believers doing the signs mentioned here. Therefore, we can believe this passage to be true without changing it, while also believing other “contradictory” passages in Paul’s epistles to be true without changing them either.

16:9 Luke 7:47 says that those forgiven of much will love much. Mary Magdalene greatly loved Jesus because she had been cleansed of seven devils. In fact, Jesus may have appeared to her first because of her great love for Him. Her being cleansed of seven devils and now seeing Jesus first is a picture of the little flock of Israel. They are cleansed from the devil having them as their lawful captive (Isaiah 49:24) and will enter the kingdom of God first.

16:11 See the lack of faith of the disciples. Even after hearing an eyewitness testimony of Jesus’ resurrection, they still do not believe He has risen from the dead.

16:12-13 Then, Jesus appeared to two men, as recorded in Luke 24:13-35, and Jesus’ disciples STILL do not believe in Jesus’ resurrection! Yet, 50 days from now, they will be filled with the Holy Ghost and will boldly proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.

16:14 Therefore, when Jesus appears to the 11 apostles, He scolds them for their unbelief. Jesus told them multiple times beforehand that He would die and rise the third day; they saw a woman spend one year’s worth of wages anointing His body for burial; they saw the sky dark for three hours while He hung on the cross; and they heard at least two, independent eyewitness accounts of His resurrection; and they STILL did not believe He rose from the dead. Their trusting in the Jewish religion over the Word of God is why their hearts are so hardened. Similarly today, no matter how many verses clearly show that Paul has a distinct, gospel message, different from the one taught by the 12 apostles in Matthew – John, Christians

refuse to believe the truth.

16:15 Going to all the world to preach the gospel is a later stage of Jesus' commission to them. They are to first go to Israel (Acts 1:8). They will not finish going through all of Israel before Jesus' second coming (Matthew 10:23). Therefore, they will not fulfill Mark 16:15 until the millennial kingdom is set up. Then, they will go to the world with the gospel and "ten men shall take hold...of the skirt of him that is a Jew" to go to Israel to hear the law (Isaiah 2:2-3) because God is with them (Zechariah 8:23).

16:16 The gospel of the kingdom was to believe the gospel and be water baptized for the remission of sins. This verse does not say "He that believeth is saved. Then, he needs to be water baptized as a demonstration to all that he is saved." Rather, the verse says they must believe and be water baptized in order to be saved. Water baptism is a work, and Paul says that "by grace are ye saved...not of works" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Therefore, the gospel that Jesus and the apostles preached was a DIFFERENT gospel than what Paul preached.

Water baptism was required for salvation for Israel to be cleansed from their idolatry (Ezekiel 36:25) and to be ordained as "the Priests of the Lord" (Isaiah 61:6) to reach the Gentiles with the gospel (Exodus 19:5-6; 29:4), while "Christ sent [Paul] not to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (I Corinthians 1:17).

Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38 are the two, clearest passages that show that water baptism is required for salvation during the at-hand phase of God's kingdom in Israel's program. To break this link between water baptism and salvation, fundamental Christians will change Acts 2:38 to say that water baptism is needed **because** they have already been forgiven, when the verse clearly makes water baptism a requirement in order to be forgiven. With Mark 16:16, they will either simply omit the verse, or they will say that, because baptism is not mentioned for those damned, it is not required. However, if someone does not believe, they are damned to hell already. Water baptism does no good for a non-believer. They are taking the last part of the verse to replace the part of the first part of the verse that they do not agree with.

16:17-18 These signs are part of the healing of sick and the casting out of devils to show the lost sheep of Israel that the gospel of the kingdom they are hearing is of God, as 16:20 says that the Lord confirmed "the word with signs following." Therefore, they need to believe the gospel and be water baptized in order to be saved. The reason only Mark mentions these verses is because each gospel writer gives the aspect of "The Great Commission" that applies to the emphasis the gospel writer makes. Mark shows Jesus as the perfect servant. Therefore, he is the only one showing the apostles continuing the servant work of Jesus during the tribulation period. John shows Jesus as God, and he is the only one who shows the apostles continuing the saving work of Jesus during the tribulation period by forgiving others' sins (John 20:23). Mainstream Christians only believe the Matthew commission; Pentecostals only believe the Mark commission; Catholics only believe the John commission; no main denomination believes the Luke

commission since salvation begins at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47); but only right dividers believe all four commissions. They believe them because they are the only ones who recognize that they do not apply today, and that they only apply to Israel's program, which is in abeyance until the rapture of the Body of Christ.

We should also note that there are a few churches known for using this passage as a commandment from the Lord to handle poisonous snakes. Just because they are successful at handling those snakes does not mean that God is protecting them from getting bitten. It is just that they are handling the snakes in such a way that the snakes do not feel threatened, and so they do not bite their handlers. Note that "if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them" is also in this verse. Yet, I know of no church that practices drinking poison. The reason is because they would die. In other words, the fact that no one drinks poison and lives today shows that these verses apply to believing Israel during the at-hand phase of Israel's program, and not to us today. Therefore, handling poisonous snakes today and not being bitten is not proof of the fulfillment of this passage.

Similarly, some churches use the phrase "they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (v. 18) as proof that God is performing physical healings today. However, we need to note that, according to this verse, the success rate of those praying for the sick is 100%. Although some people may claim that God does heal people physically today, no one claims that it works 100% of the time, which shows that this part of the verse also does not apply today either.

16:19 Jesus sat down at the right hand of God because His work was complete. Now, He would sit "from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool" (Hebrews 10:13). However, when He stood up in Acts 7:55, He stood up, not in judgment, as was prophesied, but to offer grace and peace through the dispensation of grace, putting Israel's program on hold. That is why 2,000 years have passed since Jesus ascended to the Father, even though prophecy shows that only a little more than 7 years should have passed between Jesus' ascension and His second coming (Daniel 9:24-27).

16:20 Until Jesus' second coming, the little flock is to preach the gospel of the kingdom, which the Lord confirmed through the signs that He performed through them as promised in 16:17-18. This shows that the purpose of the signs is not to make a big show, make you look more spiritual than everyone else, or even to bring physical healing to people. The real purpose of the signs is the same as it was when Jesus was on earth, which is to confirm that the gospel of the kingdom that the little flock is preaching is true.