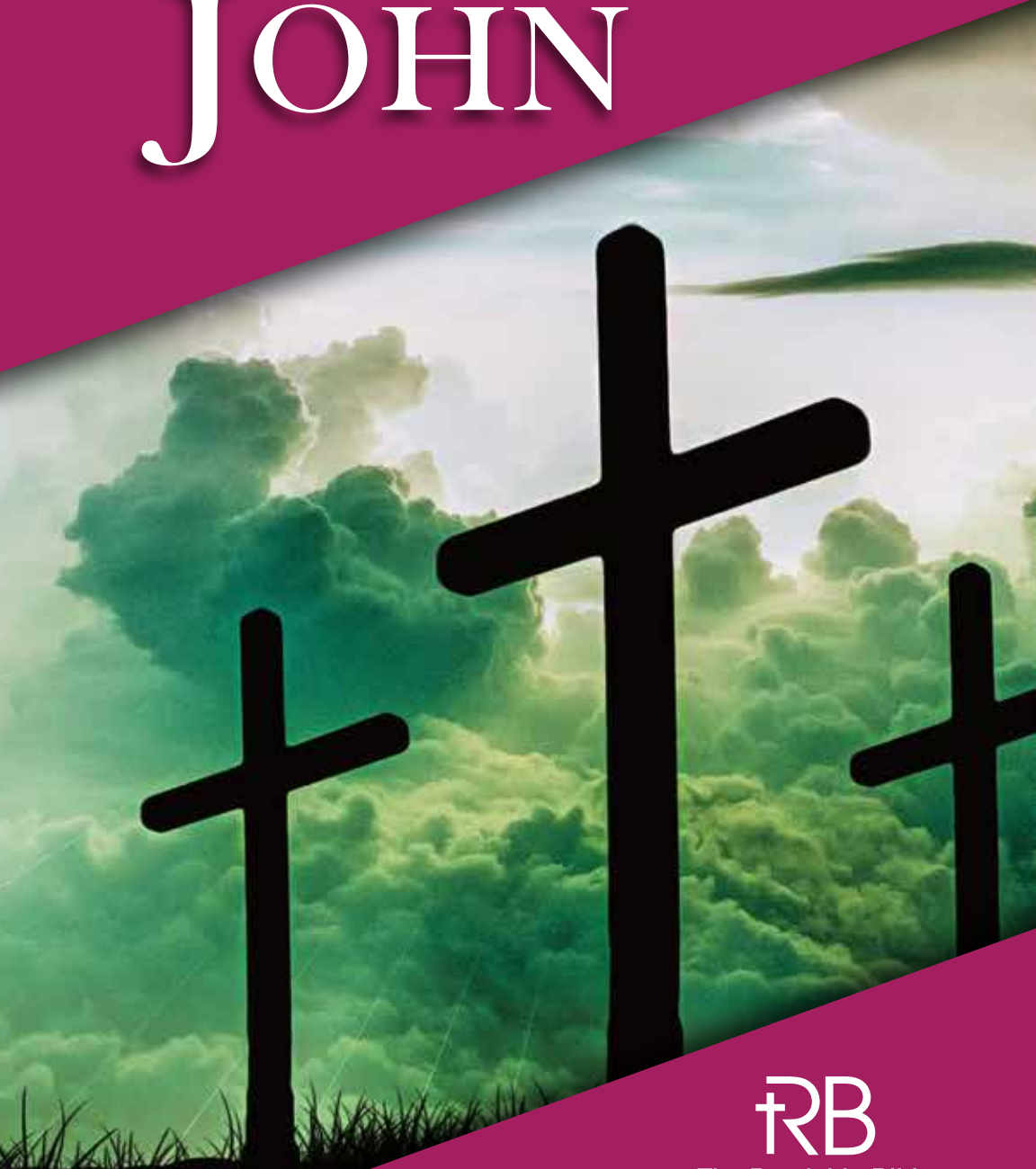


GIFT EDITION

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
JOHN



RB

The Readable Bible

The Readable Bible

Excerpts from
The Gospel According to
John

Gift Edition

A Gift From _____

My phone _____



Birmingham, Alabama

The Readable Bible: Gospel of John Gift Edition

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Invitation to Read the Gospel of John

This special edition of The Readable Bible Gospel of John was given to you by someone who hopes John's story will be a blessing to you as it has been to him or her.

John was a fisherman in his early twenties who lived on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. He gave up fishing to follow Jesus. John summed up his experience in these words: "We saw his glory, the glory of the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

John emphasized that he witnessed the events, and he told us why he wrote: "These things are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name."

Millions have read this story, concluded that it is true, and found peace with God. This is your invitation to read, your invitation to believe.

Before You Read

The glossary lists words that are not common today but are used often in this book, and it has important information regarding the words "Jesus" and "Christ."

Words in *italics* are additions to the biblical text. The text enclosed in brackets is not in the oldest, most reliable manuscripts but has been traditionally included in English Bible translations.

Remember, Jesus was and is Jewish. The disciples and the women around him were Jewish. So "Jews" in the text oftentimes refers not to all Jews but only to those who opposed Jesus.

The Gospel of John^a

Good News About Jesus the Messiah as Reported by John

Part I. Prologue

1

The Word Became Flesh

In the beginning was the Word,^b and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things came into existence through him. Apart from him nothing came into existence that has existed. In him was life, and that life was the light of all humanity. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify about the light so that through him all might believe. He was not the light, for *he came* that he might testify concerning the light.

The true light (who gives light to everyone) was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world didn't know him. He came to his own *people*, but his own *people* didn't receive him. Yet to all who have received him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, born not of human descent, nor of sexual desire, nor of a human's decision, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory of the one and only *Son* from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John *the Baptist* testified about him, crying out, "This is he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me, because he existed before me.'" Out of his fullness^c we have all received grace upon grace^d *already given*. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.^e No one has ever seen *all of God*. The one and only God (*i.e., Jesus*), who is in the closest possible relationship with the Father,^f has made him fully known.

John the Baptist's Testimony

Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, "Who are you?"

He freely declared, "I am not the Messiah."

So they asked him, "Then who are you? Elijah?"^g

a "Gospel": an Old English word that means "good news."

b "Word" is an ancient Greek philosophical term for the central force/fundamental organizing principle of the universe. Here it relates to the eight "God said, 'Let...'" statements in the creation story in Genesis 1.

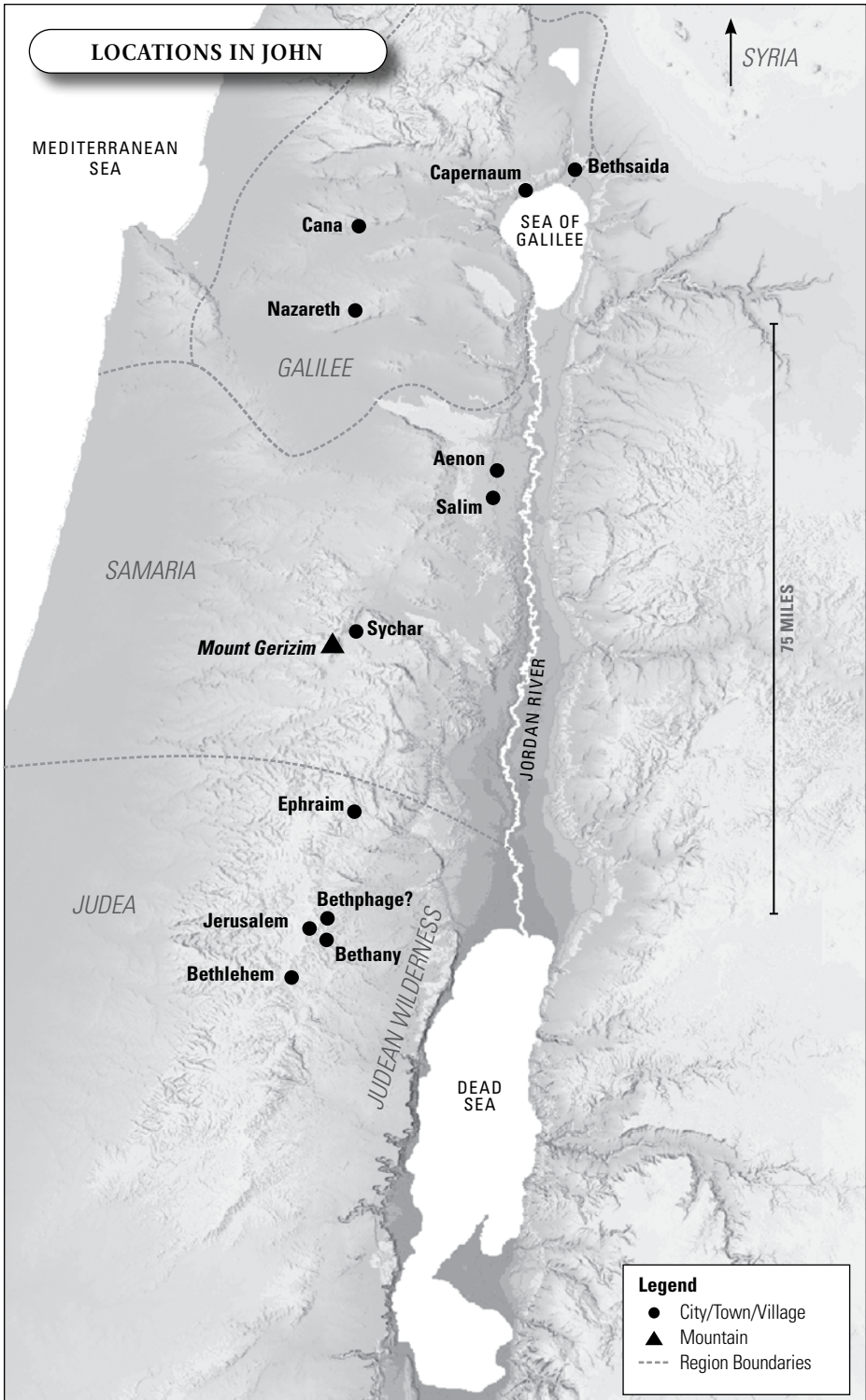
c "Fullness": completeness in all respects.

d "Grace" is unmerited favor.

e See "Jesus" and "Christ" in the glossary.

f Literally, "in the bosom of the Father."

g Elijah, who "went up" (see 2 Kings 2:11), was seen as still alive. He was expected to come back before the "great and dreadful day" of the Lord spoken of by the prophet Malachi.



He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

Then they said, "So we can give an answer to those who sent us, tell us, who are you? What do you say about yourself?"

John said as Isaiah the prophet said, "I am the voice crying out in the wilderness, 'Make clear the way for the Lord.'"

Those who had been sent from the Pharisees asked, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?"

John replied, "I baptize in water, but one whom you do not know stands among you. He is coming after me, and I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandal."

This all happened where John was baptizing at Bethany on the east side of the Jordan.

John Testifies About Jesus

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one about whom I said, 'A man who comes after me ranks ahead of me, because he existed before me.' I didn't recognize him, but for this purpose I came baptizing in water so that he might be revealed to Israel."

And *after baptizing him*, John testified: "I saw the *Holy Spirit* come down from heaven like a dove and remain upon him. And I didn't recognize him, but the one who sent me to baptize in water told me, 'The one on whom you see the *Holy Spirit* descend and remain is the one who will baptize *people* in the Holy Spirit.' I have seen, and I testify that this is the Son of God."

Part 2. Jesus Begins His Ministry

John's Disciples Follow Jesus

Again the next day, John was standing with Andrew and another of his disciples. He saw Jesus passing by and said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus.

Jesus turned and saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"

They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?"

He replied, "Come, and you will see." So they went to see where he was staying, and they stayed with him *the rest of that day*. It was about 4:00 p.m.

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard John and had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his own brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated "Christ" *in Greek*), and he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You will be called Cephas, which means Rock."

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee.^a He came upon Philip (who was from Bethsaida,^b the town of Andrew and Peter) and said to him, “Follow me.”

Then Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We’ve found the one Moses and the prophets wrote about in the Law. *He’s* Jesus, the son of Joseph, from Nazareth.”

“Nazareth?” Nathanael asked. “Can anything good come out of there?”

Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said about him, “Look here, a true Israelite, one in whom there is no deceit.”

Nathanael asked, “How do you know *about* me?”

Jesus replied, “I saw you while you were under the fig tree, before Philip called you.”

Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel!”

Jesus said, “You believe *just* because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You’ll see greater things than that.” And he told him, “I’m telling you the truth: You will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

2

Jesus Changes Water into Wine

Three days later there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and Jesus’ mother was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother told him, “They’re out of wine.”

Jesus replied, “Dear woman, why are you telling me? My time hasn’t come yet.”

But his mother told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

Now six stone water jars, each holding twenty to thirty gallons, were there for Jewish ceremonial washing. Jesus told the servants, “Fill the jars with water,” and they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Now draw some out and take it to the banquet manager,” and they took it *to him*.

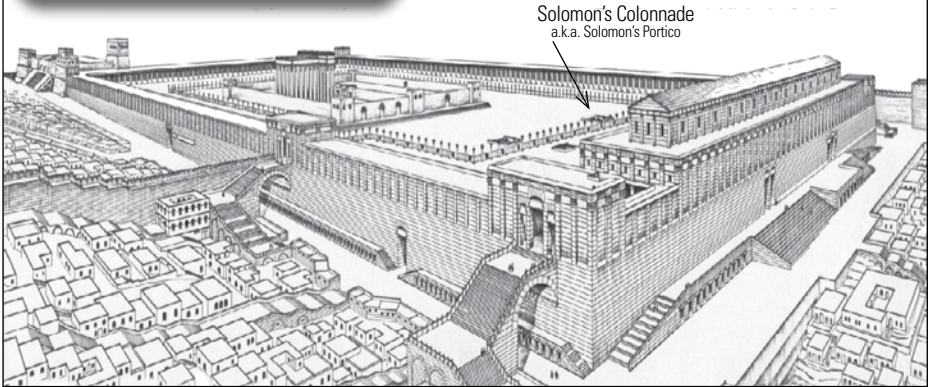
The banquet manager tasted the water that had been turned into wine. Not knowing where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), he called the bridegroom *aside* and said, “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then, after the guests have drunk a lot, *they serve* the cheaper wine. But you have saved the best till now!”

Jesus performed this first of his *miraculous* signs in Cana of Galilee, thus revealing his glory. And his disciples believed in him. Then he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. And they stayed for a few days.

a Galilee was traditionally Gentile, with a strong Gentile culture and a weak Jewish culture.

b “Bethsaida” means “house of fishing.”

THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM



Part 3. Jesus' Teaching and Healing Ministry

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

When the Jewish *Festival of Passover* was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple *courts* he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves *for sacrificial offerings* and money-changers seated *at the tables*.^a So he made a whip out of cords and drove them all from the temple—sheep, cattle, and money-changers. He scattered the coins and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling doves, “Get these things out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a house of trade!”

And his disciples remembered that it is written *in Scripture*, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

The Jews responded *to his actions* by saying to him, “What sign can you show us *to prove your authority* since you are doing these things?”

Jesus answered, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I’ll raise it up!”

They replied, “It’s taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you’re going to raise it up in three days?”

But Jesus was speaking of the temple of his body. So when he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said, and then they believed the Scripture and what Jesus had said.

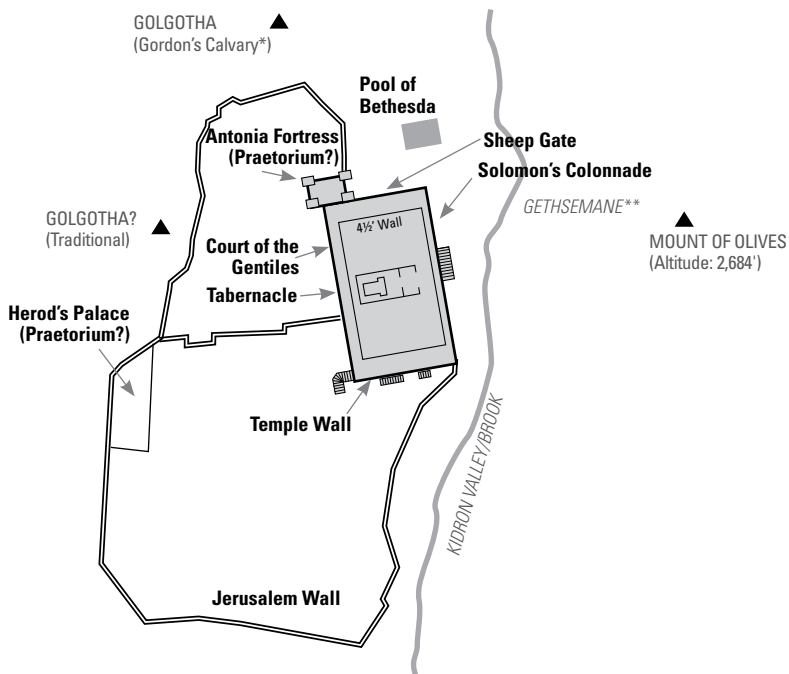
Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Festival of the Passover, many people saw the miracles he was performing and believed in his name. But Jesus, on his part, did not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. He didn’t need anyone to tell him about them; for he himself knew what was in people.

Skip to Friday of Passion Week

^a The money-changers made a profit exchanging Roman coins for temple coins.

JESUS' LAST TWO DAYS

The temple was built on the Temple Mount, the highest location in Jerusalem.



*Site proposed by Major General Charles Gordon in 1883 and accepted by many today.

** The location of Gethsemane (a Hebrew word meaning "oil press") is uncertain. Many believe it is at the base of the western slope of the Mount of Olives.

Where Did Jesus Walk? Where Was He Taken?

The "Jesus' Last Two Days" map shows most of the Jerusalem locations mentioned in the four Gospels. Some places are omitted because their location is purely speculative (e.g., Annas' house, Caiaphas' house). They have neither archaeological evidence nor strong tradition supporting their location. Thus, we do not attempt to show the route that Jesus walked. The reality is that we have a general idea but are uncertain.

Sometimes our uncertainty is because of ambiguity of the text. For instance, when they "took him to Caiaphas," the text may be referring to his home or his headquarters (or were they the same place?). And while we are reasonably confident that Pilate lived at Herod the Great's former palace, we do not know if it was "the Praetorium" (i.e., his military headquarters, which may have been at the Antonia Fortress). Even where the text is clear, the location is oftentimes uncertain. There are strong traditions about the location of Golgotha and the garden of Gethsemane. However, despite

Jesus' Last Two Days

Day	Est. Time	Location	Significant Event
Thursday	Morning	Mount of Olives	
	7:00 p.m.	Jerusalem	Last Supper
	8:00 p.m.		Lord's Supper instituted
	11:00 p.m.	On the way to Gethsemane	Prays his high priestly prayer
Friday	Midnight	Garden of Gethsemane	Prays his Father's will be done Betrayed and arrested
	1:00 a.m.	House (?) of Annas	Interrogated by Annas
	2:00 a.m.	House (?) of Caiaphas	Questioned by Sanhedrin (in an informal meeting) Denied by Peter Condemned by Sanhedrin (in a formal meeting)
	3:00 a.m.	Praetorium	Interrogated by Pontius Pilate
	Daybreak	Herod Antipas' house	Interrogated by Herod Mocked by Herod's guards
	7:00 a.m.	Praetorium	Interrogated again by Pilate Flogged and mocked by soldiers Handed over for crucifixion Mocked by soldiers
	8:00 a.m.	Jerusalem street(s)	Walked to Golgotha
	9:00 a.m.	Golgotha	Crucified
	3:00 p.m.	Golgotha	Died
	4:00 p.m.	A garden	Buried

much work, there is no definitive evidence that the sites currently shown to tourists are correct.

While it would be nice to know these things, knowing is unnecessary to understand what Jesus went through after he was arrested. His longest walk was probably the one after he was arrested, from Gethsemane to Annas' house. Whatever the distance, he was healthy and could do it easily. And we can say with confidence that he was probably moved three hundred to six hundred yards each time he was taken from one building to another, perhaps a four- to five-minute walk each time. Since he was beaten several times, the walks may have been slower and slower. Or maybe the soldiers quick-marched him.

By the time Jesus had been condemned, flogged once, and beaten other times, he had been awake for about twenty-six hours (from sunrise Thursday until 8:00 a.m. Friday). Surely the walk from the Praetorium to Golgotha (1,000 to 2,000 feet) was very slow and seemed miles long to him.

In the Garden of Gethsemane

Jesus Arrested

When he finished praying, Jesus and his disciples went across the Kidron Valley to a garden that he and his disciples entered. Now Judas *Iscaariot*, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So, having obtained a detachment of *Roman soldiers* and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees, he came with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, came out and asked the officials, “Who are you looking for?”

“Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied.

“I am he,” he said. (And Judas, who betrayed him, was standing there with them.)

When Jesus said, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

He asked again, “Who are you looking for?”

And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. If you’re looking for me, let these *others* go.”

This happened to fulfill the words he prayed: “I haven’t lost one of those you gave me.”

Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant Malchus, cutting off his right ear.

Jesus told Peter, “Sheathe your sword! Shall I not drink the cup of *suffering* the Father has given me?”

Then the detachment and their commander and the Jewish officials seized Jesus and bound him.

Jesus’ Trial, Death, and Burial

And they took him first to Annas,^a father-in-law of Caiaphas, that year’s high priest. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be better if one man died for the people.

Peter’s First Denial

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Because the other disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest’s courtyard, but Peter stayed outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came out and spoke to the doorkeeper and brought Peter in.

The servant girl who was the doorkeeper asked Peter, “You’re not one of this man’s disciples too, are you?”

He replied, “No, I’m not.”

Since it was cold, the servants and the officers stood warming themselves around the charcoal fire they’d made. Peter stood with them too, warming himself.

^a Annas was the high priest emeritus, having served AD 6–15.

The High Priest Questions Jesus^a

Inside, the *former* high priest^b questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

Jesus countered, "I've spoken openly to the world. I've always taught in synagogues or the temple courts, where all the Jews come together. I've said nothing in secret. So why question me? Ask those who heard me speak. Look, they know what I said."

When he said this, one of the officials near him slapped Jesus and said, "Is that the way you answer a high priest?"

Jesus responded, "If I said something wrong, testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke accurately, why did you hit me?"

Then Annas sent him, *still* tied up, to Caiaphas, the *current* high priest.

Peter's Second and Third Denials

Meanwhile, Simon Peter was standing and warming himself *in the courtyard*. They asked him, "You're not one of his disciples too, are you?"

He denied it, saying, "No, I'm not."

Then one of the high priest's servants, a relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden of *Gethsemane*?"

Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster crowed.

Jesus Before Pilate^c

At about daybreak, the Jewish leaders took Jesus from *the house of Caiaphas* to the Praetorium.^d To remain ceremonially clean (because they wanted to eat the Passover meal), they did not enter it. So Pilate came out to them and asked, "What charge are you bringing against this man?"

They replied, "We wouldn't have handed him over to you if he weren't a criminal."

Then Pilate said, "Take him yourselves and judge him under your own law."

But they said, "*Under Roman law*, we have no right to execute anyone." (*This happened* to fulfill what Jesus said about the kind of death he was going to die.)

Pilate went back into the Praetorium, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus answered, "Is that your idea, or did others tell you about me?"

Pilate replied, "Am I a Jew? Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?"

Jesus told him, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would be fighting so that I would not have been handed over to the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is not of this world."

Pilate asked, "So you are a king?"

a Valid meetings of the Sanhedrin members could only be held during daytime. This was an informal and illegal meeting.

b Though no longer the high priest, Annas is referred to as the high priest, just as we commonly call a former judge "Judge."

c While looked upon as governor, technically Pilate was the prefect. A prefect controlled/superintended a command, department of government, or area of land. The prefect's duties were primarily in the military and tax realm; their judicial functions were minor.

d "Praetorium": a military headquarters and/or governing official's residence. It was where Pontius Pilate, as prefect of Judea, stayed when he visited Jerusalem.

Jesus responded, “You say that I’m a king. For I was born and came into the world for this reason: to testify to the truth. Everyone who is on the side of truth listens to me.”

Pilate replied, “What is truth?” Then he went out again to the Jewish leaders and told them, “I find no guilt in him. But it is your custom that I release *a prisoner* to you every year at Passover. Do you want me to release to you ‘the king of the Jews?’”

They shouted back, “No, not him but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a robber.

19

Jesus Sentenced to Be Crucified

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a purple robe on him and kept going up to him and *making fun of him*, saying, “Hail, king of the Jews!” And they slapped his face again and again.

Pilate again went out to the Jewish leaders and said, “Look, I’m bringing him out to you so that you will understand that I find no guilt in him.”

So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Look at him, the man!”

When the chief priests and their officers saw him, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

But Pilate told them, “You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no guilt in him.”

The Jewish leaders persisted: “We have a law, and according to it, he must die because he claimed to be the Son of God.”

When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He went back into the Praetorium and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?”

But Jesus didn’t answer him.^a

So Pilate asked him, “Are you refusing to speak to me? Don’t you know that I have the authority to free you or to crucify you?”

Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over me unless it was given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you has greater sin *than you*.”

From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, “If you release this man, you’re no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.”

Upon hearing those words, Pilate took Jesus out to the place called the Stone Pavement (“Gabbatha” in Aramaic), sat on the judgment seat, and proclaimed to the Jewish leaders, “Here he is, your king.”

But they shouted back, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!”

Pilate asked, “Should I crucify your king?”

The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

a This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7: “He was oppressed and afflicted, but he did not open his mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, but he did not open his mouth—like a sheep before its shearers is silent.”

So he handed him over to them to be crucified. The soldiers took charge of him [and took him away].

It was about daybreak on the day of preparation for the Passover.

Jesus' Crucifixion

Jesus went out, carrying his own cross, to the place called "Place of the Skull" (which is called "Golgotha" in Aramaic^a). There they crucified him with two others, one on each side and Jesus in the middle. Pilate wrote an inscription and *had it put* on the cross. It read "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." Many of the Jews read the inscription, because it was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek, and the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city.

However, the chief priests of the Jews told Pilate, "Don't write 'The King of the Jews' but *write* that he said, 'I am king of the Jews.'"

Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his outer garments and divided them into four shares, one for each of them. There was also his seamless one-piece tunic. They said to one another, "Let's not tear it but cast lots^b for it *to decide* whose it will be." So that's what the soldiers did. This fulfilled the Scripture, "They divided my outer garments among them and cast lots for my clothing."

Standing near the cross of Jesus were Jesus' mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.^c When Jesus saw his mother and *John*, the disciple whom he loved *so much*, standing nearby, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, he took her into his home.

Jesus' Death

Later, knowing that everything had been accomplished and to fulfill the Scripture, Jesus said, "I'm thirsty." A jar full of wine vinegar^d was there. They put a sponge soaked in it on a hyssop stalk and held it to his mouth. When he had received it, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of preparation, and so the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for the *Passover* Sabbath was a great day^e), the Jewish leaders asked Pilate if the prisoners' legs might be broken and their bodies taken away.^f

a Golgotha's location is uncertain. The common English expression "Calvary" is from the King James Bible's transliteration of the Latin Vulgate's *calvariae*, the Latin word for "skull"

b "Cast lots": to roll or throw an object (dice, pebbles, stones, etc.) and have a related value system that determines who wins.

c "Magdalene": a transliterated Greek word that means "a woman of Magdala," a town on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.

d "Wine vinegar": wine that had turned sour. Mixed with water, it was a common beverage among the poor. Perhaps the soldiers had brought it for their refreshment.

e Passover rarely fell upon a Sabbath day.

f Breaking a crucified person's legs brought death quickly, as it made the victim unable to push up to relieve the pressure on their chest to enable breathing. The Jewish leaders wanted to get the bodies down before the Sabbath rest began at sunset; otherwise the bodies would hang until after the day of death (violating Deuteronomy 21:22-23, which states that a body is not to hang overnight but must be buried on the day of death).

So soldiers went and broke the legs of the first *man* and of the other who had been crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they didn't break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out. The person who saw it has testified *about what he saw*, and his testimony is true.^a He knows that he is speaking the truth so that you too may believe. These things happened to fulfill the Scripture: "Not one of his bones will be broken," and yet another Scripture: "They will look on the one they have pierced."

Jesus' Burial

After these *events*, Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple of Jesus who feared the Jewish leaders, asked Pilate if he could take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he went and took his body away. Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing about seventy-five pounds of *spices* (aloes mixed with myrrh^b). They took Jesus' body and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, in accordance with Jewish burial customs. Now in the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. Since it was the Jewish day of preparation and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Part 5. Jesus' Resurrection

20

The Empty Tomb

Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb *entrance*. So she ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved *so much*, and said to them, "They've taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they've laid him!" So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He stooped down, looked in, and saw the strips of linen lying there, but he didn't go in. Then Simon Peter arrived after him and went into the tomb and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but the face cloth that had been on his head was not lying with the wrappings but was rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had arrived there first, went inside too. He saw and believed, but neither one had yet understood *that* the Scriptures *said* that Jesus had to rise from the dead. Then the *two* disciples went back to their homes.

a Tradition holds that this is John, the author.

b "Myrrh": a fragrant plant resin (dried sap) used in anointing oil, perfumes, and incense. Myrrh was also used as a pain reliever. Sometimes it was more valuable than gold.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she stooped down and looked into the tomb. She saw two angels *clothed* in white, sitting where Jesus' body had been lying, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

She replied, "Because they've taken my Lord away, and I don't know where they have put him."

After saying this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, but she didn't know that it was Jesus. He asked her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you've carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I'll take him away."

"Mary!" Jesus said.

She turned and cried out, "Rabboni!" (Aramaic for "Teacher")

Jesus said, "Do not cling to me, for I haven't yet gone up to the Father. Go to my brothers and tell them that I am going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."^a

Mary Magdalene went to the disciples and announced, "I have seen the Lord!" And *she told them* the things he had said to her.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

That same Sunday evening, *in the place* where the disciples were with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Having said this, he showed them both his hands and his *pierced* side, and they rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus continued, "Peace be with you! As the Father sent me, now I am sending you." After he said this, he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven. If you withhold forgiveness from anyone, they are not forgiven."

Jesus Appears to Thomas

Now Thomas (the one called "the Twin"), one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So they told him, "We've seen the Lord!"

But he declared to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger into the mark of the nails and put my hand into *the wound* on his side, I won't believe it."

Eight days later, the disciples were *together* again inside *a house*, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; look at my hands. Reach out and put your hand into my side. Do not doubt but believe."

Thomas replied, "My Lord and my God!"

Then Jesus told him, "Have you believed because you've seen me? Blessed are those who haven't seen and yet have believed."

a "Your Father . . . your God": The Greek is second-person plural in both cases.

He performed many other *miraculous* signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these things are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name.

21

Jesus and the Miraculous Catch of Fish

After these events, Jesus revealed himself again to his disciples by the Sea of Galilee this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (called “the Twin”), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, *James and John* (the sons of Zebedee), and two of his other disciples were together. Simon Peter told them, “I’m going fishing,” and they said, “We’ll go with you.” Then they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

At daybreak, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples didn’t realize that it was Jesus. So he called out to them, “Boys, you don’t have any fish, do you?”

“No,” they replied.

He called out, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and you’ll find some.” So they cast *the net there* and couldn’t haul it in because there were so many fish.

Then the disciple whom Jesus loved *so much* said to Peter, “It’s the Lord!”

When Simon Peter heard it was the Lord, he wrapped his cloak around him (for he was stripped *for work*) and jumped into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, towing the net with the fish (since they were not far from the shore, about one hundred yards).

When they got out onto the land, they saw some bread and a charcoal fire with fish on it. Jesus invited them, “Bring some of the fish you have just caught.”

Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net to the shore. It was full, with 153 large fish. Even though there were so many, the net hadn’t torn!

Jesus called them, “Come on, let’s have breakfast.”

None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them and did the same with the fish.

Now this was the third time Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Jesus Reassures Peter

When they had finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?”

Peter replied, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Then Jesus told him, “Feed my lambs.”

Jesus asked him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”

He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus told him, “Take care of my sheep.”

He asked a third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”

Jesus told him, “Feed my sheep. I’m telling you the truth: When you were younger you dressed yourself and walked wherever you wanted, but when you’re old you’ll stretch out your hands and someone else will dress you and take you where you do not want to go.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. After saying this, he told him, “Follow me.”

Peter turned around and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved *so deeply* was following them (the one who had leaned back against Jesus’ chest at the supper and asked, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”). When Peter saw him, he asked, “But Lord, what about him?”

Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you? You *must* follow me.”

Consequently, a rumor spread among the brothers and sisters that this disciple would never die. But Jesus didn’t say to him that he would never die; he only said, “If I want him to remain *alive* until I return, what is that to you?”

The Purpose of John’s Gospel

This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.

Jesus also did many other things. If everything *he did* were written down, I imagine that even the *whole* world would not have room for the books that would be written.

Invitation to Respond

Jesus said, “This is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.” Believing means to believe not only that he exists but also that what he says is true. Believing also leads to doing what he says.

The alternative to eternal life is death, to “die in our sins.” We all need a Savior to pay the price for our sins, so we are “not guilty” before God. That Savior is Jesus. And his offer is amazing: forgiveness free to all who simply believe. Good works will not save us. The Bible says, “For you have been saved by grace . . . it is the gift of God.”^a

Will you believe in him, receive forgiveness for your sins, and gain the promise of eternal life with God? Make your decision now. Simply pray a prayer like this:

God,

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died to pay the price for my sins. I believe he was raised from the dead. I accept your forgiveness through him, and I take him today as my Lord and Savior.

Record your decision here and keep it as your record. Then go to the next page.

TODAY, _____, I put my faith in Jesus Christ, that he paid the price for my sins, and I received his gift of eternal life. I took Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

Signature

Learn More

The person who gave you this book can help you learn more. Or you can chat with someone online at www.chataboutjesus.com. There you can discuss the things in life that matter most to you and find out how Jesus can help.

Or if you are in the United States and prefer to talk by phone, call 1-888-Need-Him (1-888-633-3446).

^a See Ephesians 2:8.

What Next?

When you accept Jesus, you will receive the Holy Spirit to help you live a successful Christian life. Jesus said, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another helper to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth . . . abides with you and will be in you.”

These steps will help you stay strong in your faith:

- Read the Bible and pray (that is, talk to God) regularly on behalf of yourself and others.
- If you do not have a Bible, ask a Christian friend to help you buy one.
- Find a local church that teaches the Bible and believes the only way to be saved is through faith in Jesus. (You can find this information in the “what we believe” section of their website.)
- Meet with other believers to study and learn God’s Word, the Bible. If you know any Christians, ask if you can join them for church or go to a Bible study with them. As a member of a Bible study group, you will enjoy learning the wonderful truths of the Bible with others.
- While you now have the power to resist sin, this does not mean you will not sin again. As you read the Bible and live day to day, pay attention to the Holy Spirit’s leading and repent of any sins he reveals. Confess your sin to God by admitting what you did and accept his continuing forgiveness.
- Live a life that makes other people want to follow Jesus too.
- Tell others about your faith as you get the opportunity.
- Be baptized at your new church. Even Jesus was baptized to fulfill the Scriptures.

If you have more questions about Jesus, these websites will be helpful:

www.chataboutjesus.com

www.needhim.org

www.gotquestions.org

Key Word Glossary

Believe in/on [person]	To put complete trust in what the named person says and does.
Christ	The English transliteration of the Greek word for anointing, <i>Christos</i> —“Anointed One,” which was used to translate the Hebrew word <i>mashiach</i> (“Messiah” in English). The word is a title (e.g., president, judge) that was used in the Old Testament for the person who was expected to come and lead Israel into a time of victory and/or peace. He was expected to act under the direction of God in the power of God. Thus, “Christ” is a title referring to Jesus’ role, not part of his name. He is “Jesus, the Christ” or “Jesus, the Messiah.” See also “Jesus.”
Disciple	One who learns not only knowledge from their teacher but establishes in their lives their teacher’s beliefs, practices, and way of life.
Eternal life	Life that has no end. A person experiences eternal life when they put their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation (see “Salvation”). Eternal life continues here on earth until physical death and continues forever thereafter in the presence of God in heaven. Eternal life is a life of completely different quality from mortal life, as it includes (a) the continuing forgiveness of sins, (b) an intimate relationship with God, and (c) the peace brought by not only knowing him as Father but also by having the full expectation of a continuing relationship with God in heaven after death.
Faith	Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as “the substance of what we hope for, the bringing to light of things we do not see.” Romans 10:17 says that “faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the message about Christ.” So biblical faith is the conviction that Jesus is who he says he is (i.e., the Messiah, Son of God, and God himself) that leads a person to put their trust in him for salvation. See also “Eternal life” and “Salvation.”
Festival of Shelters	A seven-day festival celebrating the harvest and God’s divine guidance during Israel’s wilderness wanderings. All Jewish men were to be present in Jerusalem for the festival.
Glorify	To give praise and honor.
Gospel	Greek: <i>evangelion</i> , which means “good message.” Today’s word “gospel” is from the Old English “god-spell,” which means “good news.” The word has become a common English term referring to the Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John accounts of the life of Jesus. The good news is the message that Jesus is the Messiah, that he came to die to pay the price for every person’s sin, and that forgiveness is granted to every person who believes this and who makes Jesus their Lord and God their God.
Holy	Set apart for the purpose(s) and/or service of God. An object that is holy is to be used only for God’s purposes, usually in a ritual or sacrifice or for consumption by the priests. A person who is holy has a life set apart to accomplish God’s purpose(s).

Jesus	The Anglicized form of the Greek word <i>Iesoûs</i> (pronounced “yay-soos” in Koine Greek) and the Latin word <i>Iesu</i> (pronounced “yay-zu”), used to translate the Hebrew word <i>Yeshua</i> (“Joshua” in English). <i>Yeshua</i> , and therefore “Jesus,” means “God saves/rescues/delivers.” This is summed up in the term “Savior.” <i>Yeshua</i> and <i>Iesoûs</i> were common Jewish names in New Testament times.
Jesus the Messiah (a.k.a. Jesus Christ)	Greek: <i>Iesoûs Christou</i> , which means “Jesus the Messiah.” He is the Son of God, anointed by God the Father to meet the requirements of the law (see Matthew 5:17). See also “Christ” and “Messiah.”
Jew	<p>“Jews” were descendants of Abraham through Jacob, whose ancestors had survived the exile to Babylon with their religion, traditions, and sense of nationality intact. They are only a subset of the historical people of Israel. The rest were either annihilated or blended into the peoples around them and lost their identity as descendants of Israel. Also called “children of Israel” and “Israelites” and metaphorically referred to as “Jacob.”</p> <p>In his letters, the apostle Paul redefines the term, emphasizing that “circumcision is of the heart” (see Romans 2:28–29). Paul’s point is that those who were part of the current (i.e., first century) Jewish religion because of their bloodline, physical circumcision, and adherence to the commandments were not real Jews. Rather, “real Jewishness” is only achievable through the power of the Holy Spirit.</p>
the Jews	<p>The term “Jew” is from Middle English <i>gyu</i>, derived from the Latin <i>Judaeus</i>, from the Greek <i>ioudaios</i>, from the Hebrew <i>yehudi</i>.</p> <p>Greek: <i>ioudaios</i>. Depending upon the context, the term refers to (a) all Jews, (b) Jews who did not accept Jesus as the Messiah, or (c) the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem who opposed Jesus. Most of the words of Jesus in the Gospels were spoken to Jews. Most rejected what Jesus said. Some believed what he said but did not put their trust in him for their salvation (see “Salvation”). And some believed and followed him.</p> <p>Almost all of Jesus’ first followers were Jews. And Jesus is a Jew.</p>
Justify	To declare just, righteous, acquitted. God does this for any person who puts their faith in Jesus (that is, who trusts that Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross paid the price for their sins and accepts him as Lord and Savior). When a person is justified, they are declared righteous. Thus, justification (Greek: <i>dikaiosis</i>) is inseparably intertwined with righteousness (Greek: <i>dikaïos</i>). See also “Righteousness.”
Messiah	The English transliteration for the Hebrew word <i>mashiach</i> . The person who would come and save the Jews, whose salvation they understood as him leading Israel into a time of victory and/or peace. He was expected to do this under the direction of God in the power of God.
Passover	A one-day festival celebrating how God passed over the Israelites when, to free them, he killed the firstborn of Egypt.

Pharisee	<p>One of the two most important Jewish sects. It was most popular among the lower-ranking priests and middle class (merchants and tradesmen). Pharisees considered the oral law, which they believed could be traced back to Moses, to be as binding as the written Scripture. Jesus refuted this theory (see Matthew 15:1-7).</p> <p>Their zeal for obeying the law led to the development of detailed religious legal interpretations that ruled their lives, and which they lived out in closed communities with strictly regulated admission policies. Each community was led by a scribe. See also "Sadducee."</p>
Priest	A mediator between God and his people, a spokesman for God. Jewish priests, descendants of Moses' brother Aaron, (a) taught the law, (b) handled the temple administration, and (c) received on behalf of God the sacrifices brought to the temple.
High priest a.k.a. chief priest	Literally, "the anointed priest." As the highest-ranking priest, he had special garments (see Exodus 28:2-39; 39:2-31), and among other special duties, on the annual Day of Atonement he was the only priest allowed to enter the Most Holy Place to atone for the guilt of the sins of Israel. Sometimes the office was shared. A retired chief priest was also addressed as and referred to as a chief priest.
Prophet	A spokesperson for God whose primary task was to set before people the truths and expectations of God. Occasionally, some prophets also foretold events, but this was a small part of their ministry.
Repent	To change one's attitude toward God and sin, moving from putting oneself first to putting God first by respecting him as Master and despising sin as abhorrent. To turn from sin; to change your conduct, thoughts, and actions from self-centeredness and rebellion against God to God-centered cooperation with his work and obedience to his will.
Righteous	In secular life, to be righteous is to act with integrity with regard to what is right, to have high moral and ethical standards. In the Bible, righteousness is the state of being that God intends for people. A righteous person's life is in conformity with the inner character and standards of God. One who is righteous acts in accordance with God's law as written in the Bible and written upon the heart of the believer. The Bible teaches that God makes righteous those who follow him (i.e., who put their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior).
Righteousness	<p>God's: Perfect goodness and truthfulness; complete faithfulness in fulfilling his promises.</p> <p>Human: God declares humans "not guilty" on the basis of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, by grace, rather than on the basis of performance. See also "Justify."</p>
Sacred	Set apart for the purpose(s) and/or service of God.

Sadducee	<p>A member of one of the two most important Jewish sects. Both religious and political in nature, it was the most popular among the higher-ranking priests and the aristocracy. Thus, it held a strong hand in the Sanhedrin. Sadducees embraced Greek culture and were active in secular political affairs, for Rome gave them governing authority over Israel. Thus they desired to keep peace in Israel and meted out severe punishment to anyone who disturbed the peace or challenged Roman authority.</p> <p>Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead and did not accept the oral law as authoritative or binding (holding that only the written Scripture was authoritative). See also “Pharisee.”</p>
Salvation	<p>To be released from slavery to sin and delivered to slavery to God, and to be saved from the eternal consequences of sin (eternal separation from God) by becoming a believer.</p> <p>It is received when a person puts their faith in Jesus. Upon salvation, a person receives eternal life. Individuals become saved when they (a) accept that they are sinners and that Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, sacrificed his life, died, to pay the price for their sins; (b) trust solely in Jesus’ payment for their sin (not good works of their own); (c) ask God to forgive them and save them, and (d) make him the Lord of their life by repenting of their sins and serving him. See also “Righteousness.”</p>
Samaritan	<p>Samaritans followed the first five books of the Jewish Scriptures but worshiped at a temple on Mt. Gerizim rather than in Jerusalem. Jews looked down on them, and they avoided them.</p>
Saved	<p>Having experienced salvation and received eternal life.</p>
Sin	<p>An offense against God, whether a violation of God’s law and/or moral code, doing something other than what God asks a person to do, or not doing what should be done (see James 4:17). The Greek word <i>hamartia</i>, most commonly translated as “sin,” means “to miss the mark.” See also “Transgression.”</p>
Sinner	<p>A person whose character and reputation are such that they show no respect for God’s law and disregard it openly, boldly, and without shame. Jews looked down on them and avoided them for fear of becoming ceremonially unclean.</p>
Son of David	<p>A title of Jesus. Before Jesus, it was used for the person who would fulfill the prophecy of 2 Samuel 7:12–16, that God would send a person who is of the lineage of King David to establish his kingdom forever.</p>
Son of Man	<p>A term Jesus used to refer to himself, perhaps to emphasize both his humanity and his earthly work.</p>
Soul	<p>Greek: <i>psyche</i>. From <i>psyxo</i>, which means “to breathe” or “to blow.” It is the nonphysical part of a person (mind, will, and emotions) that continues to live after the death of the body. It is integrally connected with the body before death yet distinct from it. Salvation assures that God accepts a soul into his presence after death.</p>
Transgression	<p>An offense against God. There are two Greek words: <i>parabasis</i>, which is literally a “stepping over,” purposely going over the line; and <i>paraptoma</i>, which refers to falling away. See also “Sin.”</p>

Notes

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

When you look at the world, do you wonder:

- Why am I here?
- Why aren't people happy?
- Why do bad things happen?
- Why are some people good and others bad?
- Is there a God? If so, can I know him?
- Does he care about me?

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