



Letters from

The Friendly Man



Part 2 of 7

INSTRUCTIONS FOR A LIFE OF ABUNDANCE

by Son of Joy

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To the men and women who are as angels, laying down their lives for the generation that is to come.

And to the generation that is to come, who will be known as the generation who ushered in the greatest awakening.

LETTER 97 OF 777 – I CAME TO RECONCILE YOU TO MY FATHER

Friendly Man:

“Abdiel, I did not come to judge the world, I came to restore man to Eden. I came to reconcile him to My Father. Everything that has been created was created for a very specific purpose, and everything that My Father does is for a very specific purpose.

I have come so that those who believe might be restored to their purpose of companionship to My Father and caretakers of each other and the earth.

I sent the Comforter to lead you to that purpose, righteousness, which is selfless generosity to each other. Righteousness is the fruit that My Father desires upon the tree that He planted when He sent Me as the seed.

I am the resurrection and the life. I am the restored Tree of Life, the seed that was planted so that Heaven may grow within you. Righteousness is the proof that the seed has produced fruit.

I have come so that you may be heavenly to one another. If your worship does not make you heavenly to one another, your worship is empty.

I have come so that you may be filled with the thoughts of Heaven, that you would have My mind and My compassion, which is the compassion of My Father.

If you do not love each other as I have loved you, you have completely missed the point of My sacrifice. I have come so that you may be Heaven on earth. I have come so that you may see the Kingdom of Heaven and so that you may enter the Kingdom of Heaven and become the Kingdom of Heaven.

I have sent the Comforter to fill you with the power to overcome your flesh. It is in overcoming your desire to walk in your own wisdom that you become born again.

Your wisdom is worldly, it has no use whatsoever in Heaven. The wisdom of man seeks to enrich himself, not realizing that to enrich yourself will always come at the expense of others and at the expense of the earth itself. Any man who says: *‘it is about me, or my culture, or my race, or my denomination,’* or any exclusive thing, does not know Me. For I have sent you to the entire world. But to embrace any culture that is not My Kingdom is to submit to the selfish thoughts of the flesh.

If you understood how much My Father loves the world, you would not reject the poor and the sinners as you do. Even the worst murderer or the worst sexual abomination must still be loved and forgiven seventy times seven times every day and taught the freedom that comes with believing in Me.

Let the law deal with the law breakers. Let the governing authorities deal with the criminals. But you must love them!

A man who lays with another man is no worse than a man who looks upon a woman and lusts after her. And both are no worse than a woman who gossips and gives false testimony. Yet many have decided who is worthy of the Gospel, who is worthy of forgiveness, and who is worthy of love.

A divorced adulterer has more grace from many of you than a man who commits fornication with another man. Both are abominations, both sin against their own bodies, but I died for both.

Grace and mercy will be gentle with sinners, gently restoring the immoral to morality, and sharing My words with them without causing them to stumble further from the love of My Father.

You should be willing to die for each other, to lay your lives down for each other, yet many belittle each other for political differences and ideological conflicts.

The only way that the world will know that you have been disciplined by Me is by how efficiently you love each other. Or do you think I came to condemn the world?

It is the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that causes man to assume that God will judge by the standards of man. God judges by the standards of the spirit, and by the standards of Heaven. God searches the heart, and I came so that you may have your hearts of stone made soft and loving again.

If you want to be perfect, love others as I have loved you!"

LETTER 98 OF 777 – PARABLE OF THE KING AND HIS CHILDREN

Friendly Man:

“Abdiel, if you do not believe in Me, you will not receive from Me.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a king who instructs his children in the ways of abundance, war, and power. The children listen to the counsel of the king, but some do not like the amount of time it will take to achieve the goals that the king has helped them set. So, they leave the kingdom, seeking counsel from prostitutes, thieves, corrupt officials, and professional liars. The princes and princesses are surrounded by these mammonites for so long that, even though they are continually robbed and lied to, they accept this greedy and impatient world as their new truth.

After a while, broken and tired by the selfishness and abuse, many of the princes and princesses think of returning to the kingdom. They meet with ambassadors and tell them: *‘we are tired of this selfish world, even the churches here are in the image of mammon, we would like to come back to the kingdom.’*

The ambassadors reply: *‘It is good that you desire to come home, but your father’s kingdom is not a physical one, it is a kingdom that requires his throne planted upon your heart, which is your way of thinking. You must leave everything and allow the truth of your father’s kingdom to become your new truth. You must forsake the ideas and habits of the mammonites and embrace the ideas and habits of Heaven. Only then will you see the power of Heaven at work in your life. For righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit are not physical things. As a matter of fact, you can never have those things as long as you are attached to the selfish things of the mammonites, because selfishness and personal greed are a cancer that destroys anything it touches. To receive all that the king has in store for you, you must believe that the king has the right ideas and habits for you to succeed. And belief in the king starts with completely turning your back on the kingdom of mammon. For you cannot serve both God and mammon. They are completely opposite to each other.’*

Alas, most of the princes and princesses cannot leave the world behind them, and they leave the ambassadors with heavy hearts, looking for teachers who will tell them that their greed and selfishness are acceptable. They do not trust that the king knows how to fill their hearts, for they are impatient for their inheritance and eager to prideful parade their wealth in front of the hungry.

This is why they like to be exclusive, Abdiel. This is why they like to sit at the best seats and bask in the envy of those who do not have what they have. They have embraced a world where they invite only the rich and powerful to their table while the poor sit outside and drink from the cheapest cups. They say *'familiarity breeds contempt'* and use this principle to reject those whom they have been instructed to love.

The few princes and princesses who believe that the king is wise, answer him saying: *'We have seen what the world has to offer, and we see only pain and abuse. Even the most delightful temptations have turned out to be trap after trap. We were foolish not to trust you. Please may we sit at your feet once again?'*

The king answers: *'Of course! For I did not reject you, you rejected me. I have loved you from the beginning and my love for you has no ending. My greatest desire for you is that you prosper as your soul prospers, and that goodness and mercy are your constant companions. I rejoice at the thought of abundance in every area of your life, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. But most of all I desire that you would do for others as I have done to you. For you are my children, made in my image. You are an expression of my heart, a physical manifestation of my love. And nothing makes me prouder than when you love others as I have loved you. Learn from me and flourish but go and do the same for all who will believe what I teach you. Go seek out and save the lost!'*

LETTER 99 OF 777 – LISTEN, HEAR, AND OBEY; OBEDIENCE IS THE KEY

The Friendly Man and I stand inside a room where a man is praying at his desk. He cries out in desperation; tears flowing in frustration. He begs God for rescue from his financial problems. Eventually he is exhausted and ends his prayer with '*please Lord, please help me, help me*'.

Friendly Man:

“Many people will die with this prayer upon their lips, Abdiel. They will cry and lament, angry and frustrated, begging for relief from financial pressures. But no breakthrough will come because they do not know how to follow instructions.

There is never a single moment in your life when the Holy Spirit and heavenly messengers are not giving you the answers that you need to walk in abundance. Those who know how to hear and obey will have an empty boat in one moment and the next moment, their boats will be so filled with fish that they must call in their friends to help them with the catch. They will leave home without their wallets, hear, obey, and pull enough money for their shopping out of a discarded tin can, or a coin out of the mouth of a living fish.

Even those who cannot hear the voice of the Holy Spirit will receive powerful instructions from living prophets. There is never one moment where those who are willing to be obedient will be in lack.

Tell me, Abdiel, since you have moved to this land, have you lacked for anything? In nine hundred and eight days of nothing but prayer and covenant, persecuted and rejected by almost every believer that I have sent to you, have you seen a single day of lack for you or your wife?”

Me:

“No, my Lord, we have been incredibly blessed. We have never been so content and happy in our entire lives as we are now.”

Friendly Man:

“And, like the birds of the air, you have not needed to work the land or do any physical task other than be obedient to prayer. Yet you are wonderfully clothed and surrounded by people who love you dearly.

In this time, your talents have opened no doors and your personal labors have produced no wealth. It has been your obedience, and only your obedience, that has unlocked heavenly provision.

Listen well, Abdiel, it is not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit. Those who can hear what the Spirit has to say will lack for nothing. For My Father will always tell you what to do. Faith comes by hearing, hearing brings forth revelation, and revelation brings forth obedient action.

If you love Me, you will trust Me. If you trust Me, you will do as I command. Every command that I give you is to produce Heaven within you and to let living waters run through you.

Those who hate instruction will sit in their boats, weeping and hungry, while their breakthrough swims below them under instruction from God, waiting to be a blessing to the obedient.

If you cannot hear the voice of the Spirit and do not trust the prophets that I send to you, how will you hear. If you do not hear, how will you obey? Do you not realize how much your Father in Heaven loves you? Do you think you were sent to earth to suffer needlessly?

Yes, you will be persecuted for My Name’s sake, but let your suffering be for My Name’s sake, not for your own foolish stubbornness.

The disobedient servant is like an ox that muzzles itself and becomes angry at the master because it is hungry.

There is plenty to eat, Abdiel, there is more than enough. But fools will starve to death sitting atop huge barns filled with delicious treats.

Listen well, Abdiel: often I will send messengers with instructions that people do not like. But those instructions lead to the Kingdom of God, which is filled to the brim with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. But they reject My prophets and ignore My Spirit.

What can Heaven do with you when you hate My messengers? How can a teacher help a student who refuses to listen? Your Father in Heaven is a perfect father, and He withholds nothing from His children.

Those who hear and obey will eat the fruit of their obedience daily! Listen, hear, and obey!”

LETTER 100 OF 777 – HONOR THE FATHER; PARABLE OF A MAN WHO STOOD ALONE AGAINST A VILLAGE

The Friendly Man and I stand before a large cross on a hill somewhere in Africa. The cross is massive, probably three stories high!

Friendly Man:

“To honor Me without honoring My Father is to walk in the spirit of dishonor. It was My Father who sent Me, My Father’s words upon My lips, and the authority of the Father that flowed through Me. I was, and remain, under the authority of the Father. For though He has given Me all authority, it is still His authority that rests upon Me and flows through Me. It is because I honor Him that We are One. It is because I honor Him that His authority is safe with Me.

To pray to Me directly is to dishonor the Father, Abdiel. But to pray to the Father in My Name is to honor both the Father and Me. The power in My Name is His power, Abdiel. I am the Way through which all of mankind comes to the Father, but I am not the Father. We are One because I honor Him above Myself.

The world cannot comprehend the ways of Heaven because they cannot comprehend serving and honoring another person with their entire being. They ask ‘*what is in it for me*’ because they do not realize that you can only find your life when you lay it down.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who stood alone against a village and was beaten and humiliated. In his own strength, he lost every battle. One day he decided that he would no longer be victimized, and so joined the army of his nation. He followed every order, understanding that with every order from the army came the resources to fulfil that order.

One day, when he had risen in rank sufficiently, he went to his commanding officer and mentioned the village that had been terrorizing his region. Because he was such a man of honor, obeying every command, his commanding officer trusted him and favored him.

The request went up the chain of command: ‘*A lieutenant in our army is unable to go home to his farm because a local village terrorizes the entire region*’. The request came back with a letter: ‘*Let the lieutenant go to the village elders with this letter in hand*.’ The letter read: ‘*The man who bears this letter is a lieutenant in the army, to lay a hand upon him or his family is to declare war upon the entire army*.’

The lieutenant went to the village elders with this letter, and when the village elders read it, they were filled with much fear. They said among themselves: *'If we rebel against this letter and attack this man, this army will come and wipe out our entire village.'*

You see, Abdiel, it was not the lieutenant that they feared. It was the authority upon the lieutenant that they feared. For he did not come to them in his own strength or in his own authority, he came with the full might of the army behind him.

I did not defeat the enemy in My own authority; I did it in the Father's authority. That is why you must do as I say and follow every word that I have taught you. For when you speak My words, you speak the words of My Father. And when you walk in My authority, you walk in the authority of the Father.

You must always pray to the Father in My Name. You must thank the Father for the grace that He extended to all of you through Me. You must praise the Father for sending Me, for though He is a fiercely jealous God, He shared the most precious thing in Heaven with all of you so that those who believe may not perish but have everlasting life.

In the same way you must honor those who have the authority of My Word upon them above yourself, and you must lead all of mankind to the heart of My Father.

If you call Me *'Lord'* and do as I say, you will enter My Father's house. If you ignore My words, you dishonor the Father, for His words are upon My lips, and those same words will be upon your lips if you are submitted to the Holy Spirit.

Honor the Father!"

LETTER 101 OF 777 – THE WINE OF HEAVEN

The Friendly Man and I stand with the Spirit of Wisdom at the foot of a mountain so high that the base of the mountain is already shrouded in cloud.

Friendly Man:

“The truths of Heaven have the power to bring freedom and wealth on a scale that far exceeds your wildest imagination, Abdiel. The flesh cannot comprehend who God is or what He has in store for those who love Him. But the Holy Spirit who rests upon you, and the Seven Spirits of God who are before the throne of God and in the presence of His Holiness, know His mind intimately. They contain and comprehend incredible things.

Let the Spirit of Wisdom rest upon you, Abdiel. Listen with your own spirit, for your flesh will hate heavenly truth.”

Spirit of Wisdom:

“To sit at the feet of wise teachers is the greatest of all humility, and to teach truth to willing ears is the greatest of all nobility. The wise are always teachable, always allowing God to renew their wineskins so that they are always able to receive new wine.

Lean forward and open your ears, Sameach.

The vine is the same, thus the wine is the same. The wine is always new, but the wineskin sours the wine if the wineskin is allowed to become old and cracked.

Humility keeps you as hungry for wisdom as a child. But fools think themselves too grown up to receive new wine, and in refusing to sit at the feet of those who teach what the Master taught, their wineskin becomes sour, thus souring the mercies that come daily.

Though the mercies of God are new every morning, an old wineskin will render them bitter to your taste and you will pour them out saying: *‘This wine is old. I have tasted it before. Let me seek out new teachers and new revelations’*. In so doing, the fool strays from the truth, ignoring the wisdom of the Master, and is trapped in the lies of the enemy thinking that the wisdom of Heaven does not work.

Any wine that does not come from the original vine is watered down. It has a form of godliness, but it has no power. In getting used to the watered-down taste of worldly wisdom, the pure wisdom of God, which is the wine that flows from Jesus, becomes too rich in taste.

The old wineskin says: *'We cannot drink this rich wine, it is too sweet, and it makes our stomachs grumble. This wine was for other people in a different time. Let us leave these teachers who are connected to the original vine and find teachers who are connected to the vine of this world. For the wine that comes from the vine of worldly churches tastes similar but is not as rich.'*

They chase after signs and wonders and the watered-down truths of man, no longer reading the teachings of Jesus, who is the Vine. Their palates change to love watered down truth and their ears change to love the teachings of worldly teachers who tickle their ears and tell them that pride is a good thing and that they must focus on themselves before they focus on others. But Jesus says that you must put the Kingdom of God first and put yourself last.

Can you see how watered-down truth becomes a lie, Sameach? Their palates begin to hate the sweet waters of Heaven and bitter things begin to taste sweet to them. They begin to hate heavenly wisdom as if it is persecution. They begin to hate the laws of God as if God Himself is evil.

That which is evil becomes good in their eyes, and they begin to love worldly wealth, parading their financial success as if it is heavenly success. But Heaven cares nothing for material wealth, for it is the bitter water that sours the sweet truth.

The Kingdom of Heaven is more concerned about the eternal part of you, the unseen part of you, your will, your intellect, and your emotions. That part of you is the part that is changed when you drink the New Wine of Heaven, which is produced daily by the Holy Spirit when you read the words of Jesus.

For Jesus is the physical manifestation of the wisdom of Heaven and He desires you to be the same!"

LETTER 102 OF 777 – THE WORDS OF JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE WISDOM

The Friendly Man and I stand with the Spirit of Knowledge next to rows and rows of small cages. The line of cages extends from horizon to horizon. Each cage has a person trapped inside with a demon standing outside the cage with a set of keys.

Friendly Man:

“Not knowing their own authority over darkness, billions of people hand the keys to their freedom to demons. If any of these people became aware of the truth, they would simply instruct the demon outside the cage to open the door and give back the keys.

There is no reason for any affliction that puts any person in a cage, Abdiel. They are all imprisoned by their own ignorance.

Hear what the Spirit of Knowledge teaches so that you may receive a revelation of the power of knowing!”

The Spirit of Knowledge appears before us and begins to speak.

Spirit of Knowledge:

“People are destroyed because they lack knowledge. They lack the information necessary to prosper.

An ignorant man can be lied to and very easily led astray. He is like a man who invests his time, energy and money into putting fresh water into the sea because he believes that it will make the salty water fresh. Though he has worked hard and figured out clever means to get the fresh water to the sea, it is all in vain because he does not understand the science of it. Though he recruits thousands of helpers and followers and thinks himself right because so many people believe what he believes, he still achieves nothing, for the fresh water will simply turn salty.

A large group of people believing a false thing does not make it right. It simply makes a large group of people wrong.

When a person becomes conscious of the fact that they are made in the image of an eternal God, they should seek to know everything that they can about their God. They should seek to know as much as their God teaches.

Those who truly believe that they are made in the image of God will replace what they perceive as truth with the words spoken by the one who is called '*the Word*'.

Those who believe that they are made in the image of man will listen to the negativity and foolishness of man. They will speak as man speaks, not as God speaks.

The wise person will work hard at being informed, but the fool will simply work hard.

A man who depends on experience for his wisdom will dig one hole to fill another and consider himself wise. And then the next day he will return and dig up the hole that he just filled to fill the hole that he just dug. He goes home and says '*I work so hard every day, yet my financial situation does not improve. Maybe God is angry at me.*' If he was willing to listen to wise counsel, he would learn that hard work achieves nothing without practical knowledge.

Fools attach themselves to other fools. They worship, pray, tithe and preach things that have no earthly value. They turn their backs upon the teachings of Jesus and do nothing for the poor. They run from people who teach what Jesus taught because they think that worldly knowledge is greater than the wisdom of Jesus. They do what serves them emotionally, which is the way of every fool.

To do what is wise requires obedience to wise knowledge.

If those who teach you lack knowledge, you will perceive lies as truth. Those who do not know the words of Jesus will be imprisoned by their own perceptions of truth. They will follow men who tell them to put fresh water into the sea because they like the praise and worship and the atmosphere where they are lied to. Or they will follow men who tell them to dig one hole and fill another because they like the feeling of hard work.

It is very easy for the father of lies to lead the ignorant astray, Sameach.

Those who do not know what Jesus says cannot apply what He says and can be easily led down paths of destruction with half-truths and even blatant lies.

Those who are informed cannot be trapped.

To pursue the knowledge of the words of Jesus is the ultimate wisdom!"

LETTER 103 OF 777 – ONLY THE WORDS OF JESUS GIVE HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE

The Friendly Man and I stand with the Spirit of Understanding watching a man die of thirst right next to a stream of fresh water. In his last moments the man curses God.

Man:

“Though you promised that I would lack for nothing, I have lacked. Though you promised that you are the well that never runs dry, I lie here dying of thirst. Though you call yourself the Way, the Truth, and the Life, I am lost, I am led astray, and I am lifeless. You have said that your death and suffering is my gain, yet I too suffer and die. My life was better before I met you. Your love is a lie.”

The Friendly Man is filled with compassion and scoops a handful of water from the stream beside the man.

Friendly Man:

“Awaken from your sleep child, and awaken from your blindness. Awaken and drink.”

The man opens his eyes and drinks from the hand of the Friendly Man. He notices the stream next to him and blinks his eyes as if he cannot believe what he sees.

Man:

“Where did this stream come from Lord?”

Friendly Man:

“It has always been there. But because your eyes were clouded by the lies of mammon, you were looking for the rivers of mammon, which look completely different from the rivers of God. The eyes of your understanding were completely shut, My child. And unless you repent and seek first the Kingdom, they shall soon be shut again.

Listen intently as the Spirit of Understanding teaches the courier. Listen intently so that you may see every stream from Heaven.”

The Spirit of Understanding is present but invisible to my eyes. When she speaks, she speaks from everywhere, and a blanket of comfort settles upon my soul. I notice the man relax as she starts to speak.

Spirit of Understanding:

“There is nothing that has not been bought with the Blood of the Lamb, Sameach. There is nothing that is inaccessible to the students of the Master. There is no wealth that is kept from those who are heirs of the Father, and joint heirs with the Son.

Are you not called ‘*gods*’ in the book of Psalms and again in the book of John? You were created to rule over the earth with dominion over the earth. There is nothing that earth can provide that is not yours.

Yet there are poor among you because your view of the world is not through the eyes of heavenly understanding, but through the eyes of earthly understanding.

Most of mankind looks at the world through the lens of mammon; a lens that says there is not enough. So you eat your own seed instead of planting it in the ground. Have you not seen how heavenly understanding will allow you to feed five thousand people with five barley loaves and two small fish?

You cannot serve both God and mammon, because the lens of mammon is lack and the lens of God is abundance.

If you look at everything through the lens of Heaven, you will overflow in mercy, in grace, in forgiveness, in peace, in joy, in material possession, and in love.

You serve the God of plenty, who clothes nature in the richest of clothing and provides more than any bird can eat. But because people are blinded by the lies of mammon, they cry out to God for rescue when they already have all the answers that they need around them.

Silver and gold are not the answers to everything. They are very limited in what they can provide. But a person who walks in an overflow of heavenly treasures, who overflows with the fruit of the Spirit – this person is wealthy beyond measure. For those who walk in the fruit of the Spirit and do not grumble and doubt are like portals to the hills of eternal provision.

If you are filled with understanding from a heavenly point of view, you will look at the world as Heaven does, with patience and wisdom.

If you are filled with the spirit of mammon, you will be frustrated, impatient, and you will believe the lies of mammon who says that you do not have enough.

Only the words of the Son of God can give you heavenly perspective. Only they can show you your inheritance!"

LETTER 104 OF 777 – COMPASSION AND CONSIDERATION LEAD TO GOOD WORKS

In many dreams, the Friendly Man and I have spent time over the years flitting about the planet in various forms to volunteer at feeding schemes. Sometimes He appears as one of the people we are feeding and winks at me as I scoop some soup into His cup and hand Him a sandwich.

It is after one of these adventures that we sit together chewing our sandwiches and sipping our soup, watching some folks feed the poor at a shelter in a small town.

I feel so good that I start laughing and spit some of my soup on my lap, then take a bite of my sandwich and speak cheerfully around a full mouth.

Me:

“This is awesome!”

I grin like an idiot and the Friendly Man bursts out laughing too.

Friendly Man:

“Oh my goodness, Abdiel! You know, you remind me so much of my brother Jacob – the one you all call ‘*James*’ like you all call me ‘*Jesus*’ – My name is actually Joshua, but the Greek version works just as well. (He winks at me). Let us call him James so that everyone who reads what you record has a better point of reference.

James was a really good man and a wonderful brother to Me. But he struggled to believe that I was the Son of God right up until I appeared to him in My glorified form. He was constantly worried that I was deluding myself and My followers in teaching that I was the Son of God. But even in those decades of his lack of faith in Me, he never stopped helping the poor or searching for the truth.

You were like that through your years of sorrow too you know! You struggled to believe that I was real, but you never stopped being kind.

Let everyone who reads what you record take these words very seriously:

Many who do not yet believe are obedient to the law that My Father wrote upon their hearts. They struggle with sin and doubt, but they seek My Father with all their hearts and hunger for

heavenly truth even in the midst of their doubt. They are filled with love and love doing good works whether they are celebrated for it or not.

Don't think that Heaven does not see them. When James finally believed, he became the head of My church in Jerusalem. My Father and I caused this to happen so that the believers there would become like James.

Of any book that is regarded part of the canon Bible, the book of James is the most important. If any man or woman desires to model the way that they believe in Me on any person, it should be My brother James.

Don't believe people who teach you that good works are not important, or that living in community is not the message of the Cross. They might know the Bible, but they do not know Me. They become like the scribes and Pharisees who were more interested in the prestige of knowledge than the power of it.

James overflowed with the power of the knowledge of truth because he completely wrapped his heart around My teachings. He was My brother, yet he called himself My servant. His humility and generosity towards those in need set him apart from every other disciple. This is why Paul deferred to him and made himself accountable to him, because it was his good works and his love for people that showed how much of Heaven had taken up residence in him.

You would be very wise to study him and become more like him!"

Me:

"Wow Lord, I would love to meet him!"

Friendly Man:

"He is no longer in your time, but you will meet him in due season, and I am sure that you two will spit a lot of soup and talk with many mouthfuls of food together.

Let everyone who reads what you record know that I am the poor and that the poor are Me. Whatever little thing they do for the poor, they do for Me. I mean it literally, Abdiel. You cannot say that you are My disciple without loving each other.

Compassion and consideration will always lead to good works. Do not neglect good works for those in need! Don't let the evil one lead you astray!"

FOREWORD ON THE REBUKES OF JESUS

Thus says the Lord:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. You have taken My Name but you must also have My power! Those who are My disciples will do the things that I did and greater!

If you listen to My instruction, you will be filled with the knowledge that produces the faith you need to do mighty exploits.

Ask My Father for wisdom, ask Him for correction, and ask Him for rebuke and instruction so that your steps may be ordered and so that your path may be straightened!

Sit at My feet and learn, and teach others to do the same. Seek first the Kingdom of God, the ways of God, the truth of God, and the life of God.

Seek those things above and all other knowledge and all the things that My Father has for you will be yours!

Declare with this courier: *‘I love wisdom and instruction. I love rebuke and correction. I am a willing disciple of the Most High!’*

LETTER 105 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THOSE HE LOVES

Rebuke 1: Jesus rebukes those He loves

Proverbs 3:11-12

“My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.”

Revelation 3:19

“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.”

Hebrews 12:5

“And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: 'My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes (elegcho) you...’”

‘Rebuke’

Greek meaning: Epitimaō, which means rebuke, reprove, censure, to speak seriously, to warn in order to prevent an action or bring one to an end.

Second Greek meaning: Elegcho, which has the root meaning to bring to light and expose; is used to convict or convince someone of something, to point something out to someone, to reprove and correct.

Proverbs 1:23

“If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you.”

Whoever heeds reproof is wise (Proverbs 15:5) and honored (Proverbs 13:18). He who listens to reproof gains understanding (Proverbs 15:32). He will dwell among the wise (Proverbs 15:31) and is on the path of life (Proverbs 10:17).

LETTER 106 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THOSE WHO ARE RICH AND DO NOT SHARE

Rebuke 2: Jesus rebukes those who are rich and do not share

Luke 6:24

“But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.”

Luke 12:16-21

“Then he [Jesus] told them a story: A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. He said to himself, ‘What should I do? I don’t have room for all my crops.’ Then he said, ‘I know! I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I’ll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. And I’ll sit back and say to myself, ‘My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!’ But God said to him, ‘You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?’ Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God.”

LETTER 107 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES SELFISHNESS

Rebuke 3: Jesus rebukes those who are well fed now and those who laugh now

Luke 6:25

“Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep.”

LETTER 108 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THOSE WHOM PEOPLE SPEAK WELL OF

Rebuke 4: Jesus rebukes those whom people speak well of

Luke 6:26

“Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.”

LETTER 109 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES PETER FOR SETTING HIS MIND ON MAN'S INTEREST

Rebuke 5: Jesus rebukes Peter for settings his mind on man's interest

Matthew 16:21-23

“From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.” But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.””

LETTER 110 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES FOR KEEPING THE TRADITIONS OF MEN

Rebuke 6: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for keeping the traditions of men

Luke 7:5-13

“And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.” And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ But you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, “‘Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban’” (that is, given to God)— then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.”

LETTER 111 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES AND LAWYERS FOR SHUTTING UP THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Rebuke 7: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and lawyers for shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven against men

Matthew 23:13

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you neither go in yourselves, neither suffer you them that are entering to go in.”

Luke 11:52

“Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.”

LETTER 112 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES FOR DEVOURING WIDOW'S HOUSES AND FOR PRETENSE

Rebuke 8: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for devouring widow's houses and for pretense

Matthew 23:14

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore you shall receive the greater damnation.”

LETTER 113 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES FOR GAINING THEIR OWN CONVERTS

Rebuke 9: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for gaining their own converts

Matthew 23:15

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

Compass sea and land meaning: it is a proverbial expression, you leave no stone unturned; suggesting that they did all in their power to gain converts, not to God, but to their sect.

LETTER 114 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES FOR INCONSISTENCY REGARDING TAKING OATHS

Rebuke 10: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for inconsistency regarding taking oaths

Matthew 23:16-22

“Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gold of the temple is bound by that oath.’ You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gift on the altar is bound by that oath.’ You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? Therefore, anyone who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. And anyone who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. And anyone who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the one who sits on it.”

LETTER 115 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES REGARDING THE LAW

Rebuke 11: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees regarding the law

Matthew 23:23-24

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!”

LETTER 116 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES REGARDING GREED AND WICKEDNESS

Rebuke 12: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees regarding greed and wickedness

Matthew 23:25-26

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.”

Luke 11:37-41

“While Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him, so he went in and reclined at table. The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner. And the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also? But give as alms those things that are within, and behold, everything is clean for you.”

LETTER 117 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES FOR BEING WHITEWASHED TOMBS

Rebuke 13: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for being whitewashed tombs

Matthew 23:27-28

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

Luke 11:43-44

“Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it.”

LETTER 118 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE LAWYERS FOR LOADING PEOPLE WITH BURDENS

Rebuke 14: Jesus rebukes the lawyers for loading people with burdens

Luke 11:45

“One of the lawyers answered him, “Teacher, in saying these things you insult us also.” And he said, “Woe to you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.”

LETTER 119 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES AND LAWYERS REGARDING PERSECUTION

Rebuke 15: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and lawyers regarding the blood of the prophets

Matthew 23:29-36

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, saying, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.”

Luke 11:45-51

“One of the lawyers answered him, “Teacher, in saying these things you insult us also.” And he said, “... Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. So you are witnesses and you consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build their tombs. Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’ so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation.”

LETTER 120 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES REGARDING BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

Rebuke 16: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees regarding blasphemy against the Holy Spirit

Matthew 12:31-32

“Why I say to you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven to men. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.”

Mark 3:28-30

“Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemates against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”—because they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”

LETTER 121 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES FOR MAKING THE FATHER'S HOUSE A HOUSE OF MERCHANDISE

Rebuke 17: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for making the Father's house a house of merchandise

John 2:13-17

“The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.” His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.””

LETTER 122 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES AND MAN REGARDING SIN

Rebuke 18: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and the woman regarding sin

John 8:3-11

“As he [Jesus] was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd. “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?” They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust. When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?” “No, Lord,” she said. And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.””

LETTER 123 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEES FOR JUDGING BY HUMAN STANDARDS

Rebuke 19: Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for judging by human standards

John 8:13-19

“The Pharisees replied, “You are making those claims about yourself! Such testimony is not valid.” Jesus told them, “These claims are valid even though I make them about myself. For I know where I came from and where I am going, but you don’t know this about me. You judge me by human standards, but I do not judge anyone. And if I did, my judgment would be correct in every respect because I am not alone. The Father who sent me is with me. Your own law says that if two people agree about something, their witness is accepted as fact. I am one witness, and my Father who sent me is the other.” “Where is your father?” they asked. Jesus answered, “Since you don’t know who I am, you don’t know who my Father is. If you knew me, you would also know my Father.” “

LETTER 124 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES SATAN WITH 'IT IS WRITTEN'

Rebuke 20: Jesus rebukes Satan with 'it is written'

Luke 4:1-12

“Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” But Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’ ” Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.” And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ” Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ ” And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’”

LETTER 125 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES EVIL SPIRITS

Rebuke 21: Jesus rebukes evil spirits

Luke 9:42

“While he [Jesus] was still approaching, the demon slammed him [the boy] to the ground and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the evil spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father.”

Mark 9:25-27

“And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.” And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, “He is dead.” But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.”

LETTER 126 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES ILLNESSES

Rebuke 22: Jesus rebukes illnesses

Luke 4:38-39

“And he [Jesus] arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.”

LETTER 127 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES ELEMENTAL FORCES OF NATURE

Rebuke 23: Jesus rebukes elemental forces of nature

Mark 4:36-39

“Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.”

LETTER 128 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE DISCIPLES FOR BEING AFRAID

Rebuke 24: Jesus rebukes the disciples for being afraid

Matthew 14:25-27

“And in the fourth watch [between 3:00—6:00 a.m.] of the night, Jesus came to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified and said, It is a ghost! And they screamed out with fright. But instantly He spoke to them, saying, Take courage! I Am! Stop being afraid!”

Mark 4:36-41

“Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!””

LETTER 129 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE DISCIPLES FOR THEIR UNBELIEF

Rebuke 25: Jesus rebukes the disciples for their unbelief

Luke 9:37-41

"The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him. A man in the crowd called out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. A spirit seizes him and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him. I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they could not. O unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you and put up with you?""

Mark 16:14

"Afterward He [Jesus] appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen."

LETTER 130 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE DISCIPLES FOR WANTING TO BE THE GREATEST

Rebuke 26: Jesus rebukes the disciples for wanting to be the greatest

Luke 22:24-27

“A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he [Jesus] said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.””

Mark 10:35-40

“And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.””

LETTER 131 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE DISCIPLES FOR INTOLERANCE

Rebuke 27: Jesus rebukes the disciples for intolerance

Luke 9:49-50

“John said, Master, we saw a man driving out demons in Your name and we commanded him to stop it, for he does not follow along with us. But Jesus told him, Do not forbid [such people]; for whoever is not against you is for you.”

Mark 9:38-50

“John said to Him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to prevent him because he was not following us.” But Jesus said, “Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is for us.””

LETTER 132 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE DISCIPLES FOR RACIAL BIGOTRY

Rebuke 28: Jesus rebukes the disciples for racial bigotry

Luke 9:53-56

“Now when the time was almost come for Jesus to be received up [to heaven], He steadfastly and determinedly set His face to go to Jerusalem. And He sent messengers before Him; and they reached and entered a Samaritan village to make [things] ready for Him; But [the people] would not welcome or receive or accept Him, because His face was [set as if He was] going to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John observed this, they said, Lord, do You wish us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elijah did? But He turned and rebuked and severely censured them. He said, You do not know of what sort of spirit you are, For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them [from the penalty of eternal death]. And they journeyed on to another village.”

LETTER 133 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE DISCIPLES REGARDING CHILDREN

Rebuke 29: Jesus rebukes the disciples regarding children

Matthew 19:13-14

“One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. But Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.””

LETTER 134 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE CROWD REGARDING JUDGING AND CONDESCENSION

Rebuke 30: Jesus rebukes the crowd regarding judging and condescension

Matthew 5:21-22

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I [Jesus] say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire.”

Raca meaning: vain, empty, worthless, empty-headed; only found in Matthew 5:22. The Jews used it as a word of contempt. It is derived from a root meaning ‘to spit’.

LETTER 135 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE CROWD REGARDING WICKED INTENT

Rebuke 31: Jesus rebukes the crowd regarding wicked intent

Matthew 5:27-30

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I [Jesus] say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.”

LETTER 136 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE ONE WHO CAUSE OTHERS TO FALL INTO SIN

Rebuke 32: Jesus rebukes the one who will cause others to fall into sin

Matthew 18:6-9

“But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea. What sorrow awaits the world, because it tempts people to sin. Temptations are inevitable, but what sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting.”

LETTER 137 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE MAN WHO WILL BETRAY HIM

Rebuke 33: Jesus rebukes the man who will betray Him

Matthew 26:24

“The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”

LETTER 138 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES CITIES THAT DO NOT REPENT

Rebuke 34: Jesus rebukes cities that do not repent

Matthew 11:20-22

“Then He [Jesus] began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.”

LETTER 139 OF 777 - THE LORD REBUKES MOSES FOR DISOBEDIENCE

Rebuke 35: The LORD rebukes Moses for disobedience

Numbers 20:7-13

“The Lord told Moses, “Take the rod, gather the community together, and then you and your brother Aaron are to speak to the rock right before their eyes. It will release water. As you bring water to them from the rock, the community and the cattle will be able to drink.” So Moses took the rod in the Lord’s presence, just as he had commanded. Then Moses and Aaron gathered the community together in front of the rock. “Pay attention, you rebels!” Moses told them. “Are we to bring you water from this rock?” Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod. Lots of water gushed out, and both the community and their cattle were able to drink. But the Lord rebuked Moses and Aaron, telling Moses: “Because you both didn’t believe me, because you didn’t consecrate me as holy in the presence of the Israelis, you won’t be the ones to bring this congregation into the land that I’m about to give them.” Because the Israelis argued with the Lord and he was set apart among them, this place was called the Meribah Springs.”

LETTER 140 OF 777 - THE LORD REBUKES THE NATION ISRAEL THROUGH HOSEA

Rebuke 36: The LORD rebukes the nation Israel through Hosea

Hosea 4:1-3

“Hear the word of the Lord, O people of Israel! The Lord has brought charges against you, saying: “There is no faithfulness, no kindness, no knowledge of God in your land. You make vows and break them; you kill and steal and commit adultery. There is violence everywhere—one murder after another. That is why your land is in mourning, and everyone is wasting away. Even the wild animals, the birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea are disappearing.”

LETTER 141 OF 777 - GOD REBUKES BALAAM THROUGH THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

Rebuke 37: God rebukes Balaam through the angel of the Lord

Numbers 22:21-34

“So the next morning Balaam got up, saddled his donkey, and started off with the Moabite officials. But God was angry that Balaam was going, so he sent the angel of the Lord to stand in the road to block his way. As Balaam and two servants were riding along, Balaam’s donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. The donkey bolted off the road into a field, but Balaam beat it and turned it back onto the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood at a place where the road narrowed between two vineyard walls. When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it tried to squeeze by and crushed Balaam’s foot against the wall. So Balaam beat the donkey again. Then the angel of the Lord moved farther down the road and stood in a place too narrow for the donkey to get by at all. This time when the donkey saw the angel, it lay down under Balaam. In a fit of rage Balaam beat the animal again with his staff. Then the Lord gave the donkey the ability to speak. “What have I done to you that deserves your beating me three times?” it asked Balaam. “You have made me look like a fool!” Balaam shouted. “If I had a sword with me, I would kill you!” “But I am the same donkey you have ridden all your life,” the donkey answered. “Have I ever done anything like this before?” “No,” Balaam admitted. Then the Lord opened Balaam’s eyes, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the roadway with a drawn sword in his hand. Balaam bowed his head and fell face down on the ground before him. “Why did you beat your donkey those three times?” the angel of the Lord demanded. “Look, I have come to block your way because you are stubbornly resisting me. Three times the donkey saw me and shied away; otherwise, I would certainly have killed you by now and spared the donkey.” Then Balaam confessed to the angel of the Lord, “I have sinned. I didn’t realize you were standing in the road to block my way. I will return home if you are against my going.””

LETTER 142 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE CONGREGATION OF EPHESUS

Rebuke 38: Jesus rebukes the congregation of Ephesus

Revelation 2:4-7

“Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

Nicolaitans meaning: followers of Nicolas, a sect whose deeds were strongly condemned. They seem to have held that it was lawful to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication, in opposition to the decree of the Church in Acts 15.

LETTER 143 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE CONGREGATION OF SARDIS

Rebuke 39: Jesus rebukes the congregation of Sardis

Revelation 3:1-3

“I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.”

LETTER 144 OF 777 - JESUS REBUKES THE CONGREGATION OF PHILADELPHIA

Rebuke 40: Jesus rebukes the congregation of Philadelphia

Revelation 3:15-19

“I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.”

FOREWORD ON HONORING THE FATHER

Thus says the Lord:

“I have come that you might have abundant life. For whatever My Father sends, He sends to prosper you, not harm you. He sent Me so that you might have hope and a future.

When I speak, My Father speaks. I am the way, truth, and life that My Father has sent so that you may know Him and have access to every good thing from Him.

To listen to Me is to honor Him. And to honor Him is to trust Him. Trust in My Father will result in obedience to My Father.

You are redeemed from the curse of the law. Your obedience to Him will produce every promise from Him.

Honor Him by listening to Me so that every blessing might be yours and always remember that those who honor My Father He will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.

Take note of what is written so that you may know the fruit of honor.

If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all His commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth.

All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God:

You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.

The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock - the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks.

Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed.

You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.

The LORD will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you. They will come at you from one direction but flee from you in seven.

The LORD will send a blessing on your barns and on everything you put your hand to. The LORD your God will bless you in the land He is giving you.

The LORD will establish you as His holy people, as He promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the LORD your God and walk in His ways, then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the Name of the LORD, and they will fear you.

The LORD will grant you abundant prosperity - in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground - in the land He swore to your forefathers to give you.

The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of His bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.

The LORD will make you the head, and not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the LORD your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom.

Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today. Do not turn to the right or to the left, and do not following other gods or serve them.”

LETTER 145 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER: HONOR WHERE HONOR IS DUE

Honor 1: Jesus honors the Father: honor where honor is due

Matthew 15:4a (ESV)

“For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother’.”

Romans 13:7 (BSB)

“Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.”

LETTER 146 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS THE ONE WHO SENT HIM

Honor 2: Jesus honors the Father as the One who sent Him

John 5:36-38 (BSB)

“For the works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I [Jesus] am doing—testify that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent.”

John 8:42

“Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me.”

John 16:28 (ESV)

“I [Jesus] came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father.”

LETTER 147 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS THE ONLY FATHER

Honor 3: Jesus honors the Father as the ONLY Father

Matthew 23:9

“And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven.”

LETTER 148 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS THE ULTIMATE FATHER

Honor 4: Jesus honors the Father as the ultimate Father

Matthew 7:11

“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”

James 1:17

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”

LETTER 149 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS HIS OWN FATHER

Honor 5: Jesus honors the Father as His own Father

John 5:18

“For this reason they tried all the more to kill him [Jesus]; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.”

John 8:49 (ESV)

“Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.”

LETTER 150 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS THE ONLY ONE WHO SHOULD BE WORSHIPED

Honor 6: Jesus honors the Father as the only one who should be worshiped

Luke 4:5-8

“The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’””

LETTER 151 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS THE ONE REVEALING THE SON

Honor 7: Jesus honors the Father as the one revealing the Son

Matthew 16:13-17 (ESV)

“Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.”

LETTER 152 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS BEING ONE WITH HIM

Honor 8: Jesus honors the Father as being one with Him

John 10:30

“I [Jesus] and the Father are one.”

John 14:23 (ESV)

“Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”

LETTER 153 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS THE SOURCE (THE FOCUS POINT)

Honor 9: Jesus honors the Father as the source (the focus point)

John 5:26

“For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.”

Mark 11:22

““Have faith in God,” Jesus answered.”

LETTER 154 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS THE REWARDER

Honor 10: Jesus honors the Father as the rewarder

Matthew 6:1

“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 6:3,6,17-18

“But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.... But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.... But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

LETTER 155 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER AS THE ETERNAL GOD

Honor 11: Jesus honors the Father as the eternal God

Mark 12:26-27 (ESV)

“And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.”

LETTER 156 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER IN BAPTISM

Honor 12: Jesus honors the Father in baptism

Matthew 28:19

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

LETTER 157 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER IN WORSHIP

Honor 13: Jesus honors the Father in worship

John 4:24

“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

LETTER 158 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER IN PRAYER

Honor 14: Jesus honors the Father in prayer

Matthew 6:9-11

“Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

LETTER 159 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER THROUGH HIS DEPENDENCE ON THE FATHER

Honor 15: Jesus honors the Father through His dependence on the Father

John 5:19

“Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

John 5:30

“By myself I [Jesus] can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.”

John 8:38

“I [Jesus] am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father.”

LETTER 160 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER THROUGH LOVE AND OBEDIENCE

Honor 16: Jesus honors the Father through love and obedience

John 14:31 (BSB)

“But I [Jesus] do exactly what the Father has commanded Me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.”

LETTER 161 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER THROUGH THANKSGIVING

Honor 17: Jesus honors the Father through thanksgiving

Matthew 11:25-26 (ESV)

“At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.””

John 11:41

“So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me.””

LETTER 162 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

Honor 18: Jesus honors the Father for the Holy Spirit

John 14:16-17

“And I [Jesus] will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth.”

John 14:26 KJV

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my [Jesus] name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

LETTER 163 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER FOR BEING GREATER THAN HIMSELF

Honor 19: Jesus honors the Father for being greater than Himself

John 10:28-29

“I [Jesus] give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.”

John 14:28

“You heard me [Jesus] say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.”

LETTER 164 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER BY BEING AT HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS

Honor 20: Jesus honors the Father by being at His Father's business

Luke 2:49 NKJV

“And He [Jesus] said to them, ‘Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?’”

LETTER 165 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER BY KEEPING THE FATHER'S COMMANDS

Honor 21: Jesus honors the Father by keeping the Father's commands

John 15:10

“If you keep my [Jesus] commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.”

LETTER 166 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S PROVIDENCE

Honor 22: Jesus honors the Father's providence

Luke 4:9-12

“The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. For it is written: “‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’””

LETTER 167 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER FOR KNOWING HIM

Honor 23: Jesus honors the Father's relationship with Him

Matthew 11:27(b)

“No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

John 1:18 NKJV

“No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”

John 14:8-10 NKJV

“Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?”

LETTER 168 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S LOVE AND SACRIFICE

Honor 24: Jesus honors the Father's love and sacrifice

John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Philippians 2:8

“And being found in appearance as a man, he [Jesus] humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!”

LETTER 169 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S WILL

Honor 25: Jesus honors the Father's will through obedience

Matthew 7:21

“Not everyone who says to Me [Jesus], “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 12:50

“For whoever does the will of My [Jesus] Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.”

Matthew 26:39 ESV

“And He [Jesus] went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.””

John 6:38

“For I [Jesus] have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”

LETTER 170 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S AUTHORITY

Honor 26: Jesus honors the Father's authority

John 12:49

“Because I [Jesus] haven't spoken on my own authority. Instead, the Father who sent me has himself commanded me what to say and how to speak.”

Matthew 11:27(a)

“All things have been handed over to me [Jesus] by my Father.”

LETTER 171 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S FORGIVENESS

Honor 27: Jesus honors the Father's forgiveness

Luke 23:34

“Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.”

Matthew 6:14-15 NKJV

“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

LETTER 172 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S PROVISION

Honor 28: Jesus honors the Father's provision

Matthew 6:26, 31-32

“Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ... Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What

shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.”

John 6:11 NLT

“Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks to God, and distributed them to the people. Afterward he did the same with the fish. And they all ate as much as they wanted.”

LETTER 173 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S GLORY

Honor 29: Jesus honors the Father's glory

Matthew 16:27

“For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.”

Mark 8:38

“If anyone is ashamed of me [Jesus] and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.”

LETTER 174 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S PERFECTION

Honor 30: Jesus honors the Father's perfection

Matthew 5:46-48 ESV

“For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

LETTER 175 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S WORKS

Honor 31: Jesus honors the Father's works

Matthew 15:13

“He [Jesus] answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up.””

John 10:31-32

“The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” “

John 14:10

“The words that I [Jesus] speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.”

LETTER 176 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S KINGDOM

Honor 32: Jesus honors the Father's Kingdom

Matthew 6:9-10

“This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done.”

Matthew 26:29

“I [Jesus] tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”

LETTER 177 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S ABODE

Honor 33: Jesus honors the Father's abode (home/house)

John 14:2

“In My [Jesus] Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.”

John 14:23 KJV

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

LETTER 178 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER'S INVOLVEMENT IN HIS ASSIGNMENT

Honor 34: Jesus honors the Father's involvement in His assignment

John 6:44

“No one can come to Me [Jesus] unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”

LETTER 179 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER’S OMNISCIENCE

Honor 35: Jesus honors the Father's omniscience (all knowing)

Matthew 6:3,6,17-18 ESV

“But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.... But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.... But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Matthew 6:8

“Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.”

LETTER 180 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER’S OMNIPOTENCE

Honor 36: Jesus honors the Father's omnipotence (all powerful)

Matthew 3:9 ESV

“And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I [Jesus] tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.”

Mark 12:24 ESV

“Jesus said to them, “Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?””

Luke 10:27

“Jesus looked at them and said, “With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.””

LETTER 181 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER’S DESIGN

Honor 37: Jesus honors the Father's design (blueprint/order)

Mark 10:6-9

“But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

Mark 10:14

“When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.””

LETTER 182 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER’S OWNERSHIP

Honor 38: Jesus honors the Father's ownership

Mark 12:17 ESV

“Jesus said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.””

LETTER 183 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER’S GOODNESS

Honor 39: Jesus honors the Father's goodness

Mark 10:18

““Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.””

LETTER 184 OF 777 – JESUS HONORS THE FATHER’S JUDGMENT

Honor 40: Jesus honors the Father's judgment

Matthew 18:23-35 NLT

“Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. He couldn’t pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt. But the man fell down before his master and begged him, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.’ Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full. When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

Revelation 22:18 ESV

“I [Jesus] warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.”

FOREWORD ON HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION

Thus says the Lord:

“Come child, learn from Me! Come and sit at My feet. Come and sit in the shelter of the majesty of My Father.

I love you with an everlasting love! You are the apple of My eye and the very reason that My Father sent Me from Heaven to earth.

I command you today and every day to be strong and courageous!

Do not tire in doing good.

Come to Me when you are weary and heavy laden. Come to Me when you need rest.

I look upon you with kindness and compassion. Come to Me when you feel like you labor in vain.

Come to Me so that you are strengthened, for you will reap a mighty harvest in due season, just do not give up!”

LETTER 185 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: BUILDING PERSEVERANCE

Hardship and persecution 1: Building perseverance

James 1:2-4

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Romans 5:3-5

"Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."

LETTER 186 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: FOR THE GREATER CAUSE

Hardship and persecution 2: For the greater cause

John 6:38-40

"For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

LETTER 187 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: COMMAND WITH A WARNING

Hardship and persecution 3: Command with a warning

Matthew 10:16

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.”

Luke 10:3

“Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.”

LETTER 188 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: IT IS GUARANTEED

Hardship and persecution 4: It is guaranteed

Matthew 24:7-10 ESV

“For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another.”

John 15:20-21

“Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me.’”

LETTER 189 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: BE AT PEACE

Hardship and persecution 5: Be at peace

John 16:33

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

LETTER 190 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: BE CAREFUL

Hardship and persecution 6: Be careful

Matthew 10:17

"Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues."

Mark 8:15

"Be careful," Jesus warned them. "Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod."

LETTER 191 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: JESUS IS OUR EXAMPLE

Hardship and persecution 7: Jesus is our example

Mark 10:45

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

John 13:14-17

"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

LETTER 192 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: SELF-EVALUATION

Hardship and persecution 8: Self-evaluation

Mark 12:24

"Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?""

Mark 13:5

"Jesus said to them: "Watch out that no one deceives you.""

LETTER 193 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: LOVE AND PRAYER IS THE KEY

Hardship and persecution 9: Love and prayer is the key

Matthew 5:44

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

John 15:12-13

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

LETTER 194 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: FEAR NOTHING BUT GOD

Hardship and persecution 10: Fear nothing but God

Luke 12:2-5

"There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs. I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him."

Isaiah 41:8-10

"But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham my friend, I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, 'You are my servant'; I have chosen you and have not rejected you. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

LETTER 195 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: THE PROMISES

Hardship and persecution 11: The promises

Matthew 28:20

"And teaching them to obey everything I [Jesus] have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Luke 10:19

"I [Jesus] have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you."

Luke 18:27

"Jesus replied, "What is impossible with man is possible with God.""

John 10:27-28

"My [Jesus] sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand."

Isaiah 46:3-4

"Listen to me, you descendants of Jacob, all the remnant of the people of Israel, you whom I have upheld since your birth, and have carried since you were born. Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you."

LETTER 196 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: TESTING YOUR FAITH

Hardship and persecution 12: Testing your faith

John 14:1

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me[Jesus].”

Luke 18:8

“I [Jesus] tell you, he [God] will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?””

LETTER 197 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: TESTING YOUR FAITHFULNESS

Hardship and persecution 13: Testing your faithfulness

Matthew 24:9-11

“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.”

LETTER 198 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: TESTING YOUR ALLEGIANCE

Hardship and persecution 14: Testing your allegiance

Luke 9:23-26

"Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels."

Luke 17:33

"Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it."

LETTER 199 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: REMEMBER GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Hardship and persecution 15: Remember God's faithfulness

Mark 8:17-20

"Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don't you remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" "Twelve," they replied. "And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" They answered, "Seven.""

Luke 18:7-8

"And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

LETTER 200 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: INHERITING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Hardship and persecution 16: Inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 5:10

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

LETTER 201 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: YOU ARE BLESSED

Hardship and persecution 17: You are blessed

Matthew 5:11

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me."

Luke 6:20-21

"Looking at his disciples, he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man."

LETTER 202 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: REWARDS

Hardship and persecution 18: It brings reward

Matthew 5:11-12

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Luke 6:22-23

"Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets."

LETTER 203 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: OPPORTUNITY TO BE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

Hardship and persecution 19: It brings the opportunity to be a disciple of Christ

John 15:7-8

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

John 8:31-32

"To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.""

John 15:8

"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

LETTER 204 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME PERFECT

Hardship and persecution 20: It brings the opportunity to become perfect

Matthew 5:46-48

"If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

LETTER 205 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME MEEK

Hardship and persecution 21: It brings the opportunity to become meek

Luke 6:27-29

"But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them."

Matthew 5:5

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."

Meekness: The eighth fruit of the Spirit is humility: 'a•na•va.' Meek or modest is 'a•nav' in Hebrew. It has been defined several ways: righteous, humble, modest, teachable, gentle, and patient under suffering, long suffering willing to follow gospel teachings.

LETTER 206 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME MERCIFUL

Hardship and persecution 22: It brings the opportunity to become merciful

Luke 6:32-36

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

LETTER 207 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME SONS OF GOD

Hardship and persecution 23: It brings the opportunity to become sons of God

Matthew 5:44-45 NKJV

"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven, for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust."

LETTER 208 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: OPPORTUNITY TO LAY FOUNDATION ON ROCK

Hardship and persecution 24: It brings the opportunity to lay foundation on rock

Luke 6:47-49

“As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

LETTER 209 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY

Hardship and persecution 25: It brings the opportunity to testify

Matthew 10:18

“On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.”

Luke 21:12-15

“But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. And so you will bear testimony to me. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.”

LETTER 210 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: OPPORTUNITY FOR HUNDRED-FOLD RETURN

Hardship and persecution 26: It brings the opportunity for a hundred fold return

Mark 10:29-31

“Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.””

LETTER 211 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD

Hardship and persecution 27: It could bring encounters with God

Acts 22:7

“I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, ‘Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?’”

LETTER 212 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: THE CHOICE TO KEEP LOOKING FORWARD

Hardship and persecution 28: It brings the choice to keep looking forward

Luke 9:59-62

“He said to another man, ‘Follow me.’ But he replied, ‘Lord, first let me go and bury my father.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.’ Still another said, ‘I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.’ Jesus replied, ‘No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.’”

LETTER 213 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: THE POWER OF GOD

Hardship and persecution 29: It brings the power of God

Revelation 3:8-10

"I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth."

Matthew 26:53

"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?"

LETTER 214 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: EVERLASTING LIFE

Hardship and persecution 30: It brings everlasting life

John 11:25-26

"Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?""

John 12:25

"Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

LETTER 215 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: THOSE WHO PERSEVERE WILL BE SAVED

Hardship and persecution 31: Those who persevere will be saved

Matthew 10:22-23

"You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes."

Matthew 24:9-11

"Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."

Mark 13:13

"Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."

LETTER 216 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: IT CAN COME FROM THOSE CLOSEST TO YOU

Hardship and persecution 32: It can come from those closest to you

Luke 21:16-19

"You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. Everyone will hate you because of me. But not a hair of your head will perish. Stand firm, and you will win life."

Mark 13:12

"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death."

LETTER 217 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Hardship and persecution 33: You are not alone

John 14:15-18,26

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you... But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

John 16:13

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”

LETTER 218 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: YOU WILL KNOW WHAT TO SAY

Hardship and persecution 34: You will know what to say

Luke 12:11-12

“When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

LETTER 219 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: YOU WILL BE COMFORTED

Hardship and persecution 35: You will be comforted

Luke 16:19-25

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.’”

LETTER 220 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: YOU WILL GET A NEW NAME

Hardship and persecution 36: You will get a new name

Revelation 2:17

“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.”

Revelation 3:11-12

“I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.”

LETTER 221 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: EXPOSING THE HEART

Hardship and persecution 37: Exposing what is in your heart

Luke 6:45

“A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”

LETTER 222 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: TAKE THE TRUE YOKE AND BURDEN

Hardship and persecution 38: Take the true yoke and burden of Jesus

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

LETTER 223 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: THE FATHER KNOWS

Hardship and persecution 39: The Father knows every detail

Luke 12:6-7

“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”

Revelation 2:2-3

“I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.”

LETTER 224 OF 777 – HARDSHIP AND PERSECUTION: THE FATHER HAS THE LAST SAY

Hardship and persecution 40: The Father has the last say

Luke 20:9-16

“He went on to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.’ But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. ‘This is the heir,’ they said. ‘Let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.” When the people heard this, they said, “God forbid!””

FOREWORD ON PARABLES

To the men and women who are as angels, laying down their lives for the generation that is to come. And to the generation that is to come, who will be known as the generation who ushered in the greatest awakening.

Thus says the Lord:

“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. To know My Father, you must know Me.

To learn of the Father, you must learn from Me. For nobody but the Son knows the Father.

Sit at My feet and learn so that you may come to My Father through Me and you shall know the truth that brings freedom.

Learn from Me so that the Comforter may remind you of My words daily.

Learn from Me so that the wisdom of Heaven may manifest the plans of the Father in your life.

For the lies of the enemy will steal, kill, and destroy, but My teachings will bring you a life of abundance.

Sit at My feet and listen as good students and eager disciples.

Hear My truth so that you may be filled with faith!”

LETTER 225 OF 777 – PARABLES: NEW VS OLD

Definition: A parable is a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Jesus in the Gospels.

Most of the parables of Jesus are found in the three synoptic gospels namely Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Only one parable in three parts is found in the gospel of John. Mark 4:33-34 and Matthew 13:34-35 tells us that Jesus would only speak to the crowds in parables, while secretly, in private, explaining everything to his disciples. Depending on different viewpoints and groupings there are as many as 60 parables in the Gospels.

Parables 1: New cloth on an old coat / New wine in old wineskins

Matthew 9:16-17

“No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

Mark 2:21-22

“No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins.”

Luke 5:36-38

“He told them this parable: “No one tears a piece out of a new garment to patch an old one. Otherwise, they will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins.”

LETTER 226 OF 777 – PARABLES: SALT AND LIGHT

Parables 2: Salt and light

Matthew 5:13-16

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Mark 4:21-22

“He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.””

Luke 14:34-35

“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out.”

LETTER 227 OF 777 – PARABLES: WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS

Parables 3: Wise and foolish builders

Matthew 7:24-27

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Luke 6:46-49

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

LETTER 228 OF 777 – PARABLES: FORGIVING UNEQUAL DEBTS

Parables 4: Moneylender forgives unequal debts

Luke 7:41-43

“Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?” Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.”

LETTER 229 OF 777 – PARABLES: BUILDING BIGGER BARNES

Parables 5: Rich man foolishly builds bigger barns

Luke 12:16-21

“And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.””

LETTER 230 OF 777 – PARABLES: BE WATCHFUL

Parables 6: Servants must remain watchful

Mark 13:32-37

“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’””

Luke 12:35-40

“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

LETTER 231 OF 777 – PARABLES: WISE AND FOOLISH SERVANTS

Parables 7: Wise and foolish servants

Matthew 24:45-51

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Luke 12:42-48

“The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose the servant says to himself, ‘My master is taking a long time in coming,’ and he then begins to beat the other servants, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers.”

LETTER 232 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE UNFRUITFUL FIG TREE

Parables 8: The unfruitful fig tree

Luke 13:6-9

“Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’ ‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”

LETTER 233 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE SOWER

Parables 9: The Sower and four types of soil

Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23

“Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown... Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

Mark 4:3-8, 13-20

“Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times... Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

Luke 8:5-8, 11-15

“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown... This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.”

LETTER 234 OF 777 – PARABLES: WHEAT AND TARES

Parables 10: Wheat and tares

Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

“Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ ‘An enemy did this,’ he replied. The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’ ... Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.” He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing

of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.””

LETTER 235 OF 777 – PARABLES: GROWING SEED

Parables 11: Growing seed

Mark 4:26-29

“He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.””

LETTER 236 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE MUSTARD SEED

Parables 12: The mustard seed

Matthew 13:31-32

“He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.””

Mark 4:30-32

“Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.””

Luke 13:18-19

“Then Jesus asked, “What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches.””

LETTER 237 OF 777 – PARABLES: YEAST

Parables 13: Yeast

Matthew 13:33

“He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.””

Luke 13:20-21

“Again he asked, “What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.””

LETTER 238 OF 777 – PARABLES: HIDDEN TREASURE

Parables 14: Hidden treasure

Matthew 13:44

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.”

LETTER 239 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE VALUABLE PEARL

Parables 15: The valuable pearl

Matthew 13:45-46

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.”

LETTER 240 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE FISHING NET

Parables 16: The fishing net

Matthew 13:47-50

“Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

LETTER 241 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE HOUSEHOLDER

Parables 17: The householder

Matthew 13:52 NKJV

“Then He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.””

LETTER 242 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE LOST SHEEP

Parables 18: The lost sheep

Matthew 18:12-14

“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.”

Luke 15:3-7

“Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.”

LETTER 243 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE SHEEP, GATE AND SHEPHERD

Parables 19: The sheep, gate and shepherd

John 10:1-5,7-18

“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice... Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.””

LETTER 244 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE MASTER AND HIS SERVANT

Parables 20: The master and his servant

Luke 17:7-10

“Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’? Won’t he rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’? Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’”

LETTER 245 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT

Parables 21: The unmerciful servant

Matthew 18:23-35

“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

LETTER 246 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Parables 22: The good Samaritan

Luke 10:29-37

“But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.””

LETTER 247 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE FRIEND IN NEED

Parables 23: The friend in need

Luke 11:5-8

“Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.”

LETTER 248 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE LOWEST SEAT

Parables 24: The lowest seat at the feast

Luke 14:7-11

“When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: “When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.””

LETTER 249 OF 777 – PARABLES: INVITATION TO A BANQUET

Parables 25: Invitation to a great banquet

Luke 14:15-24

“When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, “Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.” Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’ Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’ Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’ The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’ ‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’ Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.’”

LETTER 250 OF 777 – PARABLES: COUNT THE COST

Parables 26: Count the cost

Luke 14:28-33

“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’ Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.”

LETTER 251 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE LOST COIN

Parables 27: The lost coin

Luke 15:8-10

“Suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

LETTER 252 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE PRODIGAL SON

Parables 28: The lost (prodigal) son

Luke 15:11-32

"Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' "My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

LETTER 253 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE SHREWD MANAGER

Parables 29: The shrewd manager

Luke 16:1-9 NKJV

“He also said to His disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’ “Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.’ “So he called every one of his master’s debtors to him, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.”

LETTER 254 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

Parables 30: The rich man and Lazarus

Luke 16:19-31

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’ He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ ‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

LETTER 255 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

Parables 31: The workers in the vineyard, early and late

Matthew 20:1-16

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius[a] for the day and sent them into his vineyard. About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. 6 About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’ ‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered. He said to them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.’ The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. ‘These who were hired last worked only one hour,’ they said, ‘and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.’ But he answered one of them, ‘I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn’t you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

LETTER 256 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

Parables 32: The persistent widow and the crooked judge

Luke 18:1-8

“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’” And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?””

LETTER 257 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

Parables 33: The Pharisee and the tax collector

Luke 18:9-14

“To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.””

LETTER 258 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE TALENTS

Parables 34: The talents

Matthew 25:14-30

“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’ The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’ Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’ His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. ‘So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

Luke 19:11-27

“While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. He said: “A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’ But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king.’ He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it. The first one came and said, ‘Sir, your mina

has earned ten more.’ ‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’ The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’ His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’ Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’ His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’ Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’ ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’ He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’”

LETTER 259 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE TWO SONS

Parables 35: The two sons, one obeys and one does not

Matthew 21:28-32

“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’ ‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did what his father wanted? “The first,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.”

LETTER 260 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE WICKED TENANTS

Parables 36: The wicked tenants

Matthew 21:33-44

“Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants? He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.” Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’? Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”

Mark 12:1-11

“Jesus then began to speak to them in parables: “A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But the tenants said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. Haven’t you read this passage of Scripture: ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

Luke 20:9-18

“He went on to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.’ But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. ‘This is the heir,’ they said. ‘Let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. When the people heard this, they said, “God forbid!” Jesus looked directly at them and asked, “Then what is the meaning of that which is written: ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’? Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.””

LETTER 261 OF 777 – PARABLES: INVITATION TO A WEDDING

Parables 37: Invitation to a wedding banquet

Matthew 22:2-14

“The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.’ But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless. Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

LETTER 262 OF 777 – PARABLES: SIGNS OF THE FUTURE

Parables 38: Signs of the future from a fig tree

Matthew 24:32-42

“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.”

Mark 13:28-29

“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

Luke 21:29-31

“He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.”

LETTER 263 OF 777 – PARABLES: THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

Parables 39: The wise and foolish virgins

Matthew 25:1-13

“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’ ‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’ Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”

LETTER 264 OF 777 – PARABLES: SHEEP AND GOATS

Parables 40: Sheep and goats will be separated

Matthew 25:31-46

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

Referencing and Abbreviations

New International Version (NIV) bible was used for scripture referencing where not otherwise stated.

KJV – King James Version

BSB – Berean Study Bible

ESV – English Standard Version

NLT – New Living Translation

MSG – The Message

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To be continued...

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