

THE POWER NEW TESTAMENT

Revealing Jewish Roots

אֱלֹהִים

FOURTH EDITION

Translated by

WILLIAM J. MORFORD

POW^{THE}ER
NEW TESTAMENT
REVEALING JEWISH ROOTS

Fourth Edition

A TRANSLATION OF THE 1993 4th EDITION
UNITED BIBLE SOCIETY GREEK TEXT

WILLIAM J. MORFORD

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~ CONTENTS ~

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
PREFACE	ii
GOSPELS	
MATTHEW	1
MARK	64
LUKE	102
JOHN	166
EPISTLES	
ACTS	211
ROMANS	267
1 CORINTHIANS	291
2 CORINTHIANS	313
GALATIANS	327
EPHESIANS	335
PHILIPPIANS	343
COLOSSIANS	349
1 THESSALONIANS	355
2 THESSALONIANS	360
1 TIMOTHY	363
2 TIMOTHY	370
TITUS	375
PHILEMON	378
HEBREWS	380
JAMES	399
1 PETER	406
2 PETER	413
1 JOHN	417
2 JOHN	423
3 JOHN	424
JUDE	426
REVELATION	428
GLOSSARY	461
APPENDIX	563

FRONT COVER: The Hebrew letters spell Ehyeh, the word spoken by God to Moses in Exodus 3:14 when He said “‘I AM Who I AM.’ (Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh) and He said, ‘Thus shall you say to the children of Israel, “The Lord God of your fathers, I AM (Ehyeh), has sent me to you.’”

“To the Israelites in bondage, the meaning would be; ‘Although He has not yet displayed His power towards you, He will do so; He is eternal and will certainly redeem you.’” A number of modern Jewish translations say, “‘I will be what I will be;’ meaning ‘no words can sum up all that He will be to His people, but His everlasting faithfulness and unchanging mercy will more and more manifest themselves in the guidance of Israel.’” (The Pentateuch and Haftorahs, Edited by Dr. J. H. Hertz, C. H., Late Chief Rabbi of the British Empire)

COVER DESIGN: Dr. William L. Pettiford III

~ ACKNOWLEDGMENT ~

This, the Fourth Edition, also the seventh printing of The Power New Testament, is greatly expanded from the first six printings. The Fourth Edition has more than 1,700 footnotes and a 105 page Glossary. Although William J. Morford was responsible for the translation of the Greek text, a number of others contributed to the completion and accuracy of the work.

Rabbi Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, now of Synagogue Beth El in Ponte Vedra, Florida, spent many hours with me to bring understanding and Jewishness to numerous passages that are often glossed over or even misunderstood. Rabbi Ben-Yehuda is a Conservative Jewish rabbi who patiently answered many questions and revealed a number of Hebrew idioms and Jewish customs. He has a thorough knowledge of the New Testament, so he made a considerable contribution to this volume.

Two Biblical scholars assisted with this translation. They are:

Arnold Gause, Ph.D., a Greek scholar of Columbia, SC, who tutored Rev. Morford for two years, then continued to give advice.

Henry M. Evans, Ph.D., of Monroe, Louisiana, who for a period of six months met with Rev. Morford nearly every week, reviewing difficult passages, sharing books from his personal library, and giving encouragement and advice.

A very dedicated friend, Dr. Waldo Nickel, reviewed the first printing, word for word, comparing The Power New Testament with more than twenty other translations, making voluminous notes and suggestions. Many of those suggestions have been used, making this 4th Edition even more readable than the earlier editions.

Several people helped by commenting at different stages in the preparation of the First Edition of this translation. Special thanks go to: Pastor Kathy Tolleson who proof read the entire manuscript; Rev. Shirley Wine, who commented on Matthew and several Epistles, and several others who made appropriate comments from less intensive scrutiny; and most of all I thank my wife, Jeanie, for all the time she gave to this project, discussing various passages and proofing many times. Jeanie went to be with the Lord in February, 2006.

~ PREFACE ~

The goal of The Power New Testament is to bring a greater understanding of and appreciation for the Jewish roots of Christianity. This translation is part of an ongoing study to learn more about Who God is and to find the deeper meanings of Scripture. Because Jesus was, and still is (Hebrews 13:8), Jewish, as was every apostle, and every author of the New Testament, it was necessary to study much more than just the Greek language to do an accurate translation. This involves Hebrew language studies and the teachings of Jewish scholars to come as close as possible to what the Hebrew Scriptures meant to the New Testament authors. It is also important to learn about Hebrew idioms that are intact in the Greek text. A number of Bible scholars believe that at least the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke were originally written in Hebrew, partly because there are so many Hebrew idioms and so much Hebrew grammar in the Greek text. Whether or not those or other books of the New Testament were originally in Hebrew will not be explored here, but this translation makes every effort to translate those Hebrew expressions properly. Another goal of this translation is to point out Jewish customs that have often been missed and to explain the meanings of various customs.

Throughout the text of The Power New Testament there are over 1,700 footnotes. There is also a seventy page Glossary to describe various first century Jewish customs and to explain Hebrew Scriptures, such as Leviticus 14, which on the surface is about cleansing a leper, but has a much deeper meaning. Read about it in Gossip/Slander in Glossary.

Many Jewish sources were studied. Among those were the Talmud, Mishna, Midrash, and Zohar, but the full list includes many modern Jewish commentaries that draw upon those four, but also quote numerous ancient and more recent sources. Those studies bring real depth to the subjects in the Glossary, but even more importantly that study gives insight into the thinking of Jesus and the Apostles, especially the New Testament authors. It is important for those of us reading in the twenty-first century to understand what a word or expression meant to those who wrote the passages in the first century.

The Greek text used for this translation is the United Bible Societies' Fourth

Edition, published in 1993. The editors used a scientific method called Textual Criticism to determine which of the more than five thousand ancient manuscripts of the New Testament were closest to what the authors wrote in the first century. This method is similar to what the editors of the ancient Greek classics use to determine the most accurate copies of those writings.

Until the first Greek text of the New Testament was printed in 1550, all copies were made by hand, so there was no standard text. A mistake or addition would therefore be passed on as other copies were made of a particular manuscript. What developed from that system were several families of manuscripts, each based geographically. Among those families of texts, one was called Alexandrian, from Egypt, another Caesarean, from Caesarea of Israel, and another was called Byzantine, which was the family of texts taken to England and western Europe by the Roman Church. See Manuscript in Glossary.

Because over the centuries there were many additions to the texts, as the textual scholars have identified them, they have been dropped from some translations or simply identified as added text, but still translated. This translation leaves out completely all passages positively identified by the editors as additions. That makes it possible for you to read a text without the intrusion of material that was not written by the author. The common practice is to translate those passages and just add footnotes to identify them as additions.

In some instances it is necessary to add a word or two for a passage to read properly in English. When that is done, the added words are in italics, so you will know that they were added.

Some words have been translated differently because the traditional translation conveys something not intended by the author. One of those words is the Greek word Ekklesia, which means a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place. Implicit in Ekklesia is a summoning, so this is not just a collection of people, but people called out to a public meeting for a particular purpose. Ekklesia is commonly translated church, but because of our association of church with both a building and an organization, in this translation, Ekklesia is translated congregation.

The Greek word Nomos has nearly always been translated Law, even when used for the Hebrew word Torah. Torah does not mean Law, but Teaching or Instruction. When you see Torah in this translation, do not think Law, but of the Loving God teaching His children, offering an outline to guide them for a better way of life. See Torah in Glossary.

The word for High Priest is capitalized when it refers to the one who occupies that office, or a former High Priest. The word also is used to refer to members of that family, whether or not they are in office at the time. It is often used in the plural, and then is not capitalized. Some translations use “chief priests” for these

Preface

situations, but this translation uses “high priests” in these cases.

This translation has as its goal to be a very readable text that flows from one book to another while preserving much of the Jewish flavor, especially the Jewishness of Jesus, and much of the power that is in the Greek and Hebrew expressions. The people who have worked on this translation all believe that by the laying on of hands we have all the gifts of the Spirit of the Living God, the King of the Universe, and that God is the same today as when He created the universe, and He will remain the same for eternity.

The editors of the Greek text cite many Old Testament Scriptures throughout the text, so the majority of Scripture references given in the text are from the Greek text used for this translation. All of the references from the Apocrypha are from the Greek text and are given here for those who use the Roman Catholic Bible.

There was no punctuation, nor were chapter or verse numbers in the original manuscripts. Even the present Greek text does not have quotation marks, but proper placement of the marks is taken from the context of a passage. See Manuscript in Glossary. See Chapter and Verse Numbers in Glossary.

~ ACCORDING TO MATTHEW ~

The Genealogy of Jesus Messiah

(Lk 3:23-38)

1.1. A scroll of *the* genealogy of Jesus Messiah, Son of David,¹ Son of Abraham.

1:2. Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judah and his brothers. 3. And Judah begat Perez and Zerach by Tamar, and Perez begat Hezron, and Hezron begat Ram, 4. and Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat Nashon, and Nashon begat Salmon, 5. and Salmon begat Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz begat Obed by Ruth, and Obed begat Jesse, 6. and Jesse begat David the king.

And David begat Solomon by the *wife* of Urriah, 7. and Solomon begat Rehoboam, and Rehoboam begat Abijah, and Abijah begat Asa, 8. and Asa begat Jehoshafat, and Jehoshafat begat Joram, and Joram begat Uzziah, 9. and Uzziah begat Jotham, and Jotham begat Ahaz, and Ahaz begat Hezekiah, 10. and Hezekiah begat Manasseh, and Manasseh begat Amon, and Amon begat Josiah, 11. and Josiah begat Jeconiah and his brothers in the time of the Babylonian captivity.

1:12. After the Babylonian captivity Jeconiah begat Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begat Zerubbabel, 13. and Zerubbabel begat Abiud, and Abiud begat Eliakim, and Eliakim begat Azor, 14. and Azor begat Sadok, and Sadok begat Achim, and Achim begat Elihud, 15. and Elihud begat Eliazar, and Eliazar begat Matthan, and Matthan begat Jacob, 16. and Jacob begat Joseph,² the husband of Mary, of whom³ was born Jesus, the One called Messiah.

1:17. Therefore all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations, and from David until the Babylonian captivity *are* fourteen

1 (v.1) See Son of David/Son of Joseph in Glossary.

2 (v.16) Joseph did not father Jesus, so Matthew could not continue saying "begat." For insight to this name. See Son of David/Son of Joseph in Glossary. See Genealogy of Jesus in Glossary.

3 (v.16) The word 'whom' in Greek is feminine, referring specifically to Mary. Some say this makes the lineage that of Mary, but it really is only saying that she gave birth to Him. See both Book Order and Genealogy of Jesus in Glossary.

generations, and from the Babylonian captivity until the Messiah *are* fourteen generations.

The Birth of Jesus Messiah

(Lk 2:1-7)

1:18. And Jesus Messiah was born in this manner. While His mother Mary was betrothed¹ to Joseph, before they came together she was found to have been made pregnant by *the* Holy Spirit. 19. And Joseph her husband, being righteous and not wanting to expose her *publicly*, wanted to secretly divorce her. 20. And when he was considering these things, behold an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, “Joseph, son of David, you must not be afraid to take Mary to yourself for your wife: for the One being formed in her is by *the* Holy Spirit. 21. And she will give birth to a Son, and you will call his name Jesus:² for He will save His people from their sins.” 22. And all this had happened so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet would be fulfilled, saying,

23. “Behold the virgin will be pregnant and will bear a son, and they will call His name Emanuel.” (Is 7:14)

which is translated “God with us.” 24. And after Joseph rose from his sleep he did as the angel of *the* Lord commanded him and he took his wife, 25. but he did not know her until she gave birth to a son: and he called His name Jesus.

The Visit of the Astrologers

2.1. And after Jesus was born in Bethlehem³ of Judea in *the* days of Herod the king, behold astrologers from *the* east arrived in Jerusalem 2. saying, “Where is the One Who has been born King of the Jewish People? For we saw His star in the east and we came to pay homage⁴ to Him.” 3. And when King Herod heard, he was disturbed and all Jerusalem⁵ with him, 4. and gathering all the high priests and scribes of the people he inquired from them where the Messiah was to be born. 5. And they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it has been written through the prophet:

6. ‘And you Bethlehem,’ country of Judea,
‘you are’ by no means ‘least among the princes of Judea:

1 (v.18) The Jewish marriage began when the ketubah, the marriage contract was signed. Later the ceremony would be performed and the marriage consummated. In Jewish law they were married, not betrothed, at the signing of the ketubah. See Wedding in Glossary.

2 (v.21) Jesus is the English spelling of Iesous, the Greek form of Yeshua, His Hebrew name, which means Deliverer or Savior. See Jesus in Glossary.

3 (v.1) Bethlehem is the Greek spelling of the Hebrew name, Beit-Lekhem, meaning House of Bread. In what more appropriate place could He have been born, the One Who said, “for the bread of God is that which descends from heaven and gives life to the world.” (Jn 6:33)

4 (v.2) To pay homage meant to kneel on one knee, bowing down to the ground. See Pay Homage in Glossary.

5 (v.3) Herod and many in Jerusalem were Hellenists, whose power and wealth was based on Roman authority. See Hellenists in Glossary.

for out of you will come a ruler,
 who will shepherd My people Israel.” (Mic 5:2)

2:7. Then Herod, having secretly called the astrologers, ascertained from them the time of the revealing of *the* star, 8. and sending them into Bethlehem he said, “When you go you must inquire carefully concerning the child: as soon as you would find *Him*, you must report to me right away, then when I come I will pay homage to Him.” 9. And those who heard the king went. And lo! The star, which they saw in the east, led them forth, until *it* came *and* stood over where the child was. 10. And when they saw the star they rejoiced *with* extremely great joy. 11. Then when they came into the house¹ they saw the child with Mary His mother, and having fallen *to their knees* they paid homage to Him, then, having opened their treasure boxes, they brought gifts to Him, gold and frankincense² and myrrh. 12. And since they had been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they returned to their country by another way.

The Flight to Egypt

2:13. And after they went away, behold, an angel of *the* Lord revealed to Joseph in a dream saying, “When you get up, you must immediately take the child and His mother and flee into Egypt and you must be there until whenever I tell you: for Herod is going to seek the child to kill Him.” 14. Then after he got up he took the child and His mother in *the* night and he went away into Egypt, 15. and he was there until the death of Herod: so that the word of the Lord by the prophet would be fulfilled saying, “I called My Son out of Egypt.” (Ho 11.1)

The Slaying of the Infants

2:16. Then after Herod saw that he was tricked by the astrologers he became exceedingly angry, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all the regions of it from two years old and below, according to the time which he ascertained from the astrologers. 17. Then that spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled saying,

18. “A voice was heard in Rama,
 weeping and” much “mourning:
 Rachel weeping *for* her children,
 and she was not to be comforted, because they were not.”³
 (Jr 31:15)

The Return from Egypt

2:19. Then, after Herod died, behold an angel of the Lord revealed by a dream to Joseph in Egypt 20. saying, “When you get up you must immediately take the child and His mother and go to Israel: for those who were seeking the

1 (v.11) That they were in a house, not the cave/barn where He was born indicates that some time had passed since His birth.

2 (v.11) Frankincense is the emblem of devotion.

3 (v.18) “They were not” is an idiom meaning they were dead. See Death in Glossary.

life of the child have died.” 21. And when he got up he took the child and His mother and entered the land of Israel. 22. Then, when he heard that Archelos was reigning in Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go back there: and because he was warned in a dream he returned to the region of Galilee, 23. and when he came he dwelt in a city called Nazareth: thus was the word through the prophet fulfilled that He will be called *of* Nazareth. (Is 11:1¹)

The Preaching of John the Baptist²

(Mt 1:1-8, Lk 3:1-9, 15-17, Jn 1:19-28)

3.1. And in those days John the Baptist was coming forth, preaching in the wilderness of Judea 2. and saying, “You must continually repent: for the kingdom of the heavens³ has come near.” 3. For this is what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet saying,

“A voice crying in the wilderness:

‘You must right now prepare the way of *the* Lord,

you must continually make His paths straight.’” (Is 40:3)

4. And this John was wearing his cloak *made* from camel hairs and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locust *beans* and wild honey. 5. At that time Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him, 6. and, as they were confessing their sins, they were being baptized by him⁴ in the Jordan River.

3:7. When he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism he said to them, “Offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8. Therefore you must immediately make fruit worthy of repentance 9. and you must now not think to say among yourselves, ‘We have Abraham *as our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise children for Abraham from these stones. 10. And now the ax is laid to the root of the trees: therefore every tree *that* does not produce good fruit is being cut down and cast into a fire. 11. I am indeed baptizing⁵ you in water for repentance, but One Who is coming after me is stronger than I, I am not worthy to carry away His sandals: this One will baptize you in *the* Holy Spirit and in fire: 12. Whose winnowing fork is in His hand and He will clean out His threshing floor and gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff in an inextinguishable fire.”

1 (v.23) The connection to Galilee is from the word *natser*, referring to the shoot, branch of Jesse. Nazareth is *Natseret* in Hebrew.

2 (Caption) The word Baptist comes from the Greek word *baptidzo*, meaning to immerse. See Baptize in Glossary.

3 (v.2) Kingdom of the heavens was an expression that often, as in this case, referred to God. The plural heavens was used because heavens is always plural in Hebrew, having seven levels. See Heavens in Glossary.

4 (v.6) John stood on the bank preaching and those who repented went into the river for self-immersion. See Baptize in Glossary.

5 (v.11) The Greek word *baptidzo* means to immerse, which had been a Jewish custom for purification for more than 1,000 years. See Baptize in Glossary.

The Baptism of Jesus

(Mk 1:9-11, Lk 3:21,22)

3:13. Then Jesus came from Galilee across the Jordan to John to be baptized by him. 14. But John was going to prevent Him saying, “I need to be baptized by You, so would You come to me?” 15. And when Jesus answered He said to him, “You must allow it now, for so it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him. 16. And after Jesus was baptized He immediately rose from the water: and behold the heavens opened up to Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon Him: 17. and there was a voice from the heavens saying, “This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased.”

The Temptation of Jesus

(Mk 1:12,13, Lk 4:1-13)

4.1. Then Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tested by the devil. 2. And after He fasted forty days and forty nights, He was then hungry. 3. And when the one who was testing, *the devil*, came, he said to Him, “If You are *the* Son of God, You must now say that these stones would become bread.” 4. But when He answered, *Jesus* said, “It has been written,

‘Man will not live on bread alone,
but upon every word going out
through *the* mouth of God.’” (Dt 8:3)

5. Then the devil took Him to the holy city and placed Him on the pinnacle of the temple 6. and said to Him, “If You are *the* Son of God, You must throw Yourself down at once for it has been written that

‘He will give orders to His angels concerning you
and they will take you up in their hands,
so that you would not strike your foot against a stone.’” (Ps 91:11,12)

7. Jesus said to him, “Again it has been written, ‘You will¹ not test *the* Lord your God.’” (Dt 6:16) 8. Again the devil took Him to an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory 9. and said to Him, “I will give all these things to You, if after You fall *on Your knees* You would pay homage to me.” 10. Then Jesus said to him, “You must immediately go back where you came from, Satan:² for it has been written,

‘You will worship *the* Lord your God
and you will serve only Him.’” (Dt 6:13)

11. Then the devil left Him, and behold angels came and were ministering to Him.

1 (v.7) The future tense is frequently translated as a command. See Future Tense in Glossary.

2 (v.10) See Satan in Glossary.

The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

(Mk 1:14,15, Lk 4:14,15)

4:12. And when He heard that John was arrested He returned to Galilee.
13. And after He left Nazareth, He went *and* stayed in Capernaum,¹ by the lake in *the* region of Zebulun and Naftali: 14. in order that what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah would be fulfilled saying,

15. “Land of Zebulun and land of Naftali,
way of the lake, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the heathens,
16. the people who dwell in darkness
saw a great light,
and to those who dwell in *the* land and darkness of death
a light rose for them.” (Is 9:1,2)

4:17. From then *on* Jesus began to preach and to say, “You must continuously repent:² for the kingdom of the heavens has come near.”

The Calling of Four Fishermen

(Mk 1:16-20, Lk 5:1-11)

4:18. And while He was walking by the lake of Galilee He saw two brothers, Simon, the one called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the lake: for they were fishermen. 19. And He said to them, “You must come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20. And immediately, having left their nets, they followed Him. 21. Then, having gone from there, He saw two other brothers, Jacob,³ the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother mending their nets in the boat with Zebedee their father, and He called them. 22. And they followed Him immediately, leaving the boat and their father.

Ministering to a Great Multitude

(Lk 6:17-19)

4:23. Then He was going about in all Galilee teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom⁴ and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. 24. And His reputation spread through all Syria: and they brought to Him all those having various evils⁵ *and* various diseases and

1 (v.13) Capernaum is the Latin spelling of the Hebrew name Kafer Na-um. Kafer means town or village and Na-um means pleasant.

2 (v.17) The tense used in the Greek tells us to walk in repentance every day, even though we know we have been sanctified and made righteous by the blood of the Lamb. This is because we have not been perfected, but are to strive to be better today than we were yesterday, as we become more like Him. See Eph 5:1.

3 (v.21) The Greek text has Iakob, which is written Jacob in English.

4 (v.23) His teaching here is about the Father, the kingdom being a reference to the Deity and His love.

5 (v.24) The Greek word kakos literally means evil.

being tormented and being possessed by demons and being moonstruck¹ and paralytics, and He healed them. 25. And huge crowds followed Him from Galilee and Dekapolis² and Jerusalem and Judea and the other side of the Jordan.

The Sermon on the Mount

(Mt 5:1-7:29)

5.1. And when He saw the crowds He went up on the mountain, and after He sat down His disciples came to Him: 2. then opening His mouth He taught them saying,

The Beatitudes

(Lk 6:20-23)

3. “Blessed³ are the repentant,⁴
because theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. (Is 61.1)
4. Blessed are those who mourn,
because they will be comforted. (Is 61:2,3)
5. Blessed are the humble⁵
because they will inherit the Earth. (Ps 37:11)
6. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, (Jn 6:53)
because they will be filled, satisfied.⁶
(Nu 25:11, Ps 4:7, Ho 10:12, Mt 6:33)
7. Blessed are those who forgive,⁷
because they will be forgiven. (2Sa 22:26)
8. Blessed are the pure in heart,
because they will see God. (2Sa 22:27, Ps 24:3,4)
9. Blessed are the peacemakers, (Ps 37:37, Is 32:17)
because they will be called ‘children of God.’
10. Blessed are those who press on for the sake of righteousness,
because theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.⁸
(Pr 21:21, Mt 11:12)
11. Blessed are you when they would revile you and they would persecute

1 (v.24) Epileptics

2 (v.25) Ten cities, nine east of the Jordan plus Beit-Sh'an west of the Jordan, declared “Free Cities” by Rome. Beit-Sh'an is still a thriving city, just west of the Jordan River, about twenty-five miles south of Tiberias. See Dekapolis in Glossary.

3 (v.3) The Greek word translated Blessed throughout the Beatitudes is Makarios, blessed and happy.

4 (v.3) Literally this is poor in spirit which is a Hebrew idiom for repentant.

5 (v.5) Humble refers to the faithful remnant. See Humble in Glossary.

6 (v.6) Righteousness is action, doing the perfect will of God, so this is hungering to do His perfect will. See Righteousness in Glossary.

7 (v.7) Literally this says to be merciful, which is a Hebrew idiom meaning to be forgiving. See Sin, Forgiveness of in Glossary.

8 (v.10) This means to walk in all the promises of God. The word heavens is always plural in Hebrew because there are seven levels of heaven in the Tanach, the OT. See Heavens in Glossary.

you and they would say all *manner of* evil against you falsely because of Me. (2Chr 36:16) 12. You must continually rejoice and be extremely joyful, because your reward *is* great in the heavens: for in this way they persecuted the prophets, the ones who were before you.”

Salt and Light

(Mk 9:50, Lk 14:34,35)

5:13. “You are the salt¹ of the Earth: but if the salt would become tasteless, in what *way* will it become salt again? It is no longer still good except to be thrown outside to be trampled by men. 14. You are the light of the world. A city laid out on a mountain is not able to be hidden: 15. and they do not light a lamp and place it under a peck measure but upon the lamp stand, and it gives light for all those in the house. 16. Your light must now shine like this before *all* mankind, so that they would see your good deeds² and they would glorify your Father, the One in the heavens.”

Teaching about the Torah³

5:17. “Do not think that I came to annul, to bring an incorrect interpretation to, the Torah or the Prophets:⁴ I did not come to annul but to bring *spiritual* abundance,⁵ for the Torah to be obeyed as it should be and God’s promises to receive fulfillment. 18. For truly I say to you: until the sky and the Earth would pass away, **not** one yod⁶ or one vav⁷ could **ever** pass away from the Torah, until everything would come to pass. (Lk 16:17) 19. Therefore, whoever would break one of the least of these commandments, and would teach people this way, will be called least in the kingdom of the heavens: but whoever would do *the commandments* and would teach *them*, will be called great in the kingdom of the heavens. 20. For I say to you that unless your righteousness would be present in abundance more than *that of* the scribes and Pharisees, you could **not** enter the kingdom of the heavens.”

Teaching about Anger

5:21. “You heard that it was said to the ancients, ‘Do not murder:’ (Ex 20:13) and whoever would murder, that one would be guilty in the judgment. 22. And I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be guilty in

1 (v.13) Salt is a preservative and speaks of permanence, see the Covenant of Salt, Nu 18:18,19.

2 (v.16) Mitsvot, see Mitsvah in Glossary.

3 (Caption) This is a reference to the first five books of the Bible. See Torah in Glossary.

4 (v.17) The Prophetic books are Jsh, Jd, 1 & 2 Sam, 1 & 2Ki, Is through Mal excluding Dn, which is one of the Writings in the Tanach.

5 (v.17) The abundance must be spiritual because Jesus said “You must continually understand and guard yourselves from all covetousness, because someone’s life is not abundant from his possessions.” (Mt 6:19-21, Lk 12:15)

6 (v.18) The yod is the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. See Yod in Glossary.

7 (v.18) The vav is the second smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The yod and the vav are called “soft letters” because they can be left out of a word and the word not be considered misspelled. See Yod in Glossary.

the judgment. And whoever would say to his brother ‘Empty-headed,’¹ that one is guilty to the Sanhedrin: whoever would say, ‘Stupid’ is guilty in the Gehenna² of the fire. 23. If therefore you would present your gift at the altar and there you would remember that your brother has something against you, 24. you must right away leave your gift there in front of the altar and go. You must first become reconciled with your brother,³ and then, after you come *back*, present your gift. 25. You must quickly be of a peaceable spirit with your opponent *at law*, *even* while you are with him on the way, lest the opponent would hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the jailer, and you would be cast into prison: 26. truly I say to you, you would **not** come out from there, until you would have given your last penny.”

Teaching about Adultery

5:27. “You heard that it was said, ‘You will not commit adultery.’⁴ (Ex 20:14) 28. But I am saying to you that everyone who looks at a woman with desire *for* her has already committed adultery *with* her in his heart.⁵ 29. And if your right eye causes you to sin, you must tear it out at once and cast it from you: for it is more profitable for you that one of your members would be lost and that your whole body would not be cast into Gehenna.⁶ 30. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you: for it is more profitable for you that one of your members would be lost but your whole body would not go over into Gehenna.”

Teaching about Divorce

(Mt 19:9, Mk 10:11,12, Lk 16:18)

5:31. “And it was said, ‘Whoever would divorce his wife, must immediately give her a certificate of divorce.’ (Dt 24:1) 32. But I am saying to you that everyone who divorces his wife except for grounds of immorality makes her to be an adulteress, and whoever would marry a divorced woman is committing adultery.”

Teaching about Pledges

5:33. “Again you heard that it was said to the ancients, ‘You will not swear falsely,⁷ (Nu 30:3) and you will keep your oaths to the Lord.’ (Dt 23:22) 34. But I say to you not to swear at all: neither by heaven, because it is *the* throne of God, 35. nor by the Earth, because it is His footstool, nor by Jerusalem, because it is a city of the great King, 36. nor by your head may you swear, because you are not able to make one hair white or black. 37. But your word must consistently

1 (v.22) The text has Raka, a Hebrew word meaning empty-headed.

2 (v.22) See Gehenna in Glossary.

3 (v.24) See Sin, Forgiveness of in Glossary.

4 (v.27) See Future Tense in Glossary.

5 (v.28) This was in accordance with rabbinic teaching in Jesus’ day.

6 (v.29) See Gehenna in Glossary.

7 (v.33) See Future Tense in Glossary.

be definitely yes, *or* definitely no:¹ and what goes beyond these is from the evil one.” (Lv 19:12, Nu 30:2, Dt 23:21,22, Ecc 5:4, Ps 76:11, Jas 5:12)

Teaching about Retaliation

(Lk 6:29,30)

5:38. “You heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’² (Ex 21:24, Lv 24:20, Dt 19:21) 39. But I say to you to not stand against the evil person: but who strikes you in your right cheek, you must at once also turn the other to him: 40. and to the one who wishes to sue you and to take your tunic, you must also let him have your cloak: 41. and who will force you one mile,³ you must now go two with him. 42. And to the one who asks you, you must give, and do not resist the one wanting to borrow from you.”

Love for Enemies

(Lk 6:27,28, 32-36)

5:43. “You heard that it was said, ‘You will love your neighbor’ (Lv 19:18) and you will hate your enemy.⁴ 44. But I am saying to you, you must love your enemies and you must pray for those who persecute you, (Pr 24:17,18) 45. so that you would become children of your Father, the One in *the* heavens, because He makes His sun rise on evil and good and rains on *the* righteous and unrighteous. 46. For if you would love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do this? 47. And if you would respect only your brothers, what are you doing *that is* remarkable? Do not even the heathens do this? 48. Therefore you must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Teaching about Almsgiving

6.1. “And you must regularly pay close attention not to do your righteousness⁵ in front of people in order to be seen by them: otherwise you do not have a reward from your Father, the One in the heavens.

6:2. “Therefore when you would do charitable giving,⁶ do not trumpet before yourself, as the hypocrites are doing in the synagogues and in the alleys, *for* in this way they have received praise by people: truly I say to you, they are receiving their reward. 3. But when you make a charitable gift your left hand must not know what your right hand is doing, 4. so that your charitable giving would be in secret: then your Father, the One Who sees in secret, will give back to you.”

1 (v.37) These are literally “Yes yes and no no.” See Double Yes in Glossary.

2 (v.38) This does not mean you are to take out the eye of someone who has knocked out an eye. See Torah in Glossary.

3 (v.41) This is a Roman mile, one thousand paces.

4 (v.43) “Hate your enemy” was from heathens, since it is not found in the Tanach (OT), oral law, or Rabbinic writing.

5 (v.1) Doing righteousness is doing good deeds. See Mitsvah in Glossary.

6 (v.2) Tsedekah, see both Mitsvah and Righteousness in Glossary.

Teaching about Prayer

(Lk 11:2-4)

6:5. “And when you would pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray in the synagogues and standing on the street corners, so that they would be revealed to people: truly I say to you, they are receiving their reward. 6. But when you would pray, you must go into your secret room and after you lock your door pray to your Father, to the One in secret: then your Father, the One Who sees in secret, will reward you. 7. And when you pray, you should not babble as the heathens, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. 8. Therefore you should not be like them: for your Father knows what need you have before you ask Him. 9. Therefore you must be praying in this way:

‘Our Father,¹ Who is in the heavens:

Your name must at once be made holy:

10. Your kingdom must now come:

Your will must be done right now,
as in heaven also on Earth:

11. You must now give us today the things necessary for our existence:²

12. You must right now forgive our sins for us, in the same manner as we have completed forgiving everyone of everything, big and little, against us:³

13. And do not lead us into temptation,⁴
but You must now rescue us from the evil one.’⁵

14. For if you would forgive *all other* people their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15. but if you would not forgive *all other* people, neither will your Father forgive your sins.”⁶ (Col 3:13)

Teaching about Fasting

6:16. “And when you would fast, do not become sad, gloomy like the hypocrites, for they render their faces so that fasting would be revealed to people: truly I say to you, they are receiving their reward. 17. But when you fast you must anoint your head and wash your face, 18. so that you would not reveal fasting to men but to your Father in secret: then your Father, the One Who sees in secret, will reward you.”

1 (v.9) Our Father was a common opening for prayer, based on Is 63:16 and Ho 11:1.

2 (v.11) The Greek word translated “necessary for our existence” is found only in Mt 6:11 and Lk 11:3. The meaning is not certain. See Daily Bread in Glossary.

3 (v.12) We can only speak this way to God, saying “You must..” as Jesus is teaching, when we have covenant relationship with Him. See Sin, Forgiveness of in Glossary.

4 (v.13) This could also be translated trial.

5 (v.13) The Doxology in some translations of the Lord’s Prayer was added in the fifth century. See Lord’s Prayer in Glossary for understanding of this prayer.

6 (v.14 & v.15) This admonition is a basic requirement for a relationship with God. See Sin, Forgiveness of in Glossary.

Treasure in Heaven

(Lk 12:33,34)

6:19. “Do not gather treasures on the Earth for yourselves, where moth and rust are destroying and where thieves break in and steal: (Sir¹ 29:11) 20. but build up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and do not steal: 21. for where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.”

The Light of the Body

(Lk 11:34-36)

6:22. “The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore if your eye would be healthy, your whole body will be light: 23. but if your eye would be evil,² your whole body will be darkness. Therefore if the light which *is* in you is dark, how great *must* the darkness *be*.” (Pr 22:9, 28:22)

God and Wealth

(Lk 16:13)

6:24. “No one is able to serve two masters: for he will hate the one and will love the other, or he will be devoted to one and he will despise the other. You are not able to serve God and wealth.”

Care and Anxiety

(Lk 12:22-34)

6:25. “Because of this I say to you, stop being anxious for your life, what you would eat or what you would drink, or what you would put on your body. No indeed! Is life not more than food and the body *more than* clothing? 26. You must consider the birds of the sky that do not sow and do not harvest and do not gather into a storehouse, and your heavenly Father feeds them: are you not worth more than they? 27. And who of you if you are anxious is able to add one single hour upon his age? 28. And concerning clothing, why are you anxious? You must observe the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not labor and they do not spin: 29. but I say to you that Solomon in all his glory did not dress himself as one of these. 30. And if God clothes the grass of the field this way, *which is here* today and tomorrow is cast into a furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, little faiths? 31. Therefore you should not be anxious saying, ‘What could we eat?’ or, ‘What could we drink?’ or, ‘What should we wear?’ 32. For the heathens are striving for all these things: for indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33. But you must continually seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, then all these things will be provided for you. 34.

1 (v.19) The book of Sirach, from the Apocrypha. See Appendix for the listing of Apocryphal references.

2 (v.23) An evil eye is a Hebrew idiom for stingy or greedy. See Dt 15:9, Pr 23:6, 7 and 28:22.

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Front Cover: The Hebrew letters אֲדֹנָי spell Ehyeh, the name spoken by God to Moses in Exodus 3:14. “‘I AM Who I AM.’ (Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh) and He said, ‘Thus shall you say to the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, I AM (Ehyeh), has sent you.’”



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