**THE CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION**

**OF JESUS CHRIST**

The Message (MSG)

**Matthew 25:31-26:16**

The Message (MSG)

**The Sheep and the Goats**

**31-33**“When he finally arrives, blazing in beauty and all his angels with him, the Son of Man will take his place on his glorious throne. Then all the nations will be arranged before him and he will sort the people out, much as a shepherd sorts out sheep and goats, putting sheep to his right and goats to his left.

**34-36**“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what’s coming to you in this kingdom. It’s been ready for you since the world’s foundation. And here’s why:

I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,
I was homeless and you gave me a room,
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,
I was sick and you stopped to visit,
I was in prison and you came to me.’

**37-40**“Then those ‘sheep’ are going to say, ‘Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?’ Then the King will say, ‘I’m telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.’

**41-43**“Then he will turn to the ‘goats,’ the ones on his left, and say, ‘Get out, worthless goats! You’re good for nothing but the fires of hell. And why? Because—

I was hungry and you gave me no meal,
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
I was homeless and you gave me no bed,
I was shivering and you gave me no clothes,
Sick and in prison, and you never visited.’

**44**“Then those ‘goats’ are going to say, ‘Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or homeless or shivering or sick or in prison and didn’t help?’

**45**“He will answer them, ‘I’m telling the solemn truth: Whenever you failed to do one of these things to someone who was being overlooked or ignored, that was me—you failed to do it to me.’

**46**“Then those ‘goats’ will be herded to their eternal doom, but the ‘sheep’ to their eternal reward.”

**Anointed for Burial**

**26 1-2**When Jesus finished saying these things, he told his disciples, “You know that Passover comes in two days. That’s when the Son of Man will be betrayed and handed over for crucifixion.”

**3-5**At that very moment, the party of high priests and religious leaders was meeting in the chambers of the Chief Priest named Caiaphas, conspiring to seize Jesus by stealth and kill him. They agreed that it should not be done during Passover Week. “We don’t want a riot on our hands,” they said.

**6-9**When Jesus was at Bethany, a guest of Simon the Leper, a woman came up to him as he was eating dinner and anointed him with a bottle of very expensive perfume. When the disciples saw what was happening, they were furious. “That’s criminal! This could have been sold for a lot and the money handed out to the poor.”

**10-13**When Jesus realized what was going on, he intervened. “Why are you giving this woman a hard time? She has just done something wonderfully significant for me. You will have the poor with you every day for the rest of your lives, but not me. When she poured this perfume on my body, what she really did was anoint me for burial. You can be sure that wherever in the whole world the Message is preached, what she has just done is going to be remembered and admired.”

**14-16**That is when one of the Twelve, the one named Judas Iscariot, went to the cabal of high priests and said, “What will you give me if I hand him over to you?” They settled on thirty silver pieces. He began looking for just the right moment to hand him over.

**John 13:1-20**

The Message (MSG)

**Washing His Disciples’ Feet**

**13 1-2**Just before the Passover Feast, Jesus knew that the time had come to leave this world to go to the Father. Having loved his dear companions, he continued to love them right to the end. It was suppertime. The Devil by now had Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, firmly in his grip, all set for the betrayal.

**3-6**Jesus knew that the Father had put him in complete charge of everything, that he came from God and was on his way back to God. So he got up from the supper table, set aside his robe, and put on an apron. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples, drying them with his apron. When he got to Simon Peter, Peter said, “Master, *you* wash *my* feet?”

**7**Jesus answered, “You don’t understand now what I’m doing, but it will be clear enough to you later.”

**8**Peter persisted, “You’re not going to wash my feet—ever!”

Jesus said, “If I don’t wash you, you can’t be part of what I’m doing.”

**9**“Master!” said Peter. “Not only my feet, then. Wash my hands! Wash my head!”

**10-12**Jesus said, “If you’ve had a bath in the morning, you only need your feet washed now and you’re clean from head to toe. My concern, you understand, is holiness, not hygiene. So now you’re clean. But not every one of you.” (He knew who was betraying him. That’s why he said, “Not every one of you.”) After he had finished washing their feet, he took his robe, put it back on, and went back to his place at the table.

**12-17**Then he said, “Do you understand what I have done to you? You address me as ‘Teacher’ and ‘Master,’ and rightly so. That is what I am. So if I, the Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other’s feet. I’ve laid down a pattern for you. What I’ve done, you do. I’m only pointing out the obvious. A servant is not ranked above his master; an employee doesn’t give orders to the employer. If you understand what I’m telling you, act like it—and live a blessed life.

**The One Who Ate Bread at My Table**

**18-20**“I’m not including all of you in this. I know precisely whom I’ve selected, so as not to interfere with the fulfillment of this Scripture:

The one who ate bread at my table
Turned on his heel against me.

“I’m telling you all this ahead of time so that when it happens you will believe that I am who I say I am. Make sure you get this right: Receiving someone I send is the same as receiving me, just as receiving me is the same as receiving the One who sent me.”

**Matthew 26:17-27:44**

The Message (MSG)

**The Traitor**

**17**On the first of the Days of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and said, “Where do you want us to prepare your Passover meal?”

**18-19**He said, “Enter the city. Go up to a certain man and say, ‘The Teacher says, My time is near. I and my disciples plan to celebrate the Passover meal at your house.’” The disciples followed Jesus’ instructions to the letter, and prepared the Passover meal.

**20-21**After sunset, he and the Twelve were sitting around the table. During the meal, he said, “I have something hard but important to say to you: One of you is going to hand me over to the conspirators.”

**22**They were stunned, and then began to ask, one after another, “It isn’t me, is it, Master?”

**23-24**Jesus answered, “The one who hands me over is someone I eat with daily, one who passes me food at the table. In one sense the Son of Man is entering into a way of treachery well-marked by the Scriptures—no surprises here. In another sense that man who turns him in, turns traitor to the Son of Man—better never to have been born than do this!”

**25**Then Judas, already turned traitor, said, “It isn’t me, is it, Rabbi?”

Jesus said, “Don’t play games with me, Judas.”

**The Bread and the Cup**

**26-29**During the meal, Jesus took and blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to his disciples:

Take, eat.
This is my body.

Taking the cup and thanking God, he gave it to them:

Drink this, all of you.
This is my blood,
God’s new covenant poured out for many people  for the forgiveness of sins.

“I’ll not be drinking wine from this cup again until that new day when I’ll drink with you in the kingdom of my Father.”

**30**They sang a hymn and went directly to Mount Olives.

**Gethsemane**

**31-32**Then Jesus told them, “Before the night’s over, you’re going to fall to pieces because of what happens to me. There is a Scripture that says,

I’ll strike the shepherd;
helter-skelter the sheep will be scattered.

But after I am raised up, I, your Shepherd, will go ahead of you, leading the way to Galilee.”

**33**Peter broke in, “Even if everyone else falls to pieces on account of you, I won’t.”

**34**“Don’t be so sure,” Jesus said. “This very night, before the rooster crows up the dawn, you will deny me three times.”

**35**Peter protested, “Even if I had to die with you, I would never deny you.” All the others said the same thing.

**36-38**Then Jesus went with them to a garden called Gethsemane and told his disciples, “Stay here while I go over there and pray.” Taking along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he plunged into an agonizing sorrow. Then he said, “This sorrow is crushing my life out. Stay here and keep vigil with me.”

**39**Going a little ahead, he fell on his face, praying, “My Father, if there is any way, get me out of this. But please, not what I want. You, what do *you* want?”

**40-41**When he came back to his disciples, he found them sound asleep. He said to Peter, “Can’t you stick it out with me a single hour? Stay alert; be in prayer so you don’t wander into temptation without even knowing you’re in danger. There is a part of you that is eager, ready for anything in God. But there’s another part that’s as lazy as an old dog sleeping by the fire.”

**42**He then left them a second time. Again he prayed, “My Father, if there is no other way than this, drinking this cup to the dregs, I’m ready. Do it your way.”

**43-44**When he came back, he again found them sound asleep. They simply couldn’t keep their eyes open. This time he let them sleep on, and went back a third time to pray, going over the same ground one last time.

**45-46**When he came back the next time, he said, “Are you going to sleep on and make a night of it? My time is up, the Son of Man is about to be handed over to the hands of sinners. Get up! Let’s get going! My betrayer is here.”

**With Swords and Clubs**

**47-49**The words were barely out of his mouth when Judas (the one from the Twelve) showed up, and with him a gang from the high priests and religious leaders brandishing swords and clubs. The betrayer had worked out a sign with them: “The one I kiss, that’s the one—seize him.” He went straight to Jesus, greeted him, “How are you, Rabbi?” and kissed him.

**50-51**Jesus said, “Friend, why this charade?”

Then they came on him—grabbed him and roughed him up. One of those with Jesus pulled his sword and, taking a swing at the Chief Priest’s servant, cut off his ear.

**52-54**Jesus said, “Put your sword back where it belongs. All who use swords are destroyed by swords. Don’t you realize that I am able right now to call to my Father, and twelve companies—more, if I want them—of fighting angels would be here, battle-ready? But if I did that, how would the Scriptures come true that say this is the way it has to be?”

**55-56**Then Jesus addressed the mob: “What is this—coming out after me with swords and clubs as if I were a dangerous criminal? Day after day I have been sitting in the Temple teaching, and you never so much as lifted a hand against me. You’ve done it this way to confirm and fulfill the prophetic writings.”

Then all the disciples cut and ran.

**False Charges**

**57-58**The gang that had seized Jesus led him before Caiaphas the Chief Priest, where the religion scholars and leaders had assembled. Peter followed at a safe distance until they got to the Chief Priest’s courtyard. Then he slipped in and mingled with the servants, watching to see how things would turn out.

**59-60**The high priests, conspiring with the Jewish Council, tried to cook up charges against Jesus in order to sentence him to death. But even though many stepped up, making up one false accusation after another, nothing was believable.

**60-61**Finally two men came forward with this: “He said, ‘I can tear down this Temple of God and after three days rebuild it.’”

**62**The Chief Priest stood up and said, “What do you have to say to the accusation?”

**63**Jesus kept silent.

Then the Chief Priest said, “I command you by the authority of the living God to say if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

**64**Jesus was curt: “You yourself said it. And that’s not all. Soon you’ll see it for yourself:

The Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Mighty One,
Arriving on the clouds of heaven.”

**65-66**At that, the Chief Priest lost his temper, ripping his robes, yelling, “He blasphemed! Why do we need witnesses to accuse him? You all heard him blaspheme! Are you going to stand for such blasphemy?”

They all said, “Death! That seals his death sentence.”

**67-68**Then they were spitting in his face and banging him around. They jeered as they slapped him: “Prophesy, Messiah: Who hit you that time?”

**Denial in the Courtyard**

**69**All this time, Peter was sitting out in the courtyard. One servant girl came up to him and said, “You were with Jesus the Galilean.”

**70**In front of everybody there, he denied it. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

**71**As he moved over toward the gate, someone else said to the people there, “This man was with Jesus the Nazarene.”

**72**Again he denied it, salting his denial with an oath: “I swear, I never laid eyes on the man.”

**73**Shortly after that, some bystanders approached Peter. “You’ve got to be one of them. Your accent gives you away.”

**74-75**Then he got really nervous and swore. “I don’t know the man!”

Just then a rooster crowed. Peter remembered what Jesus had said: “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” He went out and cried and cried and cried.

**Thirty Silver Coins**

**27 1-2**In the first light of dawn, all the high priests and religious leaders met and put the finishing touches on their plot to kill Jesus. Then they tied him up and paraded him to Pilate, the governor.

**3-4**Judas, the one who betrayed him, realized that Jesus was doomed. Overcome with remorse, he gave back the thirty silver coins to the high priests, saying, “I’ve sinned. I’ve betrayed an innocent man.”

They said, “What do we care? That’s *your* problem!”

**5**Judas threw the silver coins into the Temple and left. Then he went out and hung himself.

**6-10**The high priests picked up the silver pieces, but then didn’t know what to do with them. “It wouldn’t be right to give this—a payment for murder!—as an offering in the Temple.” They decided to get rid of it by buying the “Potter’s Field” and use it as a burial place for the homeless. That’s how the field got called “Murder Meadow,” a name that has stuck to this day. Then Jeremiah’s words became history:

They took the thirty silver pieces,
The price of the one priced by some sons of Israel,
And they purchased the potter’s field.

And so they unwittingly followed the divine instructions to the letter.

**Pilate**

**11**Jesus was placed before the governor, who questioned him: “Are you the ‘King of the Jews’?”

Jesus said, “If you say so.”

**12-14**But when the accusations rained down hot and heavy from the high priests and religious leaders, he said nothing. Pilate asked him, “Do you hear that long list of accusations? Aren’t you going to say something?” Jesus kept silence—not a word from his mouth. The governor was impressed, really impressed.

**15-18**It was an old custom during the Feast for the governor to pardon a single prisoner named by the crowd. At the time, they had the infamous Jesus Barabbas in prison. With the crowd before him, Pilate said, “Which prisoner do you want me to pardon: Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus the so-called Christ?” He knew it was through sheer spite that they had turned Jesus over to him.

**19**While court was still in session, Pilate’s wife sent him a message: “Don’t get mixed up in judging this noble man. I’ve just been through a long and troubled night because of a dream about him.”

**20**Meanwhile, the high priests and religious leaders had talked the crowd into asking for the pardon of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus.

**21**The governor asked, “Which of the two do you want me to pardon?”

They said, “Barabbas!”

**22**“Then what do I do with Jesus, the so-called Christ?”

They all shouted, “Nail him to a cross!”

**23**He objected, “But for what crime?”

But they yelled all the louder, “Nail him to a cross!”

**24**When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere and that a riot was imminent, he took a basin of water and washed his hands in full sight of the crowd, saying, “I’m washing my hands of responsibility for this man’s death. From now on, it’s in your hands. You’re judge and jury.”

**25**The crowd answered, “We’ll take the blame, we and our children after us.”

**26**Then he pardoned Barabbas. But he had Jesus whipped, and then handed over for crucifixion.

**The Crucifixion**

**27-31**The soldiers assigned to the governor took Jesus into the governor’s palace and got the entire brigade together for some fun. They stripped him and dressed him in a red toga. They plaited a crown from branches of a thornbush and set it on his head. They put a stick in his right hand for a scepter. Then they knelt before him in mocking reverence: “Bravo, King of the Jews!” they said. “Bravo!” Then they spit on him and hit him on the head with the stick. When they had had their fun, they took off the toga and put his own clothes back on him. Then they proceeded out to the crucifixion.

**32-34**Along the way they came on a man from Cyrene named Simon and made him carry Jesus’ cross. Arriving at Golgotha, the place they call “Skull Hill,” they offered him a mild painkiller (a mixture of wine and myrrh), but when he tasted it he wouldn’t drink it.

**35-40**After they had finished nailing him to the cross and were waiting for him to die, they whiled away the time by throwing dice for his clothes. Above his head they had posted the criminal charge against him: this is jesus, the king of the jews. Along with him, they also crucified two criminals, one to his right, the other to his left. People passing along the road jeered, shaking their heads in mock lament: “You bragged that you could tear down the Temple and then rebuild it in three days—so show us your stuff! Save yourself! If you’re really God’s Son, come down from that cross!”

**41-44**The high priests, along with the religion scholars and leaders, were right there mixing it up with the rest of them, having a great time poking fun at him: “He saved others—he can’t save himself! King of Israel, is he? Then let him get down from that cross. We’ll *all* become believers then! He was so sure of God—well, let him rescue his ‘Son’ now—if he wants him! He did claim to be God’s Son, didn’t he?” Even the two criminals crucified next to him joined in the mockery.

**John 19:24-37**

The Message (MSG)

**24-27**While the soldiers were looking after themselves, Jesus’ mother, his aunt, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene stood at the foot of the cross. Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her. He said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that moment the disciple accepted her as his own mother.

**28**Jesus, seeing that everything had been completed so that the Scripture record might also be complete, then said, “I’m thirsty.”

**29-30**A jug of sour wine was standing by. Someone put a sponge soaked with the wine on a javelin and lifted it to his mouth. After he took the wine, Jesus said, “It’s done . . . complete.” Bowing his head, he offered up his spirit.

**31-34**Then the Jews, since it was the day of Sabbath preparation, and so the bodies wouldn’t stay on the crosses over the Sabbath (it was a high holy day that year), petitioned Pilate that their legs be broken to speed death, and the bodies taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man crucified with Jesus, and then the other. When they got to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they didn’t break his legs. One of the soldiers stabbed him in the side with his spear. Blood and water gushed out.

**35**The eyewitness to these things has presented an accurate report. He saw it himself and is telling the truth so that you, also, will believe.

**36-37**These things that happened confirmed the Scripture, “Not a bone in his body was broken,” and the other Scripture that reads, “They will stare at the one they pierced.”

**Matthew 27:51-61**

The Message (MSG)

**51-53**At that moment, the Temple curtain was ripped in two, top to bottom. There was an earthquake, and rocks were split in pieces. What’s more, tombs were opened up, and many bodies of believers asleep in their graves were raised. (After Jesus’ resurrection, they left the tombs, entered the holy city, and appeared to many.)

**54**The captain of the guard and those with him, when they saw the earthquake and everything else that was happening, were scared to death. They said, “This has to be the Son of God!”

**55-56**There were also quite a few women watching from a distance, women who had followed Jesus from Galilee in order to serve him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the Zebedee brothers.

**The Tomb**

**57,58**Late in the afternoon a wealthy man from Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, arrived. His name was Joseph. He went to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. Pilate granted his request.

**John 19:39**

The Message (MSG)

**39-42**Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus at night, came now in broad daylight carrying a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. They took Jesus’ body and, following the Jewish burial custom, wrapped it in linen with the spices. There was a garden near the place he was crucified, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been placed. So, because it was Sabbath preparation for the Jews and the tomb was convenient, they placed Jesus in it.

**Matthew 27:62 -66**

The Message (MSG)

**62-64**After sundown, the high priests and Pharisees arranged a meeting with Pilate. They said, “Sir, we just remembered that that liar announced while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will be raised.’ We’ve got to get that tomb sealed until the third day. There’s a good chance his disciples will come and steal the corpse and then go around saying, ‘He’s risen from the dead.’ Then we’ll be worse off than before, the final deceit surpassing the first.”

**65-66**Pilate told them, “You will have a guard. Go ahead and secure it the best you can.” So they went out and secured the tomb, sealing the stone and posting guards.

**Matthew 28:1-8**

The Message (MSG)

**Risen from the Dead**

28**1-4**After the Sabbath, as the first light of the new week dawned, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to keep vigil at the tomb. Suddenly the earth reeled and rocked under their feet as God’s angel came down from heaven, came right up to where they were standing. He rolled back the stone and then sat on it. Shafts of lightning blazed from him. His garments shimmered snow-white. The guards at the tomb were scared to death. They were so frightened, they couldn’t move.

**5-6**The angel spoke to the women: “There is nothing to fear here. I know you’re looking for Jesus, the One they nailed to the cross. He is not here. He was raised, just as he said. Come and look at the place where he was placed.

**7,8**“Now, get on your way quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He is risen from the dead. He is going on ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there.’ That’s the message.” The women, deep in wonder and full of joy, lost no time in leaving the tomb. They ran to tell the disciples.

**Matthew 28:11-15**

The Message (MSG)

**11-15**Meanwhile, the guards had scattered, but a few of them went into the city and told the high priests everything that had happened. They called a meeting of the religious leaders and came up with a plan: They took a large sum of money and gave it to the soldiers, bribing them to say, “His disciples came in the night and stole the body while we were sleeping.” They assured them, “If the governor hears about your sleeping on duty, we will make sure you don’t get blamed.” The soldiers took the bribe and did as they were told. That story, cooked up in the Jewish High Council, is still going around.

**John 20:1-18**

The Message (MSG)

20**1-2**Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone was moved away from the entrance. She ran at once to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, breathlessly panting, “They took the Master from the tomb. We don’t know where they’ve put him.”

**3-10**Peter and the other disciple left immediately for the tomb. They ran, neck and neck. The other disciple got to the tomb first, outrunning Peter. Stooping to look in, he saw the pieces of linen cloth lying there, but he didn’t go in. Simon Peter arrived after him, entered the tomb, observed the linen cloths lying there, and the kerchief used to cover his head not lying with the linen cloths but separate, neatly folded by itself. Then the other disciple, the one who had gotten there first, went into the tomb, took one look at the evidence, and believed. No one yet knew from the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead. The disciples then went back home.

**11-13**But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she knelt to look into the tomb and saw two angels sitting there, dressed in white, one at the head, the other at the foot of where Jesus’ body had been laid. They said to her, “Woman, why do you weep?”

**13-14**“They took my Master,” she said, “and I don’t know where they put him.” After she said this, she turned away and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn’t recognize him.

**15**Jesus spoke to her, “Woman, why do you weep? Who are you looking for?”

She, thinking that he was the gardener, said, “Mister, if you took him, tell me where you put him so I can care for him.”

**16**Jesus said, “Mary.”

Turning to face him, she said in Hebrew, “*Rabboni!*” meaning “Teacher!”

**17**Jesus said, “Don’t cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go to my brothers and tell them, ‘I ascend to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.’”

**18**Mary Magdalene went, telling the news to the disciples: “I saw the Master!” And she told them everything he said to her.

**Luke 24:13-49**

The Message (MSG)

**The Road to Emmaus**

**13-16**That same day two of them were walking to the village Emmaus, about seven miles out of Jerusalem. They were deep in conversation, going over all these things that had happened. In the middle of their talk and questions, Jesus came up and walked along with them. But they were not able to recognize who he was.

**17-18**He asked, “What’s this you’re discussing so intently as you walk along?”

They just stood there, long-faced, like they had lost their best friend. Then one of them, his name was Cleopas, said, “Are you the only one in Jerusalem who hasn’t heard what’s happened during the last few days?”

**19-24**He said, “What has happened?”

They said, “The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene. He was a man of God, a prophet, dynamic in work and word, blessed by both God and all the people. Then our high priests and leaders betrayed him, got him sentenced to death, and crucified him. And we had our hopes up that he was the One, the One about to deliver Israel. And it is now the third day since it happened. But now some of our women have completely confused us. Early this morning they were at the tomb and couldn’t find his body. They came back with the story that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. Some of our friends went off to the tomb to check and found it empty just as the women said, but they didn’t see Jesus.”

**25-27**Then he said to them, “So thick-headed! So slow-hearted! Why can’t you simply believe all that the prophets said? Don’t you see that these things had to happen, that the Messiah had to suffer and only then enter into his glory?” Then he started at the beginning, with the Books of Moses, and went on through all the Prophets, pointing out everything in the Scriptures that referred to him.

**28-31**They came to the edge of the village where they were headed. He acted as if he were going on but they pressed him: “Stay and have supper with us. It’s nearly evening; the day is done.” So he went in with them. And here is what happened: He sat down at the table with them. Taking the bread, he blessed and broke and gave it to them. At that moment, open-eyed, wide-eyed, they recognized him. And then he disappeared.

**32**Back and forth they talked. “Didn’t we feel on fire as he conversed with us on the road, as he opened up the Scriptures for us?”

**A Ghost Doesn’t Have Muscle and Bone**

**33-34**They didn’t waste a minute. They were up and on their way back to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and their friends gathered together, talking away: “It’s really happened! The Master has been raised up—Simon saw him!”

**35**Then the two went over everything that happened on the road and how they recognized him when he broke the bread.

**36-41**While they were saying all this, Jesus appeared to them and said, “Peace be with you.” They thought they were seeing a ghost and were scared half to death. He continued with them, “Don’t be upset, and don’t let all these doubting questions take over. Look at my hands; look at my feet—it’s really me. Touch me. Look me over from head to toe. A ghost doesn’t have muscle and bone like this.” As he said this, he showed them his hands and feet. They still couldn’t believe what they were seeing. It was too much; it seemed too good to be true.

**41-43**He asked, “Do you have any food here?” They gave him a piece of leftover fish they had cooked. He took it and ate it right before their eyes.

**You’re the Witnesses**

**44**Then he said, “Everything I told you while I was with you comes to this: All the things written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms have to be fulfilled.”

**45-49**He went on to open their understanding of the Word of God, showing them how to read their Bibles this way. He said, “You can see now how it is written that the Messiah suffers, rises from the dead on the third day, and then a total life-change through the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed in his name to all nations—starting from here, from Jerusalem! You’re the first to hear and see it. You’re the witnesses. What comes next is very important: I am sending what my Father promised to you, so stay here in the city until he arrives, until you’re equipped with power from on high.”

**John 20:19-29**

The Message (MSG)

**To Believe**

**19-20**Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.” Then he showed them his hands and side.

**20-21**The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were exuberant. Jesus repeated his greeting: “Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you.”

**22-23**Then he took a deep breath and breathed into them. “Receive the Holy Spirit,” he said. “If you forgive someone’s sins, they’re gone for good. If you don’t forgive sins, what are you going to do with them?”

**24-25**But Thomas, sometimes called the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, “We saw the Master.”

But he said, “Unless I see the nail holes in his hands, put my finger in the nail holes, and stick my hand in his side, I won’t believe it.”

**26**Eight days later, his disciples were again in the room. This time Thomas was with them. Jesus came through the locked doors, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.”

**27**Then he focused his attention on Thomas. “Take your finger and examine my hands. Take your hand and stick it in my side. Don’t be unbelieving. Believe.”

**28**Thomas said, “My Master! My God!”

**29**Jesus said, “So, you believe because you’ve seen with your own eyes. Even better blessings are in store for those who believe without seeing.”

**John 21:1-24**

The Message (MSG)

**Fishing**

**21 1-3**After this, Jesus appeared again to the disciples, this time at the Tiberias Sea (the Sea of Galilee). This is how he did it: Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed “Twin”), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the brothers Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. Simon Peter announced, “I’m going fishing.”

**3-4**The rest of them replied, “We’re going with you.” They went out and got in the boat. They caught nothing that night. When the sun came up, Jesus was standing on the beach, but they didn’t recognize him.

**5**Jesus spoke to them: “Good morning! Did you catch anything for breakfast?”

They answered, “No.”

**6**He said, “Throw the net off the right side of the boat and see what happens.”

They did what he said. All of a sudden there were so many fish in it, they weren’t strong enough to pull it in.

**7-9**Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, “It’s the Master!”

When Simon Peter realized that it was the Master, he threw on some clothes, for he was stripped for work, and dove into the sea. The other disciples came in by boat for they weren’t far from land, a hundred yards or so, pulling along the net full of fish. When they got out of the boat, they saw a fire laid, with fish and bread cooking on it.

**10-11**Jesus said, “Bring some of the fish you’ve just caught.” Simon Peter joined them and pulled the net to shore—153 big fish! And even with all those fish, the net didn’t rip.

**12**Jesus said, “Breakfast is ready.” Not one of the disciples dared ask, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Master.

**13-14**Jesus then took the bread and gave it to them. He did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus had shown himself alive to the disciples since being raised from the dead.

**Do You Love Me?**

**15**After breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?”

“Yes, Master, you know I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

**16**He then asked a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”

“Yes, Master, you know I love you.”

Jesus said, “Shepherd my sheep.”

**17-19**Then he said it a third time: “Simon, son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was upset that he asked for the third time, “Do you love me?” so he answered, “Master, you know everything there is to know. You’ve got to know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. I’m telling you the very truth now: When you were young you dressed yourself and went wherever you wished, but when you get old you’ll have to stretch out your hands while someone else dresses you and takes you where you don’t want to go.” He said this to hint at the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. And then he commanded, “Follow me.”

**20-21**Turning his head, Peter noticed the disciple Jesus loved following right behind. When Peter noticed him, he asked Jesus, “Master, what’s going to happen to *him*?”

**22-23**Jesus said, “If I want him to live until I come again, what’s that to you? You—follow me.” That is how the rumor got out among the brothers that this disciple wouldn’t die. But that is not what Jesus said. He simply said, “If I want him to live until I come again, what’s that to you?”

**24**This is the same disciple who was eyewitness to all these things and wrote them down. And we all know that his eyewitness account is reliable and accurate.

**Matthew 28:16-20**

The Message (MSG)

**The Great Commission**

**16-17**Meanwhile, the eleven disciples were on their way to Galilee, headed for the mountain Jesus had set for their reunion. The moment they saw him they worshiped him. Some, though, held back, not sure about *worship*, about risking themselves totally.

**18-20**Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: “God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I’ll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age.”

### Acts 1:3-11

The Message (MSG)

**To the Ends of the World**

**1 3-5** After his death, he presented himself alive to them in many different settings over a period of forty days. In face-to-face meetings, he talked to them about things concerning the kingdom of God. As they met and ate meals together, he told them that they were on no account to leave Jerusalem but “must wait for what the Father promised: the promise you heard from me. John baptized in water; you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit. And soon.”

**6**When they were together for the last time they asked, “Master, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now? Is this the time?”

**7-8**He told them, “You don’t get to know the time. Timing is the Father’s business. What you’ll get is the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the world.”

**9-11**These were his last words. As they watched, he was taken up and disappeared in a cloud. They stood there, staring into the empty sky. Suddenly two men appeared—in white robes! They said, “You Galileans!—why do you just stand here looking up at an empty sky? *This very Jesus who was taken up from among you to heaven will come as certainly—and mysteriously—as he left.”*

**Mark 16:19,20**

The Message (MSG)

**19-20**Then the Master Jesus, after briefing them, was taken up to heaven, and he sat down beside God in the place of honor. And the disciples went everywhere preaching, the Master working right with them, validating the Message with indisputable evidence.

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