

16:33 Ex 16:4;
Ex 16:34;
Heb 9:4;
Rev 2:17

16:34 Ex 25:16,
Ex 25:21,
Ex 27:21;
Nm 17:10

16:35 Josh 5:12;
Neh 9:21

16:36 Ex 16:16;
Lv 5:11, Lv 6:20

17:1 Ex 16:1,
Ex 17:8, Ex 19:2;
Nm 33:12,
Nm 33:14

17:4 Nm 14:10;
1Sa 30:6; Jn 8:59

17:6 Ex 3:1;
Nm 20:11;

Dt 8:15;
Ps 78:15;
1Co 10:4

17:8 Gn 36:12;
Ex 17:1;
Nm 24:20;
Dt 25:17;
1Sa 15:2

17:9 Ex 4:20,
Ex 24:13,
Ex 32:17,
Ex 33:11;
Nm 11:28

17:10 Ex 17:9,
Ex 17:12,
Ex 24:14

17:11 1Ti 2:8

17:12 Ex 4:14,
Ex 5:20, Ex 6:20,
Ex 17:10,
Ex 24:14

17:13 Ex 17:8

³³Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put one full omer of manna in it. Then set it in the LORD's presence, where it should be kept safe for future generations." ³⁴Aaron did as the LORD commanded Moses, and he put it in front of the covenant document for safekeeping. ³⁵The Israelites ate manna for forty years, until they came to a livable land. They ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. (³⁶An omer^c is one-tenth of an ephah.)

Water from a rock

17The whole Israelite community broke camp and set out from the Sin desert to continue their journey, as the LORD commanded. They set up their camp at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ²The people argued with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink."

Moses said to them, "Why are you arguing with me? Why are you testing the LORD?"

³But the people were very thirsty for water there, and they complained to Moses, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?"

⁴So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What should I do with this people? They are getting ready to stone me."

⁵The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of Israel's elders with you. Take in your hand the shepherd's rod that you used to strike the Nile River, and go. ⁶I'll be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Hit the rock. Water will come out of it, and the people will be able to drink." Moses did so while Israel's elders watched. ⁷He called the place Massah^d and Meribah,^e because the Israelites argued with and tested the LORD, asking, "Is the LORD really with us or not?"

Israel defeats Amalek

⁸Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. ⁹Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some men for us and go fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I'll stand on top of the hill with the shepherd's rod of God in my hand." ¹⁰So Joshua did as Moses told him. He fought with Amalek while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel would start winning the battle. Whenever Moses lowered his hand, Amalek would start winning. ¹²But Moses' hands grew tired. So they took a stone and put it under Moses so he could sit down on it. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side of him so that his hands remained steady until sunset. ¹³So Joshua defeated Amalek and his army with the sword.

^cTwo quarts ^dOr test ^eOr argument

desert. Looking forward, the manna jar is to be placed in the LORD's presence (16:33) and in front of the covenant document (16:34). This refers to God's wilderness dwelling, which will be built only later in Exodus 35–40.

16:35 This comment looks ahead 40 years to a time when Israel will enter and eat the food of the land of Canaan. Only then will the manna stop (Josh 5:6, 11–12).

17:1–7 The two previous stories portrayed God as the one who tested Israel when they had no water or food (Exod 15:25; 16:4). Here at a desert location called *Rephidim*, the Israelites were the ones who tested the LORD (17:1, 7). Once again, the issue is a lack of water. And again, God meets their need.

17:3 The Israelites complain to Moses about the lack of water in words similar to their earlier complaint in the manna story (Exod 16:3).

17:5 *take . . . elders with you*: God reminds Moses not to go alone but to take other leaders with him. This reminder points forward to the story about the need for Moses to share the burden of leadership with others in the community (Exod 18:1–27; see also Num 11:10–29). God tells Moses to pick up the same *shepherd's rod* that Moses had earlier used to turn the Nile River into blood, thus robbing the Egyptians of water (Exod 7:20). This time Moses' rod will be used not to take away water but rather to provide life-giving nourishment to the Israelites. Moses will hit the

rock and water will flow from it (Exod 17:6). For a similar story, see Numbers 20:1–13.

17:6 God had first met Moses at the mountain of God called *Horeb*, which is also called Sinai (Exod 3:1; cf. Exod 19:11). God had promised that Moses would return to Horeb after leading the Israelites out of Egypt (Exod 3:12). Now God has fulfilled the promise.

17:7 *Massah and Meribah*: The two place names mean "test" and "argument" in Hebrew. God had responded positively to the Israelites' complaint, but at the same time their complaint seemed to be testing God. The people continue to wonder, "Is the LORD really with us or not?"

17:8–16 The first incident at *Rephidim* involved a natural threat to Israel's future: the lack of water (Exod 17:1). The second incident at *Rephidim* involves a human threat from the outside: an attack by Amalek and his army (17:8). The Israelites were runaway slaves. They were vulnerable and had few resources, which is why Amalek's attack was so morally shameful. Moses sends his assistant Joshua to lead the Israelites in fighting against Amalek's army (17:9). That won't be enough, however. Moses will also need God's and others' assistance. In the next story (Exod 18:1–27), Moses will also use help from others.

17:10–12 *Hur*: an elder and leader from the tribe of Judah (Exod 24:14; 31:2).

3:8 Ac 26:20;
Phi 1:11

3:9 Lk 3:8;
Jn 8:33, Jn 8:39;
Ac 13:26; Ro 4:1

3:10 Mt 7:19;
Lk 3:9, Lk 13:6;
Jn 15:2, Jn 15:6

3:11 Is 4:4;
Mk 1:4, Mk 1:8;
Jn 1:33; Ac 1:5

3:12 Job 21:18;
Ps 1:4; Is 30:24;
Mt 13:30;
Mk 9:43

3:13 Mk 1:9;
Lk 3:21

3:14 Jn 13:6;
Ac 1:5

3:15 Jn 4:34

3:16 Is 11:2,
Is 42:1; Jn 1:32;
Ac 7:56,
Ac 10:38

3:17 Ps 2:7;
Is 42:1; Mt 12:18,
Mt 17:5;
Jn 12:28

4:1 Mk 1:12,
Mk 1:13; Lk 4:1;
Heb 4:15

4:2 Ex 34:28;
1Ki 19:8;
Mt 21:18;
Mk 11:12

4:3 Mt 14:33;
Mk 3:11;
Lk 1:35; Jn 1:34;
1Th 3:5

you to escape from the angry judgment that is coming soon? ⁸Produce fruit that shows you have changed your hearts and lives. ⁹And don't even think about saying to yourselves, Abraham is our father. I tell you that God is able to raise up Abraham's children from these stones. ¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be chopped down and tossed into the fire. ¹¹I baptize with water those of you who have changed your hearts and lives. The one who is coming after me is stronger than I am. I'm not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹²The shovel he uses to sift the wheat from the husks is in his hands. He will clean out his threshing area and bring the wheat into his barn. But he will burn the husks with a fire that can't be put out."

Baptism of Jesus

¹³At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River so that John would baptize him. ¹⁴John tried to stop him and said, "I need to be baptized by you, yet you come to me?"

¹⁵Jesus answered, "Allow me to be baptized now. This is necessary to fulfill all righteousness."

So John agreed to baptize Jesus. ¹⁶When Jesus was baptized, he immediately came up out of the water. Heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting on him. ¹⁷A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son whom I dearly love; I find happiness in him."

Temptation of Jesus

4 Then the Spirit led Jesus up into the wilderness so that the devil might tempt him. ²After Jesus had fasted for forty days and forty nights, he was starving. ³The tempter came to him and said, "Since you are God's Son, command these stones to become bread."

The Kingdom of Heaven Unlike the Gospels of Mark and Luke, Matthew rarely refers to "God's kingdom." Instead, Matthew prefers the phrase "kingdom of heaven." "Heaven" is an indirect way of referring to God, following Jewish misgivings about pronouncing God's name. The phrase doesn't imply that the kingdom is located in heaven, though it does make clear that God rules from heaven and that the nature of the kingdom proclaimed by John and Jesus is determined by God's will. Proclamation of the kingdom of heaven by John and Jesus stands as a challenge to Rome's way of ruling.

3:9 Many Jews believed that descent from Abraham offered membership within Israel's covenant community, providing the basis for salvation. But John warns the religious leaders that physical descent from Abraham doesn't guarantee salvation. People needed to share in Abraham's commitments and behavior. The image of stones emphasizes this point, though without suggesting that Jews will be replaced as God's people by Gentiles.

3:11 *The one who is coming:* a Christ figure—clearly, Jesus. The word for *Spirit*, both in Greek and Hebrew, also refers to "wind." Together with *fire*, wind is frequently used as an image for judgment in the OT (e.g., Isa 4:4).

3:12 *shovel:* a tool used to separate the good seed from the husks (of chaff) and then to gather each into piles—the seed for storage, the husks for burning. John uses an image from the harvest to portray the end-time judgment, separating those who have changed their hearts and lives from those who haven't.

3:13-17 Jesus' baptism by John marks the beginning of his public ministry.

3:14 John's baptism looked forward to the baptism of "The one who is coming" (Matt 3:11). Jesus is that "one," so John recognizes that he is in need of the baptism Jesus brings, a baptism "with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Matt 3:11).

3:15 *righteousness:* refers to life lived in a restored relationship with God, which both John and Jesus preach. As the people show their commitment to God's ways in baptism, so Jesus' baptism would mark his allegiance to God's righteousness (or "justice").

3:16 *Heaven was opened:* In Ezekiel 1:1-3, the opening of heaven enables the prophet Ezekiel to see visions of God and hear the Lord's words (see John 1:51; Rev 19:11). In the same manner, Jesus sees God's Spirit coming down to him.

3:17 *A voice from heaven:* Not just for Jesus but for all to hear that Jesus is God's beloved Son. God speaks of Jesus, borrowing language from Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 42:1; and possibly Exodus 4:22-23. *I find happiness in him:* or "He is my favorite." The reference is both to God's approval and to God's delight. This clarifies Jesus' identity as God's Son and marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

4:1 *Then the Spirit led:* The Spirit's coming upon Jesus in his baptism (Matt 3:13-17) prepares for the Spirit's role as leader in Jesus' ministry here and throughout the Gospel. *the devil might tempt him:* The devil is introduced without fanfare in the role by which he will be named in Matthew 4:3: "The tempter" tempts. See Matthew 13:39; 25:41. In Matthew 4:10; 12:26; 16:23, the devil (a Greek term) is known by his Hebrew name, "Satan."

4:2 *forty days and forty nights:* Moses also fasted 40 days and 40 nights on Mount Sinai (Exod 34:28; Deut 9:9). In addition, God led the people of Israel in the wilderness for 40 years to test whether they would keep the commandments (Deut 8:2).

4:3-4 *Since you are God's Son:* Some translations read "If you are God's Son," but the Greek text leaves no doubt. The devil knows that Jesus is God's Son, so the question is how he will fulfill his role as God's Son. Will he use his status to work a miracle or will he depend on God?

⁴Jesus replied, "It's written, *People won't live only by bread, but by every word spoken by God.*"^f

⁵After that the devil brought him into the holy city and stood him at the highest point of the temple. He said to him, ⁶"Since you are God's Son, throw yourself down; for it is written, *I will command my angels concerning you, and they will take you up in their hands so that you won't hit your foot on a stone.*"^g

⁷Jesus replied, "Again it's written, *Don't test the Lord your God.*"^h

⁸Then the devil brought him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹He said, "I'll give you all these if you bow down and worship me."

¹⁰Jesus responded, "Go away, Satan, because it's written, *You will worship the Lord your God and serve only him.*"ⁱ ¹¹The devil left him, and angels came and took care of him.

Move to Galilee

¹²Now when Jesus heard that John was arrested, he went to Galilee. ¹³He left Nazareth and settled in Capernaum, which lies alongside the sea in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali.

¹⁴This fulfilled what Isaiah the prophet said:

¹⁵*Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
alongside the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,*

¹⁶*the people who lived in the dark have seen a great light,
and a light has come upon those who lived in the region
and in shadow of death.*^j

¹⁷From that time Jesus began to announce, "Change your hearts and lives! Here comes the kingdom of heaven!"

Calling of the first disciples

¹⁸As Jesus walked alongside the Galilee Sea, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, because they were fishermen. ¹⁹"Come, follow me," he said, "and I'll show you how to fish for people." ²⁰Right away, they left their nets and followed him. ²¹Continuing on, he saw another set of brothers, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father repairing their nets. Jesus called them and ²²immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

^fDeut 8:3 ^gPs 91:11-12 ^hDeut 6:16 ⁱDeut 6:13 ^jIsa 9:1-2

4:18 Mt 10:2; Mk 1:16; Lk 5:2; Jn 1:40, Jn 6:1 **4:19** Mt 8:22, Mt 9:9; Mk 1:17; Lk 5:10; Jn 1:43 **4:20** Mt 9:9 **4:21** Mt 10:2, Mt 17:1, Mt 20:20, Mt 26:37; Mk 1:19 **4:22** Mk 1:20

4:4 Dt 8:3; Mt 4:7, Mt 4:10; Eph 6:17
4:5 Neh 11:1; Neh 11:18; Is 48:2; Mt 27:53; Lk 4:9
4:6 Ps 91:11; Ps 91:12; Mt 4:3
4:7 Dt 6:16; Mt 4:4, Mt 4:10
4:8 Mt 16:26; Lk 4:5; 1Jn 2:15; 1Jn 2:16
4:9 1Co 10:20; 1Co 10:21
4:10 Dt 6:13; Dt 10:20; Isa 7:3; 1Ch 21:1; Job 1:6
4:11 Mt 26:53; Lk 22:43; Heb 1:14
4:12 Mt 14:3; Mk 1:14; Lk 3:20, Lk 4:14
4:13 Mt 11:23; Mk 1:21; Lk 4:31; Jn 2:12
4:14 Mt 1:22; Mt 8:17; Mt 12:17
4:15 Is 9:1, Is 9:2
4:16 Is 9:2; Lk 1:79, Lk 2:32
4:17 Mt 3:2; Mt 10:7; Mk 1:14; Mk 1:15

Quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, Jesus demonstrates his obedience to God; unlike Israel, who failed a similar test in the wilderness.

4:5-7 *Since you are God's Son:* See note on Matthew 4:3-4. Will Jesus test God to see if God will prove that Jesus is God's Son by protecting him from injury? Jesus refuses, quoting Deuteronomy 6:16, a reference to Israel's testing of God in the wilderness. Unlike Israel, Jesus doesn't test God, proving again that he is God's faithful Son.

4:8-10 The devil invites Jesus to transfer his loyalty from God to the devil. Jesus refuses by quoting Deuteronomy 6:13, which commands Israel to worship and serve God alone. Jesus again proves to be God's faithful Son.

4:12-16 Matthew has demonstrated in chapters 2-3 that John and Jesus are parallel figures. For this reason, when we read that John is arrested we can anticipate that Jesus will experience the same fate. For now, Jesus goes to Galilee to begin his ministry.

4:13-16 *the area of Zebulun and Naphtali:* According to the book of Joshua, after the conquest of the promised land, the lower land of Galilee west of the Lake of Galilee, which includes Nazareth, belonged to the tribes of Zebulun (Josh 19:10-16); and the area to the northwest of the Lake of Galilee belonged to the tribes of Naphtali (Josh 19:32-39). Matthew lumps them together as the primary location of Jesus' ministry. *This fulfilled what Isaiah the prophet said:* See Isaiah 9:1-2. When Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, invaded Israel in 732 BCE, he captured Gilead and Galilee,

including all the land of Naphtali (2 Kgs 15:29). As a result, this region became the Assyrian province of Galilee with Megiddo as its capital. That is probably why this region is called "Galilee of the nations [or Gentiles]" in Isaiah (Isa 9:1-2). Matthew will later develop the significance of this phrase when he reports Jesus' words that salvation is to include "all nations" (Matt 28:16-20) or "the Gentiles" (Matt 12:16-21). The prophecy from Isaiah referred to the birth of a Davidic heir as a promise for the restoration of the occupied Assyrian provinces. For Matthew, this message is fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus.

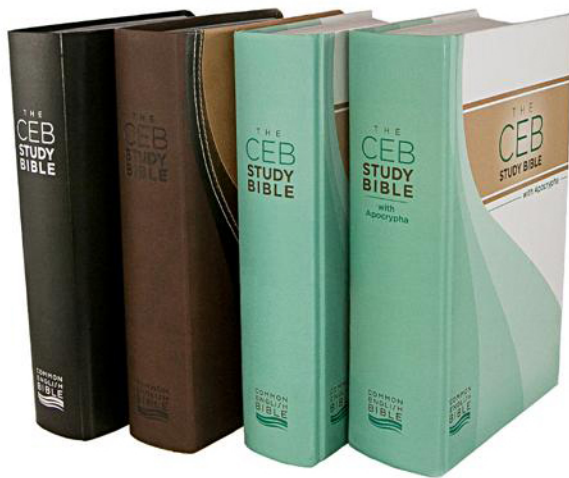
4:17-25 A summary of Jesus' entire ministry and message (Matt 4:17) leads to two stories in which Jesus calls disciples (4:18-22) and to a summary of Jesus' itinerant ministry (4:23-25). These stories demonstrate what it means to *Change your hearts and lives* and for the *kingdom of heaven* to draw near. See sidebar, "The Kingdom of Heaven" at Matthew 3.

4:18-22 In the ancient world, fisherfolk were peasants. Matthew's two accounts portray different kinds of fishing—Peter and Andrew have only nets, which they throw into the lake; whereas James and John are part of a family business with a boat.

4:19, 22 *fish for people:* From the very beginning, the calling of disciples suggests missionary activity. *they left:* Both in 4:19 and 4:22, the response is immediate and complete. They left their ways of life, even family. This wholesale following after Jesus summarizes the nature of discipleship.



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