

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,
that our ancestors were all under the cloud
and all passed through the sea,
and all of them were baptized into Moses
in the cloud and in the sea.

All ate the same spiritual food,
and all drank the same spiritual drink,
for they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them,
and the rock was the Christ.

Yet God was not pleased with most of them,
for they were struck down in the desert.

These things happened as examples for us,
so that we might not desire evil things,
as they did.

And do not become idolaters, as some of them did,
as it is written,
*The people sat down to eat and drink,
and rose up to revel.*

Let us not indulge in immorality as some of them did,
and twenty-three thousand fell within a single day.

Let us not test Christ as some of them did,
and suffered death by serpents.

Do not grumble as some of them did,
and suffered death by the destroyer.

These things happened to them as an example,
and they have been written down as a warning to us,
upon whom the end of the ages has come.

Therefore, whoever thinks he is standing
secure should take care not to fall.

No trial has come to you but what is human.

God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength;
but with the trial he will also provide a way out,
so that you may be able to bear it.

The word of the Lord.

+A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Mt. 5:17-47

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.

Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away,
not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter
will pass from the law,
until all things have taken place.

Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments
and teaches others to do so
will be called least in the Kingdom of heaven.

But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments
will be called greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.

I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses
that of the scribes and Pharisees,
you will not enter into the Kingdom of heaven.

"You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *You shall not kill; and whoever kills
will be liable to judgment.*

But I say to you,
whoever is angry with his brother
will be liable to judgment,
and whoever says to his brother, *Raqa*,
will be answerable to the Sanhedrin,
and whoever says, 'You fool,'
will be liable to fiery Gehenna.

Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar,
and there recall that your brother
has anything against you,
leave your gift there at the altar,
go first and be reconciled with your brother,
and then come and offer your gift.

Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court.
Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge,
and the judge will hand you over to the guard,
and you will be thrown into prison.

Amen, I say to you,
you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.

"You have heard that it was said,
You shall not commit adultery.

But I say to you,
everyone who looks at a woman with lust
has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

If your right eye causes you to sin,
tear it out and throw it away.

It is better for you to lose one of your members
than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna.

And if your right hand causes you to sin,
cut it off and throw it away.
It is better for you to lose one of your members
than to have your whole body go into Gehenna.
"It was also said,
Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.
But I say to you,
whoever divorces his wife – unless the marriage is unlawful –
causes her to commit adultery,
and whoever marries a divorced woman
commits adultery.
"Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors,
*Do not take a false oath,
but make good to the Lord all that you vow.*
But I say to you, do not swear at all;
not by heaven, for it is God's throne;
nor by the earth, for it is his footstool;
nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.
Do not swear by your head,
for you cannot make a single hair white or black.
Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.'
Anything more is from the Evil One.
"You have heard that it was said,
An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.
But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil.
When someone strikes you on your right cheek,
turn the other one as well.
If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic,
hand over your cloak as well.
Should anyone press you into service for one mile,
go for two miles.
Give to the one who asks of you,
and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.
"You have heard that it was said,
You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.
But I say to you, love your enemies,
and pray for those who persecute you,
that you may be children of your heavenly Father,
for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good,
and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.
For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have?
Do not the tax collectors do the same?
And if you greet your brothers only,
what is unusual about that?
Do not the pagans do the same?"