



**BIBLE**  
HOMEWORK

## What Jesus Said

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### 3. Matthew 4:12-25. *Jesus begins to preach and gather his disciples*

This story is found in the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 4, from the twelfth verse through to the twenty-fifth verse. We write it like this: **Matthew 4:12-25**. *BibleHomework* uses this format throughout its website.

#### The Scripture:

**Matthew 4:12** - When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee.

**4:13** - Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali—

**4:14** - to fulfil what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

**4:15** - “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

**4:16** - the people living in darkness have seen a great light on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”

**4:17** - From that time on Jesus began to preach, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”**

**4:18** - As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers; Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

**14:19** - **“Come, follow me,”** Jesus said, **“and I will send you out to fish for people.”**

**4:20** - At once they left their nets and followed him.

**4:21** - Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them,

**4:22** - and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

**4:23** - Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

**4:24** - News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them.

**4:25** - Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

## The Explanation:

John the Baptist has been captured and thrown into prison. Jesus knows that this is his cue to start his own Ministry and so begins to preach the message that people need to change their lives and adhere to God's words.

As he begins his travels he starts meeting several men who will become his **Disciples** – his followers (also known as Apostles). They all have a very important part to play in fulfilling all that has been said (prophesised) in the Old Testament regarding Jesus' future. Simon and his brother Andrew, and James with his brother John were all fishermen. Upon hearing Jesus speak to them, they dropped everything and followed him immediately.

Jesus also starts performing miracles of healing and crowds begin to gather and follow him.

## Places and People Mentioned:

**Galilee:** Is a large area in today's Northern Israel, located on the Eastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea.

**The Decapolis:** The Decapolis ("Ten Cities"; Greek: deka, ten; polis, city) was a group of ten cities on the eastern frontier of the Roman Empire in Judea and Syria. The ten cities were not an official league or political unit, but they were grouped together because of their language, culture, location, and political status, with each possessing a certain degree of autonomy and self-rule. The Decapolis cities were centres of Greek and Roman culture in a region that was otherwise Semitic (Nabatean, Aramean, and Jewish). With the exception of Damascus, Hippos and Scythopolis, the "Region of the Decapolis" was located in today's Jordan.

- i. **Gerasa** (Jerash) in Jordan
- ii. **Scythopolis** (Beth-Shean) in Israel, the only city west of the River Jordan.
- iii. **Hippos** (Hippus or Sussita) in Israel
- iv. **Gadara** (Umm Qais) in Jordan
- v. **Pella** (West of Irbid) in Jordan
- vi. **Philadelphia**, modern day Amman, the capital of Jordan
- vii. **Capitolias** (Beit Ras) in Jordan (Dion, Jordan)
- viii. **Canatha** (Qanawat) in Syria
- ix. **Raphana** in Jordan
- x. **Damascus**, the capital of modern Syria; Damascus was considerably north of the others and so is sometimes thought to have been an "honorary" member.

**Jerusalem:** Was the capital of Judea, and is the Capital of the State of Israel (though this is contested by some members of the World Community). It is one of the oldest cities in the world located in the Judean Mountains.

**Judea:** The name of the mountainous southern part of the Land of Israel, roughly corresponding to today's Southern West Bank. The region is named after both the biblical tribe of 'Judah' and with the old 'Kingdom of Judah'

**Zebulun & Naphtali:** Zebulun and Naphtali are tribes of Israel – Naphtali was the second son of the Jacob, and Zebulun was the sixth son of Jacob. The twelve sons of Jacob are the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. Each tribe had an area within Israel to live.

**Nazareth:** Is today Israel's largest city in the North District. In the New Testament, we are told that Jesus grows up in Nazareth.

**Capernaum:** Located on the North shore of the Sea of Galilee.

**John The Baptist:** In the Gospel of St. Luke he is described as a relative of Jesus. He was a travelling preacher, announcing the coming of 'The Messiah' and baptising people in the River Jordan.

**Zebedee:** Husband to Salome, Father to James and John.

**Simon (Peter):** The son of John or of Jonah or Jona, he was from the village of Bethsaida in the province of Galilee.

**Andrew:** Brother of Simon, He is considered the founder and the first bishop of the Church of Byzantium

**James:** He was a son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of John the Apostle. He is also called James the Greater to distinguish him from James, son of Alphaeus, who is also known as James the Less.

**John:**

He was the son of Zebedee and Salome and brother of James, son of Zebedee. Tradition claims he outlived all of the apostles, or Disciples and died in old age in Ephesus. He is also known as the 'Beloved Disciple'.

**Questions:**

1. What do you think the news of John the Baptist's capture would mean to Jesus?
2. What would be meant by "living in darkness"?
3. What do you think is meant by the "Kingdom of Heaven is near?"
4. Why do you think the fishermen gave up their lives to follow Jesus following a simple command?
5. What sort of miracles was performed by Jesus?