

Instructions to the Church
*A colometric-concordant translation*¹

Matthew 18:1-14

- ¹ *At that time his followers come to Jesus, saying,*
‘Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’
- ² *and having called a child to him, he makes it stand in their midst,*
^{3a} *and he says:*
- ❖
- ^{3b} For sure, I say to you, lest you turn around and become like a child,
you will never go into the kingdom of heaven;
⁴ therefore, whoever makes himself as low as this child,
is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven;
⁵ and whoever welcomes one such child,
welcomes me;
⁶ but whoever makes one of these little ones who believe in me, stumble,
it is better for him that an upper millstone is hung about his neck
and [that] he is drowned in the depth of the sea.
- ⁷ Woe to the world for the stumbling-blocks,
for it may be necessary that stumbling-blocks come,
but more woe to the man by whom the stumbling-block comes;
⁸ and if your hand or your foot makes you stumble,
cut it off and throw it from you;
it is better for you to go into life crooked or crippled,
than, having two hands or two feet, being thrown into the everlasting fire;
⁹ and if your eye makes you stumble,
take it out and throw it from you;
it is better for you to go one-eyed into life,
than, having two eyes, being thrown into the ‘gehenna’ of the fire.
- ❖
- ¹⁰ See to it that you do not despise one of these little ones,
for I say to you:
in heaven their messengers always watch the face of my father in heaven.
- ¹¹ ² *[For the son of man comes (to find and) to save what was lost.]*

¹ This is based on the work of F.H. Breukelman, *Bijbelse theologie. I,1 Schrift-lezing*. Een verhandeling over de kolometrische weergave van bijbelse teksten als hulp bij het lezen en als grondslag voor de exegetische (Kampen: Kok, 1980) – probably a good reason to learn Dutch. Some information about colometry, as distinguished from stichometry, in classical texts was already in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th Edition (1910 pass.), now on [Wikipedia](#). More can be found in: Bruce M. Metzger, *Manuscripts Of The Greek Bible. An Introduction to Greek Palæography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), which is on [Google Books](#) now.

² This is an issue of textual criticism. The standard text of the Greek New Testament (*Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. Nestle-Aland²⁷) omits verse 11, which appears to be borrowed from Lk. 19:10. Most Greek witnesses for the Gospel according to Matthew have it included – notably the Majority Text (ⲛⲗ, 5th–9th century), and also the Codex Bezae (D, 5th century) and others – however, the most authoritative witnesses, including the Codex Sinaiticus (ⲛ, 4th century) and the Codex Vaticanus (B, 4th century), as well

12 What do you assume?
 if some man happens to have a hundred sheep [cf. Ezek. 34:6,12,16;
 and one of them goes astray, Ps. 119:176]
 will he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountain
 and, having gone out, seek for the one that went astray?
 13 and if it happens that he finds it,
 for sure, I say to you,
 that he rejoices over it, more than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray.
 14 Thus it is not the will behind³ your father in heaven
 that one of these little ones would be lost.



Matthew 18:15-19:1

15 If your brother does wrong [to you],
 go and show him his fault between you and him alone; [cf. Lev. 19:17]
 if he hears you, you have gained your brother;
 16 if he does not hear you, bring one or two along with you,
 that *by the mouth of two or three witnesses every saying shall stand*; [= Deut. 19:15]
 17 if he does not want to hear, you must say it to the congregation;
 if he does not want to hear the congregation either,
 he shall be to you as the foreigner and the tax collector.
 18 For sure, I say to you,
 whatever you bind on the earth, will be bound in heaven,
 and whatever you untie on the earth, will be untied in heaven;
 19 again, [for sure,] I say to you,
 if two of you speak in unison about anything on the earth that you ask for,
 it will happen to them through my father in heaven;
 20 for where two or three are gathering,
 in my name I will be there in their midst.
 21 Then, coming closer, Peter says to him,
 ‘Lord, how often will my brother do wrong to me and I forgive him⁴?
 As many as seven times?’
 22 Jesus says to him,
 ‘I do not say to you as many as seven times,
 but as many as seventy times.’ [cf. Gen. 4:24]



23 Because of this, the kingdom of heaven is like a man, a king,
 who wants to settle accounts with his servants;
 24 and when he begins to settle one is brought to him,
 a debtor of ten thousand talents;

as the Kirsopp Lake minuscules (f^{1.13}, 12th–13th century) do not. The Codex Regius (L, 8th century) has the verse inserted in the margin – also adding two words, apparently to accord with Lk. 19:10 (here indicated by brackets) – while the verse was originally omitted. The conclusion is, that if we decide to read this verse, it should be considered as a later addition. Hence the square brackets and italics in this translation.

³ Or: in front of.

⁴ Or: leave it behind.

25 and since he cannot give it back to him,
the lord orders him to be sold, and his wife and his children and all he has,
and makes him give it back;
26 the servant then, falling down, kisses his feet, saying,
'Have patience with me and I will give it all back to you';
27 and, taking pity, the lord of this servant sends him away
and he acquits⁵ his debt;
28 but, coming outside, this servant finds one of his fellow servants,
who has a debt with him of hundred denarii,
and, seizing him, he chokes him, saying,
'Give back your debt';
29 his fellow servant then, falling down, pleads with him,
'Have patience with me and I will give it back to you';
30 and he does not want to, but, having gone away, throws him into prison,
until he could give back his debt;
31 so his fellow servants, seeing what has happened, are deeply grieved,
and, having gone, they make clear to their lord all that has happened;
32 then his lord, having called him, says to him,
'All these debts I have acquitted for you, because you pleaded with me;
33 should you not have had mercy too on your fellow servant,
as I have had mercy on you?
34 and, getting furious, his lord hands him over to the prison guards
until he could give back all of his debt.
35 So also my father in heaven will do to you
if you do not forgive⁶ each your brother from from your heart.



1 *And it happens, when Jesus has completed these words,
that he departs from Galilee;
and he comes into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.*



⁵ *Or: leaves it out.*

⁶ *Or: leave it behind.*