

THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE

Matthew 5: 1-2; 6: 25-34

1. And it came to pass, that seeing the multitudes of people gathering before him, Jesus went up into an mountain, but not an high one, and when He was set down upon a convenient rock, his disciples came unto Him saying, Why sit ye here upon this stone, convenient and symbolic though it is? Verily, the aforementioned multitudes of people are seeking thy words and teaching, and if we keep them waiting much longer they will grow anhungered and we shall have to feed them:
2. And so, even though He knew what He would do when that time came, opened He His mouth, and taught them, leaving the beatitudes for another lection, saying,
25. Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; and pay no heed unto the Best Before dates, for they are but a marketing ploy by the authorities and the food shall be wholesome for some days afterwards. Though not all of them. (For He knew which ones were to go off.) And take no thought for your body, what ye shall put on, and what ye shall use to cover thyself in the morning when thou arise from thy bed. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Though take care not to leave thy house in scanty clothing that hideth not thy modesty as some do in those suspect parts of the town. And Jesus looked at Peter, and Peter remembered.
26. I tell you, behold the fowls of the air: for whilst they maketh much mess upon thy rooftops and upon thy clothing drying in the sun, they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Well, a bit anyway. And the people did wag their heads and murmur agreement for they understood this teaching, which was a change. And some did look up at the sky, yet some doubted.
27. And suddenly He continueth, Which of you by taking thought or exercising on machines or with weights can add one cubit unto his or her stature? And Thomas, raising his eyes unto heaven, did comment loudly, He meaneth not thy muscles but height. And the people were satisfied. [1]
28. And Jesus said, And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, often in places where they are not desired; they toil not, neither do they spin:
29. And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Which was wise, for a king who dressed like a flower would carry little respect.
30. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven and - woof! - is no longer, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? And some did puzzle exceedingly over this saying for they did not liken unto the idea of being thrown into an oven despite the stories of Shadrach, Mesach and Abednego. And some pulled out their loin copies of Daniel and began to question his metaphor.
31. Therefore, sayeth Jesus, And please put those away and pay attention. Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? or, Shall we get take-away tonight?
32. (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek, and they eateth out in diverse places and drink many fine wines and wear clothes of two different cloths, and that's just for starters:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things and that thou hast strict kosher regulations. But that might change. And He looked at Peter again.
33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. And at this saying did some of the people take out lutes and divers stringed instruments and start singing in chorus but were silenced by the disciples who did frown at them and make gestures with their fingers.
34. And Jesus concluded, Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. And the things of itself and just that. Things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, without those things. Or with those things. Of itself. Or themselves. And the people did depart much confused by these final words, and the disciples did ask Him privately about their meaning. And they still didn't get it, and so they returned unto Bethany.

- [1] In some early manuscripts the following verses appear at this point. They were included in the first editions of the Great Wenchester Bible, but after some debate the translators deemed them to be non-canonical and were omitted from later printings.

And lo, there was in the crowd an woman by name of Biba, and she was of short stature, and had been afflicted of this from her youth. And she did have much trouble in reaching things that had been placed upon high shelving and as a consequence was much grieved. And he had of late taken to wearing shoes with elevated heels so that she might fetch her provisions with greater ease, but on hearing these words of Jesus she did approach him and cast her shoes at his feet saying, Lord, I am not worthy to increase my height. And Jesus answereth her, Thou art blessed in thy stature. From this time on thou shalt find all that thou needest on a lower shelf. And looking around he declared, This woman's sin is forgiven her, for she has seen the glory of the Father from below. And Judas (yes, that one) did pick up the shoes and marvel at their design and said, These could be sold and the money given to the woman. But Jesus replied, Cast them away for they are of cheap construction. The short will be always with us and need to be received without such frippery. And Judas did throw the shoes down, but they were secretly taken up by Thomas who doubted and he did keep them for a later occasion.