



**New  
Testament  
Series:  
The Gospel  
of St.  
Matthew**

Jay Olaguer  
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**THE POWER OF FOUR** offers startling evidence for the existence of a mysterious biblical code and the four keys that open its marvelous spiritual treasures. Drawing connections throughout the entire Bible, the book revolves around the keys of the four allegorical creatures mentioned in Ezekiel and the Apocalypse, the four collections of Old Testament books, the four structural clues at the beginning of each gospel, and the four sets of seven hidden symbols in each gospel.

Unlike the *Bible Code*, which requires a computer to decipher, or the execrable *Da Vinci Code*, the genuine "code" behind the Gospels is hidden in plain sight. Offering a view that runs counter to the received wisdom of our age—which considers Scripture as no more than a haphazard collection of writings by time- and culture-bound human authors—the four keys enable us to understand the entire Bible as the systematic work of an Infinite Mind, and ultimately allow the reader to discern the deeper meanings of the life of Jesus Christ.

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**EDUARDO P. OLAGUER, JR.** holds an S.B. in Physics and a Ph.D. in Meteorology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His theological publications include *Born From Above: A Commentary on St. John's Gospel*, *The Old and the New: A Dual Commentary on Genesis and the Gospel of St. Matthew*, and *Son of God, Son of Man: On the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke*.

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THE POWER OF FOUR



# THE POWER OF FOUR

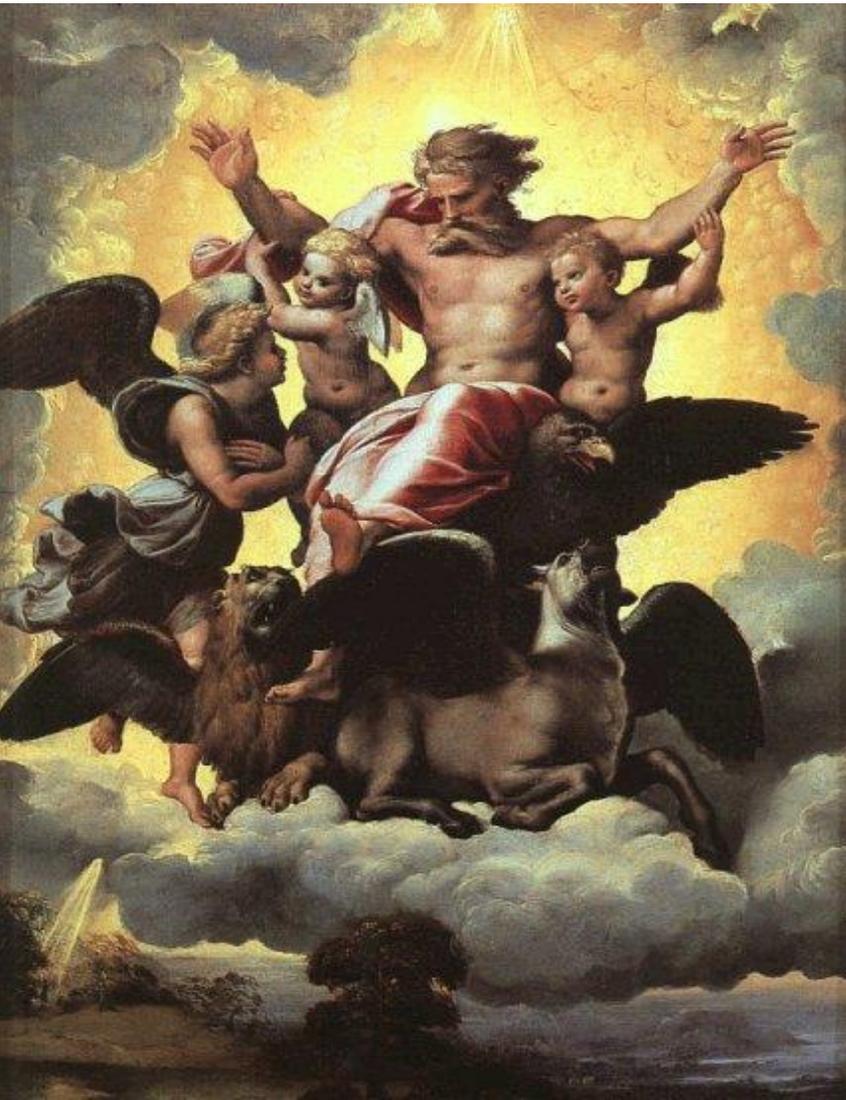
Keys to the Hidden Treasures of the Gospels  
Eduardo P. Olaguer, Jr.



# The Four Keys to the Gospels

- The Four Creatures (Cherubim)
- Four Sets of Old Testament Books
- Four Maps (Structural Clues)
- Four Sets of Seven Treasures

# The Four Cherubim



- Order in Ezekiel (1:1-10):  
**Man, Lion, Ox, Eagle**
- Order in Apocalypse (4:1-8):  
**Lion, Ox, Man, Eagle**
- Church Fathers agreed that there was a correlation between four creatures and four gospels, but disagreed as to the correlation order.
- Artistic tradition sides with Ezekiel (e.g., *Book of Kells*)
- **Why not take both Ezekiel and the Apocalypse at face value?**

# The Synoptics vs. John

- Matthew, Mark, and Luke are referred to as the synoptic (“same eye”) gospels, because of their significant overlap in material.
- Modern scholars regard Mark as the earliest gospel (Marcan primacy), whereas Matthew and Luke are thought to draw from Mark, plus another source (*Quelle* or “Q”) for Jesus’ sayings.
- Assignments of the four cherubim:
  - Matthew = Man + Lion
  - Mark = Lion + Ox
  - Luke = Ox + Man
  - John = Eagle

# Old Testament Canon

- Jewish division of Hebrew Scriptures (TaNaK):
  - **Torah** (Law): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy
  - **Nevi'im** (Prophets): Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings (Former Prophets), Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Twelve (Latter Prophets)
  - **Ketuvim** (Writings): Ruth, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Lamentations, Daniel, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
- The Catholic Church added 7 “deuterocanonical” books (Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Baruch, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach).
- Christian distinction between Historical and Wisdom books:
  - **Historical**: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Tobit Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees
  - **Wisdom**: Jobs, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Wisdom, Sirach

# The Four Gospels and the Old Testament

- The teaching of St. Augustine:
  - “The New Testament is hidden in the Old, and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New.” *Questions on the Heptateuch* 2.73
- The correspondences:
  1. Matthew—Torah (Pentateuch in Greek)
  2. Mark—Joshua and the Nevi'im
  3. Luke—Historical Books
  4. John—Genesis and Wisdom Books

# The Four Maps

- Rhetorical devices unique to each gospel
- Structural clues at beginning of each gospel
- The “map” of each gospel:
  - Matthew: *Chiasmus* (mountain structure)
  - Mark: *Inclusio* (“sandwich” technique)
  - Luke: *Diptych* (side-by-side presentation)
  - John: *Parataxis* (repetition of simple words or phrases)

# Four Sets of 7 Treasures

- Perfect number 7 = Number of God (3) + Number of Creation (3+1=4)
- Symbolizes union between God and Creation that results from the mystical marriage between Jesus Christ and the Church.
- The “treasures” of the gospels:
  - Matthew: 7 mountains linked to 7 Mosaic feasts
  - Mark: 7 elements of St. Peter’s *kerygma* linked to 7 stone memorials of Joshua
  - Luke: 7 visits to the Temple of Jerusalem linked to 7 great events in Historical Books
  - John: 7 “I AM” sayings of Jesus linked to 7 days of Creation

# Outline of the Torah, Part I:

## Genesis

- The Seven Days of Creation (1-2)
- The Fall of Man, Cain and Abel (3-5)
- The Flood and Noah's Ark (6-9)
- The Origin of the Nations and the Tower of Babel (10-11)
- The Covenant with Abraham (12-20), where God:
  - promises 1) multitude of descendants, 2) royalty and kingship
  - demands circumcision of sons.
- The Sacrifice and Marriage of Isaac (21-24)
- The Patriarch Jacob (Israel) and his Twelve Sons (25-36)
- Israel's Migration to Egypt under Joseph (37-50)

# Outline of the Torah, Part II: Exodus

- The Persecution of the Israelites by Pharaoh (1-2)
- God Reveals His Name (YHWH) to Moses in the Burning Bush (3-4)
- The Ten Plagues of Egypt (5-11)
- The Institution of the Feast of Passover (12-13)
- The Crossing of the Red Sea (14-15)
- The Crossing of the Sinai Desert and the Gift of Manna (16-18)
- The Covenant of Mount Sinai (19-24), where God:
  - promises 1) Israel will be His special people, 2) a kingdom of priests
  - demands that Israel keep the Law of the Covenant:
    - The Ten Commandments
    - The Laws of Worship and Sacrifice
    - The Dietary (Kosher) Laws
    - The Sabbath and Annual Feasts
- The Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant (25-31)
- The Golden Calf, the Breaking and Rewriting of the Tablets of the Law, and the Repetition of the Covenant Elements (32-40)

# Outline of the Torah, Part III:

## Leviticus

- The Sacrificial System (1-7)
- The Ordination of Priests (8-10)
- The Laws of Cleanliness and Purification (11-22)
- The Seven Liturgical Feasts (23)
  - Passover (Pesach)
  - Unleavened Bread (Hag Hamatzah)
  - First Fruits (Bikkurim)
  - Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)
  - Atonement (Yom Kippur)
  - Pentecost (Shavuot)
  - Booths (Sukkoth)
- The Tabernacle Lampstand and Table, Penalties for Serious Sins (24)
- The Year of Jubilee (25-27)

# Outline of the Torah, Part IV: Numbers

- The First Census of Israel (1-8)
- The Failed Entry into Canaan (9-15)
- The Rebellions in the Desert against Moses and Aaron (16-21)
- The Oracles of Balaam (22-25)
- The Final Census of Israel (26-36)

# Outline of the Torah, Part V: Deuteronomy

- Review and Summary of the Law of Moses (1-26)
  - The Shema: “Hear O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD; and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might (Deuteronomy 6:4).”
- Blessings for Obedience, Curses for Disobedience (27-30)
- The Anointing of Joshua and the Death of Moses on Mount Nebo (31-34)

# The Covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David

- **Abraham (Genesis 17:6)**
  - “I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.”
- **Moses (Exodus 19:5-6)**
  - “Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”
- **David (2 Samuel 7:12-13)**
  - “I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body... and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

# Key #1

## The Man and the Lion

- The covenants of Abraham, Moses, and David promised a **priestly** people, with a line of descendants of **royal** nature leading to an everlasting kingdom (**Lion**) ruled by a Son of David (**Man**) .
- David's name had a **numerical value of 14** in *gematria*. David's son, **Solomon**, had a gold and ivory throne flanked by **14 lions** (2 Chronicles 9:17-19).
- St. Matthew's gospel was written to the Jews, and therefore emphasized that **Jesus fulfilled the covenant** between God and Israel, beginning with His genealogy.
  - “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, **the son of David, the son of Abraham** (Mathew 1:1).”
  - “So all the generations from **Abraham to David** were **fourteen** generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon **fourteen** generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ **fourteen** generations (Matthew 1:17).”

# The New Covenant

- Foreshadowed in **Exodus 34:1-28**
  - “The Lord said to Moses, ‘Cut two tablets of stone like the first; and I will write upon the tables the words that were on the first tables, which you broke...’ And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write these words; in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.’ And [Moses] wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.”
- Foreshadowed in **Jeremiah 31:31-34**
  - “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel... not like the covenant I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: ***I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*** And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for ***I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.***”
- Established by Jesus at the Last Supper (**Matthew 26:28**)
  - “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many ***for the forgiveness of sins.***”

# The Kingdom of God

- In addition to fulfilling the priestly aspects of the Covenant through His Passion, Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom of God.
- Jesus taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come (Matthew 6:10).”
- God’s kingdom is a spiritual rather than a political entity. It is a secret hidden within the soul of man, much like the Ark of the Covenant behind the veil of the Tabernacle.
- The Parables (Matthew 13) allude to the secrets of the Kingdom of God. According to John Fenton, the peak of the gospel is reached when Jesus turns from the crowds to explain the Parables to His disciples.
  - ***“To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:11).”***

# Key #2

## The New Torah

- St. Matthew's gospel presents Jesus as the New Moses, the Lawgiver of the New Covenant and of the Kingdom of God.
- St. Matthew's gospel is naturally divided into 5 sections corresponding to the 5 books of the Torah, in most cases separated by the formula, "when Jesus finished these words."

# Section 1

## Matthew 1:1-2:15 (Genesis)

- The generations of Genesis and Matthew
  - “This is the book of the generations of Adam (Genesis 5:1).”
  - “The book of the genealogy (Greek: *biblos geneseos*) of Jesus Christ (Mathew 1:1).”
- Jesus’ foster father, Joseph, is similar to his namesake in Genesis who:
  - received divine messages in dreams
  - was a “father to Pharaoh (Genesis 45:8)”
  - married the daughter of the priest of On (Genesis 41:45)
  - brought his family down to Egypt in a crisis.

# Section 2

## Matthew 2:16-7:29 (Exodus)

- The Holy Family's sojourn in Egypt and return to Nazareth enabled Matthew to quote the prophet Hosea: "***Out of Egypt, have I called my son*** (Hosea 11:1, Matthew 2:15)." **This is the transition to the Exodus section of the gospel.**
- Herod's slaughter of the Innocents mirrors Pharaoh's massacre of the Hebrew infants, from which Moses was delivered, much like Jesus was from Herod.
- Jesus' baptism in the Jordan and temptation in the desert during 40 days mirrored the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea and 40 year journey.
- Jesus' Sermon on the Mount corresponds to Moses' giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai.

# Section 3

## Matthew 8:1-11:1 (Leviticus)

- Leviticus prescribes rules for inspection and ritual cleansing of leprosy.
- Jesus healed a leper and commanded him to “show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses prescribed (Matthew 8:4).”
- Jesus is compared to the scapegoat of Leviticus 16:20-22.
  - “He took our infirmities and bore our diseases (Matthew 8:17).”
- Leviticus forbids priests to touch a dead person. For the high priest, “not even for his father and mother may he thus be unclean and leave the sanctuary (Leviticus 21:12).”
- To one who said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father (Matthew 8:21),” Jesus replied, “Let the dead bury their dead (Matthew 8:22).”

# Section 4

## Matthew 11:2-18:35 (Numbers)

- Heightened opposition by the scribes, Pharisees, and Saducees mirror the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram against Moses in Numbers 16:1-35.
- Jesus called His opponents “blind guides” (Matthew 15:14), recalling the prophet, Balaam, who was blinded by greed to a warning angel (Numbers 22:1-35).
- Jesus alludes to the two censuses of Israel in Numbers.
  - “Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:3)”

# Section 5

## Matthew 19:1-28:20 (Deuteronomy)

- Compare the beginning of this section in Matthew's gospel with that of Deuteronomy:
  - “When Jesus finished these words, he left Galilee and went to the district of Judaea across the Jordan (Matthew 19:1).”
  - “These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan (Deuteronomy 1:1).”
- Jesus' condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 23) parallel the curses in case of disobedience pronounced on Mt. Ebal according to the instructions of Deuteronomy 27.
- Parallels between Moses and Jesus:
  - Moses summarized the Law before ascending Mt. Nebo.
  - Jesus summarized the New Law before ascending Golgotha, including the two greatest commandments (Matthew 22:34-40).
  - Moses' body was never found.
  - Jesus' risen body was seen only by His disciples.

# Key #3

## The Chiasmus: Up and Down

- Chiasmus is a rhetorical device made up of ascending and descending elements (AB:BA).
- The genealogy in Matthew 1:1-17 is a series of ascending and descending generations.
- David Wenham was the first modern scholar to notice the chiastic arrangement of Jesus' Parables about the Kingdom of God in Matthew 13.
- John Fenton and Thomas Constable consider the entire Gospel of St. Matthew as a chiasmus centered on the Parables.

# Matthew's Chiasmic Structure

## Chapters

1-4	Jesus' birth, and the beginning of His ministry
5-7	Sermon about entry into the Kingdom of God
8-9	Jesus' ministry in Galilee
10	Sending of the apostles
11-12	Rejection of John the Baptist and Jesus
<b>13</b>	<b>The Parables</b>
14-17	John the Baptist's death, controversies between Jesus and the Pharisees, Jesus predicts His own death
18	Reception and forgiveness of a disciple of Christ
19-22	Journey to and entry of Jerusalem
23-25	Final teachings about the Kingdom of God
26-28	Jesus' last days, His Passion and Resurrection

# Spiritual Meaning of Chiasmus

- Moses' comment on the Law:
  - “For this commandment... is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ (Deuteronomy 30:11-12)”
- St. Paul's teaching on the Law:
  - “Moses describes in this way the righteousness that is by the law: ‘The man who does these things will live by them.’ But the righteousness that is by faith says: ‘Do not say in your heart, Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down) or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? ‘The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,’ that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:5-9).”
- Jesus' incarnation and death, by which He descended from heaven to earth and then from earth to the netherworld, and His resurrection from the dead followed by His ascension into heaven, mysteriously save us from the condemnation of the Law.

# Key #4

## The Seven Mountains

- The chiasmus of St. Matthew's gospel is physically represented by the mountain.
  - “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings (Isaiah 52:7).”
- When God made a covenant with Abraham, he used the title, *El Shaddai* (Gen 17:1-2), meaning “God of the mountains.”
- The Good News (Gospel) of Matthew is outlined by Jesus' actions on 7 mountains.
- The 7 mountains also correspond to the 7 feasts established by Moses in the Torah (Leviticus 23).

# The First Mountain: The Temptation in the Desert

- Moses won a battle against the Amalekites while standing on a mountain in the wilderness (Exodus 17:8-16).
- Jesus overcame the temptation of Satan on a desert mountain (Matthew 4:8).
- The temptations of Jesus corresponded to the failures of the Israelites in the desert on the way to Mount Sinai:
  - Grumbling at lack of food (Exodus 16:1-15)
  - Testing God at Massah and Meribah (Exodus 17:1-7)
  - Worshipping the golden calf (Exodus 32:1-20).
- Jesus' victory over Satan represents the first fruits of faith, hope, and love after His Baptism in the Jordan, and corresponds to the **Feast of First Fruits** (Lev 23:9-14).
- The risen Jesus lives in us as the first fruits of the Kingdom.

# The Second Mountain: The Sermon on the Mount

- Moses gave the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai.
- Jesus proclaimed the New Law at the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-7:2).
- The Beatitudes correspond to the Blessings of the Law of Moses pronounced on Mt. Gerizim (Deuteronomy 28:1-14).
- The Law of the New Covenant would be written on the hearts of the apostles on the **Feast of Pentecost** (Leviticus 23:15-22).
- Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to the “poor in spirit,” enabling them to keep God’s commandments.

# The Third Mountain:

## The Feeding of the Four Thousand

- God fed the Israelites manna in the desert.
- Jesus fed a crowd of four thousand on a hill along the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 15:29-39).
- Afterwards, Jesus warned his disciples when they had forgotten to bring any bread, “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 16:6).”
- Event corresponds to the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** (Leviticus 23:6-8).
- Jesus feeds us His Body and Blood so we can maintain communion with God and avoid sin.

# The Fourth Mountain: The Transfiguration

- God appeared to Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel on Mt. Sinai, calling to Moses out of a cloud that covered the mountain after six days (Exodus 24:9-16).
- Jesus was transfigured before the apostles, Peter, James, and John, while the Father spoke out of a cloud. This happened six days after Jesus first spoke about His coming Passion (Matthew 17:1-5).
- Just as the elders of Israel ate and drank after seeing God without dying, as they were protected by the blood of the covenant that was offered to God immediately before His appearance on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 24:3-8), Jesus reminded the disciples of His coming Passion at the Last Supper.
- The Transfiguration anticipated Christ's fulfillment of the **Feast of Passover** (Leviticus 23:4-5).
- Jesus instituted the Eucharist as the blood of the New Covenant, and as a means for us to visibly see God in the Eucharistic species.

# The Fifth Mountain: The Mount of Olives

- The Mount of Olives had been used as a cemetery for 1,000 years before Christ.
- Jesus gave a discourse on the Last Judgment.
- This event corresponds to the **Feast of Booths** (Lev 23:33-44), which celebrated the autumn harvest. The Jews would build booths made of the boughs of trees, palm fronds and leaves to dwell in during the feast.
- Jesus will return at the end of time to gather us into the New Jerusalem, so we can dwell in God.

# The Sixth Mountain: Golgotha

- Jesus died in atonement for the sins of the human race on Golgotha (Calvary), a hill overlooking Jerusalem. At His death, the veil of the Temple was torn open.
- Jesus' death on Golgotha corresponded to the **Feast of the Atonement** (Leviticus 16:1-34, 23:26-32), during which the High Priest would sprinkle the blood of a bull on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant behind the curtain of the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle.
- Jesus' everlasting atonement enables us to approach the Father, because of the blood He shed on the Cross.

# The Seventh Mountain: Galilee

- After His resurrection from the dead, Jesus summoned His disciples to a mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28:16), where He said:
  - “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you (Matthew 28:19-20).”
- This event corresponded to the **Feast of Trumpets** (Leviticus 23:23-25) at the beginning of the Jewish year.
- Go tell the world that God saves through Jesus!

# Why Is All This Important?

- “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word that proceeds from the mouth of God** (Matthew 4:4).”
- “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ (St. Jerome).”
- We must take Jesus seriously in **Matthew 13:10-17**.
- If we are not attentive to the deeper things of God in Scripture, and instead rely on our own substitutes for His Word, **the less supernatural help we will receive from God, whose Word we have grossly underestimated.**
- As opposed to Gnosticism, in which knowledge saves, the **Word of God saves by inspiring reverence and awe** (fear of the Lord) that leads to **faith and obedience.**
- We must be **evangelized as well as sacramentalized.**