

UPDATE ON THE WEEKLY BIBLE NOTES AND RESPONSE TO CSPS

March 3, 2024

HISTORY

The *Weekly Bible Notes* began in 1979 as the *Researched Bible Guide*, providing commentary on the citations included in the weekly *Christian Science Bible Lesson* from scholarly, mainstream Christian commentaries. In 2007, I purchased the publication from Daybreak Publications, and continued the work as the *Weekly Bible Notes*. Both the previous owners and I have strived to provide a study aid which supports the theology of Christian Science. Countless thousands have subscribed during the 47 years of publication, and we have done so in plain sight and without interference from the Christian Science Publishing Society. In fact, for years the *Researched Bible Guide* advertised in the *Christian Science Monitor*. When I took over publication in 2007, then Manager of the Christian Science Publishing Society, Lyon Osborn, granted me a license to use the citations of the *Bible Lesson* and in Lesson order – which they hold the copyright. I have been operating under that license for 17 years without incident. Then on February 22, 2024, out of the blue, I received this email:

Dear Mr. Mohlenbrock,

As manager of the Bible Lessons department at the Christian Science Publishing Society, I have the opportunity to correspond with readers around the world regarding the Bible Lessons. Even when focused on logistical topics, these messages invariably share an appreciation of the Lessons and of the inspiration and healing they bring to our experience. They often spark gratitude for all that readers—like yourself—do in *living* what the lessons teach and preach, which is of course the whole reason we study them. Though my writing today is prompted by legal concerns, I hope you'll feel this gratitude as well.

A friend of mine recently shared with me a CSDirectory.com email advertisement with a sample of a study resource that included the citations of a Bible lesson from the *Christian Science Quarterly* with the text of another Bible translation in place of the text published by CSPS. Upon further exploring CSDirectory.com, I found a number of similar documents that reproduce the citations of Bible Lessons from the *Quarterly* with various commentary or Bible translations. Unfortunately these offerings on CSDirectory.com infringe CSPS's copyright, and we need to ask you to discontinue the creation and distribution of the following items, including making past issues available:

- Weekly Bible Notes
- Translation Resources
- Composite Translations Document

The core issue is that these resources reproduce the citations that constitute the lessons in the *Christian Science Quarterly*. The *selection* and *arrangement* of these citations is copyrighted, so reproducing and distributing them in various formats, regardless of the addition of different translations or commentary, violates that copyright. In addition to what's listed above, if there are other resources on your websites or distributed via other channels that also reproduce the selection and arrangement of the citations published in the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lessons, we'd ask that you discontinue those as well.

I am sure that your desire is to support Christian Scientists and their engagement with the Bible, *Science and Health*, and the Bible Lessons, and know that you have previously worked with staff at CSPS and The Mother Church to ensure that your activities respect CSPS's copyright. I trust your appreciation for the copyright continues, and that we can work along these same lines. Your desire to support others can assuredly find a fruitful—and legally sound—channel. As such, this message is intended to inform you of these copyright violations so you can appropriately end activities that don't meet this standard.

If it would be helpful to chat about this on the phone or via Zoom, I would be happy to do so.

Best regards,
Eli Reynolds

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I responded to Mr. Reynolds that we would drop the posting of the *Bible Lesson* verses in the alternate modern translations and paraphrases immediately – resources that have been extremely popular on our website.

However, I did point out that *we were operating under a license granted to us by CSPS in 2007*.

He said that he was unaware of our license and said he would research the issue. I then received this email on February 29, 2024:

Dear Mark,

My apologies for the delay in getting back to you, but the additional context about your activity and its license from 2007 prompted further research and discussion before following up. We have a sense of the significance of this activity to you and your subscribers and want to ensure each step we take is done with care and love. We still feel it is in the best interest of the Bible Lessons and the Movement to continue with our request for you to cease the publication and distribution of the content mentioned in my initial email.

Our legal department located the communications you had with Lyon Osborn in 2007 and the language of the license CSPS granted at the time. It seems clear that this permission was intended to be a temporary step while CSPS considered how to address multiple instances of third-party use of content from the Bible Lessons. Unfortunately other needs pulled focus away from that discussion, and the awareness of your license and your activity was lost sight of until now. My apologies for not having a fuller understanding of the circumstances before reaching out last week—and that it's taken CSPS 17 years to follow up on this.

Knowing that you may have obligations to your subscribers and to support a graceful transition for your publication, we'd like to afford you further time to end the production and distribution of your Weekly Bible Notes feature or to explore modifications to it that would not involve reproducing the citations of the

Bible Lessons. Six months seems like a reasonable amount of time to us, allowing you time to work with your subscribers and for them to plan for next steps. This would make the September 1, 2024 lesson on Christ Jesus the last lesson covered under the permission given in 2007.

Above all, please know that your love for the Bible Lessons is recognized and appreciated. The Lessons are so important to our understanding and demonstration of the inspired Word, and the responsibility for their publishing appropriately remains with CSPA. Mrs. Eddy earnestly defended her copyrights, including those she entrusted to the CSPA. Our motive in asking for these changes is fidelity to her desire for a unified and trusted Lesson-Sermon.

If you have any questions, please feel free to be in touch with me or permissions@cspa.com.

Best regards,
Eli

So, after 47 years of publication – and *17 years operating with a license*, CSPA has notified me that they will be revoking our license to use the *Bible Lesson* selected Bible verses and verse fragments in the unique order found in the *Bible Lesson* (their copyright). They are asking us to cease publication or to modify our publication so that we are not infringing on their copyright. **I chose to do the latter.**

The Bible texts are a gift from God. They belong to everyone. We therefore are retooling the format of the *Weekly Bible Notes* to offer commentary in canonical order on selected **complete stories and/or chapters** from the Bible. This research can be used as a study aid in conjunction with your study of the weekly *Bible Lesson*. The new format is designed so you can **print and arrange the complete stories/chapters in 3-ring binders in canonical order for future, easy reference.** Each week, new complete stories and chapters, suggested in the *Bible Lesson*, will be researched and presented so that you can **build a cumulative Bible reference tool.** *I've wanted to do this for years!*

Since the material is presented in canonical order and the complete stories are commented on, not just the selected verses and verse fragments found in the Lesson, the order of which makes no sense unless you have a *Christian Science Quarterly*, **non-Christian** Scientists may find the *Weekly Bible Notes* helpful in their Bible study as well. (And they will be exposed to a bit of metaphysical ideas from the **METACOMMENTS** that we include which are from the articles of the early CS Periodicals in the public domain.)

This retooling is a work in progress. **I invite you to check out this week's issue of the *Weekly Bible Notes* on the following pages of this document.** I appreciate your feedback, ideas, and support.

In Christly love,

Mark Mohlenbrock, Publisher, *Weekly Bible Notes*

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"As adherents of Truth, we take the inspired Word of the Bible as our sufficient guide to eternal Life."

(Mary Baker Eddy - *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* p. 497)

I L L U S T R A T E D
Weekly Bible Notes
Researched Bible Guide weeklybiblenotes.com

REGULAR EDITION

Digging deeper into the inspired Word of the Bible

For study the week of **March 4 - 10, 2024**

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Suggested uses and notes for the *Illustrated Weekly Bible Notes*:

The **complete chapters and/or stories** are provided in canonical order for your weekly Bible study. The format is designed so you can **print and arrange the complete stories / chapters in 3-ring binders in canonical order for future, easy reference**. New chapters/stories are published each week, so that you can **build a cumulative Bible study reference tool**.

The text of each featured chapter / story is presented in the **Common English Version (CEB)**, and just below the block of text are links to the text in nine other translations or paraphrases. An **alternate, modern Bible translation for each verse** is provided with the commentary on each verse, and a list of the Bible version abbreviations with full titles and copyright information can be found at the end of this document.

NEW! The **“Bible Character Notes”** mentioned are now part of your Weekly Bible Notes subscription. Use your login credentials to access.

METACOMMENTS are helpful metaphysical notes relating to a verse or story. As of 2024, articles from the Christian Science periodicals from 1928 and earlier are in the public domain.

“As adherents of Truth, we take the inspired Word of the Bible as our sufficient guide to eternal Life.”

— Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* p. 497

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Ruth 1:1-22

The Family in Moab

Naomi Loses Her Husband and Sons

(CEB)* ¹ During the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. A man with his wife and two sons went from Bethlehem of Judah to dwell in the territory of Moab. ² The name of that man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They entered the territory of Moab and settled there. ³ But Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died. Then only she was left, along with her two sons. ⁴ They took wives for themselves, Moabite women; the name of the first was Orpah and the name of the second was Ruth. And they lived there for about ten years. ⁵ But both of the sons, Mahlon and Chilion, also died. Only the woman was left, without her two children and without her husband.

Ruth's Loyalty to Naomi

⁶ Then she arose along with her daughters-in-law to return from the field of Moab, because while in the territory of Moab she had heard that the LORD had paid attention to his people by providing food for them. ⁷ She left the place where she had been, and her two daughters-in-law went with her. They went along the road to return to the land of Judah. ⁸ Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, "Go, turn back, each of you to the household of your mother. May the LORD deal faithfully with you, just as you have done with the dead and with me. ⁹ May the LORD provide for you so that you may find security, each woman in the household of her husband." Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. ¹⁰ But they replied to her, "No, instead we will return with you, to your people." ¹¹ Naomi replied, "Turn back, my daughters. Why would you go with me? Will there again be sons in my womb, that they would be husbands for you? ¹² Turn back, my daughters. Go. I am too old for a husband. If I were to say that I have hope, even if I had a husband tonight, and even more, if I were to bear sons— ¹³ would you wait until they grew up? Would you refrain from having a husband? No, my daughters. This is more bitter for me than for you, since the LORD's will has come out against me." ¹⁴ Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth stayed with her. ¹⁵ Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her people and to her gods. Turn back after your sister-in-law." ¹⁶ But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to abandon you, to turn back from following after you. Wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. ¹⁷ Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD do this to me and more so if even death separates me from you." ¹⁸ When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her about it.

Naomi and Ruth Return to Bethlehem

¹⁹ So both of them went along until they arrived at Bethlehem. When they arrived at Bethlehem, the whole town was excited on account of them, and the women of the town asked, "Can this be Naomi?" ²⁰ She replied to them, "Don't call me Naomi,^[a] but call me Mara,^[b] for the Almighty^[c] has made me very bitter. ²¹ I went away full, but the LORD has returned me empty. Why would you call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has deemed me guilty?" ²² Thus Naomi

returned. And Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, returned with her from the territory of Moab. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

*(Common English Bible) View text in: [AMP](#) | [GNT](#) | [KJV](#) | [MSG](#) | [NET](#) | [NIV](#) | [NLT](#) | [NRSV](#) | [VOICE](#)

COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

1 Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. (KJV)

(NLT) In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, a man from Bethlehem in Judah left the country because of a severe famine. He took his wife and two sons and went to live in the country of Moab.

MAPS: "Bethlehem Judah," map and article, [BibleAtlas.org](#); "Moab," map and article, [BibleAtlas.org](#)

COMMENTARY: This story takes place in the days of the Judges (c.1250-1000 BC), and probably comes from oral traditions circulated during Solomon's reign (970-930 BC). It may not have been written down until after the Babylonian exile. "Famine covers the area known as 'the house of bread' (*Beth*, house; *lehem*, bread). Members of a clan named 'Fruitfulness' [the meaning of "Ephrathites," verse 2] move to Moab in order to live, but end up dying one after another, leaving no 'fruit' (children)." (*The New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)*) "The judges were rulers rather than deciders of disputes, and led Israelite tribes before the establishment of the kingdom. A famine occurred fairly often in Palestine, where the crops depended upon both the regularity and the amount of the early and the latter rains....To sojourn, 'live as a resident alien,' involved in the ancient world the forfeiting of all legal rights. The sojourner must put himself under the direct protection of the ruler; or he must attach himself to some important citizen....Moab lay east of the Dead Sea." (*The Interpreter's Bible (IB)*, p832-3) "Bethlehem Judah, or EPHRATH or EPHRATHAH (which see) is now Beit Lahm (Arabic = "house of meat"), a town of upward of 10,000 inhabitants, 5 miles South of Jerusalem and 2,350 ft. above sea level....The surrounding country is fertile, cornfields, fig and olive yards and vineyards abound. Bethlehem is not naturally well supplied with water, the nearest spring is 800 yds. to the Southeast, but for many centuries the "low level aqueduct" from "Solomon's Pools" in the ArTas valley, which has here been tunneled through the hill, has been tapped by the inhabitants; there are also many rock-cut cisterns." ([BibleAtlas.org](#))

2 And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. (KJV)

(VOICE) His name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi; their two sons were called Mahlon and Chilion. They were *descendants* of Ephraim's tribe from Bethlehem in Judah. They had settled and made lives for themselves in Moab,

Elimelech; Naomi; Mahlon; Chilion: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

PRONUNCIATIONS: "Elimelech (e-lim'e-lek)" [Audio](#) is only mentioned here in the Bible. His wife was "Naomi (nay-oh'mee)." [Audio](#) "Mahlon (mah'lon), [Audio](#) the name may mean 'sickly' in Hebrew; Chilion (kil'ee-uhn), [Audio](#) the second son born to Elimelech and Naomi. The name may mean 'weakness' in Hebrew," (*Harper Collins Bible Dictionary (HBD)*)

COMMENTARY: *Ephrathites* "Ephrathah was another name for the region of Bethlehem (Genesis 48:7; Micah 5:2). (*Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary (NNIBC)*) "God had promised the Israelites that if they departed from Him He would discipline them by sending famine on the Promised Land. The famine on Israel at this time indicates God's judgment for unfaithfulness. As Abram had migrated to Egypt as a result of a famine in his day ([Genesis 12:10](#)), so Elimelech migrated to Moab to obtain food for his family....There are many motifs that occur in the patriarchal narratives in Genesis and reappear in Ruth. This repetition seems to indicate that

one of the writer's purposes was to present Ruth as another of Israel's notable matriarchs who, despite many natural barriers, provided important leaders for the nation by God's grace." (**Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)**) "The name Naomi...literally means "my pleasant one" or "my lovely one." Her name will become the subject of a wordplay in 1:20-21 when she laments that she is no longer "pleasant" but "bitter" because of the loss of her husband and two sons." (**New English Translation notes**)

3 And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. (KJV)

(NET) Sometime later Naomi's husband Elimelech died, so she and her two sons were left alone.

COMMENTARY: "We do not know how long they were there. Nothing is recounted of their doings until the death of the head of the household. Interestingly he is called *Naomi's husband*, though it is rare for a man to be characterized with reference to a woman. But in this story he plays no part whereas Naomi is a central figure. Naomi was left, i.e., 'left in life', 'remained alive'." (**The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (TOTC)**, p250) "The want increases when the head of the family, Elimelech, dies – leaving his wife and sons to fend for themselves. Hunger and death thus become the negative conditions for a significant leitmotif in Ruth: *bread and life*. No mention is made of the cause of Elimelech's death. Later traditions could not allow such an event to remain unexplained, however, and have interpreted his death as a just punishment for leaving his homeland and failing to show solidarity during the famine." (**The Old Testament Library (OTL)** p43)

4 And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years. (KJV)

(NET) Both her sons married Moabite women. (One was named Orpah and the other Ruth.) And they continued to live there about ten years.

Orpah; Ruth: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

PRONUNCIATION: "Orpah (awr' pah)," [audio](#) (**Harper Collins Bible Dictionary (HBD)**).

COMMENTARY: "Although tragic is the loss of her husband, Naomi's aloneness is mitigated by the fact that her two sons are alive....the sons' marriage must have fanned Naomi's flickering hope into brighter flame, although the text does not offer any valuation of these marriages to Moabite women.... Both marriages, however, are marked by infertility: ten years, but no children. The covenantal implications are clear. As Yahweh withheld the rain and thus produced the famine, so he withheld fertility, hence no children." (**The NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC)**, p116-7) We learn from 4:10 that Mahlon married Ruth and Chilion married Orpah. K&D tells us: "Marriage with daughters of the Moabites was not forbidden in the law, like marriages with Canaanite women (Deut. vii.3)." (**Commentary on the Old Testament (K&D)**) "The name Orpah is from the noun ("back of the neck") and the related verb ("to turn one's back"). The name Ruth (*rut*) is from the noun ("friendship"), derived from the root (*rea'*, "friend, companion"). Ironically, Orpah will eventually turn her back on Naomi, while Ruth will display extraordinary friendship as her life-long companion (see 1:14). Since they seem to mirror the most definitive action of these women, perhaps they designate character types (as is the case with the name *Mara* in 1:21 and *Peloni Almoni* in 4:1) rather than their original birth names." (**New English Translation notes**)

5 And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. (KJV)

(TPT) Mahlon and Chilion also died and left Naomi all alone without husband or sons.

COMMENTARY: "The names given to Naomi's sons are symbolic of the short-lived role they will play in the story. 'Mahlon' sounds like the disease that hit the Egyptians before the exodus, and 'Chilion' seems to come from the root (*kala*), meaning 'to perish'....When the two sons also die, we are told that 'the woman was left without her two sons and her husband'. Naomi will be the center of narrative attention throughout the rest of the chapter." (**The New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)**, p901) "Naomi had now accumulated a great load of personal

grief. Her husband and her only sons had died before their time. She was a stranger in a foreign land. If the family name were to carry on, there had to be an heir. But having no sons, Naomi was left without hope. Her Moabite daughters-in-law offered her no apparent means to an heir.” (*Bible Knowledge Commentary (BKC)*)

6 Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread. (KJV)

(TPT) Sometime later, Naomi heard that Yahweh had visited his people and blessed them with an abundant harvest; so she decided to leave Moab with her daughters-in-law.

COMMENTARY: “Naomi learned that rain had come to her homeland. The famine was ended and God provided food (crops from the field and fruit from the trees). It was the Lord who had stopped the famine and given rain; it was not Baal, who the Canaanites believed was the god who sent rain.” (*Bible Knowledge Commentary (BKC)*) **“divine intervention.** As would be the case for any natural occurrence, the Lord is seen as intervening to bring an end to the famine. In the ancient Near East, deity played the most important role in cause and effect, both in history and in nature. In our worldview we would be inclined to identify human or natural cause and effect first and then mention that “of course, God was behind it all.” In the ancient Near East it would be the other way around. God would be identified as the cause behind famine or war, with natural or human causes given secondary notice, if mentioned at all. They would not rule out natural causes any more than we would rule out supernatural ones.” (Victor Harold **Matthews**, Mark W. **Chavalas**, and John H. **Walton**, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Ru 1:6.)

7 Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. (KJV)

(VOICE) Naomi prepared to return with her daughters-in-law. With Orpah and Ruth at her side, she began her journey back to Judah, leaving the place where she had lived.

COMMENTARY: “Return is a key word in Ruth. Hebrew forms of this word are used several times in this first chapter. Here is an apt illustration of repentance. Naomi reversed the direction she and her husband had taken. She turned away from Moab and the errors of the past. She turned her back on the tragic graves of her loved ones and headed back to Judah, her homeland.” (*Bible Knowledge Commentary (BKC)*)

8 And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. (KJV)

(VOICE) Naomi (to Orpah and Ruth): You have accompanied me far enough; you must both return to Moab. Go home to your mothers’ care and your people. May the Eternal show His loyal love to you just as you demonstrated it to my dead sons and me.

COMMENTARY: “Naomi had assumed that her daughters-in-law were merely accompanying her to Judah out of respect and courtesy with the intention of returning to Moab afterwards. She told them that this was unnecessary. Her maternal suggestion was that they should return to their mother’s home, confident that God would reward them for having been good wives and dutiful daughters-in-law...*May Hashem deal kindly with you....* ‘God does not withhold reward from any creature!’ Naomi’s blessing must be understood as saying: Just as you both have gone beyond what is expected of you by doing *kindness*, so may Hashem [God] not only reward you in the usual manner, but may He go beyond the expected and do *kindness*, with you.” (*The ArtScroll Tanach Series (ART)*, p71-2) “*Heb* “each to the house of her mother.” Naomi’s words imply that it is more appropriate for the two widows to go home to their mothers, rather than stay with their mother-in-law (see F. W. Bush, *Ruth, Esther* [WBC], 75).” (*New English Translation notes*)

9 The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept. (KJV)

(TPT) And may Yahweh give you another husband and cause you to find rest in a happy home." Then Naomi tenderly embraced Orpah and Ruth and kissed them goodbye, but they wailed and sobbed.

COMMENTARY: Naomi wished "rest" (Heb. *menuhah*) for her daughters-in-law in the household of their next husbands (Ruth 1:9). Rest was one of the great blessings God had promised the Israelites as they anticipated entrance into the Promised Land. It refers to security, which in this case marriage would give Ruth (lit. friendship) and Orpah (lit. neck), rather than freedom from work." (**Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)**)

10 And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people. (KJV)

(AMP) And they said to her, No, we will return with you to your people.

COMMENTARY: "Orpah and Ruth agree in rejecting the suggestion. They assure Naomi that they will certainly go back with her to her people." (Arthur E. **Cundall** and Leon **Morris**, *Judges and Ruth: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 7, **Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries** (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1968), 246.) "**And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.** So King James's version. The expression in the original is broken at the commencement: "And they said to her, For with thee we shall return to thy people." It is as if they had said, "Do not insist on our return to our mothers' homes, *for evith thee we shall return to thy people.*" Note the expression, "we shall return," instead of "we shall go with thee in thy return to thy people." For the moment they identify themselves with their mother-in-law, as if they had come with her from Judah." (H. D. M. **Spence-Jones**, ed., *Ruth, The Pulpit Commentary* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 12.)

11 And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? (KJV)

(NEB) But Naomi said, 'Go back, my daughters. Why should you go with me? Am I likely to bear any more sons to be husbands for you?

COMMENTARY: "According to the old Levirate law—a survival of rude and barbarous times—Orpah and Ruth, having had husbands who died without issue, would have been entitled to claim marriage with their husbands' brothers, if such surviving brothers there had been (see Deut. 25:5–9; Matt. 22:24–28). And if the surviving brothers were too young to be married, the widows, if they chose, might wait on till they reached maturity (see Gen. 38.). It is in the light of these customs that we are to read Naomi's remonstrances. The phraseology in the second interrogation is very primitive, and primitively 'agglutinative.' "Are there yet to be sons in my womb, and they shall be to you for husbands?" (H. D. M. **Spence-Jones**, ed., *Ruth, The Pulpit Commentary* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 12.)

12 Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons; (KJV)

(NLT) No, my daughters, return to your parents' homes, for I am too old to marry again. And even if it were possible, and I were to get married tonight and bear sons, then what?

COMMENTARY: "*Too old to get married again.* Naomi may be exaggerating for the sake of emphasis. Her point is clear, though: It is too late to roll back the clock." (**New English Translation notes**) "She draws attention to her age. She is too old for marriage. Then she embarks on a somewhat different argument, but calculated, like the preceding, to show the impossibility of the young women's coming with her. Even should she become a wife again and bear sons, they could not wait for the boys to grow up. Naomi is clear that there is no point in their continuing with her. They should seek marriage elsewhere." (Arthur E. **Cundall** and Leon **Morris**, *Judges and Ruth: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 7, **Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries** (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1968), 248.)

13 **Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me. (KJV)**

(MSG) can you imagine being satisfied to wait until they were grown? Would you wait that long to get married again? No, dear daughters; this is a bitter pill for me to swallow—more bitter for me than for you. GOD has dealt me a hard blow.”

COMMENTARY: “grieves: Naomi was bitter (Heb. marar, “grieves” here) that she was without husband and sons and attributed her circumstances to God’s discipline.” **(Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Commentary (NNIBC))**

14 **And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her. (KJV)**

(NLT) And again they wept together, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye. But Ruth clung tightly to Naomi.

COMMENTARY: “Orpah should not be unduly criticized for returning to Moab. She was obeying the wishes of her mother-in-law. Nothing more is said in the Book of Ruth about Orpah. Presumably she remarried in Moab. Ruth, however, did the unexpected. Though Orpah chose to seek a husband, Ruth clung to Naomi, apparently choosing to follow and serve her widowed mother-in-law rather than seek a husband. In Ruth’s mind the decision probably meant that she would never have a husband or children.” **(Bible Knowledge Commentary (BKC))** “The Hebrew verb for “cling tightly” is *davaqah*. It carries the sense of permanent bonding (as with adhesive). The term is used in the Bible for covenantal devotion and clinging to God or a person. Loaded with spiritual meaning to a Hebrew speaker, this is the major term for spiritual cleaving to God in Rabbinic literature. In a sense, Ruth was entering into a covenant with Naomi. The Targum states, using several sources, that Ruth truly desired to be a proselyte to the Jewish faith. The Jewess Naomi is a type of Israel, and the gentile Ruth is a type of the church. As Ruth stayed connected to Naomi (Israel), Naomi would lead her to Boaz (a type of our Kingsman-Redeemer, Jesus).” **(The Passion Translation Notes)**

15 **And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. (KJV)**

(TPT) Naomi said, “Ruth, listen. Your sister-in-law is going back to Moab to her people and to her gods. Now go with her.”

COMMENTARY: “Naomi tried one last time to convince Ruth to return to Moab. The word for gods (‘elohîm) refers to the deities of Moab. Here we are reminded that coming to Israel was also coming to the one Lord; remaining outside of Israel was remaining away from the covenant community.” **(Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Commentary (NNIBC))**

16 **And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: (KJV)**

(TPT) But tearfully, Ruth insisted, “Please don’t ask me again to leave you! I want to go with you and stay with you. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will now be my people, and your God will now be my God.

COMMENTARY: “Ruth had endured three entreaties of her mother-in-law to return home to Moab (Ruth 1:11-12, Ruth 1:15). But she chose life with Naomi over her family, her national identity, and her religious idolatry. In one of the most beautiful expressions of commitment in all the world’s literature she laced her future to that of Naomi. She confessed allegiance to the people of Israel (your people) and to the God of Israel (your God). Here was a stirring example of a complete break with the past. Like Abraham Ruth decided to leave her ancestors’ idolatrous land to go to the land of promise. And Ruth did it without the encouragement of a promise. In fact

she made her decision despite Naomi's strenuous encouragement to do otherwise." (*Bible Knowledge Commentary* (BKC))

METACOMMENT: "Ruth's loyalty to God was the result of her spiritual understanding. Her experiences had helped her to know the true God, and her faith in Him enabled her to turn somewhat from the false sense of life and human relationship to realize man's true relationship to God. This healed her of the sense of loss and separation." (Rockefeller, Susan T., "Loyalty", *Sentinel* Vol. 26 (8 March 1924), p. 546.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1924/3/26-28/loyalty>

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. (KJV)

(NLT) Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!"

COMMENTARY: "Ruth here pronounces a curse upon herself, elevating the preceding promise to a formal, unconditional level. If she is not faithful to her promise, she agrees to become an object of divine judgment. As in other occurrences of this oath/curse formula, the specific punishment is not mentioned. As Bush explains, the particle (*ki*) here is probably asseverative ("indeed, certainly") and the statement that follows expresses what underscores the seriousness of her promise by invoking divine judgment, as it were, if she does otherwise. Of course, the Lord would not have been obligated to judge her if she had abandoned Naomi—this is simply an ancient idiomatic way of expressing her commitment to her promise (F. W. Bush, *Ruth, Esther* [WBC], 82)." (*New English Translation notes*)

18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. (KJV)

(MSG) When Naomi saw that Ruth had her heart set on going with her, she gave in.

COMMENTARY: "*Heb* "she ceased speaking to her." This does not imply that Naomi was completely silent toward Ruth. It simply means that Naomi stopped trying to convince her to go back to Moab (see F. W. Bush, *Ruth, Esther* [WBC], 84-85)." (*New English Translation notes*)

19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi? (KJV)

(EXB) So Naomi and Ruth went on until they came to the town of Bethlehem. When they entered Bethlehem, all the people became very excited [the whole town was abuzz/stirred up]. The women of the town said, "Is this really Naomi?"

COMMENTARY: "The impression given is that they now proceeded alone (they two went) as they made their way towards Bethlehem. It would not be a pleasant journey for two women on their own. And when they arrived in the small town of Bethlehem word got around that Naomi was coming. Workers in the fields would have seen these two helpless women and had seemingly thought that they recognised Naomi. The result was that when the women entered the town the majority of its inhabitants were showing a deep interest in them, and were indeed asking whether this could possibly be Naomi, who had been away for so long." (*Pett Commentary on the Bible* (PETT))

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. (KJV)

(NRSV) She said to them, "Call me no longer Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me.

COMMENTARY: "Naomi temporarily forgot or ignored the courageous and loyal commitment of Ruth. She wanted her name to reflect her bitterness over her." (*Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary* (NNIBC)) "The name *Naomi* means "pleasant." The name *Mara* means "bitter." *Heb* "Shaddai"; traditionally "the Almighty." The etymology and meaning of this divine name is uncertain. In terms of use, Shaddai (or El Shaddai)

is presented as the *sovereign* king/judge of the world who grants life/blesses and kills/judges. In Genesis he blesses the patriarchs with fertility and promises numerous descendants. Outside Genesis he blesses/protects and also takes away life/happiness. In light of Naomi's emphasis on God's sovereign, malevolent deprivation of her family, one can understand her use of this name for God. For discussion of this divine name, see T. N. D. Mettinger, *In Search of God, 69-72.*" (***New English Translation notes***)

21 I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me? (KJV)

(NLT) I went away full, but the LORD has brought me home empty. Why call me Naomi when the LORD has caused me to suffer and the Almighty has sent such tragedy upon me?"

COMMENTARY: "I left here full. That is, with a husband and two sons. *Empty-handed*. This statement is highly ironic, for ever-loyal Ruth stands by her side even as she speaks these words. These words reflect Naomi's perspective, not the narrator's, for Ruth will eventually prove to be the one who reverses Naomi's plight and "fills" her "emptiness." Naomi's perspective will prove to be inaccurate and the women will later correct Naomi's faulty view of Ruth's value (see 4:15)." (***New English Translation notes***) "Naomi's story is similar to the story of Job. God tests them, as Job and Naomi have full lives. Then they go from emptiness to vindication, and finally to redemption." (***The Voice Commentary***)

METACOMMENT: "Hast thou a friend, and forgettest to be grateful?" (Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings*, p.339.

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest. (KJV)

(NLT) So Naomi returned from Moab, accompanied by her daughter-in-law Ruth, the young Moabite woman. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

PRONUNCIATION: "Moabitess (moh'uh-bit-es)," [Audio](#) (***Harper Collins Bible Pronunciation Guide (HCBP)***)

COMMENTARY: "The rather dry summary statement supplied by the narrator in verse 22 provides a sober response to Naomi's charges, pointing out that the two women had made a safe journey to Bethlehem at harvest time, a period when the village will be 'full' of God's bounty. In addition, verses 19-21 serve to foreshadow the legal setting in chapter 4, where Boaz opens his conversation with Naomi's next-of-kin by saying she 'is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech'. It could be that by publicly declaring that she is without resources Naomi has put up the 'for sale' sign on her property and thereby set things in motion that will eventually lead to the financial redemption of the two widows." (***The New Cambridge Bible Commentary (NCBC)***, p223) "This statement provides closure for the previous scene, while at the same time making a transition to the next scene, which takes place in the barley field. The reference to the harvest also reminds the reader that God has been merciful to his people by replacing the famine with fertility. In the flow of the narrative the question is now, "Will he do the same for Naomi and Ruth?" The *barley harvest* began in late March. See O. Borowski, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel*, 91." (***New English Translation notes***) "Ruth is a prophecy, than which none could be more beautiful and engaging, of the entrance of the heathen world into the kingdom of God. She comes forth out of Moab, an idolatrous people full of wantonness and sin, and is herself so tender and pure. In a land where dissolute sensuality formed one of the elements of idol worship, a woman appears, as wife and daughter, chaste as the rose of spring and unsurpassed in these relations by any other [human] character in Holy Writ.... Ruth's confession of God and His people originated in the home of her married life. It sprang from the love with which she was permitted to embrace Israelites.... The conduct of one Israelitish woman [Naomi] in a foreign land was able to call forth a love and a confession of God like that of Ruth.... Ruth loves a woman, and is thereby led to the God Whom that woman confesses" (***Lang's Commentary OT/NT (LANG)***).

METACOMMENT: “Wonderful, exquisite Ruth! We see her, the personification of modesty and grace beyond the dreams of poets, standing in the field of ripened corn, her love all golden and her gold all love, and feel that when she was received into the kingdom of Israel it became from that day forward more than ever before a kingdom of Spirit, a type of God's kingdom which will ultimately include "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.” (Jackson, Myrtle Strode, *“Spiritual Development and Ascent”*, Journal Vol. 26 (February 1918), p. 628.)

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1918/2/35-11/spiritual-development-and-ascent>

NOTES:

Luke 10:25-37

Loving Your Neighbor

The Most Important Commandment

(CEB)* ²⁵ A legal expert stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to gain eternal life?” ²⁶ Jesus replied, “What is written in the Law? How do you interpret it?” ²⁷ He responded, “*You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.*” ²⁸ Jesus said to him, “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.” ²⁹ But the legal expert wanted to prove that he was right, so he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

³⁰ Jesus replied, “A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He encountered thieves, who stripped him naked, beat him up, and left him near death. ³¹ Now it just so happened that a priest was also going down the same road. When he saw the injured man, he crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. ³² Likewise, a Levite came by that spot, saw the injured man, and crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. ³³ A Samaritan, who was on a journey, came to where the man was. But when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. ³⁴ The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day, he took two full days’ worth of wages and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, ‘Take care of him, and when I return, I will pay you back for any additional costs.’ ³⁶ What do you think? Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?” ³⁷ Then the legal expert said, “The one who demonstrated mercy toward him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

*(Common English Bible) View text in: [AMP](#) | [GNT](#) | [KJV](#) | [MSG](#) | [NET](#) | [NIV](#) | [NLT](#) | [NRSV](#) | [VOICE](#)

COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? (KJV)

(PHIL) Then one of the experts in the Law stood up to test him and said, "Master, what must I do to be sure of eternal life?"

COMMENTARY: “A lawyer was a person educated in the Jewish Law and its interpretation. The nearest equivalent in modern Judaism would be a rabbi. Apart from the interpretation of the Law, the lawyers acted as judges in the courts and, specially interesting for this passage, trained young men in discipleship.” **(The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible (CBC))** “The ‘lawyer’ is sometimes termed ‘scribe.’” **(The Complete Pulpit Commentary (PUL))** “The question he asked must have sounded innocent, commendable even: ‘What must I do to inherit [or: obtain possession of] everlasting life?’ ‘Everlasting life,’ how beautiful the term, and how superlatively precious the essence indicated by it! It refers to the kind of life that is not only endless in duration but also priceless in quality. It embraces such treasures as ‘the love of God shed abroad in our hearts’ (Romans 5:5), ‘the peace of God that surpasses all understanding’ (Philippians 4:7), ‘joy inexpressible and full of glory’ (1 Peter 1:8), and ‘fellowship with God the Father and with his Son’ (John 17:3). It is not suggested that this law-expert was aware of the full significance of the term he used, but it must be admitted that he was making inquiries about a most important matter.” **(Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT))**

“a certain lawyer”: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? (KJV)

(GNT) Jesus answered him, "What do the Scriptures say? How do you interpret them?"

COMMENTARY: “Note how marvelously Jesus parries the question. Instead of answering it, he asks the lawyer a counter-question. By implication he is also immediately informing the questioner that he, Jesus, is not teaching a new doctrine; he is adhering strictly to the basic principles of *God's holy law.*” (***New Testament Commentary (NTC)***)

27 " And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. (KJV)

(PHIL) "The Law says, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind', and 'your neighbour as yourself'," he replied.

COMMENTARY: *Heart/soul/strength/mind*) “the lawyer answers in terms of what has been called the ‘Great Commandment,’ a combination of Deuteronomy 6:5 ([love God with all thy heart/soul/might]) recited twice a day as part of the Shema), and Leviticus 19:18 [“love thy neighbor as thyself”].” Matthew 22:37 has “love...with all thy heart/soul/mind”; Mark 12:30 reads “with all thy heart / soul / mind / strength.” (***Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT)***)

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. (KJV)

(VOICE) Jesus: *Perfect.* Your answer is correct. Follow these commands and you will live.

COMMENTARY: “When Jesus says, ‘*Do this and you will live,*’ he is saying that relationship to God is what gives life. The chief end of humankind is to love God wholly. Here is the definition of life that brings life. And the product of our love for God will be a regard for others made in his image, those whom God has placed next to us as neighbors.” (***The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)***)

METACOMMENT: “Love God with all your energy, all your power, all your might, all your thought, all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself. This will give eternal life.... Our difficulty in doing this lies chiefly in the fact that through a false conception, reception, and understanding of Jesus' life, teachings, and works, we have not accepted the truth that if a man love and serve God only, as did Jesus, through divine power and intelligence he can do the works of the Master.” (**Hubbell, Ira C., “An Important Question”, *Sentinel* Vol. 6 (20 February 1904), p. 388.)**

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1904/2/6-25/an-important-question>

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? (KJV)

(NET) But the expert, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

COMMENTARY: “The lawyer realized that the only way he could possibly fulfill the law’s demand was to limit its demand. He should have acknowledged his inability to keep these commands and asked Jesus what He should do. Instead he tried to ‘justify’ himself (i.e., to declare himself righteous) by limiting (redefining) the demand of the law and then showing that he had fulfilled that limited demand. His question set up a distinction between neighbors and non-neighbors. The word ‘neighbor’ (Gr. *plesion*) means one who is near (cf. Acts 7:27). The Hebrew word that it translates, *rea*, means a person with whom one has something to do. The Jews interpreted the word in a limited sense to mean a fellow Jew or someone in the same religious community. They specifically excluded Samaritans and foreigners from this category.” (***Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)***)

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. (KJV)

(PHIL) And Jesus gave him the following reply: "A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He fell into the hands of bandits who stripped off his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead.

COMMENTARY: "Jesus picks the treacherous road from Jericho to Jerusalem as the site of the incident. This seventeen mile journey was well known for its danger....This road was hazardous, as the man who falls among robbers finds out. Thieves took advantage of the caves that lined the road as it wound through the desert, jumping travelers as they passed through. So this man is stripped of his clothing, beaten, and robbed. He is left for dead, cast off at the side of the road. Two opportunities for aid appear next." (*The NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC)*, p300)

"the good Samaritan" cast of characters: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

MAP: "Jericho," Map and article, [BibleAtlas.org](#)

MUSIC VIDEO: "On the road to Jericho," [Keith Green, Youtube](#)

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. (KJV)

(AMP) Now by coincidence a certain priest was going down along that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

COMMENTARY: "Since the man was 'half dead' the priest would probably not have been able to be certain whether he was dead or not without touching him. But if he touched him and the man was in fact dead, then he would have incurred the ceremonial defilement that the Law forbade. He could be sure of retaining his ceremonial purity only by leaving the man alone. Not only did he not help, he went to the other side of the road. He deliberately avoided any possibility of contact." (*The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (TNTC)*)

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. (KJV)

(NLT) A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

COMMENTARY: "The priest's helper [a *Levite*] is not any better than the priest. He, too, as soon as he sees the grievously wounded man, makes sure that he remains as far as possible away from him, passing by on the opposite side of the road. The man just did not want to 'get involved'. Does that phrase have a modern ring?" (*New Testament Commentary (NTC)*, p.594)

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, (KJV)

(NRSVUE) But a Samaritan while traveling came upon him, and when he saw him he was moved with compassion.

COMMENTARY: *A certain Samaritan*) "The Samaritans were the most inveterate foes of the Jews. They had no dealings with each other. It was this fact which rendered the conduct of this good man so striking, and which was thus set in strong contrast with the conduct of the priest and the Levite. 'They' would not help their own afflicted, and wounded countryman. 'He,' who could not be expected to aid a Jew, overcame all the usual hostility between the people; saw in the wounded man a neighbor, a brother, one who needed aid; and kindly denied himself to show kindness to the stranger." (*Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES)*) "Here is what made the Samaritan different: *He felt compassion for him*. In the story, compassion becomes the concrete expression of love. The next verse details explicitly six acts of compassion." (*New English Translation notes*)

METACOMMENT: "In her Message for 1902 (p. 18) Mrs. Eddy states the invariable attitude of Christ Jesus when she says: "Jesus was compassionate, true, faithful to rebuke, ready to forgive. He said, 'Inasmuch as ye have

done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." ...Compassion is a benign state of consciousness resulting from spiritual understanding. It cannot be thought of as existing by itself. With it are always associated affection, faith, hope, humility, honesty. The combination serves to measure in no uncertain way a man's spiritual understanding of Truth." (Sinclair, Duncan, "*Compassion*", *Sentinel* Vol. 20 (1 June 1918), p. 784.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1918/6/20-40/compassion>

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. (KJV)

(NRSVUE) He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an inn, where he took care of him.

COMMENTARY: "Having dismounted, the Samaritan crosses over to the side of the road where the half-dead man is lying. He immediately administers first aid by washing his wounds with wine (because of its alcoholic content being a disinfectant and antiseptic), and by pouring into them soothing oil, acting as a kind of salve... What a marvelous picture: the Samaritan walking by the side of his donkey and giving support to the tragic figure on the way to the inn!" (*New Testament Commentary (NTC)*, p595)

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. (KJV)

(NET) The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever else you spend, I will repay you when I come back this way.'

COMMENTARY: "The *two silver coins* were denarii. A denarius was a silver coin worth about a day's pay for a laborer; this would be an amount worth about two days' pay." (*New English Translation notes*)

36 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (KJV)

(NLT) "Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked.

COMMENTARY: "Jesus then applied the teaching of the parable to the lawyer by asking him which of the three passersby behaved as a neighbor. He reversed the lawyer's original question (Luke 10:29) and focused attention where it should have been, on the subject showing love rather than the object receiving it. The priest and the Levite had avoided contamination and ritual uncleanness, while the Samaritan had contracted it. Yet the two Jews had not showed compassion, whereas the true neighbor had." (*Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)*)

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (KJV)

(TPT) The religious scholar responded, "The one who demonstrated kindness and mercy." Jesus said, "Go and do the same as he."

COMMENTARY: "There was only one answer, and the lawyer was both clever enough and honest enough to give it: *the one who showed mercy on him*. Implicit in the story, the question, and the answer is the answer to the lawyer's question. The neighbor whom he is to love is the man who needs his compassion and help – regardless of physical, social, or racial status...It was to such encounter and decisive action that Jesus called the lawyer in his response, *Go and do likewise*. The tense of the imperative indicates habitual practice – 'make a habit of doing as the Samaritan did.' The lawyer had asked what he should do. Jesus told him what to do – practice the demonstration of love at every opportunity where need is evident." (*Summers, Ray, Commentary on Luke*, Waco, TX: Word Books, 1972)

NOTES:

Luke 13:10-17

Jesus Heals a Woman on the Sabbath

Woman Which Had a Spirit of Infirmity 18 Years

(CEB)* ¹⁰ Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ A woman was there who had been disabled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and couldn't stand up straight. ¹² When he saw her, Jesus called her to him and said, "Woman, you are set free from your sickness." ¹³ He placed his hands on her and she straightened up at once and praised God. ¹⁴ The synagogue leader, incensed that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, responded, "There are six days during which work is permitted. Come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath day." ¹⁵ The Lord replied, "Hypocrites! Don't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from its stall and lead it out to get a drink? ¹⁶ Then isn't it necessary that this woman, a daughter of Abraham, bound by Satan for eighteen long years, be set free from her bondage on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷ When he said these things, all his opponents were put to shame, but all those in the crowd rejoiced at all the extraordinary things he was doing.

*(Common English Bible) View text in: [AMP](#) | [GNT](#) | [KJV](#) | [MSG](#) | [NET](#) | [NIV](#) | [NLT](#) | [NRSVUE](#) | [VOICE](#)

COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. (KJV)

(GW) Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the day of worship.

COMMENTARY: "The story of healing this woman is unique to Luke. It reveals the unfruitfulness of the nation of Israel to which Jesus' parable of the unfruitful tree alludes (Luke 13:6-8). Instead of finding love, justice, humility, and mercy among God's people, Jesus found an arrogance that didn't even allow healing a woman on the Sabbath, the day set aside for the God of mercy." (*Life Application New Testament Commentary (LANTC)*) "This is the last instance in Luke where Jesus appears teaching in a synagogue. The hostility of the Jewish authorities increased to such an extent towards the end of the Saviour's activities that He would afterwards no longer be allowed to appear in the synagogues." (*The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)*)

11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. (KJV)

(MOFF) there was a woman who for eighteen years had suffered weakness from an evil spirit; indeed she was bent double and could not raise herself at all.

"a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years": See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

PRONUNCIATION: "bowed (boud) [as in "loud"] [Audio](#) 3. to bend or curve downward"; "19. to bend into the form of a bow; curve," (*The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (RAND)*)

COMMENTARY: "Luke describes the spiritual and physical condition of a woman in the synagogue. She has been possessed, or at least influenced by, a spirit that has left her in a weakened condition for eighteen years. Thus the note of spiritual conflict is immediately introduced into the account. The length of her condition indicates its severity and adds a note of pathos [that is, a feeling of sympathy or sorrow for her], since she has suffered a long time....The result of the evil spirit's presence is that the woman is bent over or 'bent double'. She is not able to stand erect." (*Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT)*, p1215) "The eighteen

years of the sickness match the eighteen people killed by the tower of Siloam (Luke 13:1-9).” (*Sacra Pagina (SP)*, p212)

METACOMMENT: “It is, however, very likely that she had been led to believe that her suffering came from God, directly or indirectly, as so many are taught today, and this belief would paralyze the energies which if unhindered would lift any one up....It was little wonder that the woman was bowed down, when all those around her held over her the false belief in disease which denied the omnipotence and omnipresence of the one infinite Mind, and her healing meant that she was set free from false belief respecting God and man.” (**Knott, Annie M.**, “*The thirteenth chapter of Luke’s gospel presents a vivid...*”, *Journal* Vol. 34 (December 1916), p. 183.)

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1916/6/34-3/the-thirteenth-chapter-of-luke-s-gospel-presents-in-vivid>

12 **And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. (KJV)**

(NJB) When Jesus saw her he called her over and said, ‘Woman, you are free from your disability,’

COMMENTARY: “Jesus initiates the healing upon seeing the woman’s sad condition.....Jesus acts by calling to her and declaring that she is free from her ailment. No mention is made of the woman’s faith, for the only point here is Jesus’ authority and what the healing represents. The declaration that she is ‘freed from her infirmity’ will shortly become a declaration that she is freed from Satan’s power....Jesus’ word has the authority to reverse her condition, and it does. She is no longer in bondage.” (**Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT)**, p1215-6) “Woman was a polite form of address, similar to “Madam” or “Ma’am” used in English in different regions.” (**New English Translation notes**)

METACOMMENT: ““Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity”—the lie that has claimed to keep you bound for the past eighteen years is no part of your real selfhood; that selfhood is the image and likeness of God, the perfect reflection of the perfect creator! Christ Jesus’ consciousness abode in the realm of reality. In consequence, he was constantly about his Father’s business, always knowing the truth about God and His idea, man. At all times he saw only the divine idea, governed by its perfect Principle.” (**Wardle, James**, “*Fidelity and Faith*”, *Sentinel* Vol. 30 (7 January 1928), p. 365.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1928/1/30-19/fidelity-and-faith>

13 **And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. (KJV)**

(NEB) Then he laid his hands on her, and at once she straightened up and began to praise God.

ILLUSTRATION: Jesus heals the bowed woman, [Image](#)

COMMENTARY: “Jesus acts by calling to her and declaring that she is free from her ailment,” as BECNT points out. “No mention is made of the woman’s faith, for the only point here is Jesus’ authority and what the healing represents. The declaration that she is ‘freed from her infirmity’ will shortly become a declaration that she is freed from Satan’s power....Jesus’ word has the authority to reverse her condition, and it does. She is no longer in bondage.” (**Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT)**) The one through whom God’s power was working had touched her. Her cure was immediate. The result was that she began to praise God for what Jesus had done.” (**Summers, Ray**, *Commentary on Luke*, Waco, TX: Word Books, 1972, p167-8)

14 **And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. (KJV)**

(GNT) The official of the synagogue was angry that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, so he spoke up and said to the people, "There are six days in which we should work; so come during those days and be healed, but not on the Sabbath!"

“ruler of the synagogue”: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

COMMENTARY: “The synagogue leader argues that the healing could have waited. Jesus has violated laws of working on the Sabbath (i.e., the fourth commandment, Ex. 20:8-10; Deut. 5:12-14). It is crucial to see what his work consists of in order to appreciate the complaint. Jewish tradition was particular about Sabbath labor.” **(The NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC))** “Not on the Sabbath day. Detailed rules with regard to the kind of work allowed on a Sabbath, according to the urgency of the injury, were published by the rabbis...the prohibition in the *Damascus Document*: ‘No man shall help an animal in its delivery on the Sabbath day. And if it falls into a pit or ditch, he shall not raise it on the Sabbath.’ To Jesus these rules were of no more importance than the halter which needed to be untied, and his play on the ties which bind the beasts and those which bind those whom Satan has tied up is maintained to the end of the saying.” **(Black’s New Testament Commentaries (BNTC), p207)**

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?* (KJV)

(AMP) But the Lord replied to him, saying, You playactors (hypocrites)! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it out to water it?

COMMENTARY: *Thou hypocrite*) TOTC corrects the KJV singular: “Jesus’ plural, *hypocrites*, castigates not only the ruler but all who agreed with him as well. His hypocrisy consisted in his talking to the crowds when he really aimed his rebuke at Jesus, but even more in his professed zeal for the law in objecting to a deed which fulfilled the spirit and the purpose of the law. Jesus chose to rebuke the hypocrisy of this approach by pointing to the Jewish practice of looking after animals...On the sabbath, animals could be led out by a chain or the like as long as nothing was carried. Water could be drawn for them and poured into a trough...” **(The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (TOTC))**

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? (KJV)

(PHIL) This woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom you all know Satan has kept bound for eighteen years—surely she should be released from such bonds on the Sabbath day!”

COMMENTARY: “The description of the woman as daughter of Abraham is unusual. It is placed first in the Greek sentence, a position of emphasis...it is probable that Jesus insists the woman is a daughter of Abraham because she has been robbed of her rights as a member of the covenant people, since she is identified as the bearer of an unclean spirit. Her physical position – bent over – can be taken as symbolic of her social position...In verse 16 he explains that the woman had been ‘bound’ by Satan; therefore, it was necessary for her to ‘be set free from this bondage’. The analogy in verse 15 is relevant because it concerns freeing an animal that was confined...One of the kinds of captivity from which Jesus frees people is Satanic oppression in the form of physical ailments, but this may be accompanied by social oppression through being stigmatized.” **(Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC), p218-9)**

METACOMMENT: “Jesus did not assert or imply that this woman had been herself guilty of any special sin, but simply that her condition expressed one of the many forms of sin or satanic beliefs in universal human thought which spring from the errors therein. These errors include what is commonly known as positive sin as well as the sin of ignorance, or a belief in, or fear of, some power opposed to God and His righteous laws and government. Is not the great sin of the world to-day a belief that there is something besides God, divine Intelligence, that can do more for us in times of trouble than He can?” **(J. C., “Disease—Its Cause and Cure”, Sentinel Vol. 2 (8 March 1900), p. 429.)**

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1900/3/2-27/disease-its-cause-and-cure>

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him. (KJV)

(TPT) When they heard this, his critics were completely humiliated. But the crowds shouted with joy over the glorious things Jesus was doing among them.

COMMENTARY: “*All the people* - The persons who attended the synagogue, and who had witnessed the miracle. It is to be remarked: 1. That those who opposed Christ were chiefly the ‘rulers.’ They had an ‘interest’ in doing it. Their popularity was at stake. They were afraid that he would draw off the people from them. 2. The common people heard him gladly. Many of them believed in him. The condition of the poor, and of those in humble life, is by far the most favorable for religion, and most of the disciples of Jesus have been found there.”

(Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES))

NOTES:

Acts 10:34-43

The Gentiles Hear the Good News

(CEB)* ³⁴ Peter said, “I really am learning that God doesn’t show partiality to one group of people over another. ³⁵ Rather, in every nation, whoever worships him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ This is the message of peace he sent to the Israelites by proclaiming the good news through Jesus Christ: He is Lord of all! ³⁷ You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism John preached. ³⁸ You know about Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit and endowed with power. Jesus traveled around doing good and healing everyone oppressed by the devil because God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses of everything he did, both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him up on the third day and allowed him to be seen, ⁴¹ not by everyone but by us. We are witnesses whom God chose beforehand, who ate and drank with him after God raised him from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

*(Common English Bible) View text in: [AMP](#) | [GNT](#) | [KJV](#) | [MSG](#) | [NET](#) | [NIV](#) | [NLT](#) | [NRSVUE](#) | [VOICE](#)

COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

34 Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: *(KJV)*

(GNT) Peter began to speak: "I now realize that it is true that God treats everyone on the same basis.

Peter: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

COMMENTARY: [Peter’s message to Cornelius] “Peter’s sermon on this occasion is the first sermon in Acts addressed to a Gentile audience (cf. Acts 14:15-17; Acts 17:22-31). It is quite similar to the ones Peter preached in Acts 2:14-40 and Acts 3:11-26 except that this one has more information about Jesus’ pre-crucifixion ministry. This emphasis was appropriate since Peter was addressing Gentiles who would have known less about Jesus’ ministry than the Jews did. Also this speech contains no quotations from the Old Testament, though there are many allusions to the Old Testament.” (**Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)**) *Peter opened his mouth, and said* “in Luke’s eyes what Peter was about to say was indeed momentous in sweeping away centuries of racial prejudice.” “God treats everyone on the same basis” (TEV). (**The Expositor’s Bible Commentary (EBC)**) “Grk “God is not one who is a respecter of persons,” that is, “God is not one to show partiality”. L&N 88.239 translates this verse “I realize that God does not show favoritism (in dealing with people).” The underlying Hebrew idiom includes the personal element (“respecter of persons”) so the phrase “in dealing with people” is included in the present translation. It fits very well with the following context and serves to emphasize the relational component of God’s lack of partiality.” (**New English Translation notes**)

METACOMMENT: “If the term person is used spiritually and not materially, then it is permissible to speak of the real man as person and of God as the infinite Person. Scholastic theology has, however, so beclouded the use of the word person that in Christian Science the term Principle is preferably applied to Deity and image or idea to man. It is certain that God loves and is therefore a respecter of His own ideas, the children of His creation, the expression of His own intelligence....The lesson Peter learned by his vision comes to all spiritually minded individuals sooner or later. Beholding the unsubstantiality of physical life and the eternal nature of life in God, the advancing Christian is led to understand that God, who is Mind, Spirit, cannot recognize material

personalities. He cannot, from the very nature of His being, be a respecter of material persons.” (McCrackan, William D., *“God is no respecter of persons”*, *Sentinel* Vol. 36 (June 1918), p. 145.)

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1918/6/36-3/god-is-no-respecter-of-persons>

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (KJV)

(MSG) It makes no difference who you are or where you're from - if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open.

COMMENTARY: Peter may have in mind Cornelius, who habitually prayed and gave alms. “A person’s acceptance with God rested, not on nationality, but on a proper disposition of the heart. What Peter meant is that if the attitude is right, then given the Good News, there is no one who cannot be saved. And so, without further ado, he spoke the saving word that they had gathered to hear. Jesus said, ‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled’ (Matthew 5:6). We can infer from this text that an unbeliever who thirsts after righteousness will be shown the way of salvation by God.” (*New International Bible Commentary (NIBC)*)

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) (KJV)

(TPT) God sent his word to the Jewish people first, announcing the wonderful news of hope and peace through Jesus, the Anointed One, the Lord of all.

COMMENTARY: “As with Peter’s other addresses in Acts, considerable stress is placed on God’s act in Jesus Christ. This theme is introduced in verse 36, where Peter stressed the good news of peace through Jesus Christ. There is an interesting interplay in the verse between the limited nature of the gospel’s beginnings and its unlimited scope. God sent the gospel message to his people, “the people of Israel.” But its *content* was peace, the peace Christ brings, who is “Lord of all.” If he is truly Lord of *all*, then the gospel *and* Christ’s peace are for all peoples, not just the people of Israel....Peter also had come to see that it is a natural corollary that there can be no barriers between those who profess Christ as “Lord of all.” He could not allow such nonessentials as particularistic Jewish food laws to separate him from Gentiles like Cornelius who were, like him, those for whom Christ died. Where Christ is Lord of all, a worldwide witness and a worldwide fellowship of believers free of all cultural prejudice are absolutely imperative.” (Polhill, J. B. (1992). *Acts (The New American Commentary (NAC)* Vol. 26, p. 261). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.)

37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; (KJV)

(TPT) You are well aware of all that began in Galilee and spread throughout the land of Israel immediately after John preached his message of baptism.

COMMENTARY: “Verse 37 returns to the ministry of Jesus and offers a concise summary of the gospel.” (*Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC)*) “Peter proceeded to outline Jesus of Nazareth’s career for his listeners assuming some knowledge that was common but adding more details than Luke recorded in Peter’s previous speeches. This is the most comprehensive review of Jesus’ career found in any speech in Acts. These details would have been appropriate since Peter’s hearers here were Gentiles. Peter’s sketch followed the same general outline as Mark’s Gospel, which, according to early Christian tradition, Peter influenced.” (*Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)*)

38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. (KJV)

(VOICE) You know God identified Jesus as the uniquely chosen One by pouring out the Holy Spirit on Him, by empowering Him. You know Jesus went through the land doing good *for all* and healing all who were suffering under the oppression of the evil one, for God was with Him.

Holy Ghost: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

COMMENTARY: “The news that passed from mouth to mouth and filled the land was: ‘How God anointed him – Jesus from Nazareth – with the Holy Spirit and power.’ That anointing took place immediately after the baptism of Jesus. The verb is the historical aorist and reports the one act of anointing and uses the sacred, ceremonial verb...Peter is speaking to Gentiles who have come into contact with the synagogue; they seem to need no explanation in regard to the Holy spirit and how that Spirit could anoint Jesus....With the Holy Spirit ‘and power’ makes emphatic the feature of the anointing that was so prominent in all the work of Jesus: he was full of power. The Spirit and the power had come upon him. This refers to his human nature. Peter says still more, namely, that God was with him....All that Jesus did showed that ‘God was with him,’ in company with him...Peter is showing his hearers the man ‘Jesus from Nazareth’ of whom all men spoke at the time he was on earth and reveals his connection with God.” (*Commentary on the New Testament (LENSKI)* p423-4)

METACOMMENT: “the secret of his power was that "God was with him." Here, then, was the source of his wonderful capability in overcoming discord, in destroying the works of the devil, and in setting aside material law, even the so-called law of gravitation so generally accepted by humanity as unchangeable. But "God was with him"! What more does one need by way of explanation of the many mighty works performed by Christ Jesus than this knowledge? Surely when God is with men, all things are within the possibility of accomplishment.” (*Gilmore, Albert F., “Doing The Works”, Sentinel* Vol. 25 (16 June 1923), p. 832.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1923/6/25-42/doing-the-works>

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: (KJV)

(PHIL) Now we are eye-witnesses of everything that he did, both in the Judean country and in Jerusalem itself, and yet they murdered him by hanging him on a cross.

COMMENTARY: *hanged on a tree*) “The manner of this death was the one on which the sacred law of Israel pronounced a curse: “a hanged man is accursed by God” (Deuteronomy 21:23). His enemies, in other words, had inflicted the utmost disgrace on him. But God’s mighty power exalted him; God bestowed the utmost honor on him, investing him with the authority of Prince and Savior, to bless his people with the grace of repentance and the gift of forgiveness. With such a proclamation entrusted to them, the apostles could do no other than insist, as they had done before, that they must obey God rather than any earthly court. The authority of the Sanhedrin was great, but greater still was the authority of him who had commissioned them to make the good news known.” (*The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)*) Crucifixion was fit only for non-Roman citizens, slaves and provincials. Only if a Roman citizen was convicted of treason would he be crucified. How could One whose followers claimed was "Lord of all people" have been crucified? Peter does not answer that question here, though the allusion to a cursed death, understood in both a promise-and-fulfillment and a vicarious-atonement framework, would certainly go a long way to legitimize it.” (*The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)*)

40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; (KJV)

(MOFF) but God raised him on the third day, and allowed him to be seen.

COMMENTARY: “Peter’s claims for Jesus were only believable in that God had **raised him from the dead on the third day**. This is one of only two references outside the Gospels to the resurrection taking place ‘on the third day.’ The other is found in 1 Corinthians 15:4. The phrase is especially characteristic of Luke’s Gospel, where it occurs six times. Verse 40 adds the striking comment, showing that nothing was left to accident, that God **caused him to be seen** – admittedly by only a handful of people, but those best qualified to be his witnesses.” (*New International Bible Commentary (NIBC)*, p194)

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. (KJV)

(MSG) Not everyone saw him - he wasn't put on public display. Witnesses had been carefully handpicked by God beforehand - us! We were the ones, there to eat and drink with him after he came back from the dead.

COMMENTARY: "Peter specifies that the witnesses include those whom God chose, those 'who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.' None of the other speeches in Acts refers to this qualification of the witnesses, but it is especially appropriate for a story that concerns itself with hospitality for Gentiles, one in which the sharing of food plays an important role (see 11:3)." (**Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC)**) "Peter (and by implication the other apostles) was witness to what he accomplished in Judea and Jerusalem, and so could personally vouch for the truth of these remarks about Jesus. Even Jesus' death is seen as a fulfillment of Scripture. The proof that Jesus was really alive beyond death was that he even ate and drank with his followers after the resurrection." (**Witherington III, Ben, *The Acts of the Apostles*** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998))

42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. (KJV)

(VOICE) He told us to spread His message to everyone and to tell them that He is the One whom God has chosen to be Judge, *to make a just assessment of all people*—both living and dead.

COMMENTARY: "Peter concluded his treatment of the apostolic witness by referring to Jesus' command for them to preach the word (Acts 1:8) and especially to testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God as eschatological judge (verse 42). The role is that of the Danielic Son of Man, and Peter perhaps was interpreting the title in terms that would have been comprehensible to a Gentile." (**Polhill, J. B. (1992). *Acts (The New American Commentary (NAC) Vol. 26, p. 262-263.*** Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.)

43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. (KJV)

(TPT) And not only us, but all of the prophets agree in their writings that everyone who believes in him receives complete forgiveness of sins through the power of his name."

COMMENTARY: "The function of the risen Christ was by no means limited to the execution of judgment; he was also the one through whom, as the prophets agreed, those who believed on him would have their sins forgiven. As Jesus said himself when he cured the paralytic of Capernaum, 'the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins' (Mark 2:10). Peter's appeal to 'all the prophets' would be supported by relevant quotations from their writings, including most probably the portrayal of the Servant of the Lord who was to 'make the many righteous' and 'bear their iniquities' (Isaiah 53:11)." (***The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)***)

NOTES:

Acts 17:22-31

Paul Before the Areopagus

(CEB)* ²² Paul stood up in the middle of the council on Mars Hill and said, “People of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. ²³ As I was walking through town and carefully observing your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘To an unknown God.’ What you worship as unknown, I now proclaim to you. ²⁴ God, who made the world and everything in it, is Lord of heaven and earth. He doesn’t live in temples made with human hands. ²⁵ Nor is God served by human hands, as though he needed something, since he is the one who gives life, breath, and everything else. ²⁶ From one person God created every human nation to live on the whole earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷ God made the nations so they would seek him, perhaps even reach out to him and find him. In fact, God isn’t far away from any of us. ²⁸ In God we live, move, and exist. As some of your own poets said, ‘We are his offspring.’ ²⁹ “Therefore, as God’s offspring, we have no need to imagine that the divine being is like a gold, silver, or stone image made by human skill and thought. ³⁰ God overlooks ignorance of these things in times past, but now directs everyone everywhere to change their hearts and lives. ³¹ This is because God has set a day when he intends to judge the world justly by a man he has appointed. God has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

*(Common English Bible) View text in: [AMP](#) | [GNT](#) | [KJV](#) | [MSG](#) | [NET](#) | [NIV](#) | [NLT](#) | [NRSVUE](#) | [VOICE](#)

COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. (KJV)

(NRSVUE) Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way.

Paul: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

PRONUNCIATION: “Areopagus, (air’ee-op’uh-guhs)” [Audio](#) (*Harper Collins Bible Pronunciation Guide* (HCBP))

MAP: “Areopagus (Mar’s Hill),” map and article, [BibleAtlas.org](#)

COMMENTARY: These verses are part of Paul’s speech at the Areopagus to the Athenians. *Mars’ hill*) The Greek reads *Aerios Pagos*, literally “Ares Hill,” “Since Ares, the Greek god of war, was equated with the Roman god of war, Mars, the alternative name Mars Hill is also found. Paul was taken to the Areopagus to find out more precisely what he was teaching. In ancient Athens there was a council which used to meet on the Areopagus.” (*The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (TNTC)*) *Ye are too superstitious*) The Greek adjective is only found here in the NT. SP translates it as a complement: “You are in every respect exceptionally religious.” “The quality of being ‘superstitious’ was ambiguous, and the precise meaning depends on the attitude of the writer. Since Paul builds on rather than condemns their piety, the translation ‘religious’ is here appropriate.” (*Sacra Pagina (SP)*) “Paul was well prepared to speak to this group. He came from Tarsus, an educational center, and had the training and knowledge to present his beliefs clearly and persuasively. Paul was a rabbi, taught by the finest scholar of his day, Gamaliel, and he had spent much of his life thinking and reasoning through the Scriptures. Luke recorded this sermon in more detail than many of the others, likely as a sample of how Paul addressed the typical lost, intellectual Greek. Rather than arguing the Scriptures as he would with a Jewish audience, he adapted his message and backed up a step or two to speak of a Creator; then he moved toward speaking about a Savior and Judge. Paul began his address by affirming the **religious** nature of his audience by

explaining what he had seen in their city. He chose a starting point, a place where they could agree, rather than starting with their differences.” (*Life Application New Testament Commentary (LANTC)*)

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. (KJV)

(NRSVUE) For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

COMMENTARY: “The inscription according to Luke did not say ‘To *the* unknown god’ but **To an unknown god**, and Paul did not say ‘Him whom you worship’ but **What you worship** (neuter, as if unknown), **this** (neuter) **I proclaim to you**. With this formulation Paul indicates that it is not just ignorance about the person and name of God, but ignorance about his ‘deity’. Paul suggests that by erecting this altar with this inscription the Athenians themselves announced the failure of polytheism and its cults to come to terms with the deity of God. Simultaneously, this inscription expresses a hunch, and vague notion that the reality of God, his deity, is to be found beyond all pagan cults, temples, and religious efforts. Thus the inscription marks the places where the Athenians are open for knowledge of the true God, where they are truly ‘religious.’ Open, but not more than that!” (*Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament (ACNT)*, p330-1) “There is considerable evidence for altars to uncertain or unnamed gods (plural) in antiquity. The word ‘unknown’ could of course be a term used by a foreigner of a god that simply had a name unknown to him or her, or it could be an expression of doubt about the true name of a god, or it could be a word used to avoid misnaming a god, since it was believed that to misname could bring the wrath of a god.” (*Witherington III, Ben The Acts of the Apostles, A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, ,1998)*).

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; (KJV)

(PHIL) God who made the world and all that is in it, being Lord of both Heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by human hands,

COMMENTARY: “[God] has **made the world and everything in it**. The proposition comes straight from the Old Testament; the language, however, does not, for there is no corresponding word in Hebrew for ‘the world.’ The Hebrew Bible speaks of ‘the heavens and the earth’ or ‘the all’. ‘The world’ is found in Greek-speaking Judaism, but Paul’s choice of it here may have been influenced less by that than by the use made of it by Plato and Aristotle. In any case, his point was that the world was not a thing of chance, but the work of God...God is not detached from the creation, as the Epicureans thought and...God is greater than the creation. Therefore he cannot be confined to **temples built by hands**.” (*New International Bible Commentary (NIBC)*, p305) “He then begins to tell them about the true God. He it is who created the universe and everything in it; he is Lord of heaven and earth. Here is the God of biblical revelation; no distinction is pressed between a supreme being and a demiurge who fashioned the material world. The God who is creator of all and universal Lord is introduced in language strongly reminiscent of the Old Testament scriptures. Equally reminiscent of those scriptures is the language in which Paul describes the true God as not inhabiting sanctuaries built by human hands. If even the shrine at Jerusalem, erected for the worship of the true God, could not contain him, how much less the splendid shrines on the Athenian Acropolis, dedicated as they were to divinities that had no real existence! True, even the higher paganism had acknowledged that no material house could accommodate the divine nature, but the affinities of the terms here used by Paul are biblical rather than classical.” (*The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)*) “On the statement *does not live in temples made by human hands* compare Acts 7:48. This has implications for idols as well. God cannot be represented by them or, as the following clause also suggests, *served by human hands*.” (*New English Translation notes*)

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; (KJV)

(NLT) and human hands can't serve his needs – for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need there is.

COMMENTARY: “The God who created all could not be envisaged as requiring anything from his creatures. If he is pleased to accept their service, it is not because he lacks something which they can supply. Here again parallels to Paul’s argument can be adduced from Greek literature and philosophy. But the great prophets of Israel also had to refute the false notion that God is somehow dependent on his people’s worship and service, when they saw how many of their fellow Israelites were devoted to it....Far from their being able to supply any need of his, it is he who supplies every need of theirs: to them all he gives ‘life, breath, and everything.’” (***The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)***, p337)

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; (KJV)

(NRSV) From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live,

(TPT) From one man, Adam, he made every man and woman and every race of humanity, and he spread us over all the earth. He sets the boundaries of people and nations, determining their appointed times in history.

COMMENTARY: *Of one blood all nations of men*) Here is where Paul shocks the philosophers, who boasted that the Athenians sprang out of their own special soil. “Verse 26 is somewhat ambiguous, since it literally reads that God ‘made from one’ supplying neither ‘ancestor’ nor ‘blood’. The strong appeal to the creation story that underlies this speech inclines many interpreters to think that the ‘one’ is a reference to Genesis 1:27-28 and the creation of humankind from Adam. The precise connotations of ‘the times of their existence’ and ‘the boundaries of the places where they would live’ are uncertain, but the larger point is clear: God not only created humankind but determined the parameters of human existence.” (***Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC)***, p251)

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: (KJV)

(VOICE) His purpose in all this was that people of every culture and religion would search for this ultimate God, grope for Him in the darkness, as it were, hoping to find Him. Yet, in truth, God is not far from any of us.

PRONUNCIATION: “haply (hap´lé), adv. Archaic. perhaps; by chance.” [Audio](#) (***The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (RAND)***)

COMMENTARY: “Paul qualifies his comment on people searching for God and states a wish: ‘if perhaps they might grope for him and find him.’ He hopes that people, even though blinded by sin, may grope for God their Maker—much as a sightless person reaches out to and touches a fellow human being without seeing him. The writer of Hebrews stresses this same truth but puts it in the context of true faith. Says he, ‘For without faith it is impossible to please God. Because the one who comes to God must believe that he exists and that he is a rewarder of those who earnestly seek him’ (Hebrews 11:6).” (***New Testament Commentary (NTC)***) *Grope* “‘feel after him,’ as men groping their way in the dark, looking for the light of God’s truth. The difficulty in finding God is not that he is far from man, but that man, because of sin, is far from God.” (***The New Commentary on the Whole Bible (NC)***)

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (KJV)

(EMPH) For, in him, we live and move and are: as, even some of your own poets, have said - For, his offspring also, we are.

(PHIL) Indeed, it is in him that we live and move and have our being. Some of your own poets have endorsed this in the words, 'For we are indeed his children'.

COMMENTARY: "For 'in him we live and move and have our being' is a quotation from the 6th century BC poet Epimenides of Cnossos in Crete. The second quotation comes from the 3rd century Stoic author Aratus, who came from Paul's native Cilicia, although he may have been echoing an earlier poem by the Stoic philosopher Cleanthes. Paul quotes their own poets to expose their own inconsistency [in their idolatry]." (***The Bible Speaks Today (BST)***) "This conclusion follows from the divine nature — God as God is omnipresent: and so the apostle is led on to the doctrine of our dwelling in God with all it involves. Our self-conscious existence with all its intellectual and spiritual activity, all these so depend on God that we can be said to be *in him*." (**Rackham**, Richard B., *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978))

METACOMMENT: "As human thought awakens to know what man really is, it is seen that no matter how undesirable one's environments may seem to be, the true purpose of being is to reflect God's loving-kindness, purity, truth, and in fact nothing less than every attribute of the infinite good which is our life. As the limits of the prison-cell or the sick-chamber are no part of the ray of light which comes into them, so these mortal limitations never become a part of the real man. In the language of Paul we can say, "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" for 'in him we live, and move, and have our being.'" (**Kraft, Charles F.**, "***A Ray of Light***", *Sentinel* Vol. 19 (11 August 1917), p. 894.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1917/8/19-50/a-ray-of-light>

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. (KJV)

(TPT) "Since our lineage can be traced back to God, how could we even think that the divine image could be compared to something made of gold, silver, or stone, sculpted by man's artwork and clever imagination?"

COMMENTARY: "The relationship existing between God and man must be chiefly spiritual, not corporeal. To deify matter, therefore is to make God inferior to man, the Creator to the creature. *Art and device of man*. The two ideas here combined are the power of execution and the power of invention or artistical creation, neither of which, nor both together can change matter into spirit, much less clothe it with divine perfections." (**Alexander**, Joseph A., *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1980 reprint of 1875 edition))

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: (KJV)

(NRSV) While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

COMMENTARY: "Verse 30 begins by announcing that God has previously overlooked human ignorance (recalling the 'unknown god' at the beginning of the speech). Given the preceding elements of the speech, that ignorance would seem to focus on pagans and their idolatry. This is not an unprecedented move, since Luke also characterized as ignorance the actions of Jerusalem Jews against Jesus." (**Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC)**, p252) IBC calls Paul's audience "Cultured Idolaters." He tells them: "Until now pagan ignorance was overlooked, but now is the time to turn to the one true God. Calvin charged that 'the human mind is a perpetual factory for idols.' The God whom Paul proclaims is not just another option for human devotion, not an accommodating God content to be one among many." (**Interpretation, a Bible commentary for teaching and preaching (IBC)**)

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead. (KJV)

(TPT) For the appointed day has risen, in which he is going to judge the world in righteousness by the man he has designated. And the proof given to the world that God has chosen this man is this: he resurrected him from among the dead!"

COMMENTARY: "The true knowledge of God leads to (encourages) repentance because it contains information about coming judgment. Paul concluded his speech by clarifying His hearers' responsibility. Wiersbe outlined Paul's speech as presenting the greatness of God: He is Creator (Acts 17:24); the goodness of God: He is Provider (Acts 17:25); the government of God: He is Ruler (Acts 17:26-29); and the grace of God: He is Savior (Acts 17:30-34). [Note: Wiersbe, 1:473.] Note that Paul referred to sin (Acts 17:29), righteousness (Acts 17:31), and judgment (Acts 17:31; cf. John 16:5-11; Romans 1-3). The resurrected Jesus is God's agent of judgment (cf. Acts 7:13; Psalms 96:13; John 5:22; John 5:27), the Son of Man (Daniel 7:13). Paul stressed that Jesus was a man, rather than an idol or a mythological character such as the Greek gods, whom the true God has appointed as His agent of judgment. The proof of Jesus' qualification to judge humanity is His resurrection. Jesus' resurrection vindicated His claims about Himself (e.g., His claim to be the Judge of all humankind, John 5:22; John 5:25-29)." **(Expository Notes (CONSTABLE))** "The Apostle was not allowed to finish his argument, owing to the contentions of his audience, as he when sitting as judge upon Stephen had interrupted that martyr of the truth, and ordered him to execution. It is remarkable, however, that St. Stephen was the instrument of Paul's conversion, and that St. Paul converted his judge also by this unfinished strain of sublime reasoning." **(Ferrar Fenton Bible note)**

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