

Bible Characters for Your Weekly Bible Study

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For week of June 30 – July 6, 2008

GOLDEN TEXT: Moses Reminds Israel To Remember the Lord (Deut 8: 18 *thou* [to :])

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Deut 4: 25-31

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by Moses just prior to his death in 1405 BC. The majority of the book is comprised of farewell speeches.

"Moses saw in the distant future a time when repentant Israel would turn again to the Lord and obey Him." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Greenwood, Samuel, "**The Constant Remembrance of God**," Christian Science Monitor, Vol.21 (March 1904), p. 728.

--One of our earliest lessons in Christian Science is that the woes of men are the result of forgetting God. (Psalm 9:17.)

- The seeming lapse from spiritual consciousness, termed mortality, is "the Adam-dream" (Science and Health, p. 306), the dark, delusive dream of matter, which enfolds all discord.

---Forgetfulness of God, good, is the opportunity through which evil suggestions enter thought and govern us. Our weak yieldings to temptation, our beliefs that evil thought and will can rule ourselves and others, would be impossible if we always remembered that God is all, and therefore the governing Mind of all men, — the intelligence so absolutely good as to hold no thought of evil, and yet that knows all there is to know.

- This constant remembrance is not only possible for every man but is his necessity, that he may fulfill the purpose of his being, — the expression of good.

Morrison, Miss Margaret (CS, Lecturer, Associate Editor, and 2nd Reader), "**Let Me Remember**," POEM, , "Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.36 (10 March 1934), p. 548.

Let me remember the multitude of thy mercies, O God:
The many pleasant ways Thy love has brought me,
 When sense would say 'twas but a desert place;
The many wondrous things Thy law has taught me
 Of Principle and its redeeming grace!
Let me recall the depth of consolation,
 When, after mighty wrestlings through the night,
There waited on the mount of revelation
 A sacred stillness and transfiguring light,
Through which was seen Thy changeless love enfolding
 The universe and Thine own image, man,
Thy law omnipotent forever holding
 Each little one within Thy holy plan.

....

Dear Father, when the way of human living
Seems dark, and thought with doubt and fear imbued,
Oh, let me then remember with thanksgiving
Thy tender mercies in their multitude.

SECTION II: Remembering God's Power Over Evil Proves His Righteousness

God's Compassion for Israel in the Past (Micah 6:5)

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by the prophet Micah @700 BC.

"Noting their trek from bondage in Egypt to their own homeland, God had provided leadership (v.4), reversed the attempts of Balaam to curse the people (v.5; cf. Num. 22-24), and miraculously parted the Jordan River (v.5b) so they could cross over from Acacia Grove, located east of the Jordan, to Gilgal on the west side near Jericho." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Balak's Summons of Balaam (Num 22: 4-6 *Balak*,18)

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by Moses in his final year @1405 BC; the event occurred @1452 BC.

"The 'River' is the Euphrates. [v.5] The ancient Chaldeans and Babylonians, like the modern Arabs, had a firm belief in the existence and influence of demons. They also believed that certain persons had the power of controlling these demons by means of magic spells and incantations, and these magicians or soothsayers were frequently employed to discover secrets, to foretell the future, to bless an undertaking, or bring ruin upon an enemy." (Dummelow Commentary)

Balaam's Frustration (Num 23: 5,8,19,20)

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by Moses in his final year @1405 BC; the event occurred @1452 BC.

"Balaam's first oracle emphatically stated that Israel could not be cursed (23:8). She was unlike all other nations of the world (23:9). Balaam even wished to share in her blessing (23:10)." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"In contrast to the unreliability of man, so well seen in Balaam himself, God is reliable and immutable [v.19]. He does not change; therefore, His Words always come to pass." (Ibid)

King **Balak**
[Bā'lāk] ("making waste")

Zippor

Balak

Balak was "the king of Moab near the end of the wilderness wanderings of the Israelites." (Who Was Who in the Bible) He was the principal antagonist in the Balaam story. "He was overcome with fear after the Israelites defeated the Amorites and so summoned Balaam in order to curse them (Num. 22-24)." (Eerdmans Dictionary) Instead, Balaam blessed Israel.

Balaam the Soothsayer

[Bay'lum]

Beor

Balaam

Balaam, a magician or soothsayer, was a man of some rank among the Midianites and "a non-Israelite prophet who figures most prominently in the narratives of Numbers 22-24; there is also a lengthy prophecy of the same Balaam in the text from Dier Alla in the Jordan Valley dating to around 700 [BC]." (Oxford Guide to People & Places)

He resided at Pethor, in Mesopotamia. It is evident that though dwelling among idolaters he had some knowledge of the true God; and was held in such reputation that it was supposed that he whom he blessed was blessed, and he whom he cursed was cursed. When the Israelites were encamped on the plains of Moab, on the east of Jordan, by Jericho, Balak sent for Balaam "*from Aram, out of the mountains of the east,*" to curse them; but by the remarkable interposition of God he was utterly unable to fulfill Balak's wish, however desirous he was to do so. The apostle Peter refers to this as an historical event. In Micah, reference also is made to the relations between Balaam and Balak. Though Balaam could not curse Israel, yet he suggested a mode by which the divine displeasure might be caused to descend upon them. In a battle between Israel and the Midianites, Balaam was slain while fighting on the side of Balak.

Carter, Bernice W., "[The Lord, Thy Righteousness](#)," POEM, , "[Christian Science Journal](#), Vol.37 (May 1919), p. 88.

When day's begun,
And hope with vivid hues illumines the sky,
And songs spontaneous rise, and heaven is nigh—
God is thy Sun.

At height of day,
When self in subtle guise would baffle thee,
And Mammon offering bribes says, Worship me,—
God is thy stay.

And in the night,
When sorrow, blackness, death hold thee at bay,
And none seems near to watch with thee and pray,—
God is thy light.

Welch, Hannah Webster, "[The Experience of Balaam](#)," , "[Christian Science Sentinel](#) (30 October 1920), p. 166.

--In the Bible there is much about a condition of thought called rebelliousness, stiff-neckedness, or as we to-day think of it, willfulness.

- It is interesting to study this quality of the human mind through the dictionary, where it is allied to witchcraft, to hypnotism, to sedition, and organized lawlessness, also to lust.

--Mary Baker Eddy, in her writings, has many times pointed out the subtle nature of it, the danger of yielding to its influence, and has warned her students to be ever on guard against this stumblingblock.

- On page 446 of "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" we read: "The exercise of will brings on a hypnotic state, detrimental to health and integrity of thought. This must therefore be watched and guarded against."

--Among the many Bible narratives illustrating the operation of the human will is that of Balak and Balaam, a wonderful lesson to every student of Christian Science.

Ker Seymer, Miss Violet (CSB, Lecturer, and Associate Editor), "**Balaam or Balak**," EDITORIAL, , "Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.31 (6 July 1929), p. 891.

--It is stated in the book of Numbers that the children of Israel had come up out of the land of Egypt and were pressing toward the land of promise.

- Their advance struck terror into the heart of Balak, King of Moab, and he accordingly gave to Balaam, his diviner, the command, "Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel."

---Balaam, however, had gone to "an high place" and returned from his communion with God, good, with such fresh illumination that he referred to himself as "the man whose eyes are open."

- Disregarding both the king's promises and his threats, Balaam then replied persistently, "Behold, I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it."

--If the would-be curse and defiance of corporeal sense, in short, the Balak arguments, seem to be unyielding in their insistence upon material opposition and prolonged suffering, the Christian Scientist is untiring and firmer still in his insistence upon the irreversible divine blessings of health, holiness, and immortality.

Selover, John J., (CSB, Lecturer, and Associate Editor), "**Hear the word of the Lord**," EDITORIAL, , "Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.61 (17 January 1959), p. 107.

--An...urgent call is uttered today, and it can be heard by all whose thoughts are truly turning from evil and are reaching out to God for relief from the discords of the world.

--As a result of the discovery of Christian Science by Mary Baker Eddy, mankind have available today the correct interpretation of "the word of the Lord," an interpretation which, when properly applied, heals the sick, reforms the sinner, and destroys discord as it was destroyed in the early Christian era.

--Mrs. Eddy points out in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p.89), "Spirit, God, is heard when the senses are silent."

--...what does the voice of God reveal to us?

- Even this, man's spiritual nature as the perfect image and likeness of the infinite Father-Mother, God.

Evans, Arden (CSB), "**Never consent to a lie**," , "Christian Science Journal, Vol.110 (January 1992), p. 19.

--We know that a lie is the opposite of truth and that truth is that which is actual.

- But are we aware of the necessity of determining constantly within our own consciousness what is true and what is a lie in order to live a truly Christian life?

---Are we aware of the spiritual power we exercise when we distinguish lies from the truth and refuse to agree with lies?

--The demand upon every Christian is to deal with his own character and to grow daily in Christian grace and living.

- We each must, moment by moment, deal with our own thoughts and take responsibility for what we agree with and what we disagree with in our own thinking.

---We learn through our study of Christian Science that the good in human consciousness is real, legitimate thought coming from the one Mind, God, and that evil is not really our thinking because it is not from God.

SECTION V: Jesus Teaches, Preaches, and Heals (Matt 4: 17,23)

PARALLEL GOSPELS: Mark 1: 38,39; Luke 4: 43,44

TIME LINE: The year of Opportunity and Fundamental Principles (Jesus' 2nd year of ministry), May 28 AD in Capernaum

“For the author of Matthew the kingdom (designated as the kingdom of heaven most often but also as the kingdom of God, kingdom of the father, and simply kingdom) is the root metaphor and central symbol of Jesus’ teaching and work.” (Eerdmans Commentary)

"From that time Jesus began to preach. This verse (17) marks the beginning of [his] public ministry. Note that [his] message echoes John the Baptist's preaching exactly." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Teaching, preaching, and healing [v.23] are "the three main activities in [Jesus'] public ministry." (Ibid)

Sinclair, Duncan (CSB, Associate Editor, President, Normal Class Teacher, and Editor), "**Repentance**," EDITORIAL, , Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.26 (8 December 1923), p. 290.

--Every one who has studied Christian Science from its textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," knows the stress that Mrs. Eddy lays on the allness of God, good, and the unreality of evil.

- On page 339 she says: "Since God is All, there is no room for His unlikeness. God, Spirit, alone created all, and called it good. Therefore evil, being contrary to good, is unreal, and cannot be the product of God."

---The teaching is perfectly clear.

- Surely no one can fail to apprehend its meaning.

--Now, Christian Science is finding its way to all sorts and conditions of men, making its appeal of the allness of good and the unreality of evil to every ear open to receive it.

- In the very paragraph from which the above quotation was taken is the following: "Only those, who repent of sin and forsake the unreal, can fully understand the unreality of evil."

---The words resemble those of Matthew in the fourth chapter of his gospel, where he says, after recording the temptation of Christ Jesus in the wilderness, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Cook, George Shaw (CSB, Lecturer, 1st Reader, Associate Editor, Editor, Normal Class Teacher, and President), "**Healing and Teaching**," , Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.34 (16 January 1932), p. 383.

--Mrs. Eddy says, in Section 7 of Article XXX of the Manual of The Mother Church, "Healing the sick and the sinner with Truth demonstrates what we affirm of Christian Science, and nothing can substitute this demonstration."

- This, Christian Scientists, or metaphysicians, know to be a fact.

---For without the Christ-healing of sickness and sin, the Christian Science movement would be stripped of its practical value to mankind.

--Yet, knowing that the Christ-power to heal had been demonstrated in her own experience and in the experience of those who turned to her for help between the time of her discovery of Christian Science and the writing of the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," Mrs. Eddy says, on page 373 of that book, "Healing is easier than teaching, if the teaching is faithfully done."

• And those Christian Scientists who have been privileged to follow their Leader into the field of teaching Christian Science would agree readily with that statement.

SECTION VI: The New Heaven and the New Earth (Rev 21: 1,3-6 [to 2nd.])
TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written 93-96 AD, probably by John at Patmos

With respect to *The Revelation* (1:1), "The Greek word from which the English word *apocalypse* comes literally means 'to uncover, or to reveal.'" (MacArthur Commentary)

"Given the connection between 1:1 and 22:6,16, *doulos* likely denotes John and the group of prophets to which he belongs...and not simply to Christians generally." (Eerdmans Commentary)

"[v.3] the words echo God's OT promises to dwell with his own people Israel as their God (Ezek 37:27-8; Zech 8:8) and also that many nations will be his people with whom he will dwell (Zech 2:10-11...)." (Oxford Bible Commentary)

"This [vv.5-8] is the first time since 1:8 that God speaks directly (as distinct from 'a voice from the throne,' a phrase which preserves a reverent indirectness)." (Ibid)

V.6: "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning at the end.* God is indeed the source and the end of all glory (cf. Rom 11:36). He is the First (*Alpha*) and the Last (*Omega*)." (King James Bible Commentary)

McCoun, Alice Troxell, "**And I saw a new heaven,**" POEM, , *Christian Science Sentinel*, Vol.55 (4 July 1953), p. 1156.

This is the dawn to mortals: A ray
Of light along the rim of the day
 Unfolds, and as the night subsides,
 The glory of the morning rides
The sky, while colors interplay.

Yet when mortality—at bay
Before enlightened thought—gives way,
 When faith to understanding glides,
 This is the dawn!

Nor is there any power to stay
The glory spiritual truths convey,
 As rich nuances God provides
 Herald the day when thought abides
In Love. Revealed for now—for aye—
 This is the dawn.

WAGERS, RALPH E. (CSB, Lecturer, Associate Editor, President, and Normal Class Teacher), "**The Goal of the True Christian**," EDITORIAL, "Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.67 (27 February 1965), p. 369.

--The goal of the true Christian is to bring his life into accord with the divine order, the kingdom of heaven, in which alone is to be found the true purpose of his being.

--The spectacular achievements of today in the intellectual and technological fields in no way render moral and spiritual values obsolete.

• Jesus made plain that morality and spirituality relate human life to divine order, in which God's purpose for man is understood and fulfilled.

--...the scientific Christian strives to bring forth a type of humanhood in which the divinity of the Christ is manifested....

--...two transforming agencies--"spiritualization of thought and Christianization of daily life"--are essential if one is to bring forth a human experience which gives proof of the truly redemptive nature of Christianity.

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*The weekly Bible Lessons are made up of selections from the King James Version of the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science.

These biblical characters can seem larger than life. Their stories are so grand, their significance so great, it's easy to forget they were real people with real struggles that God chose to use in spite of their weaknesses. That's one reason character studies are so powerful. Whether you're studying for personal devotion or preparing a lesson or sermon, when you dive deep into the lives of biblical characters, you realize that there was nothing special to set them apart; God didn't choose these individuals because of any intrinsic greatness. Choose and list the passages of Scripture you will use for your Bible character. A good Bible dictionary or encyclopedia or an exhaustive concordance will tell you where the person is mentioned. The index in a study Bible may also help. The Bible has answers! Study the Scriptures with free articles, maps, timelines and a wide range of unique Biblical resources. Celebrating our 24th year, Bible Study is a 100% independent Christian outreach dedicated to creating and publishing materials that promote what God's word teaches. All content on the site is accessible to the public and available free of charge. We even publish a free twice monthly newsletter! We have also offered, since 2002, a free service where visitors can submit a Biblically-based question and receive a personalized answer from people who have been Christians for many years. Known as the Email Evangelists, these hard working volunteers have handled more than 21,000 inquiries! The sit Bible studies are one of the foundational ways that Christians gather to learn about their faith. As a result, these small groups are a very common aspect of life for many American Christians. But one particular Bible study group has been gaining notoriety in recent months, primarily because of the powerful people who are attending, and the controversial lessons being taught. Since Trump arrived in the White House, Drollinger has also been meeting weekly with members of the White House Cabinet. The sessions have been taking place since at least April.