

Bible Characters for Your Weekly Bible Study

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For week of July 7 -13, 2008

Hoag, Mrs. Ella W. (CSB; Mrs. Eddy's Student, Household; Lecturer; Associate Editor; President; and Normal Class Teacher), "**Sacrament**," EDITORIAL, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.25 (7 July 1923), p. 891.

--We are told that the word "sacrament" was adopted by the early Latin church to denote those ordinances of religion by which Christians came under an obligation of obedience to God.

• From the days of the early Passover to the present time Christian sacrament has implied the renewal on one's obligations to God; and therefore all approach the thought of it with reverence.

--Although the Church of Christ, Scientist, has divorced sacrament from all materiality, it regards it as none the less sacred, and searches for its deepest meanings with utmost consecration and prayerful consideration.

--To the Christian Scientist, partaking of the sacrament is...no empty rite to be passed lightly by; but, instead, it is eating of that bread of Life and drinking of that spiritual draught by which all hunger is satisfied, all thirst is quenched.

SECTION I: The Ministry of John the Baptist, and the Baptism of Jesus (Matt 3: 1,2,5-8,11,13-17)

PARALLEL GOSPELS: Mark 1: 1-11; Luke 3: 1-22

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Col 2:12

TIME LINE: The Preparatory Time, January, 27 AD in Jordan

"All four Gospels associate John the Baptizer with the beginning of Jesus' public life." (Eerdmans Commentary) "Matthew's reference to John the Baptist assumes that his readers were familiar with him." (King James Bible Commentary) It is possible that John had never seen Jesus before, although he must have known about his cousin Jesus (Luke 1:36).

"In the Greek, Mark doesn't even begin with an actual sentence but rather with an announcement that appears as an interruption or a shift in perspective." (On Your Mark)

Mark 1:1 "is best viewed as Mark's title for his Gospel. The historical record of the gospel message began with John the Baptist." (MacArthur Bible Commentary) In Mark 1:2 *it is written* is "a phrase commonly used in the NT to introduce OT quotes." (Ibid)

In Matthew 3:16,17 "all three persons of the Trinity are clearly expressed...The Father's command to hear His Son and the Spirit's vindication and empowerment...officially inaugurate Christ's ministry." (MacArthur Commentary)

John the Baptist

(Abbreviated)

"We have only fragmentary and imperfect accounts of John the Baptist in the Gospels." (Baker Encyclopedia) John the Baptist was the cousin and "forerunner of Jesus; a moral reformer, and preacher of Messianic hope." (Who Was Who in the Bible) He is "an important figure in each of the four New Testament Gospels." (HarperCollins Dictionary) "Luke adds that both John and Jesus were announced, set apart, and named by the angel Gabriel even before their birth." (Who Was Who in the Bible) John is identified with the beginning of Jesus' ministry. "Reference to John is the first point of convergence among the canonical Gospels, all of which gave a somewhat similar account of his person, preaching, and activity, though varying in detail." (HarperCollins Dictionary)

"According to Luke, Elisabeth and Mary, the mothers of John and Jesus, were either blood relatives or close kinswomen. As is true of Jesus, practically nothing is known of John's boyhood. The silence of his early years was broken by his loud call to repentance shortly before Jesus began his ministry. Matthew reports that John preached in the wilderness of Judea **[central Israel]**....

John's baptism was a washing, symbolizing moral regeneration, administered to each candidate only once. He had a burning awareness of one who was to come after him. "At the height of his popularity he baptized Jesus, and proclaimed him the Messiah." (Halley's Bible Handbook)

Pharisees

[Fair'uh see] (Heb. "to separate," Gr. "separated one")

(Abbreviated)

The Pharisees were a small legalistic sect (about six thousand) of specially observant and influential Jews, mainly in Palestine, from the second century BC to the second century AD. They were probably the successors of the Assideans (i.e. the "pious"), a party that originated in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes in revolt against his heathenizing policy. "For the doctrines and beliefs of the Pharisees our main source is...Josephus." (Interpreters Dictionary) The first mention of them is in a description by him. "According to Josephus...[he] calls the Pharisees 'a choice [of life]' and a 'philosophy.' He gives some general characteristics of the Pharisees in contrast to the Sadducees and Essenes, recounts some of the activities and influence of this group, and mentions occasional influential Pharisees." (HarperCollins Dictionary) "The Pharisees were the successors of the 'Holy Ones' who had fought for religious freedom during the Greek occupation of Palestine from 332 BC." (Who's Who in the New Testament). Josephus wrote for non-Jews in Greek of the three sects (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes) or schools into which the Jews were divided during the Hasmonean period (145 BC)....

They "were the most numerous and influential of all the religious sects of Jesus' day. They were strict legalists. They stood for the rigid observance of the letter and forms of the Law, and also for the Traditions." (Halley's Bible Handbook) They constituted the most important of the groups opposed to Jesus. "The Pharisees were a group that interpreted Torah so that its meaning could be applied to everyday life. Their name means 'interpreters,' but it can also mean 'separatists,' and they were called that by their opponents." (Complete Bible Handbook) "The synagogue was the peculiar institution of the Pharisees as the Temple was for the Sadducees." (Funk & Wagnalls Dictionary) "Luke's portrayal of the Pharisees recalls portraits of the Sophists in Hellenistic texts: the respected teachers of the common people, who come out to scrutinize Jesus' activities (Luke 5:17)." (Eerdmans Dictionary)

“Jesus continually denounced their external observance of the Law, their multitude of petty traditions, and particularly their self-righteousness.” (Who’s Who in the New Testament)

Sadducees

[Sad’u seas](Gk. “followers of Zadok”)

"By New Testament times the Jerusalem Temple had been taken over by the Sadducees, perhaps so-called because they claimed descent from Zadok, chief priest under David and Solomon (2 Sam 8:17; 1 Kgs. 2:35)." (Bible Handbook) The Sadducees were a Jewish politico-religious party, holding the highest offices in church and state, and were in opposition to the Pharisees. “They were prepared to compromise, for the sake of peace, with the Roman occupation forces, and consequently they frowned on the passive resistance of the Pharisees and on the aggressive nationalism of the Zealot freedom fighters. In return, they were allowed by the Romans to retain their power in the Temple and in the Supreme Council, the Sanhedrin, and they guarded their position zealously. Indeed, the office of the high priest was the appointment of Rome—much to the shame of the Jews—but Annas the Sadducee had so exerted his influence that six high priests in succession had been members of his own family, and Caiaphas, the seventh was his own son-in-law.” (Who’s Who in the New Testament)

The high priests held the monopoly of the sale of animals for sacrifice, for which payment had to be made in Temple currency and on which they levied a rate of exchange. The Sadducees advocated a solid common-sense morality and political reality: for them any form of enthusiasm was unnecessary.

“The Sadducees hardly appear in the NT.” (Eerdmans Dictionary) Jesus had few dealings with the Sadducees; they were not as influential in Galilee as they were in Jerusalem. John does not mention the Sadducees at all, but Matthew, Mark, and Luke all relate the question of the Sadducees to Jesus, on the day following his Palm Sunday triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Following the Pharisees’ question about the primary commandment, the Sadducees put their question about the resurrection. They probably hoped to ridicule both Jesus and the Pharisees by this story, for they did not believe in any resurrection.

"Once they lost their cultic function as a result of the destruction of the Temple in 70 [AD] they ceased to exist as a group as a result. This may reflect the extent to which they had lost popular support." (Oxford Guide to People & Places)

Leishman, Thomas L., “[Jesus Comes to John for Baptism](#),” THE CONTINUITY OF THE BIBLE, Christian Science Journal, Vol.90 (January 1972), p. 31.

--John’s work is fully described and attention is focused upon it by the arrival of Jesus at the Jordan River.

--Jesus was about thirty years old, most scholars agree, when he came to John for baptism.

- Speculation about the period before this—just where the Nazarene had been since his attendance at the Passover in Jerusalem at the age of twelve—have never been supported by authoritative evidence.

---Many legends have arisen.

--When Jesus came to John for baptism, he came to one who was a prophet in a new tradition.

--The Baptist refused to assume the role of the great Messiah whom he had come to proclaim, and professed an unworthiness to perform for him even the most menial task: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matt 3:11).

“Jesus and the Pharisees,” Christian Science Journal, Vol.110 (January 1992), p. 16.

--In Jesus' time the Pharisees were the dominant religious influence in Judaism.

--Because they felt that worship extended beyond the temple in Jerusalem, and was centered in the day-to-day life of the people, the Pharisees were the major Jewish religious group to survive after the temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 during the disastrous Jewish revolt against Roman authority.

- Their work in the next two centuries helped to establish the foundations of what has since been called rabbinic Judaism and thus profoundly shaped the Jewish religious tradition extending down into our time.

---From the Gospels, however, we get a different and harsher view of the Pharisees.

- Indeed, they are often denounced by Jesus as representatives of spiritual hypocrisy, insisting on strict religious observance but substituting "the tradition of men" for "the commandment of God."

Flebbe, George H., "**Suffer it to be so now,**" Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.39 (31 October 1936), p. 166.

--The words, "Suffer it to be so now," were spoken by Jesus in answer to John's question when the Master came to him for baptism.

- Referring to this incident, Mrs. Eddy points out in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p.56) that "Jesus' concessions (in certain cases) to material methods were for the advancement of spiritual good."

---However, we sometimes find his words interpreted as giving consent to the continuation of false habits and sin in various forms, even to the covering of a multitude of sins.

- It is also used at times as a cloak for the use of material remedies, usages which controvert Jesus' dictum, "No man can serve two masters."

--Whenever we feel that the words, "Suffer it to be so now," should be applied to conditions or circumstances confronting us, it is well to make sure that true wisdom is making the decision.

"Accepted by God," Christian Science Monitor (15 August 1990), p. 21.

--As we accept and express our true nature as God's children, we can each live our lives with the knowledge that we are already accepted instead of fearfully wondering what our relation to God is.

- We have the best possible example for this in the life of Christ Jesus.

---He was actively conscious of God's perfect love.

- And he lived and worked, as Matthew's Gospel tells us, within the benediction, "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

--We are working out from our God-bestowed perfection, demonstrating, or proving, more and more of our innate goodness.

- And we can rest assured that our approval will never be in question with God.

Moody, William E. (CSB, Associate Editor, Editor, President, and 2nd Reader; West Tisbury, MA), **“Baptized of the Holy Ghost,”** EDITORIAL, Christian Science Sentinel (23 January 1984), p. 159.

--To the Hebrew people of ancient Bible times, water was a most vital resource.

--In the New Testament era John the Baptist widely practiced baptism with water as a rite of purification and as a symbolic indication of individual repentance.

- Yet John himself pointed to a higher, more spiritual sense of purification when he spoke of the Saviour's mission.

--Christian Science does not teach ritualistic baptism by water.

- But it does demand the baptism of spiritual purgation.

---We are called on to repent and to accept the baptism of the Holy Ghost that works throughout our lives—from moment to moment, day to day, year to year.

SECTION II: A Deputation from John the Baptist (Luke 7: 19-22)

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Isa 35: 5,6; 61:1

PARALLEL GOSPEL: Matt 11: 2-6

TIME LINE: The Year of Popularity (Jesus' 2nd year of ministry)

"two of his disciples"

"John was not the sort of man who vacillated [Luke 7: 19 *Art thou he that should come?*]." (MacArthur Bible Commentary) "John the Baptizer's inquiry concerning Jesus' identity (Matt 11:2-3) raises the question of the Messiah and uses the word 'Messiah/Christ' as an explicit title for the first time since the story of the Magi (2:4)." (Eerdmans Commentary)

Jesus pointed John to the book of Isaiah, which had first led John to believe in him (John the Baptist quoted Isaiah more than any other book of the Old Testament). "Verses 22,23 are quoted from Isaiah 35:5,6; 61:1." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Jesus' spontaneous praise and thanksgiving to God lead him into constant awareness of their eternal intimate relationship that is expressed in Matt 11:27.

Pittman, Alfred (CSB, Editor, and Director), "**How that the blind see,...the deaf hear**," EDITORIAL, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.44 (29 August 1942), p. 1522.

--In this period, as in the time of Jesus, the healing of physical disease is abundantly testifying to the presence of the Christ, the true idea of God, among men.

- Sufferers who might have wished despairingly that the personal Jesus could be present for them are finding that that which gave him his marvelous curative power is here today, and fully available.

---Thus the answer to those who ask about the truth revealed in Christian Science can be in the manner of Jesus' answer to the disciples of the Baptist: "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

--Not only are such results occurring today through Christian Science, but its students are enabled to see just how they occur, and thus to master the art of spiritual healing themselves.

Heimann, Mrs. Winona, "**The lame shall walk**," HOW CHRISTIAN SCIENCE HEALS: Radio Program No. 5, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.57 (23 July 1955), p. 1955.

--fever settled in my knees, drying up the fluid in my kneecaps.

- a specialist...told me...I would always be lame.

--I saw so clearly and without a single doubt that God, who is Love, could not make anything unlike Himself.

- And in this moment of true understanding I was instantly and permanently healed.

--When we gain a clear perception of what God is, when our consciousness is filled with an awareness of His power, perfection, and ever-presence, when we know that God never sends disease to His children, this leads to healing.

--a clear glimpse of God's goodness leads to the logical conclusion that God never made man, His own image and likeness, to be mortal or diseased.

--You and I can experience God's healing power by striving to the best of our ability to maintain the consciousness of God's presence and power.

- This goal is pointed out in these words from Mrs. Eddy's writings (The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany, p.160): "To live so as to keep human consciousness in constant relation with the divine, the spiritual, and the eternal, is to individualize infinite power; and this is Christian Science."

Ten Lepers and a Lesson About Thankfulness (Luke 17: 11-16 [to])

TIME LINE: The 3rd tour of Galilee during the 3rd year of Jesus' ministry (The Year of Opposition)

"ten men that were lepers"

This story is peculiar to Luke. However, leprosy is referred to in Matthew's gospel at the beginning of chapter 8.

"Leprosy has always been, and is still, one of the most intractable diseases. Under the Mosaic law lepers were regarded as unclean and excluded entirely from human society.... The healing of a Samaritan, and the stress laid upon his greater gratitude, is in keeping with the character of this Gentile Gospel...." (Dummelow)

"Luke did not explain the reason for such a circuitous route, but a comparison of the Gospels yields several clues." (MacArthur Commentary) The Greek text has a number of variations in an attempt to make geographical sense. The caravans of Galilee took either the Samaritan route or the Peræan. Jesus follows neither, but travels along the boundary between Samaria and Galilee. He directed his steps from W. to E. towards the Jordan, which he must cross to enter Peræa.

"This group of ten men [v.12] was composed of Jews and Samaritans alike, their common leprosy having erased the usual religious animosities (Jn 4:9)." (King James Bible Commentary)

"Not surprisingly, the pronouncement story in the Gospel concludes, 'your faith has made you well' [v.19], or, more literally, 'your faith has saved you.'" (Eerdmans Commentary)

Hollenbeck, Althea Brooks, "The Tenth Leper," POEM, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.68 (26 November 1966), p. 2073.

Were they not still lepers at heart—those nine
who turned not back to seek the Lord with sign
of gratitude?

The Bible has not said,
But Scriptures teach that all will leap ahead,
in Truth, that turn to God who heals them, kneeling—
as the tenth leper—praising Him for healing!

Kennedy, Leah King, "Where are the nine?," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.35 (8 April 1933), p. 627.

--In the seventh chapter of Luke's Gospel we read that John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to Jesus saying, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"

- John was seeking proof of Jesus' Messiahship.

---Jesus' reply was preceded by proofs of healing.

- Then he said, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard."

---In this practical way Jesus sought to convince the inquiring thought that Truth heals and restores harmony.

--Again, in the seventeenth chapter of the same Gospel, we read that after Jesus had healed the ten lepers he observed that only one returned to give thanks or to acknowledge that he was healed.

- "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" was his inquiry.

--In the Manual of The Mother Church (Art.VIII, Sect.24) [Mrs. Eddy] incorporated a By-Law protecting and encouraging the giving of testimonies, saying in part, "Testimony in regard to the healing of the sick is highly important."

SECTION III: The Last Supper (Mark 14: 17-19,22-25)

PARALLEL GOSPELS: Matt 26: 20-29; Luke 22: 14-23; John 13: 21-30

RELATED SCRIPTURE: I Cor 11: 23-25

TIME LINE: Thursday of Passion Week

The reference to *when the hour was come* (Luke 22:14) refers to "sundown, marking the official beginning of Passover." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"Jesus' words of accusation are immediately offset by the rituals of Passover, what we now call the Last Supper or the Lord's Supper. In Mark's account, it appears that Judas has remained to receive this gift of intimacy and presence given to all the disciples, whether faithful or deceitful." (On Your Mark)

"the twelve"

"Jesus Christ selected...Twelve Apostles to carry on with authority His Gospel, and He sent them to preach it and to baptize converts all over the world." (George Mastrantonis, The Twelve Apostles) "The names of the Twelve are listed in the NT in four passages (Matt 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6: 13-16; Acts 1:13 [Judas Iscariot is not named in this text])." (Eerdmans Dictionary)

"The Apostles kept their mission with integrity and faithfulness. They dedicated their lives to it; they injected the new faith in the true God into society to heal its infirmities." (Ibid)

"The Apostles organized the converts into groups called Churches. To these Churches the Apostles handed down the treasure of the new Gospel, their eyewitness account of the Word as they actually saw it take place, preserving it forever through the Church. This is the Gospel - the Tradition in the broad sense of the word - which we cherish today." (Ibid)

"The only sources on the subject of the Twelve Apostles are the four Gospels and the first chapter of the Acts, describing the relationship between Jesus and His Apostles during His ministry on earth. Although the Apostles are the ultimate authors of the Gospels they do not appear prominently in them; they are never magnified in them. The Gospels refer to them only because Jesus Himself was occupied with them, teaching and training them to understand His origin and mission, in order to transmit to others correctly His personality, His Gospel and His deeds." (Ibid)

"One of you...shall betray me"/Judas Iscariot
[joo'duhs] (Greek for the Heb. *Judah*)

Simon Iscariot

Judas Iscariot

(Abbreviated)

Judas Iscariot, was one of the twelve apostles. He "is mentioned only in the Gospels and Acts. The name Iscariot probably means 'man from Kerioth' (a village in southern Judea [southern Israel]) because 'from' is used with the name in John and because similar names occur in Josephus." (Oxford Guide to People & Places) Thus, Judas was a Judean, the only one of the Twelve who was not from Galilee. "Several times he showed his tendency to avarice and selfishness." (Baker Encyclopedia) Judas' name appears in three of the lists of the disciples (Matt 10: 2-4; Mark 3: 16-19; and Luke 6: 14-16), although it always appears last.

"Judas possessed a privileged position among the apostles as treasurer of the group (John 12:5,6; 13:29)." (HarperCollins Dictionary) "As treasurer, Judas was probably a member of Jesus' inner circle." (Eerdmans Dictionary) "Judas is contrasted with the prostitute who anointed Jesus with expensive perfume and washed his feet with her tears. According to the Gospels, Judas protested at this apparent extravagance, suggesting that the money spent on it should have been given to the poor." (Wikipedia.org) "His proximity to Jesus at the Lord's Supper (John 13;21-26) also suggests this. Why he betrayed Jesus is uncertain. Some suggestions are that he did it (Mark 14:10,11) after being convinced that Jesus truly planned to die (Mark 14:3-9); that he did it for money (Matt 26:14-16); or that he did it to help Jesus fulfill his purpose of dying!" (HarperCollins Dictionary)

Anderson, Margaret H., "[The Passover](#)," Christian Science Journal (January 1937), p. 552.

--The revelation of Christian Science, which came to Mary Baker Eddy and was elucidated by her in the textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," sheds upon the inspired Biblical records the illumination of spiritual interpretation, and unfolds, for all mankind, the deep spiritual significance and practical import of the sacred Scriptures.

--The Passover commemorated the exemption of the children of Israel when their families were protected from the doom of the first-born of Egypt.

- The feast was also observed by the twelve tribes as a memorial of their release from the tyranny of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, when, under the leadership of Moses, they escaped into the wilderness and began their journeyings to the promised land, passing safely on dry ground through the Red Sea.

---Through all the vicissitudes of their troubled history this rite was strictly observed by the Israelites as a sacred duty, in obedience to Moses' command, "Ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations." (Ex 12:14)

--The feast of the Passover, which Jesus kept with his disciples, was later merged into the communion service and, including the material elements of bread and wine, was maintained as a ministrations of the Christian church.

Dixon, Frederick (CSB and Acting Editor), "[The Last Supper](#)," EDITORIAL, Christian Science Journal (September 1921), p. 288.

--For centuries a hideous battle has raged over the meaning of the words, "This is my body," and, "This is my blood."

- Millions of people have been tortured, burned, murdered, or imprisoned for daring to explain them in their own way, and, as a result, people naturally differ as much as ever.

--The disciples could not have understood Christ Jesus literally

--What Christ Jesus really meant...was that he would make this supper something more wonderful than any Passover; that he would himself become the paschal lamb; that the bread they were eating and the wine they were drinking were to be to them as the flesh and blood of this lamb; and that in doing this they were to let their minds pass from the bread and wine to the Christ.

- For the future, he was saying to them, When you eat bread and drink wine, remember what this supper means, and do it in remembrance of me.

McKenzie, William P. (“First Member,” Pleasant View Household, CSPA Trustee, Lecturer, and Editor), “**The Sign of Discipleship**,” EDITORIAL, Christian Science Journal, Vol.37 (September 1919), p. 311.

--While the conservators [of ceremonial order] called upon men to conform to the traditions of the past[,] the prophetic messengers called for reformation; hence John, coming in the line of the prophets, cried out to men that they should repent and be cleansed from their sins.

--Jesus began by calling upon men to repent, but his word had a new power and his declaration that the kingdom of heaven was at hand had proofs of the actual presence and power of that kingdom.

- The Pharisees naturally opposed the reformation which this teaching inaugurated.

- They were the upholders of national and ritualistic religion.

- Jesus acknowledged their zeal but he rebuked their neglect of what he called “the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.”

--His commands called for Godlikeness.

Pendexter, Hugh, III, “**Judas**,” POEM, Christian Science Journal, Vol.104 (November 1986), p. 656.

He washes my feet. Poor stumbling Peter balked
To see him kneeling slavely with the bowl.
When my turn came, I smiled to hide my soul.
Kneeling, did he see the temple dust that chalked
My sandals, dust that gathered while I talked
With priests of silver to guide the watch patrol
To his retreat beside the olived knoll?
His look gave one last fork from the doom I walked.
Innocence offers itself before my seat,
Wrapped in white cloth to dry baptismal beads;
I wrench to fling myself prostrate, and gape
To find I sit erect. Even now escape
From my crime shines in yearning face. He reads
His fate and knows my choice, yet washed my feet.

SECTION IV: Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet (John 13: 3-10 [to:],13-15)

TIME LINE: Thursday of Passion Week at Jerusalem

"In these remaining chapters [13-17] before [his] crucifixion, the record looks at Jesus devoting [himself] to [his] own disciples." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

“This supper is identified by almost all modern authorities with the Last Supper, which took place on Thursday night at Jerusalem. Writing to supplement the synoptists,...John omits practically all that they have recorded, and this accounts for his omission of the institution of the Holy Communion. The points peculiar to...John are the feet-washing, the incident of the sop, the details about the beloved disciple, and the wonderful discourses, of which the synoptists give no hint.” (Dummelow)

“The disciples had been disputing which of them should be accounted greatest, and, as we gather from [Jesus’] rebuke, not one of them would serve at supper, for fear of being thought inferior to

others. Jesus, therefore, after waiting a little for one of them to offer, rose [himself]. Not content with waiting at table, which might upon occasion be done by a person of good position, [he] washed their feet." (Ibid)

"The dusty and dirty conditions of the region necessitated the need for foot-washing....in the society of the time foot-washing was reserved for the lowliest of menial servants." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Simon Peter

[Pee'tuhr] (Gr. *Petros*, a "rock")

(Abbreviated)

Simon Peter was the most prominent of Jesus' twelve apostles. The Bible gives a more complete picture of Peter than any other disciple, except Paul. He is often considered to be a big, blundering fisherman and is attractive for his constant mistakes and forgiveness, his boisterous and impetuous enthusiasm, and for his good intentions and self-confidence that so soon seemed to disappear. He became one of Jesus' closest friends and was the first to recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

"Peter is prominent in the Gospel of John, but he does not hold the unrivaled position among the disciples which he does in the Synoptic gospels." (Interpreter's Dictionary) "Peter's ardor, earnestness, courage, vigor, and impetuosity of disposition marked him from the first as the leader of the disciples of Jesus" (Westminster Dictionary). Peter is the first named in every list of the twelve Apostles, and was apparently the strongest individual in the group. "He was the natural spokesman of the apostolic band" (Ibid). "With James and John, Peter formed an inner circle of three, who alone were allowed to accompany Jesus into the house for the raising of Jairus' daughter, to witness the transfiguration, and to share the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Peter was often the spokesman of the twelve and was their natural leader.... He expressed the conviction of the twelve when he made his great confession at Caesarea Philippi: 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' At once Jesus replied, 'You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven'..." (Who's Who in the New Testament)

Holland, Muriel Nellis, "Thou art Peter," Christian Science Journal, Vol.69 (February 1951), p. 71.

--It is recorded that Jesus put the following question to his disciples (Matt 16: 13): "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"

- The replies were varied: "Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets."

--Obviously dissatisfied with these answers, Jesus again appealed to them, "But whom say ye that I am?"

- Simon responded, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

--We can well imagine with what joy and gratitude the Master accepted Simon's answer, an answer momentous in its import.

- Here at last was one follower who had grasped the meaning of Jesus' toil, sacrifice, and unselfed love.

--Yet it was Simon Peter who remonstrated with the Master when the latter was about to wash the disciples' feet and then, being made aware of the spiritual significance of the ritual, said in true humility (John 13:9), "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

WAGERS, RALPH E. (CSB, Lecturer, Associate Editor, Normal Class Teacher, and President), "**On Becoming a Christian Science Practitioner**," EDITORIAL, *Christian Science Sentinel*, Vol.65 (21 September 1963), p. 1651.

--At the close of the Last Supper, the Master impressed upon his disciples in a rather dramatic way the nature of his healing ministry.

- He washed their feet.

---And then he said to them (John 13:12-15): "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

--The attitude...of one who would be a Christian Science practitioner must be to serve, to minister effectively to the needs of the people.

--Sin, disease, frustration, and other difficulties are merely symptoms of spiritual undernourishment, spiritual inadequacy.

--Christian Science treatment is based upon the fact that God, divine Mind, is the one and only source of the individual's true being.

--Nothing can compare with the joy and satisfaction that come from applying spiritual facts to the needs of mankind.

SECTION V: Trial and Crucifixion (Mark 15: 1,16,25)

PARALLEL GOSPELS: Matt 27:1,2, 24-26; Luke 23:1,24,25; John 18:28 and 19:16

TIME LINE: Friday of Passion Week, April 7, 30 AD, 5:00-9:00am at Jerusalem

Matt 27:1 "*When morning came.*" The Sanhedrin waited until daybreak to render its official verdict (cf. Matt 26:66), possibly a token nod to the rule against criminal trials at night." (MacArthur Bible Commentary) They then decided "to bind Jesus and send him to Pilate, the Roman governor." (Eerdmans Commentary)

The Roman governor's official residence [Mark 15:16 *called Praetorium*] in Jerusalem, [was] probably located in the Fortress Antonia complex." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"Matthew's account of Jesus' second interrogation and condemnation by Pilate (Matt 27:11-26) repeats the themes of the first, especially that Jesus is innocent and voluntarily dies according to God's will expressed in Scripture." (Eerdmans Commentary)

"The story of the hearing before Pilate raises almost as many historical problems as the account of the Sanhedrin. That there was some Roman involvement in the trial and death of Jesus seems undeniable: at the very least we have to explain the fact that Jesus was crucified, and crucifixion was a Roman punishment, reserved primarily for political rebels." (Oxford Commentary)

"chief priest...elders and scribes"/The Sanhedrin

"The Gospels and Acts utilize this Greek term for council, which literally means 'sitting together,' both for the locus of opposition to Jesus and his movement, often in combination with elders and chief priests, and for the venue where both Jesus and his followers make their defense." (Oxford Guide to People & Places)

"During his lifetime Herod controlled political affairs by appointing the high priest, subordinating the *synedrion* (the ruling regional council) to his wishes, and appointing family members

and relatives by marriage to all high posts." (Cambridge Companion to the Bible) "The high priest presided over this Sanhedrin, and its members included the chief priests, elders, scribes, and other members, presumably leading citizens (Mark 15:1)." (Anchor Bible Dictionary)

"In Acts 5:21 the *synédrión* is linked to 'the whole council of elders (*gerousia*) of Israel.' In Luke 22:66 the *presbytérion* (another word for 'council of elders') of people,' consisting of the chief priests and scribes, is said to have gathered and then to have brought Jesus into their *synédrión*." (Eerdmans Dictionary)

Pilate

(Abbreviated)

Pilate's part in the trial and execution of Jesus is the focus of most later interest in him. "Since the Jews could not execute a person without approval from the Roman authorities (John 18:31), the Jewish leaders brought Jesus to Pilate to pronounce the death sentence (Mark 14:64)." (Who Was Who in the Bible)

"Some scholars have placed the site of the praetorium, where Jesus was tried before Pilate, north of the temple area, where flagstones under the Sisters of Zion building have been identified as the lithostraton of the Fortress Antonia." (Oxford Guide to Ideas & Issues) "The Gospels make it abundantly clear that the charge was one of rebellion, one which was eminently in the domain of the Roman prefect." (Anchor Dictionary) "Pilate seemed convinced that Jesus was not guilty of anything deserving death, and he sought to release Jesus (Matt 27:24; Mark 15:9-11; Luke 23:14; John 18:38-40; 19:12). Neither did he want to antagonize the Jews and run the risk of damaging his own reputation and career." (Who Was Who in the Bible) "Pilate is represented in all the Gospels as questioning Jesus especially on the subject of kingship, but he remained unconvinced that Jesus was in any way a serious claimant to Jewish or Roman political power. The inscription he insisted on placing over the cross according to all the Gospels was Pilate's last grim joke at Jewish expense: 'This is the King of the Jews'." (Holman Dictionary) However, the Anchor Bible Dictionary says, "As for the Gospel's claim that Pilate was in fact unconvinced of Jesus' guilt and was forced by the Jewish mob to execute Jesus against his own better judgment, this appears to be part of the apologetics of the early Church." Pilate's role is presented somewhat differently in each of the Gospels, reflecting the diversity of theological agendas of the various authors as well as a growing tendency, as time passed, for Christians to exonerate the Romans and to lay blame for Jesus' crucifixion on "the Jews."

Seeley, Paul Stark (CSB, Lecturer, and Associate Editor), "[Why Pilate Marveled,](#)" Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.56 (13 November 1954), p. 1985.

--Bait, deceptive and alluring, is constantly being put before mortals in many forms of evil suggestion which tempt them to react with concurrence, fear, or hate.

- Daily many are tempted to accept death as a verity of being for themselves or for others.

--Jesus marked the way.

- When he was brought before Pilate, "the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing." (Mark 15:3)

---Pilate then reminded him of the many things that were witnessed against him.

- "But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled."

---Why did Pilate marvel?

- Because before him stood a man who would not react to false accusation, condemnation, and hate.

---Jesus had mastered the temptation to react to evil, be it sin, sickness, death, or vilification, and he was expected by men to do [so].

Chapin, Mary Jane, "[The crucifixion](#)," EXPERIENCING THE GOSPEL OF MARK, *Part twenty-four*, Mark 15: 21-47, Christian Science Journal, Vol.117 (September 1999), p. 41.

--Jesus' crucifixion had not been unexpected.

- The Pharisees and the Herodians have wanted to destroy him almost from the beginning.

---At various points during his ministry, Jesus himself has prophesied that he would be killed.

• He did not challenge the false witnesses during his trial before the Sanhedrin, and Pilate's main concern was to maintain peace—at whatever the cost.

---Now the hour was come, and it will be uncompromising.

15: 21-32

--Earlier, Jesus had said those that wished to follow him would have to take up their cross and do just that—follow him.

- Now his disciples have deserted him.

--**And it was the third hour**, about 9 a.m., **and they crucified him.**

Dunaway, Max, "[Crucifixion and Resurrection](#)," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.65 (13 April 1963), p. 617.

--Who or what was it that crucified Jesus?

- Was it the **Roman soldiers** who placed him on the cross?

---They merely fulfilled the orders of the unstable Pilate.

- Then was it **Pilate** who crucified the Master?

---He only yielded to the demands of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, which stirred up the multitude to call for the crucifixion.

• Then was it the **hierarchy**, together with the people who blindly followed the instruction of the elders, that crucified Jesus?

---These were but tools in the hands of the criminal.

- It was **animal magnetism**, or evil mind, that crucified our Master.

---It was the impersonal error that always resists the impersonal Christ, Truth.

The Burial (Luke 23: 50,52,53,55)

PARALLEL GOSPELS: Matt 27: 57-61; Mark 15: 42-47; John 19: 31-42

TIME LINE: Late on Friday of Passion Week

"The stories about the burial and the guard set the stage for [Matt] 28:15. The tomb that is filled here (in accord with Deut 21:23, before sundown) is emptied there. The stone that is here rolled across the door of the tomb is there rolled back." (Oxford Bible Commentary)

In [Luke 23:53], "Joseph a wealthy man, undoubtedly had the tomb built for his own family. It had remained unused, [Jesus'] burial there was a wonderful fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9." (MacArthur Bible Commentary) "Romans did not typically release the bodies of those whom they crucified for insurrection, but Pilate did for this official." (Eerdmans Commentary)

"According to John 19:39, Nicodemus brought a hundred pounds (about 72 pounds by modern measurement; a Roman pound equaled 11.5 oz.) of spices and aloes (Probably obtained while Joseph was negotiating with Pilate for Jesus' body), and he and Joseph wrapped the body with linen and the

spices [Luke 23:53]. These women [Luke 23:55], from Galilee, were probably unfamiliar with Joseph and Nicodemus, who were Judeans....So, the women were determined to prepare Jesus' body for burial themselves." (Ibid)

Joseph of Arimathea

Joseph of Arimathea was a high-ranking and honorable converted Jew in whose tomb Jesus was laid. "He is described as a member of the council (Mark 15:43), probably the Sanhedrin." (Eerdmans Dictionary)

"Unanticipated, Joseph enters all four passion narratives to request Jesus' body from Pilate to entomb it. Mark 15:43-46 depicts a respected council member awaiting the reign of God." (Oxford Guide to People & Places) "He wrapped the body of Jesus in a linen cloth and buried it in his unused, rock-hewn tomb in Jerusalem." (Eerdmans Dictionary) "That he was a disciple of Jesus (Matt 27:57; John 19:38) is not mentioned by either Luke or Mark." (HaperCollins Bible Commentary)

"**Editor's Table**," Christian Science Journal, Vol.12 (March 1896), p. 528.

--"Pilate therefore, leaving Jesus within the praetorium, went out to the Hebrews and said to them, I find not one fault in him.

--"Then Pilate commanded him to be loosed, and said to Jesus, Thine own nation complain of thee as a king; therefore, I have decreed that thou shalt first be scourged according to the statutes of the emperors, and then be crucified upon a cross."

--"Now his acquaintances and the women who had followed him out of Galilee stood afar off beholding these things.

- And, behold, a certain man, Joseph by name, a counselor of Arimathea, a city of the Hebrews, a good and just man, who did not consent to their counsels nor deeds, and who himself expected the kingdom of God, went away to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus.

---And taking it down from the cross he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and placed it in his own new tomb, wherein no one had been laid."

Mason, Frank E. (CSB and Asst Pastor), "**Extracts from an Address**," Christian Science Journal, Vol.7 (April 1889), p. 23.

--It was needful that Jesus lay down his mortal life, that his immortality might shine through the clouds of materialism.

- Because the idea of sacrifice had its origin in the human mind, that idea could not be uprooted until that from which it had birth had been destroyed; hence, it was necessary that a human being be sacrificed to appease this false belief of human mind.

--Again, it will be remembered that the Mosaic sacrificial law demanded a victim "without spot or blemish."

- The pure and holy Jesus was this victim — the human sacrifice without spot or blemish.

---The great tragedy of the crucifixion closed forever the era of sacrificial ceremonies, and in the death and resurrection of the personal Jesus the belief in their efficacy had a burial that was without resurrection in the catacombs of mortal mind.

The Women Discover the Empty Tomb (Luke 24: 1-6 [to:])

PARALLEL GOSPELS: Matt 28: 1-7; Mark 16: 1-5; John 20: 1,2

TIME LINE: At dawn on Sunday morning, 30 AD, in Jerusalem

"the women"

"The resurrection is the necessary end to Jesus' story." (Oxford Bible Commentary)

"If it be remembered that a considerable number of women visited the tomb—Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, Salome (Mark), Joanna (Luke), and 'the other woman with them' (Luke)—the fragmentary accounts of the evangelists are not very difficult to arrange in order.

- (1) Mary Magdalene and the other woman visit the tomb immediately after the resurrection, and see one angel (Matthew, Mark), or two (Luke).
- (2) She runs at once to Peter and John, who were probably alone at Peter's house, and thus misses the appearance of Christ to the women recorded by St. Matthew.
- (3) The other women returning more leisurely are met by Christ Himself (Matthew), and report what they have seen to the other apostles.
- (4) Mary returns to the tomb, and after the departure of Peter and John, sees Jesus in the garden (John).

Other arrangements of the events are also possible." (Dummelow Commentary)

"The Jewish Sabbath officially ended with sundown on Saturday. At that time, the women could purchase and prepare spices (Luke 24:1). The event described here occurs the next morning, at dawn on Sunday, the first day of the week." (MacArthur Commentary) The *other Mary* was "the mother of James the Less" (Ibid) and Josés.

"This earthquake [Matt 28:2] is the second associated with [Jesus'] death (27:51)." (Ibid) "The characters and the events at the tomb resemble those found in apocalypses:

a divine messenger with white garments and a fiery appearance ('like lightning'—[Matt 28:] v.3)

an earthquake, the rolling aside of the rock sealing the tomb,
the frightened fainting of the guards,
the fear of the women,
the instruction not to be afraid, and
the revelatory message that Jesus has risen from the dead ([Matt]28:2-6)." (Eerdmans

Commentary)

"In Mk and Lk the angel [Matt 28:5] (or angels) appears inside the tomb. Such slight discrepancies harmonise well with the excited feelings which such a vision would be likely to produce." (Dummelow Commentary) "In Luke, the women are faithful witnesses." (HarperCollins Bible Commentary)

"two men"

"The 'two men' are angelic beings who also appear at the ascension (Acts 1:10). The message of the angels is for the women, rather than given to them in order to be passed on to the disciples (Mk 16:7)" (HarperCollins Bible Commentary)

Felton, Hilda D.B., "The Stone Rolled Away," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.34 (26 March 1932), p. 583.

--In the four gospels we find slightly varying accounts of the resurrection of our Lord.

- But, although worded somewhat differently, there are certain incidents connected with this event upon which the writers are in complete agreement, one of these being that the stone was rolled away from the sepulcher; and another, that Mary Magdalene was one of the first to make this discovery.

--Students of Christian Science will be helped by a careful consideration of these two facts.

- Understanding so completely the unreality of matter, Jesus could, doubtless, just as easily have emerged from the tomb with the stone remaining, even as, soon after, he went through closed doors; but he probably knew that its removal was necessary to convince others that he had really risen.

---As ever, our Master gave positive proof of his understanding of God's allness.

Wood, Aylett L., "[Angels at the Tomb](#)," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.60 (5 April 1958), p. 573.

--How beautiful must have been the vision that appeared on the resurrection morn to those who came to the tomb seeking the body of Christ Jesus!

- What comfort it must have been to their suffering hearts to hear the glorious message (Matt 28:6), "He is not here: for he is risen"!

--From time to time, in hours of grief and despair, sorrowing mortals come to the tomb of materiality, seeking consolation for their lost hopes and joys.

- They may be longing for the touch of a hand that is gone, or perhaps they are mourning for a love that has vanished.

- They may be seeking better health, or they may be hoping to regain a treasure that seems irrevocably lost.

---Whatever the tomb may represent, if they turn humbly to divine Love, they will find God's angels waiting to comfort them.

--Such indeed was the experience of Mary Baker Eddy, who writes in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p.299): "My angels are exalted thoughts, appearing at the door of some sepulchre, in which human belief has buried its fondest earthly hopes. With white fingers they point upward to a new and glorified trust, to higher ideals of life and its joys."

Kenrick, Miss Ann (CSB and Associate Editor; London, ENG), "[Christ is risen](#)," Christian Science Journal, Vol.106 (April 1988), p. 30.

--The culmination of Christ Jesus' lifework was in his resurrection and ascension.

- He illustrated and proved by his love the deathless reality of Life as God.

---Love literally vanquished hate and all its effects.

- Jesus began a new era of possibility for the human race.

--Until this moment, even though Jesus' disciples had walked beside him throughout Galilee and had seen the healings he performed, they had still failed to see an essential element of his teachings.

- ...until the resurrection the disciples had not fully realized he was showing them the way out of mortality—the way out of limited mortal thinking that would hold men and women forever in a physical framework of mortal birth and death.

[The Appearance to the Disciples by the Sea](#) (John 21: 1 [to;], 12-14,25 [to 1st.])

PARALLEL GOSPEL: Matt 28: 16-20

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Luke 5: 1-11

TIME LINE: Post-resurrection, April, 30 AD, at the Sea of Galilee

“The Fourth Gospel confirms the synoptic tradition that there were appearances in Galilee as well as Judea.” (Dummelow Commentary)

“This resurrection story finds a parallel in Luke 5:1-11, a call story, in which the disciples are also fishing on the Sea of Galilee (Gennesaret), Simon Peter figures prominently, and Jesus guides the disciples to make a large catch of fish. That the Lucan and Johannine stories are variants of the same tradition remains a possibility, especially in view of their apparent similarity of purpose as well as content: Jesus commissions, or recommissions, his disciples.” (HarperCollins Commentary) "In 6:1 the Sea of Tiberias is mentioned as a synonym for the Sea of Galilee.” (Oxford Bible Commentary)

“The post-resurrection appearances continue beyond Mary Magdalene’s encounter with Jesus. However well she may have told her story, it would seem that the ‘brothers’ did not fully understand since they are still fearfully behind closed doors (John 20:19) after her report. Jesus comes to them with the greeting he promised before the passion, ‘Shalom’ (14:27).” (Eerdmans Commentary)

"Again Peter is the man of action. **I go a fishing.** Although the Greek present tense (I am going to fish) is used here and normally denotes continual action, this does not necessarily mean that Peter intended to return permanently to his former occupation." (King James Bible Commentary)

“The miraculous catch of fish and the following meal are closely interrelated. [In] V. 1 the typical Johannine ‘after these things’ does not indicate a chronological but a thematic progression (cf.6.1). The same formula ‘to show oneself’ as in 7:4 is now used in reference to the risen Christ (in 21:14 in the passive form). Strangely enough the word ‘disciples’ occurs seven times in vv. 1-14, matching the seven disciples named in v. 2." (Oxford Bible Commentary) "In all lists of the apostles, [Simon Peter] is named first, indicating his general leadership of the group." (MacArthur Commentary)

"Jesus invites the group to breakfast (21:12-13), with himself as host. The similarity to the Emmaus Road sharing of bread is strong, and there may here be allusions to a eucharistic meal, especially when Jesus takes the bread and gives it to the disciples." (Eerdmans Commentary)

"the disciples"

(continued from Section III)

Even at the resurrection they were yet weak in their knowledge, though he had for so long been carefully preparing and instructing them. On the feast of Pentecost, ten days after our Lord’s ascension, the Holy Spirit came down on the assembled church; and from that time the disciples became altogether different men, giving witness with power of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, as he had declared they should.

Stinson, Mrs. Barbara-Jean (CSB, Lecturer, and Associate Editor), “**A breakfast that feeds the world,**” Christian Science Journal, Vol.105 (June 1987), p. 34.

--Christ Jesus fed mankind’s spiritual hunger in a way that also satisfied their human needs.

--After the resurrection, Jesus invited Peter and some fellow disciples, who had gone back to their fishing, to breakfast on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

•The Bible says, “As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.” (John 21: 9)

--How humbled Peter must have been to witness another proof of the Master’s spiritual ability to provide what they needed through his pure consciousness of divine Love’s provision.

• This time, however, in obedience to Jesus’ command to cast their net on the right side of the ship, the disciples were also able to add to the meal by contributing the fish they had caught.

--God will bring those who are hungry for the meal.

Glaser, Eliot Dixon, "[Morning meal](#)," POEM, Christian Science Journal, Vol.116 (October 1998), p. 16.

Lost, we decided to go fishing.
What a lonely night that was
banished by a glorious sunrise.

He told us to cast the net on the right side.
It was so full we couldn't hoist it—
and the light grew stronger.

When John told me who he was
I remembered that strange feeling
on a bright morning three years past.

Then he had told us we would catch men.
I didn't really understand what that meant
but the light was irresistible....

After he left, we realized Light is forever,
nothing can stop it, nobody owns it.
We couldn't help but tell the world!

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Bibliography is provided only in the notes of the first Sunday of each month.

*The weekly Lesson-Sermons 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. This week's Golden Text is from the *Good News Translation of the Bible*.