



Weekly Bible Study Resources

Wood's Bible Characters Notes for Your Weekly Bible Study

*Notes on the Bible characters mentioned in the weekly Bible Lesson
with correlative references from the Christian Science periodicals.*

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SUBJECT: DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

For week of April 15 - 21, 2013

Cast of characters are listed in the order of appearance in this week's Lesson

The Celebration by Levi (Matthew) (Mark 2: 15-17)

PARALLEL GOSPELS: Matt 9: 9-13; Luke 5: 27-32, 36-38

TIME LINE: The Year of Popularity and Fundamental Principles (Jesus' 2nd year of ministry), May or June, 28 AD in Capernaum.

"This scene had transparent meaning for disciples in a Greco-Roman house church assembled in a dining room...and spilling out into the peristyle garden listening to the Gospel read aloud." (*Eerdmans Commentary*)

"This [*sat at meat*, Mark 2:15] can also be translated 'reclining at table,' a common posture for eating when guests were present. According to Luke 5:29, this was a feast that Matthew gave in Jesus' honor." (*MacArthur Bible Commentary*)

"In [Luke 5:27] stress is laid on the fact that Levi [Matthew] was a tax collector, and as such was an outcast." (*Peake's Commentary*)

In Matt. [9:12], the phrase "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," shows "the Pharisees thought they were well—religiously pure and whole. The outcasts knew they were not. Salvation can't come to the self-righteous." (*MacArthur Bible Commentary*)

"The word [*righteous*, Matt 9:13] is used here in an ironic sense, meaning self-righteous. Ultimately, as the Scripture tells us, "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom 3:10)." (*King James Bible Commentary*)

"publicans [tax collectors] and sinners" (mentioned this week in Mark chapter 2)

"In...eating with tax collectors and sinners ([Matt 9]:10), Jesus transgressed social propriety in favor of the ostracized." (*Eerdmans Commentary*) Sinners was "a term the Jews used to describe people who had no respect for the Mosaic Law or rabbinic traditions, and were, therefore, the most vile and worthless of people." (*MacArthur Bible Commentary*)

"When St. Luke says, 'Then drew near to the Lord all the publicans and sinners for to hear him,' we must understand him as giving the prevailing feature in the whole of Christ's ministry, or at least in one epoch of it. The publicans were hateful to their countrymen, being accounted as traitors who for the sake of filthy lucre had sided with the Romans, the oppressors of the theocracy, and now collected tribute for a heathen treasury. No alms might be received from their money-chest; their evidence was not taken in courts of justice, and they were put on the same level with heathens (this fact gives an emphasis to Luke xix. 9). By the word 'sinners' is meant all those who, till awakened by the Lord to repentance, had been notorious transgressors. Being come to seek and to save that which was lost, [he] received them graciously, and lived in familiar intercourse with them." (*Trench Parables*)

From the Christian Science periodicals:

Cook, George Shaw, “*They that are whole*” EDITORIAL, *Sentinel* (13 May 1939), p. 730.

JSH-Online: <http://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1939/5/41-37/they-that-are-whole>

- It is recorded of Jesus, in the Gospel of Mark, that “*when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*” From this it is evident that the most spiritually minded of men did not ignore the fact that mankind is in need of healing and salvation.
- In the Preface to *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*,” Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, says (p.xi), “*The physical healing of Christian Science results now, as in Jesus' time, from the operation of divine Principle, before which sin and disease lose their reality in human consciousness and disappear as naturally and as necessarily as darkness gives place to light and sin to reformation.*” This very plainly indicates that Christian Science, which is a restatement of primitive Christianity, has for its twofold purpose the healing of sin and of sickness.
- Christ Jesus, the Way-shower for mankind, and Mary Baker Eddy, who has given to the world the scientific explanation of the Christ, which Jesus demonstrated, both strongly emphasize healing and regeneration as signs following an understanding of Truth.

Jesus frees the “woman taken in adultery” from her sin (John 8:1-11)

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Lev 20: 10; Deut 13: 9; 17: 7; 22: 22; John 1: 4-9

TIME LINE: Toward the end of The Year of Opposition and Development (Jesus' 3rd year of ministry), Mid-October 29 AD in the treasury of the Temple located in the court of the women, the most public part of the Temple, on Mount Zion, in the city of Jerusalem. (Jesus had spent the night nearby at the Mount of Olives.)

“This famous story was not originally a part of the Gospel of John.” (*HarperCollins Bible Commentary*) “It is not found at all in the earliest and best MSS of the Gospel. In later MSS, it appears at other places in the Gospel of John or the Gospel of Luke; (a total of six different places in various New Testament manuscripts), often marked with obelisks to indicate it was a secondary addition.” (*People's NT Commentary*) It “was an isolated tradition that still circulated orally after the Gospels were written.” (*Theological Bible Commentary*)

The “Mount of Olives [is] a prominent hill east of Jerusalem, and separated from the city by the valley of the Kidron.” (*New Oxford Annotated Bible*) “The dialogue partners turn out to be the Pharisees (v.13) rather than the ‘Jews,’ but the subject of the dispute is a continuation of the earlier question about testimony.” (*Ibid*) “If Jesus rejected the Law of Moses (Lev.20:10; Deut.22:22) [v.6], [his] credibility would be gone. If [he] held to Mosaic law, [his] reputation for compassion and forgiveness would have been questioned.” (*MacArthur Bible Commentary*) “This [*He that is without sin*, v.7] directly refers to Deuteronomy 13:9; 17:7, where the witnesses of a crime are to start the execution.” (*Ibid*)

“They [the accusers] left [vv.9-11], probably not out of conviction, but rather they had been defeated in their attempt to trap the Son of God. The sinner is left alone with the only person who was perfect and able to condemn her.” (King James Bible Commentary) “For the first time in the story Jesus and the woman now address one another [vv.10,11].” (*Eerdmans Commentary*)

“a woman taken in adultery” (mentioned this week in John chapter 8)

“The woman presented to [Jesus] by her accusers was without doubt guilty of the sinful conduct with which she was charged, and [he] in no way condoned her serious offense. Doubtless [he] pitied the woman’s weakness and made full allowance for the force of temptation compelling her to sin.” (*All the Women of the Bible*)

“The woman was only betrothed, not married, otherwise her punishment would not have been stoning, but strangulation, for so the rabbis interpreted Lv 20:10 Dt 22:22. But inasmuch as among the Jews betrothal was almost equivalent to marriage (see on Mt 1:18), the sin of a betrothed woman was regarded as a species of adultery.” (*Dummelow Commentary*)

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“For most of the story she is but a prop, an object used in the story. This only changes when Jesus speaks to her directly. These teachers challenge Jesus, 'What do you say about her,' that is, this obvious sinner? Their question is not designed to see if he knows what Moses says but to see if he will answer with something they can use against him.” (*Women in the NT*) “The crowd departs, leaving Jesus alone with the woman. Ascertaining that no one has condemned her, Jesus sends her on her way, asking only that she not sin again (8:11).” (*Women in Scripture*)

From the Christian Science periodicals:

Dressel, Alberta R., “To Heaven With Them” *Sentinel*, Vol. 88 (January 13, 1986) p. 67.

JSH-Online: <http://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1986/1/88-2/to-heaven-with-them>

- The way Jesus responded to the woman taken in adultery showed his utter compassion and purity of thought in recognizing her innocence as the child of God. Knowing that under the Mosaic law she would be stoned, he touched the conscience of her accusers, saying, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." But after her accusers had left, he told the woman, "Go, and sin no more."

Upton, Henry Leighton, “Resisting Evil” *Sentinel*, Vol. 16 (May 30, 1914) p. 764.

JSH-Online: <http://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1914/5/16-39/resisting-evil>

- On one occasion in the early morning hours, when Jesus had entered into the temple to instruct the people, the scribes and Pharisees brought to him an adulterous woman, informing him that Moses in the law commanded that such be stoned. What a rebuke to their self-justification, as well as a sharp censure to the self-deceived sense, must have been his simple remark, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Convicted by their own conscience, they slunk away one by one, from the eldest to the youngest, leaving the woman weighed down with self-condemnation, alone with Jesus. The great Teacher, with his ever-compassionate apprehension of the human problem, said, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She answered, "No man, Lord." Jesus replied, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."
- As Jesus brought out in the foregoing incident, that it is not only ineffectual but actually injurious to personalize evil and to try to master it by force and cruelty, so James showed, in line with the words of the Lord to Zerubbabel, that it is "not by might, nor by power," but only as we draw nigh to God, and submit ourselves unreservedly to His loving care, that we reflect enough of the one Mind successfully to "resist the devil."

Markstein, Joseph Carl, “Love, Not Condemnation, Heals” *Journal*, Vol. 66 (February 1948) p. 61.

JSH-Online: <http://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1948/2/66-2/love-not-condemnation-heals>

- We read that when the accusers brought the woman before the Master and told him of her sin, demanding the full penalty of man-made law, "Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not" (verse 6). Was it that he did not hear the error they voiced, that before them was a sinning woman? He knew the nothingness of sin and its claim to belong to man.
- Knowing that the sins of the accusers were as unreal, as ephemeral, as the sin they would fasten upon the woman, did he write that record too in the dust of the ground, nothingness?
- May we so grow in love and spiritual understanding that we too can write the claim of error, be it condemnation of self or another, or whatever its claim, in the dust of the ground.
- So long as we believe man to be material, believe life to be in matter, we are prone to condemn; . . . Christ Jesus condemned the sin but not the person, and Christian Science teaches us to do likewise.

Mgijima, Nomagugu, “The healing power of forgiveness” IMPROVING SOCIETY, *Journal*, Vol. 117 (January 1999), p. 23.

JSH-Online: <http://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1999/1/117-1/the-healing-power-of-forgiveness>

- “Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?” (Matt 9: 5)
With these words Christ Jesus was rebuking those around him who doubted his right to forgive

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sins when healing a palsied man. In our Master's healing work and mission, the power of compassion and forgiveness is most noticeable.

- Forgiveness must be a crucial component of healing, otherwise Jesus would not have asked us to forgive so many times.
- Compassion and forgiveness certainly manifest spiritual qualities such as wholeness and love, which each one of us possesses as God's offspring. And they are indispensable in the demonstration of healing—physical, moral, and spiritual. Forgiveness is also a powerful component of God's law of progress.
- An understanding of divine Love enhances our capability to see loved ones as in reality they are—perfect and spiritual. God, divine Mind, creates us all perfect and...we remain perfect and grand in His love.

Jesus heals the man "sick of the palsy" (Matt 9: 1-8)

PARALLEL GOSPELS: Mark 2: 2-12; Luke 5: 18-25

TIME LINE: The Year of Popularity and Fundamental Principles (Jesus' 2nd year of ministry), 28 AD at Capernaum.

"a man, sick of the palsy" (mentioned this week in Matthew chapter 9)

This story is told in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In Matthew and Mark it is called "The Sick of the Palsy;" in Luke it is called "The Paralytic." "Here, as in the preceding story, Matt. has eliminated considerable material from the fuller account in Mark. The result is that the authority of Jesus in both healing and forgiving sins is highlighted." (*Interpreter's One-volume Commentary*) "This conflict episode is the first of five conflict episodes (2:1-2; 13-17, 18-22, 23-28; 3:1-6)." (*MacArthur Commentary*) "The story presupposes that the infirmity has a spiritual cause (cf. Ex 20:5; I Cor 11:29-30; James 5:14-15; in [Matt] 9:32-34 a demon makes a man deaf and dumb). So by forgiving sins Jesus uproots the cause of the paralysis." (*Oxford Bible Commentary*)

"Jesus had been traveling throughout Galilee, preaching and teaching, and people keep coming to him to be healed and cured. His reputation as a miracle worker is dogging him, and it seems to handicap him when he wishes to preach about God's kingdom because the good news does not necessarily save one from suffering or death." (On Your Mark) His "entry into Capernaum was unknown by the public," but when "someone discovered his presence, the news spread like wildfire." (*King James Commentary*) "As Jesus arrives at Capernaum, some people carry to him a man who was unable to walk, presumably near the shore in the hope that Jesus will heal him ([Matt] 9:2-8)." (*Eerdmans Commentary*) "Brought to Jesus on a bed, the man's paralysis was severe." (*MacArthur Bible Commentary*)

"Rather than simply heal the man, Jesus offers to forgive his sins, which the scribes regard as a blasphemous arrogation of divine privilege." (*Theological Bible Commentary*) "Jesus' words of forgiveness [Matt v.2] may indicate that the paralysis was a direct consequence of the man's own sin." (*MacArthur Commentary*)

Arise (Mark 2:11). "The same word [is] used at the resurrection. Here and elsewhere the vocabulary of the healing stories points beyond the particular story to the cross-resurrection event." (*People's NT Commentary*)

"The peculiarity of this miracle is that it was worked to prove a doctrine, and that in the face of opposition. There were present certain scribes and Pharisees, some of whom had doubtless come from Jerusalem expressly to oppose Jesus. Jesus at once threw them a challenge by saying to the man, 'Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.' The scribes understood this to mean that He claimed to forgive sins as only God can do. Instead of repudiating this suggestion, as a mere man would have done, Jesus accepted it, and proceeded to prove His claim by a miracle." (*Dummelow Commentary*)

"In response to the scribes' and Pharisees' questioning, Jesus claims that 'the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins' ([Luke]5:24)." (*Eerdmans Commentary*) "Form criticism has taught us that this saying [*the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins*, Matt v.6] may be the pronouncement for which the story provides a framework." (*The Interpreter's Bible*) "It is certainly easier to claim the power to pronounce absolution from sin [*whether is easier*, Matt v.5] than to demonstrate the power to heal. [Jesus] actually proved [his] power to forgive by instantly healing the man of his paralysis." (*MacArthur Bible Commentary*)

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"[Luke] alone mentions the glorifying of God by the paralytic [v.25], and the fear of the bystanders." (*Peake's Commentary*) "The audience was stunned again when Jesus healed the man of his paralysis [Matt 9:8]; and *they marveled*, (lit., they were afraid)." (*King James Bible Commentary*) "The crowds praise God, who has given this kind of (divine) power to 'human beings' ([Matt] 9:8). They perceive that God's power is being democratized." (*Theological Bible Commentary*) "The more general expression of this power at the end of the story...supports Matthew's view that the church community can forgive sins ([Matt] 16:13-19; 18:15-20)." (*Eerdmans Commentary*)

From the Christian Science periodicals:

Hay, Violet, "The Higher Mission Of The Christ-Power" *Journal*, Vol. 76 (July 1958) p. 357.

JSH-Online: <http://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1958/7/76-7/the-higher-mission-of-the-christ-power>

- In the healing of the man with the palsy, it is interesting to note that even though the scribes and Pharisees could not help recognizing that Jesus had healed the sickness, they resisted up to the hilt his healing, or forgiveness, of sin and called it blasphemy. "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" they asked (Luke 5:21). To them, Jesus was presuming on the prerogative of God. To himself, Jesus was fulfilling the divine demand for man to reflect God, utilizing the power of God divinely bestowed upon man.
- We usually speak of the healing of sickness and the forgiveness of sin. In exercising forgiveness, the student of Christian Science always surrenders a false concept of man for the true concept. This is the true sense of forgiveness.

Curran, Arthur F., "The Forgiveness Of Sin" *Sentinel*, Vol. 63 (March 18, 1961) p. 450.

JSH-Online: <http://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1961/3/63-11/the-forgiveness-of-sin>

- "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." This, according to the ninth chapter of Matthew, was the greeting given by Jesus to a man sick of the palsy. This man had been brought to the Master for physical relief, and he was probably surprised to hear his sins mentioned instead of the disease which seemed to hold him in bondage. But because our Way-shower understood the allness of God, Spirit, and also the mythical nature of matter, with all its so-called conditions, he was able to prove that not only sin but sickness is an error to be destroyed by the Christ, the spiritual Truth which Jesus demonstrated.
- Masquerading under many disguises, sin often suggests that it is justifiable under certain circumstances. However, we should classify as sin anything which blinds our eyes to the allness of God or causes us to think that man, God's image, can have something unlike his loving creator.

Campbell, Margaret T., "Hath no man condemned thee?" *Sentinel*, Vol. 27 (31 January 1925), p.

425. JSH-Online: <http://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1925/1/27-22/hath-no-man-condemned-thee>

- In the eighth chapter of John there is an account of a trial where the accusers were the scribes and Pharisees, the accused a woman, and the judge Christ Jesus.
- The woman had been brought before the judge; and material sense had made its accusation of evil against her. Mortal mind watched to see what Jesus would do. He stooped and wrote on the ground, acting as if he did not hear what was said. But at last the verdict came: the woman might be stoned, according to the law of Moses, provided the stones were cast by those who were without sin! Again Jesus seemed to withdraw himself from the situation; again he stooped and wrote on the ground. It was for the accusers to make the next move.
- Mrs. Eddy says in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p. 154), "*Certainly we should not be error's advocate;*" and on page 441 of the same book, "*Our law refuses to recognize Man as sick or dying, but holds him to be forever in the image and likeness of his Maker.*"

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