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**Weekly Bible Notes**  
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**REGULAR EDITION**

*Digging deeper into the inspired Word of the Bible*

For study the week of **March 11 - 17, 2024**

**Table of Contents**

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(Online users: click on page number to be taken DIRECTLY to notes on that Chapter)

<b>Psalm 139 part 1: 1-15 .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Luke 15:11-32 .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>John 5:1-15.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>John 12:1-11.....</b>	<b>22</b>

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

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

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

*“As adherents of Truth, we take the inspired Word of the Bible as our sufficient guide to eternal Life.”*  
— Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* p. 497

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## Psalm 139 part 1: 1-15

(We'll cover the rest of the chapter in a future week.)

### You Have Searched Me and Know Me

**(CEB)\*** <sup>1</sup> LORD, you have examined me. You know me. <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I stand up. Even from far away, you comprehend my plans. <sup>3</sup> You study my traveling and resting. You are thoroughly familiar with all my ways. <sup>4</sup> There isn't a word on my tongue, LORD, that you don't already know completely. <sup>5</sup> You surround me—front and back. You put your hand on me. <sup>6</sup> That kind of knowledge is too much for me; it's so high above me that I can't reach it. <sup>7</sup> Where could I go to get away from your spirit? Where could I go to escape your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I went up to heaven, you would be there. If I went down to the grave, you would be there too! <sup>9</sup> If I could fly on the wings of dawn, stopping to rest only on the far side of the ocean—<sup>10</sup> even there your hand would guide me; even there your strong hand would hold me tight! <sup>11</sup> If I said, "The darkness will definitely hide me; the light will become night around me," <sup>12</sup> even then the darkness isn't too dark for you! Nighttime would shine bright as day, because darkness is the same as light to you! <sup>13</sup> You are the one who created my innermost parts; you knit me together while I was still in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I give thanks to you that I was marvelously set apart. Your works are wonderful—I know that very well. <sup>15</sup> My bones weren't hidden from you when I was being put together in a secret place, when I was being woven together in the deep parts of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my embryo, and on your scroll every day was written that was being formed for me, before any one of them had yet happened. <sup>17</sup> God, your plans are incomprehensible to me! Their total number is countless! <sup>18</sup> If I tried to count them—they outnumber grains of sand! If I came to the very end—I'd still be with you. <sup>19</sup> If only, God, you would kill the wicked! If only murderers would get away from me— <sup>20</sup> the people who talk about you, but only for wicked schemes; the people who are your enemies, who use your name as if it were of no significance. <sup>21</sup> Don't I hate everyone who hates you? Don't I despise those who attack you? <sup>22</sup> Yes, I hate them—through and through! They've become my enemies too. <sup>23</sup> Examine me, God! Look at my heart! Put me to the test! Know my anxious thoughts! <sup>24</sup> Look to see if there is any idolatrous way<sup>[f]</sup> in me, then lead me on the eternal path!

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

### COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

**CHAPTER OVERVIEW:** "A psalm of innocence composed by a religious leader (cf. verse 21) who was accused of idol worship. Creating an inclusion, the psalmist begins (verse 1) and ends (verses 23–24) the poem with an appeal to Yahweh to investigate personally, on the basis of his omniscience and universal presence, the charges of idolatry brought against him." (Mitchell Dahood S.J., *Psalms III: 101-150: Introduction, Translation, and Notes with an Appendix: The Grammar of the Psalter*, vol. 17A, *Anchor Yale Bible* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 284.)

**1 O lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. (KJV)**

**(NLT)** O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me.

**YOUTUBE:** "Psalm 139" by Sons of Korah [Click here to listen](#)

**COMMENTARY:** "This statement of omniscience is characteristically vivid and concrete: not formulated as a doctrine but, as befits a psalm, confessed in adoration. This divine knowledge is not merely comprehensive, like that of some receptor that misses nothing, capturing everything alike. It is personal and active:..." (*The Tyndale*

**Old Testament Commentaries (TOTC)**, p464) “Nowhere is there a more overwhelming sense of the fact that man is beset and compassed about by God, pervaded by His Spirit, unable to take a step without His control — and yet nowhere is there a more emphatic assertion of the personality of man as distinct from, not absorbed in, the Deity. Man is here the workmanship of God.” (Perowne, J. J. Stewart, *Commentary on the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1989 reprint of 1873 edition)) *You have searched me*) “God is active to search and test His servants. He knows our motives, desires, and words before they are expressed. In short, He knows His servants completely....The purpose of His intimate knowledge of His servants is protective and helpful, not judgmental and condemning.” (*The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)*)

**2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. (KJV)**

**(TPT)** You perceive every movement of my heart and soul, and you understand my every thought before it even enters my mind.

**(VOICE)** You even know *the small details like* when I take a seat and when I stand up again. Even when I am far away, You know what I’m thinking.

COMMENTARY: The Psalmist now elaborates upon “Thou knowest me.” K&D lists sitting down, rising up, walking, and lying down as “the totality or sum of the life of the spirit and soul of man...” (*Commentary on the Old Testament (K&D)*)

**3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. (KJV)**

**(AMP)** You sift and search out my path and my lying down, and You are acquainted with all my ways.

COMMENTARY: “Compass” in the sense of discerning or comprehending, not encompassing, according to DSB. “You have known my thoughts centuries before they entered my mind. You sift all my actions, putting them through a sieve, as it were, so as to discover every detail about them, what has motivated them.... In a word, God’s action in his search for the real ‘me’ is like winnowing through a whole load of wheat in search of, say, just one pin.” (*The Daily Study Bible (DSB)*)

**4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. (KJV)**

**(MSG)** You know everything I’m going to say before I start the first sentence.

COMMENTARY: What is said about the *word* and the *tongue* may be read in two ways. It may mean: *there is no word on my tongue* (which) *Thou doest not know altogether*; or, *a word is not (yet) upon my tongue* (but) *lo! Thou knowest it altogether*. The latter is, perhaps, the meaning here, and is in keeping with the thought in verse 2, that God knows our thoughts before they have taken definite shape.” (Scroggie, W. Graham, *The Psalms* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1965)) This verse “presents the greatest proof of God’s omniscience. Before David spoke, the Lord knew what he was about to say.” (*Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)*)

**5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. (KJV)**

**(NLT)** You both precede and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head.

**(VOICE)** You have surrounded me *on every side*, behind me and before me, and You have placed Your hand *gently* on my *shoulder*.

COMMENTARY: “So it is as if there has been an invisible presence in front of me and behind me, able to have access to all that I do or think or say. ‘Bind’ is a neatly ambiguous verb; one can bind things to protect them or to restrict them. Likewise Yhwh’s hand could be like the hand of the FBI, or it could be the hand of a supporter. The person who has nothing to hide has nothing to fear of Yhwh’s binding or of the touch of Yhwh’s hand any more than of Yhwh’s knowing. It is only the faithless person who has reason to dislike the idea of Yahweh always being present.” (*Baker Commentary on the Old Testament (BCOT)*, p630-1) “To be fully known is to be completely vulnerable, but on the whole, the psalmist certainly celebrates as good news the marvelous and

mysterious reality that his or her life is accessible to God in every way and at every moment." (*The New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)*, p1235-6)

**METACOMMENT:** "The term "to assert" is derived from a Latin verb which means "to bind together." To assert the Word of God, then, is to link consciousness to Truth; the human mind is awakened from its dreams of material presence to behold the one and all-inclusive presence of Spirit. The unilluminated human consciousness may exclaim in the words of David, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it"! Let consciousness but touch the hem of the Christ-mind, however, and with the shepherded king it begins to sing, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." Such a changed view-point from spiritual blindness to sight, from a sense of spiritual absence to divine presence, is neither miraculous nor occult; it is as natural and orderly..." (**Eastman, Lucy Hays, "Divine Ever-Presence", *Sentine*** Vol. 15 (21 July 1913), p. 824.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1913/6/15-42/divine-ever-presence>

**6** **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. (KJV)**

**(VOICE)** It is the most amazing feeling to know *how deeply* You know me, *inside and out*; the realization of it is so great that I cannot comprehend it.

**COMMENTARY:** "this kind of **knowledge** was out of David's control — it was **too wonderful for** him. The word 'wonderful' is in the emphatic position, at the beginning of the sentence. The meaning of 'wonderful' or 'Wonders' (*nīplā'ôṭ*, "things extraordinary or surpassing") is used frequently of God's works in the Psalms. In other words divine omniscience is **too** high for humans to comprehend." (***Bible Knowledge Commentary (BKC)***)

**7** **Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? (KJV)**

**(VOICE)** Can I go anywhere apart from Your Spirit? Is there anywhere I can go to escape Your *watchful* presence?

**COMMENTARY:** "The transition is now made from God's omniscience to God's omnipresence, Psalm 139:5 having paved the way for it. God's presence is not to be escaped; his spirit is everywhere. 'In him we live, and move, and have our being' (Acts 17:28). When Jonah sought to flee from his presence, he only found himself brought more absolutely and more perceptibly into his presence (comp. Jeremiah 23:24)." (***The Complete Pulpit Commentary (PUL)***) *Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?* - Hebrew, From his face; that is, where he will not be, and will not see me. I cannot find a place - a spot in the universe, where there is not a God, and the same God. Fearful thought to those that hate him - that, much as they may wish or desire it, they can never find a place where there is not a holy God! Comforting to those that love him - that they will never be where they may not find a God - their God; that nowhere, at home or abroad, on land or on the ocean, on earth or above the stars, they will ever reach a world where they will not be in the presence of that God - that gracious Father - who can defend, comfort, guide, and sustain them." (***Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES)***)

**METACOMMENT:** "Perhaps in nothing has human thought been more subject to erroneous belief than in its concept of the truth concerning the immanence of God. All Christians, of whatever denomination, profess to believe that God is infinite. An examination, however, into their application of this belief to everyday living, proves it to be an admission in theory only, and quite rejected by them in practice. If God is infinite, there can be no place where He is not; there can be no place nor particle outside His presence.... In the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy, we find the answer to this vexatious problem; indeed, to the honest seeker this book will ever prove the key to unlock every Scriptural truth. On page 465 we read: "God is incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love." By giving careful thought to this definition of God, we see that a belief of the infinity of God as a corporeal, manlike person is an utter impossibility, hence it must be abandoned before we can understandingly and truthfully believe in the omnipresence, or all-presence of God; but every one of the above synonyms given by Mrs. Eddy to express God, is purely spiritual, is infinite in scope. Even a finite so-called mind can think of no

place where Mind, or Spirit, or Soul, or Principle, or Life, or Truth, or Love, is not, in all the universe of God.” (Marvin, Edgar S., “*The Divine Presence*”, *Sentinel* Vol. 23 (26 February 1921), p. 633.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1921/2/23-26/the-divine-presence>

**8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. (KJV)**

**(EXB)** If I ·go [climb] up to the heavens, you are there. If I ·lie down [spread out; make my bed] in ·the grave [<sup>l</sup>Sheol; <sup>c</sup>the grave or the underworld], you are there.

COMMENTARY: “The rhetorical question of verse 7 is amplified into a series of examples: hypothetical locations above and below the earth and movement from east to west as speedy as the light of dawn. The key to the intent of the passage is the related statement of man’s accessibility to Yahweh at Jeremiah 23:24, in a divine threat of judgment: ‘can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him?... Do I not fill heaven and earth?’ So said the God who was great enough to see through the subjective claims of rival prophets. In similar fashion the psalmist states his awareness of his own availability to the divine judge. He cannot escape God: ‘before him no creature is hidden’...The personal life of the psalmist is related spatially to divine universality.” (**Word Biblical Commentary (WBC)**, p261) *My bed in hell*) The Hebrew place is Sheol, which has become an English word: “Sheol **1.** the abode of the dead or of departed spirits. **2.** (*l.c.*) hell,” **The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (RAND)**. UBS adds: “The question does not imply that the psalmist wants to get away from God. Yahweh is present in the most distant places in the universe.” (**UBS Handbook Series (UBS)**)

**9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; (KJV)**

**(NET)** If I were to fly away on the wings of the dawn, and settle down on the other side of the sea,

COMMENTARY: “The myth that lies behind the ‘dawn’ in verse 9 we can no longer recognize. Therefore also the statement of the verse can hardly be interpreted with assurance. Does the fleeing person use the wings of the rising sun? Or does verse 9 simply mean to ‘show up on the eastern horizon’? The meaning is clear: Even a flight to the most remote areas of East and West is senseless. All dimensions are traversed – Yahweh is everywhere.” (Kraus, Hans-Joachim, *Psalms 60-150*, Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989, p515)

**10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. (KJV)**

**(TPT)** Wherever I go, your hand will guide me; your strength will empower me.

COMMENTARY: “We could only fly from God by his own power. The Lord would be leading, covering, preserving, sustaining us even when we were fugitives from him. *And thy right hand shall hold me.* In the uttermost parts of the sea my arrest would be as certain as at home: God’s right hand would there seize and detain the runaway. Should we be commanded on the most distant errand, we may assuredly depend upon the upholding right hand of God as with us in all mercy, wisdom, and power....Both the hands of God are with his own servants to sustain them, and against rebels to overthrow them....the active energy of God is around them still.” (**The Treasury of David (SPURGEON)**, p24)

**METACOMMENT:** When we seem to be struggling in hell, when the sense of failure, of sin, of wasted opportunities and unfulfilled promise seems overflowing, and doubt and depression are besieging us, we can still turn resolutely away from the tumult of error, and claim, with persistence and calm assurance, the omnipresence of God. The nightmare of error vanishes as we become conscious of the only real presence.” (Fraser, L. Mearns, “*The Omnipresence of God*”, *Sentinel* Vol. 23 (19 February 1921), p. 486.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1921/2/23-25/the-omnipresence-of-god>

**11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. (KJV)**

**(MSG)** Then I said to myself, "Oh, he even sees me in the dark! At night I'm immersed in the light!"

**(TPT)** It's impossible to disappear from you or to ask the darkness to hide me, for your presence is everywhere, bringing light into my night.

COMMENTARY: "If I seek to find refuge in the darkness of the night so that God would not see me....The idea is, If it should come suddenly upon me; if I should be involved in sudden darkness – *as if* the darkness should come and attempt to *snatch* me away from God. All this would be in vain, for it would be, so far as God is concerned, bright day around me,...It shall be as if I stood in the full blaze of light. God can see me still; he can mark my going; he can perceive all that I do as plainly then as at mid-day." (**Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES)**, p293)

**12**     **Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. (KJV)**

**(NIV)** even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

COMMENTARY: "since darkness and light are the same to God, David felt secure always. Darkness does not hide things from God's sight as it does from human eyes." (**Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)**)

**METACOMMENT:** "One far-reaching statement of Science declares that God is "all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal" (Science and Health, p. 587), and this enforces the acceptance of these words of the one hundred and thirty-ninth psalm: "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." What, in the first place, is meant by darkness? Surely every illusion of sin, pain, sorrow, sickness; and it is these conditions which in God's sight have no place. He does not see them. It would be a great help in the darkest hours of human experience to cling so firmly to this that the night may be seen to shine as the day." (**Williams, Eva S. W., "The night shineth", Sentinel** Vol. 17 (17 October 1914), p. 125.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1914/10/17-7/the-night-shineth>

**13**     **For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. (KJV)**

**(VOICE)** For You shaped me, inside *and out*. You knitted me together in my mother's womb long before I took my first breath.

**PRONUNCIATION:** "reins (ranz), n.pl. 1. the kidneys. 2. the region of the kidneys, or the lower part of the back. 3. (esp. in Biblical use) the seat of the feelings or affections, formerly identified with the kidneys," [Audio](#) (**The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (RAND)**). COMMENTARY:

"We have already seen that David is writing with his heart as well as with his head in this psalm, and this means that he is not thinking of God's omnipotence abstractly, but as it applies to him. More particularly, he is thinking of the power of God in forming him while he was still in the womb of his mother. No wonder God knows me, he says. God made me. He formed me from my very first moments, from my beginning." (**Boice, James Montgomery, Psalms, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Company, Vol. 3, 1998, p1209**) "God had made him; that the innermost recesses of his being had been constituted as they are by God; and that, "therefore," he must be able to see all that there is in the very depths of the soul, however it may be hidden from the eye of man." (**Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES)**)

**14**     **I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. (KJV)**

**(CEV)** and I praise you because of the wonderful way you created me. Everything you do is marvelous! Of this I have no doubt.

COMMENTARY: "Verse 14 is significant, for the psalmist praises God, 'for I am fearfully [*noraot*] and wonderfully made.' *Noraot*, which here refers to the psalmist's own creation, elsewhere refers to the great deeds of the Lord like those celebrated in Psalms 65:5; 106:22; and 145:6. God's creation of the psalmist is as

wondrous in its own way as other great deeds of God.” (**Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries (AOTC)**, p282) “Do not think that God made man at first, and that ever since men have made one another. David took no notice of father or mother, but ascribed the whole efficiency of himself to God. And though we are begotten and born of our earthly parent, yet God is the chief parent and the only fashioner of us all.” (**The Treasury of David (SPURGEON)**)

**15 My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. (KJV)**

**(NLT)** You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.

**(TPT)** You even formed every bone in my body when you created me in the secret place; carefully, skillfully you shaped me from nothing to something.

**(VOICE)** You see all things; nothing about me was hidden from You As I took shape in secret, carefully crafted in the heart of the earth *before I was born from its womb*

COMMENTARY: “*My substance was not hid from thee* - Thou didst see it; thou didst understand it altogether, when it was hidden from the eyes of man. The word “substance” is rendered in the margin, ‘strength’ or ‘body.’ The Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, the Syriac, the Arabic, and Luther render it, ‘my bone,’ or ‘my bones.’ The word properly means strength, and then anything strong. Another form of the word, with different pointing in the Hebrew, means a bone, so called from its strength. The allusion here is to the bodily frame, considered as strong, or as that which has strength. Whatever there was that entered into and constituted the vigor of his frame, the psalmist says, was seen and known by God, even in its commencement, and when most feeble. Its capability to become strong - feeble as it then was - could not even at that time be concealed or hidden from the view of God.” (**Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES)**) “Unmistakably the thought of the origination of the human being from the ‘depths of earth’ in Psalm 139 serves ‘to prove the psalmist’s awareness of Yahweh’s inescapable knowledge of man’s secret places since the primal beginnings of his existence’.” (**Kraus, Hans-Joachim, Psalms 60-150, Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989, p516**)

NOTES:

## Luke 15:11-32

### The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother (NRSV) (The Lost Son)

**(CEB)\*** <sup>11</sup> Jesus said, “A certain man had two sons. <sup>12</sup> The younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the inheritance.’ Then the father divided his estate between them. <sup>13</sup> Soon afterward, the younger son gathered everything together and took a trip to a land far away. There, he wasted his wealth through extravagant living. <sup>14</sup> “When he had used up his resources, a severe food shortage arose in that country and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup> He hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup> He longed to eat his fill from what the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup> When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have more than enough food, but I’m starving to death! <sup>18</sup> I will get up and go to my father, and say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup> I no longer deserve to be called your son. Take me on as one of your hired hands.” ’ <sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion. His father ran to him, hugged him, and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> Then his son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his servants, ‘Quickly, bring out the best robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet! <sup>23</sup> Fetch the fattened calf and slaughter it. We must celebrate with feasting <sup>24</sup> because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life! He was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> “Now his older son was in the field. Coming in from the field, he approached the house and heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> He called one of the servants and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup> The servant replied, ‘Your brother has arrived, and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he received his son back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup> Then the older son was furious and didn’t want to enter in, but his father came out and begged him. <sup>29</sup> He answered his father, ‘Look, I’ve served you all these years, and I never disobeyed your instruction. Yet you’ve never given me as much as a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours returned, after gobbling up your estate on prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.’ <sup>31</sup> Then his father said, ‘Son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and be glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive. He was lost and is found.’”

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

### COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

**11**     **And he said, A certain man had two sons:** (*KJV*)

      (*NLT*) To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: “A man had two sons.

**“a certain man had two sons”:** See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

**YOUTUBE:** “Prodigal Son Suite,” by Keith Green. [The parable of the Prodigal Son in song](#)

COMMENTARY: “This extended parable, virtually a novella, is unique to Luke’s Gospel. It amplifies the basic point of the two previous parables [Parable of the Lost Sheep and Parable of the Lost Coin]. Matthew has a parable of ‘two sons’ that has some thematic resemblance but does not really form a parallel version.” (*Sacra Pagina* (SP), p236) “The parable’s popular title ‘prodigal son’ probably puts the focus in the wrong place. Actually the story gives more attention to the father and his reaction than to the son’s return. The father’s response to the elder son’s resentment also shows how central a character he is in the parable. So a better title



might be 'the parable of the forgiving father' or 'the parable of a father's response to his two sons.'" (*The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)*, p258)

**12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. (KJV)**

**(MOFF)** and the younger said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.' So he divided his means among them.

**"the younger (son) of them"**: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

COMMENTARY: "*He divided his assets between them.* There was advice against doing this in the OT Apocrypha (Sir 33:20). The younger son would get half of what the older son received (Deut 21:17)." (*New English Translation notes*) "At that time the custom prevailed among the Jews that a father could either bequeath his possessions to his heirs by drawing up a testament or could even during his lifetime assign them to his heirs in the form of presents. As a rule, however, as in the case of the elder son in the parable, the father, although he had allotted to each son his share, still retained the usufruct [the right to enjoy the use and advantages of another's property short of the destruction or waste of its substance] of it until his death." (*The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)*)

**13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. (KJV)**

**(PHIL)** Before very long, the younger son collected all his belongings and went off to a foreign land, where he squandered his wealth in the wildest extravagance.

COMMENTARY: "Having divided the living or the *property* between the two sons, the father watches the younger son depart. On his own, the son loses everything *in wild living*. No other details are given. In fact, the text says he scattered his resources: he *squandered* his inheritance and throws his money away." (*The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)*, p259) In the view of LBC, "the prodigal's sin, therefore, did not consist in wasting his part of the inheritance. This careless behavior was merely a symptom of the deep desire to be his own master, to live independently of his father's will, to do as he pleased, to shed the protective influences of home and love as unworthy of his own free manhood....The essence of sin is man's refusal to use God's gifts for God's glory, living as an obedient creature under the sovereign love of his Creator." (*The Layman's Bible Commentary (LBC)*)

**14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. (KJV)**

**(NET)** Then after he had spent everything, a severe famine took place in that country, and he began to be in need.

COMMENTARY: "Two disasters struck him simultaneously – he ran out of money and he ran into a famine. The first was entirely his fault. It does not need vast experience to know that when capital is expended without return it must eventually be dissipated. The famine was not his fault but it increased his difficulties. People who might have helped him would find their own circumstances more straitened. Food was short and consequently would be high priced. It gave people the perfect excuse for refusing to help. So the young man *began to be in want*. He lacked even the necessities of life." (*The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (TNTC)*, p241)

**15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. (KJV)**

**(NJB)** so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs.

COMMENTARY: "*Joined himself.* Entered the service of that citizen. Hired himself out to him. It would seem that he engaged to do any kind of work, even of the lowest kind. A *citizen*. One of the inhabitants of one of the cities or towns of that region, probably a man of property. *Into the fields.* Out of the city where the owner lived.

*To feed swine.* This was a very low employment, and particularly so to a Jew. It was forbidden to the Jews to eat swine, and of course it was unlawful to keep them. To be compelled, therefore to engage in such an employment was the deepest conceivable degradation." (*Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES)*, p102-3) "*To tend the pigs:* As in the story of the Gadarene demoniac, the herd of pigs represents something unclean for Jews." (*Sacra Pagina (SP)*, p237)

**16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. (KJV)**

**(AMP)** And he would gladly have fed on and filled his belly with the carob pods that the hogs were eating, but [they could not satisfy his hunger and] nobody gave him anything [better].

COMMENTARY: "That he was hungry enough to share the food of the detested swine which he kept for the citizen indicates the extremity of his degradation. The *Pods* were the hornlike bean pods of the carob tree which contained not only seeds but a sweet gelatinous substance adding to the food value. In conditions of extreme want the very poor people of the Mediterranean world ate these pods, but they were not regarded as fitting human food; they were food for the beasts...Jesus...showed how the young man had forsaken his family, how he had been forsaken by the friends of his more affluent days, and was even abandoned by the citizen for whom he worked – *no one gave him anything.*" (*Summers, Ray, Commentary on Luke*, Waco, TX: Word Books, 1972, p185)

**17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! (KJV)**

**(NLT)** When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger!

COMMENTARY: *Came to himself*) TPINTC defines this phrase "as a Semitism with the meaning 'repented'; but the expression is found in Greek and Latin authors, generally with the meaning of coming to one's senses as the result of reflection. This would seem to be what is required here by the young man's reflection (hence the soliloquy form in verses 17-19) that he is now worse off than his father's labourers." (*TPI New Testament Commentaries (TPINTC)*)

**METACOMMENT:** "In the tender story of the Prodigal Son, as told by that old-time physician and metaphysician, Luke, there is a portion of a sentence that has always challenged my attention and demanded careful consideration and study since I have read and studied the Scriptures in the light which Christian Science throws upon them, for the words contained therein seem to me to be pregnant with deep meaning, and helpful to all who are trying to apply the lesson of the great parable practically. In the seventeenth verse of the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, is found these words: "*And when he came to himself.*" We all desire to be ourselves, to act ourselves, the real self, for in so far as we do this we know that we are reflecting that which is good in the sight of God. We want to feel at all times that we are guided by Good, — God — and that we are not controlled or influenced by any other mind. We know that man is himself only when he is reflecting his creator, and therefore every one of us awaits the day that he will "*come to himself,*" for that day will find him close to his Father-Mother God." (**Fuller, Herbert S., "And when he came to himself," Journal** Vol. 20 (April 1902), p. 32.)

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1902/4/20-1/and-when-he-came-to-himself>.

**18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, (KJV)**

**(TPT)** I want to go back home to my father's house, and I'll say to him, "Father, I was wrong. I have sinned against you.

COMMENTARY: "**Father.** For those who seek to make this parable into an allegory in which the Father is God, note that the 'Father' in this verse ('you') is clearly distinguished from God ('heaven')...**Sinned against heaven**

**and against you.** 'Heaven' is a circumlocution for God. Note how Jesus' order 'God and man' follows his teaching in 10:27....Jesus' theological orientation is apparent. The young man has first of all sinned against God. The younger son has sinned against his father by dishonoring him. In so doing he above all has sinned against God who gave this, the Fifth, Commandment." (*The New American Commentary (NAC)*, p406)

**19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. (KJV)**

**(PHIL)** I don't deserve to be called your son any more. Please take me on as one of your hired men."

COMMENTARY: "So he practices a speech is designed to evoke his father's sympathy. It is not possible to tell how sincere his repentance is, and apparently all he hopes to receive from his confession is a servant's fare. He did not understand much about his father's love when he demanded his inheritance and left home, and he is not prepared for the reception he is about to receive as he returns in failure. And it is true that he has no 'right' to anything from his father and no 'worthiness' as a son to bank upon. Assuming that he is not trying to manipulate his father, the best he could expect is a little pity." (*Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament (ACNT)*, p278)

**20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. (KJV)**

**(NEB)** "So he set out for his father's house. But while he was still a long way off his father saw him, and his heart went out to him. He ran to meet him, flung his arms round him, and kissed him.

**ILLUSTRATION:** "The parable of the prodigal son," Gospellimages, [Image](#)

COMMENTARY: "His father" is not God, as NIB notes, but "no other image has come closer to describing the character of God than the waiting father, peering down the road longing for his son's return, then springing to his feet and running to meet him. ...He was moved by compassion, and his joy carried him down the road to his younger son." (*New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)*)

**METACOMMENT:** "His father's thought had not changed, he was ready, waiting, all the time. It only remained for the son to come to himself, to see that he was in bondage to false conditions which did not belong to him, to give them up, refuse to be held by them, and return to his father. So may the sick, sorrowful, weary, distressed, troubled ones to-day look up and find that 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Christ, Truth awaits them, invites them, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'" (**Rome, Rev. James J.**, "*Know thyself*", *Journal* Vol. 24 (April 1906), p. 21.)

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1906/4/24-1/know-thyself>.

**21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. (KJV)**

**(MOFF)** The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I don't deserve to be called your son any more.'

**ILLUSTRATION:** "The Return of the Prodigal Son" (1773) by Pompeo Batoni, [Image](#)

COMMENTARY: "Jesus has the sinner make his oral confession, even though the pardon is assured in advance. Men may require an investigation, God never. But note well that the father breaks into the son's words before he can finish. This is one of the tenderest touches in the parable. The son is spared his humiliating petition." (*Commentary on the New Testament (LENSKI)*, p513)

**22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: (KJV)**

**(AMP)** But the father said to his bond servants, Bring quickly the best robe (the festive robe of honor) and put it on him; and give him a ring for his hand and sandals for his feet.

COMMENTARY: “The suggestion to take a hired man’s place is never spoken. It is crowded out by the father’s overwhelming eagerness to reinstate the lost one....The son is clothed with the garment reserved for an honoured guest, he is given the ring and the sandals which are the badge not of slavery but of sonship,....So by a touching incident from human life Jesus would illustrate the love of God towards sinners returning to Him, and defend his own attitude towards the lapsed among his nation who have lost their status as sons of God and whom he seeks to lead homewards to the Father.” (*The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (MNTC)*, p179-80) “The ring may contain a seal and thus represents the son’s membership in the family, but it stops short of being a transfer of authority....The sandals are also a symbol of wealth; contextually the suggestion is that the son had been barefoot and destitute. The son goes from destitution to restoration.” (*Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT)*, p1314-5)

**23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: (KJV)**

**(PHIL)** and get that calf we’ve fattened and kill it, and we will have a feast and a celebration!

COMMENTARY: “...The father calls for a celebration in honor of his son’s return. They will sacrifice the fattened calf eaten on major religious holidays like the day of atonement. Such an animal was specially fed and prepared for these occasions. Meat was rarely consumed at meals in first-century Palestine, so this is a special time. It would take hours to fulfill this request. But the son has been reinstated, and so it is time to eat lavishly and rejoice.” (*Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT)*, p1315)

**24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. (KJV)**

**(TPT)** For my beloved son was once dead, but now he’s alive! Once he was lost, but now he is found! And everyone celebrated with overflowing joy.

COMMENTARY: “The language here is indeed striking, and while it does not actually break the bounds of the story, it comes closer to being immediately symbolic than at other points of the parable (the father does not use the language primarily in connection with the son’s experiences in the distant land – he does not know about this except by supposition, and minimally from the state in which he finds his son – but in connection with his own ‘bereavement’ and ‘finding again’ of his son)....The role of the younger son comes to a close with the beginnings of the party to celebrate his homecoming. The noise of this same celebration becomes the beginning point for the drama that is now to unfold in connection with the elder son.” (*Word Biblical Commentary (WBC)*, p786)

**METACOMMENT:** ““God is the Father of Mind and of Mind only.” Mind creates its own environments. Evil and matter are modes of consciousness. God is the all of true consciousness. For man to know himself—herself—is to know God: for man was created in the image and likeness of Good, not of Evil. Then this illusion which we call sin, and which is *nothing*, having no reality or entity, is all that separates man from his Maker; to dispel this illusion is to reunite man to his Maker; to restore the primitive relation of father and child. How is this restoration effected? In the case of the prodigal it was the ministry of suffering that dispelled the illusion or belief of reality in evil, and turned his erring feet toward his father’s house. With much fear, and trembling, and humility of spirit, he looked forward to becoming a hired servant in the house of his father, not counting himself worthy to be called a son. Being tired of the wages of sin he determined to seek the wages of righteousness, little dreaming that this determination would lead to a restoration of his lost sonship with all its privileges. Mark you, that his sonship was never lost, save in belief. The parental tie was never severed. The father’s attitude toward his deluded child had remained unchanged during all these years of sin and misery.” (J. E., “*The Prodigal Son*”, *Journal* Vol. 7 (December 1889), p. 21.)

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1889/12/7-9/the-prodigal-son>

**25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. (KJV)**

**(NLT)** “Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house,

“**his elder son**”: See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

COMMENTARY: “With verse 25 a new issue emerges. The **older son** who apparently was at work **in the field** hears the celebration and so inquires about what is going on. (To ask why the older son was not invited to the feast misses the point of this part of the parable. The point here is to provide contrast. Unlike his irresponsible younger brother, the older brother has remained at home faithfully going about his work.)” (*New International Bible Commentary (NIBC)*, p233)

**26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. (KJV)**

**(PHIL)** So he called one of the servants across to him and enquired what was the meaning of it all.

COMMENTARY: “The noise is coming from the house. And *he* does not know anything about it! His suspicion is aroused. He asks a servant, ‘What’s happening?’ Undoubtedly the servant congratulates himself on the fact that to him has been accorded the privilege of being the one who can impart the electrifying news to the inquirer. Full of enthusiasm, he shouts...” (*New Testament Commentary (NTC)*, p756)

**27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. (KJV)**

**(GW)** "The servant told him, 'Your brother has come home. So your father has killed the fatted calf to celebrate your brother's safe return.'

COMMENTARY: “The servant gave a concise report of the state of affairs. He confined himself to the return of the younger brother and the killing of the fatted calf. He adds that the reason for this latter is that the father *has received him safe and sound.*” (*The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (TNTC)*, p243)

**28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. (KJV)**

**(NRSV)** Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him.

COMMENTARY: “The elder son’s anger is expressed by his refusal to join the party.” “When he refuses to come in, the father comes out, just as he ran out to his younger son in order to bring him back to the family. In coming out to plead with the elder son, the father is ignoring his own dignity and position. The son’s refusal to join a party at which the father is host dishonors his father, just as the younger son dishonored the father by his premature request for a share of the property.” (*Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC)*, p242-3)

**29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: (KJV)**

**(TPT)** “The son said, ‘Father, listen! How many years have I worked like a slave for you, performing every duty you’ve asked as a faithful son? And I’ve never once disobeyed you. But you’ve never thrown a party for me because of my faithfulness. Never once have you even given me a goat that I could feast on and celebrate with my friends as this son of yours is doing now.

COMMENTARY: *you never gave me a young goat*) “All those years of service to the father appear to have been motivated too much by concern for what he could get for himself. This son's self-righteous behavior was more socially acceptable than the younger brother's debauchery, but it was equally dishonoring to the father—and called for repentance.” (*The MacArthur Bible Commentary (MacA)*)

**30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. (KJV)**

**(NEB)** But now that this son of yours turns up, after running through your money with his women, you kill the fatted calf for him."

**(NRSV)** But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!

COMMENTARY: "He regards his father's actions as a sign of favoritism," according to BECNT, "especially in light of his own faithfulness to his father. Perhaps this son fears a further paring away of his estate. The son who was lost and 'outside' is now inside, while the 'inside' elder brother complains from outside. The son's rebuke is expressed in strong terms, for not only does he complain about the lack of generosity toward him but he also notes that not even a goat—an animal worth very little—was made available, much less a special fatted calf (in our culture, it would be the difference between a fast-food hamburger and a four-course meal). He separates himself from his sibling entirely and faults his father for being so kind to the reprobate family member." (***Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT)***)

**31**     **And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. (KJV)**

**(PHIL)** But the father replied, 'My dear son, you have been with me all the time and everything I have is yours.

COMMENTARY: "[The father] responds to the elder son not with rebuke and rejection but with reassurance and persuasion. The one part of the complaint that he contests is the implication that he does not care about his elder son. He begins with 'child' ["son," KJV]. This form of affectionate address, used even of adults, reaffirms the family relationship. 'You are always with me' indicates that the father appreciates the elder son's past loyalty and wants a close relation to continue. 'All that is mine is yours' assures the elder son that the younger son's return will not affect the prior inheritance agreement." (***Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC)***)<sup>â</sup> "Ever with me; life was meant to be irradiated and blessed by the constant sense of God's nearness. We were meant to live in God and God in us. *All that I have is thine*; such is our wealthy condition, in the purpose of God, that all His divine resources, stored in Jesus, await the appropriation of our faith." (***Through the Bible Day by Day (MEYER)***)

**METACOMMENT:** "It would seem natural that he who had lived with the father day by day would have a thorough understanding of his tenderness and justice. But is this the case? Take, for instance, his reproach when he comes in from the field and finds the feast in progress to celebrate his brother's return: "Yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends." And then the immortal reply: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." Is not this the key to the whole situation? All things that the father had were his, but he did not reach out and take them—he failed to appropriate that which was so freely provided. Just here is where many of us fail. Perchance we have had endless proofs of our heavenly Father's tenderness, but do we put into practice the knowledge of it which remained so clearly with the prodigal throughout his wanderings? We thirst, though the water of Life flows freely for all. We hunger, though divine Love is ever ready to feed us with the bread of Truth "which cometh down from heaven." Let us therefore turn to this ever-ready source of all good, never doubting that we may partake freely thereof." (**Lilly, Anne May, "All that I have is thine", *Sentinel* Vol. 11 (26 June 1909), p. 846.**)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1909/6/11-43/all-that-i-have-is-thine>

**32**     **It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found. (KJV)**

**(AMP)** But it was fitting to make merry, to revel *and* feast and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and is alive again! He was lost and is found!

COMMENTARY: "The older son needed to get his perspective, be grateful that he had not had to go through such pain, and **celebrate this happy day** of his brother's safe return. Desperate sinners, notorious outcasts, difficult people—all have been offered salvation. God's people must not stand aside and above, but must join in

heaven's celebration when those who were lost have been found." (*Life Application New Testament Commentary (LANTC)*) *It was meet*) "It was right: The father claims justice is being done and rejoicing should occur using the same dead/alive, lost/found contrast which appeared in Luke 15:24. We are not told how the elder responds. The parable is left hanging for reflection. One is left to decide whether they rejoice at the return of the sinner like the father or complain like the elder son. If one is willing to rejoice at the presence of transformation in the sinner, one should also seek out the sinner who can benefit from it." (*Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary (NNIBC)*)

**METACOMMENT:** "Instead of loving acknowledgment of good, with loyal appreciation of a brother's struggle for and attainment to better things, and generous rejoicing over his reunion with their father, such a mistaken thinker accords but cold recognition of the prodigal's right to strive for betterment, grudging admission of relationship between his father and the sometime wanderer, but completely ignores the possibility of an existent tie between his brother and himself. He attempts to justify his lack of love and gratitude by reproaching his father with injustice and his brother with unworthiness, and succeeds only in insuring to the latter the crowning blessing that identifies "the poor in spirit" with the "persecuted for righteousness' sake," thus helping to establish his title to the kingdom of heaven, his inalienable inheritance. One's own prolonged ignorance of his father and his birthright can never alter his relationship nor diminish his inherent ability to possess his full quota of his father's estate. Nor can the ignorant or wilful refusal on the part of others to concede his right and acknowledge his claim accomplish anything other than to emphasize their own failure to claim rightly all they are entitled to possess; it cannot result in depriving another of that which rightfully belongs to him. Not always is the weary prodigal among the husks as far separated from his father as he dreams. Not always do years of service, of obedience to duty, make the home keeping child a true son and brother. The one may awaken amid his unsavory surroundings to find himself clasped in his father's arms. The other may so pride himself upon his dutiful service, may so blind himself by envy and prejudice, as to bar his own entrance to the door which opens wide in welcome to his repentant brother. "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine," is the divine warrant issued to every child of God. Nothing can alter this relationship, nothing can diminish or dissipate this inheritance, for though he wander long in the far country, the prodigal shall one day come to himself and shall turn his feet to enter the kingdom of heaven." (**Mesechre, Mary I., "The Beatitudes and the Prodigal", *Journal* Vol. 29 (November 1911), p. 478.)**

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1911/11/29-8/the-beatitudes-and-the-prodigal>

NOTES:

## John 5:1-15

### Jesus Heals at the Pool of Bethesda

**(CEB)\*** <sup>1</sup> After this there was a Jewish festival, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> In Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate in the north city wall is a pool with the Aramaic name Bethesda. It had five covered porches, <sup>3</sup> and a crowd of people who were sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed sat there. [Critical editions of the Gk New Testament do not include the following addition: *waiting for the water to move.*

<sup>4</sup> *Sometimes an angel would come down to the pool and stir up the water. Then the first one going into the water after it had been stirred up was cured of any sickness.* <sup>5</sup> A certain man was there who had been sick for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him lying there, knowing that he had already been there a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?” <sup>7</sup> The sick man answered him, “Sir, I don’t have anyone who can put me in the water when it is stirred up. When I’m trying to get to it, someone else has gotten in ahead of me.” <sup>8</sup> Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”

<sup>9</sup> Immediately the man was well, and he picked up his mat and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath.

<sup>10</sup> The Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It’s the Sabbath; you aren’t allowed to carry your mat.” <sup>11</sup> He answered, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” <sup>12</sup> They inquired, “Who is this man who said to you, ‘Pick it up and walk?’” <sup>13</sup> The man who had been cured didn’t know who it was, because Jesus had slipped away from the crowd gathered there.

<sup>14</sup> Later Jesus found him in the temple and said, “See! You have been made well. Don’t sin anymore in case something worse happens to you.” <sup>15</sup> The man went and proclaimed to the Jewish leaders that Jesus was the man who had made him well.

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

### COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

#### **1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. (KJV)**

**(TPT)** Then Jesus returned to Jerusalem to observe one of the Jewish holy days.

COMMENTARY: “**After this** is John’s loose tying of this with the previous narrative. The precise **feast** is not named, and the best manuscripts omit the definite article, meaning **a feast**. The evangelist has little interest in the occasion except as a means of getting **Jesus to Jerusalem**. If it was an obligatory pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Galilean Jews, it would have been Passover Pentecost, or Tabernacles. While John sometimes seems to use the symbolic significance of Passover, it is curious that he has no such interest in this unspecified feast.” (*Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament (ACNT)*, p75)

#### **2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. (KJV)**

**(NET)** Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool called *Bethzatha* in Aramaic, which has five covered walkways.

**PRONUNCIATION:** “Bethesda (buth-thez’ duh)” [Audio](#) (*Harper Collins Bible Dictionary (HBD)*). “‘Bethesda’ is the Greek transliteration of a Hebrew (or Aramaic) name meaning ‘house of outpouring.’” (*The MacArthur Bible Commentary (MacA)*)

**MAP:** “Jerusalem in Jesus’ time.” Note: the “Pool of Bethesda” is located in the upper right quarter of the walled city.” [Image](#)

COMMENTARY: “Jesus takes His disciples into one of the most miserable places they have ever seen. The suffering and impurity is frightening, but He comes to serve these precious people.” (*The Voice Commentary*)



**“Sheep Gate.** Most likely, this is a reference to the gate identified in Nehemiah 3:1, Nehemiah 3:32; Nehemiah 12:39. It was a small opening in the north wall of the city, just west of the northeast corner.” (*The MacArthur Bible Commentary (MacA)*) “The pool had five porticoes. These were *covered walkways* formed by rows of columns supporting a roof and open on the side facing the pool. People could stand, sit, or walk on these colonnaded porches, protected from the weather and the heat of the sun.” (*New English Translation notes*)

**3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. (KJV)**

**(NEB)** In these colonnades there lay a crowd of sick people, blind, lame, and paralysed. [Some manuscripts add: waiting for the disturbance of the water;]

**(NET)** great number of sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed people were lying in these walkways.

**ILLUSTRATION:** “Pool of Bethesda,” James Tissot, [Image](#)

COMMENTARY: “We learn in the story that many people viewed the pool as a healing sanctuary. Such places were not uncommon in antiquity, and once a site was identified as a sanctuary of healing, the tradition was impossible to stop. Excavations at the site show that after the New Testament era, the pools continued to be used as an Asclepius (a healing sanctuary), which confirms the tradition.” (*The NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC)*) “A large number of disabled persons used to lie at that place. Official Judaism almost certainly did not approve of the superstition associated with the alleged healing powers of the pool of Bethesda. After all, healing shrines were characteristic of pagan cults. Apparently, however, the authorities looked the other way, tolerating this expression of popular religion. Among the disabled were the blind, the lame, and the paralyzed.” (*Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (BECNT)*, p179)

**4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. (KJV)**

**(PHIL)** (They used to wait there for the “moving of the water”, for at certain times an angel used to come down into the pool and disturb the water, and then the first person who stepped into the water after the disturbance would be healed of whatever he was suffering from.)

COMMENTARY: PNTC explains why modern versions omit this note: “Probably the lines in verses 3b-4 were first introduced as marginal glosses, reflecting popular belief about the cause of the water’s disturbance. Although the twin pools were fed by the large reservoirs called Solomon’s pools, they may also have been fed by intermittent springs which caused the disturbance. Some ancient witnesses speak of the redness of the water, popularly thought to be medicinal: the spring may have been chalybeate [containing or impregnated with iron].” (*The Pillar New Testament Commentary (PNTC)*)

**5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. (KJV)**

**(MSG)** One man had been an invalid there for thirty-eight years.

**“a certain man...which had an infirmity”:** See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

COMMENTARY: *thirty-eight years* “John included this figure to emphasize the gravity of the debilitating disease that afflicted the individual. Since his sickness had been witnessed by many people for almost four decades, when Jesus cured him everyone knew the genuineness of the healing (cf. John 5:9).” (*The MacArthur Bible Commentary (MacA)*)

**6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? (KJV)**

**(LAMSA)** Jesus saw this man lying down, and he knew that he had been waiting for a long time; so he said to him, Do you wish to be healed?

COMMENTARY: “Verse 6 describes how Jesus comes to notice just this man: he sees him lying there and recognizes that he has been ill for so long a period.....Jesus begins the conversation by asking whether the sick

man wants to be healed. Even the modern reader is surprised by this since one presupposes that a sick man desires to be healed. But the narrator intends for the sick man to depict the situation; that is a livelier form of presentation than when the information is provided in the third person. On the other hand, the narrator wants Jesus to seize the initiative. He must then insert a word of Jesus that establishes his contact with the sick man and at the same time permits the sick man to depict his deplorable situation. The words of Jesus...serve this purpose." (*Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary (HERM)*, p245)

**METACOMMENT:** "The significance of Jesus' question. "Wilt thou be made whole?" deepens daily in the thought of every true Christian Scientist. He can never forget the imperative demand of this teaching for purity, a purity which signifies not only faultless moral conduct, but that cleanliness of mentality which presents no impediment to a continuity of divine revelation, to the life-nourishing, life-beautifying light of Truth. Under a different figure, Mrs. Eddy drives this teaching home when she says, "The corner-stone of all spiritual building is purity" (*Science and Health*, p. 241 ). Let us not forget, moreover, that this pure thought medium not only serves us by transmitting heaven's light, but that through it we gain clear visions of the without, acquire that true sense of proportion, of experience-values, which is essential to poise and right judgment. Pure thought, as we learn in Christian Science, is not only ethically clean, but logically, scientifically true. It is based on divine Principle, it is a divine idea and hence efficient in casting out the doubts and fears of false sense which tend to obscure our spiritual perception and thus prove the forerunners of sickness and suffering. Blessed indeed, therefore, are they of transparent thought; their hearts are sure to be flooded with an unfailing sunshine, and their lives to abound with both flowers and fruit." (*Willis, John B., "Transparency and Growth", Sentinel* Vol. 13 (25 February 1911), p. 511.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1911/2/13-26/transparency-and-growth>

**7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. (KJV)**

**(PHIL)** "Sir," replied the sick man, "I just haven't got anybody to put me into the pool when the water is all stirred up. While I'm trying to get there somebody else gets down into it first."

**COMMENTARY:** "Jesus' question shows us that he will not force himself upon anyone. He seeks permission before intervening in that person's life. The man indirectly answered Jesus by telling how he had not been able to be healed because others would get into the water before he did. But in making this statement, the man admitted that he needed help. His hope for healing was stuck behind his hopelessness of ever having help to get to the water in time." (*Life Application New Testament Commentary (LANTC)*)

**8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. (KJV)**

**(NASB)** Jesus said to him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk."

**ILLUSTRATION:** "Jesus cures a sick man that is unable to reach the pool of Bethesda waters," William Brassey Hole, [Image](#)

**COMMENTARY:** "The healing is accomplished by the simple command of Jesus. The words are parallel to those used in Mark 2:11 in the healing of the paralytic. This has given some interpreters evidence of John's use of the Markan story, but more likely there was interchange between the two healings in the preliterate period of the tradition. **Pallet** is a mattress used by the poor, and is the word used both in this story and in Mark 2:4ff. Jesus does not aid the man by helping him into the pool at the proper time, but by the intercession of an entirely new healing power available only through Christ." (*Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament (ACNT)*, p76)

**METACOMMENT:** "Unwavering obedience to the commands of God must support the desire to overcome sickness. The lame man received his healing because of his ready response to the command of Jesus, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The voice of Truth speaks to the afflicted today, and the same ready obedience brings the healing now as surely as it did two thousand years ago." (*Allison, Olive, "Progress Toward Perfection", Sentinel* Vol. 19 (16 December 1916), p. 304.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1916/12/19-16/progress-toward-perfection>

**9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. (KJV)**

**(NIV)** At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath,

COMMENTARY: “We are told that the man is healed at once, immediately after and because Jesus spoke, and he obeys the command, demonstrating he is well. It is only at this juncture in the story, at verse 9b, that we are told that this happened on the Sabbath, and since it is this fact which prompts all the following discussion, it is aptly placed here.” (Witherington, Ben, III, *John’s Wisdom*, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995, p137)

**10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. (KJV)**

**(VOICE) Jewish Leaders (to the man who had been healed):** Must you be reminded that it is the Sabbath? You are not allowed to carry your mat today!

COMMENTARY: BNTC considers the Fourth Commandment about work on the Sabbath: “The carrying of burdens on the Sabbath was not specifically forbidden by the Pentateuch, but the Mishnah [the first major written collection of the Jewish oral traditions that are known as the Oral Torah] classified it as work, with some precedent in Num. 15:32-36; Jer. 17:21; and Neh. 13:15-19. Thus the complaint against the man carrying his pallet was by no means merely captious [tending to find fault or raise petty objections].” (*Baker’s New Testament Commentaries (BNTC)*)

**11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. (KJV)**

**(NLT)** But he replied, “The man who healed me told me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’”

COMMENTARY: PNTC, along with most commentators, finds “the man defends himself by blaming the one who told him to do it. It is a doubtful exegesis that understands the man to be defending Jesus, as if he were saying that anyone with the authority to heal certainly has the authority to interpret the law authoritatively. He is simply ‘ducking’ the authorities; he will shortly go so far as to try to ingratiate himself with them....There may also be a hint of irony: the Jews hear of the wonderful healing and of the formal breach of their code, and are interested only in the latter. They think they see what is important, but in religious matters there are none so blind as those who are always certain that they see.” (*Pillar’s New Testament Commentary (PNTC)*)

**12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? (KJV)**

**(NET)** They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Pick up your mat and walk’?”

COMMENTARY: “The opponents ask, *Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?* (John 5:12). On one level they are simply asking for his name. But on another level this question epitomizes their basic problem: nothing that Jesus does makes godly sense to them because they do not know who he is. The major question of this Gospel is *Who is this fellow?* One’s answer to that question makes the difference between eternal life and death.” (*The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)*)

**13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. (KJV)**

**(MOFF)** Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for (owing to the crowd on the spot) Jesus had slipped away.

COMMENTARY: “It is extraordinary that the healed paralytic had no idea of the identity of his benefactor—so little did he ‘believe’! It is equally extraordinary that the Jewish leaders had no regard for the healing of a man who had been crippled for almost a lifetime; their sole concern was for the breaking of a sabbath rule as defined in their tradition.” (*Word Biblical Commentary (WBC)*) “in his complete ignorance of Jesus, not even

knowing his name, this man is like those who earlier had seen Jesus' signs in Jerusalem but had no true faith (John 2:23-25). This man does not just see signs but is himself the one who receives the benefit of Jesus' action. Yet like those others he fails to receive that which the sign points to, the revelation of God in Jesus." (**The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)**)

**14**     **Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. (KJV)**

**(TPT)** A short time later, Jesus found the man at the temple and said to him, "Look at you now! You're healed! Walk away from your sin so that nothing worse will happen to you."

COMMENTARY: "The Gospel writer...makes it clear that...Jesus did not simply leave helpless people to the wolves but 'found them.' In this story Jesus found the man in the temple, a place where in his hopeless state he would have found little welcome but in his healed state was now able to enter. Moreover, Jesus addressed him in his healed state: 'Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.' These words are not meant to be a cause-and-effect statement related to his sickness or paralysis. Such a direct identification between personal sin and illness, which was proposed by the disciples in the story of the blind man (9:2), was firmly rejected by Jesus. The statement of cause and effect in this story, therefore, must be taken as referring to the eschatological correlation between sin and judgment that undoubtedly is the meaning of 'something worse' in Jesus' warning to the paralytic." (**The New American Commentary (NAC)**, p235) "The man had earlier obeyed Jesus' command, but it had gotten him into trouble with the Jews, who accused him of sinning. Now he disobeys (at least from a Johannine point of view) Jesus' order to stop sinning, for he immediately betrays Jesus to the Jewish opponents. Jesus' command to this man could have functioned like his order to the Samaritan woman to go and call her husband (John 4:16). That command and the woman's response were part of Jesus' imparting of eternal life. The woman passes the test, but not so this man. He is caught between Jesus and the Jewish opponents, and he does not choose wisely. He now knows Jesus' name, but he continues to be ignorant of Jesus' identity." (**The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)**)

**METACOMMENT:** "Here was one with an infirmity of thirty and eight years' standing, who had doubtless resorted to various material means without receiving help. This poor mortal was probably seeking relief on a physical plane, not realizing that his freedom from disease would include the destruction of sin in his own consciousness. Possibly he had no thought of experiencing any moral or spiritual benefit. What he wanted was to be relieved of his lameness. Like many others, he presumably wanted to experience freedom from pain while continuing "to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Jesus' explanation to him, that he was now made whole, and that he must cease sinning if he would remain so, opened up a new line of thought for him. It meant that from then on he must serve but one master if he would obey the divine will and remain in a state of perfect health. For the first time he learned the distinction between a physical or material cure and the Christ-healing." (**Chadwick, Clarence W., "Curing vs. Healing", Journal Vol. 25 (July 1907), p. 222.**)

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1907/7/25-4/curing-vs.-healing>

**15**     **The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. (KJV)**

**(CEB)** The man went and proclaimed to the Jewish leaders that Jesus was the man who had made him well.

COMMENTARY: *The man...told the Jews*) NIB deplores the NIV, NRSV, and KJV translation: "A careful study of v.15 suggests a different interpretation of the man's actions. The verb used to describe the man's speech is '**to announce**'. This verb is used only four times in the Fourth Gospel, and all four uses are **positive**. The man **does not** turn Jesus in for violating the sabbath law, but announces him as the man who has made him well....A healing miracle simultaneously challenges conventional understandings of how the world is ordered and gives concrete embodiment to the new possibilities." (**The New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)**) [Most commentaries accuse the healed man of 'informing' the authorities, a betrayal of Jesus.] IVP puts it like this: "Jesus is healing one who is totally unworthy, and in doing so he reveals God's graciousness. Here we have revealed God's love,

which embraces even one who betrays him. The light of God's glory is shining at its brightest in this manifestation of his love for his enemies." (***The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)***)

NOTES:

## John 12:1-11

### Mary anoints Jesus' feet

**(CEB)\*** <sup>1</sup> Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, home of Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup> Lazarus and his sisters hosted a dinner for him. Martha served and Lazarus was among those who joined him at the table. <sup>3</sup> Then Mary took an extraordinary amount, almost three-quarters of a pound, of very expensive perfume made of pure nard. She anointed Jesus' feet with it, then wiped his feet dry with her hair. The house was filled with the aroma of the perfume. <sup>4</sup> Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), complained, <sup>5</sup> "This perfume was worth a year's wages! Why wasn't it sold and the money given to the poor?" (<sup>6</sup> He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief. He carried the money bag and would take what was in it.) <sup>7</sup> Then Jesus said, "Leave her alone. This perfume was to be used in preparation for my burial, and this is how she has used it. <sup>8</sup> You will always have the poor among you, but you won't always have me."

### The Plot to Kill Lazarus

<sup>9</sup> Many Jews learned that he was there. They came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>10</sup> The chief priests decided that they would kill Lazarus too. <sup>11</sup> It was because of Lazarus that many of the Jews had deserted them and come to believe in Jesus.

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

### COMMENTARY/RESOURCES:

**1** Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. (KJV)

**(LAMSA)** SIX days before the passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

**Lazarus:** See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

**MAP:** "Bethany," map and article, [BibleAtlas.org](#)

COMMENTARY: "Chapter 12 serves as a postscript to the story of Lazarus and as a prelude to that of the Passion. On the Saturday before Palm Sunday there was a supper in Jesus' honour in Bethany at which Martha acted as waitress and Lazarus figured among the guests." (***The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible (CBC)***) "The time schedule now was more definite and critical: It was six days before the Passover. Jesus went back from Ephraim (John 11:54) to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, and attended a dinner in His honor. Mark wrote that the place was Simon the Leper's home (Mark14:1-11). The dinner must have been a joyous occasion with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus there. The relationship of this family to Simon is not known, but it must have been close since Martha served." (***Bible Knowledge Commentary (BKC)***)

**2** There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. (KJV)

**(NIV)** Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.

**Martha:** See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

COMMENTARY: “*Grk* “reclining at the table.” 1st century middle eastern meals were not eaten while sitting at a table, but while reclining on one’s side on the floor with the head closest to the low table and the feet farthest away.” (**New English Translation notes**) “The meal may well have been intended in part to celebrate the recent recovery of Lazarus from death,” according to F. F. Bruce, “so Lazarus was treated as one of the guests of honour, alongside the Lord to whom he owed his new life. The depiction of Lazarus’ two sisters—Martha serving and Mary worshipping—is once again remarkably consistent with Luke’s portrayal of the two in the one paragraph where he mentions them.” (Bruce, F. F., *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983))

**3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. (KJV)**

(**NEB**) Then Mary brought a pound of very costly perfume, pure oil of nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her hair, till the house was filled with the fragrance.

**Mary:** See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

**PRONUNCIATION:** “spikenard (spik’nahrd) 1.a: a costly ointment with a musky odor valued as a perfume in ancient times,” [Audio](#) *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary Unabridged* (N.Y.C.: Merriam-Webster, 2000). [This what Mary used to anoint Jesus before the Crucifixion. the source of nard mentioned in scripture, Mark 14:3.]

**ILLUSTRATION:** “Spikenard,” (*Nardostachys jatamansi*), a member of the Caprifoliaceae or Valerian family, [Image](#)

COMMENTARY: “*Nard* or spikenard is a fragrant oil from the root and spike of the nard plant of northern India. This *aromatic oil*, if made of something like nard, would have been extremely expensive, costing up to a year’s pay for an average laborer.” (**New English Translation notes**) “Mary’s was a very costly action. Mary poured it on Jesus’ feet. This is probably to be taken as an act of utter humility. The use of the hair rather than a towel or the like may also indicate something of personal involvement. The act is all the more striking in that a Jewish lady never unbound her hair in public. Only John recalls that ‘the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume’—her action would be spoken of throughout the world.” (**The New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)**)

**METACOMMENT:** Please refer to this article which is under copyright: (Kennedy, David C., “*The fragrance that spreads and heals*”, *Journal* Vol. 114 (April 1996), p. 12.)

JSH-Online: <https://journal.christianscience.com/issues/1996/4/114-4/the-fragrance-that-spreads-and-heals>

**4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, (KJV)**

(**NLT**) But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said,

**Judas Iscariot:** See the [Bible Character Notes](#)

COMMENTARY: “*Then ... Judas Iscariot]* **But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples ... saith ...** Omit, with the best ancient authorities, *Simon’s son*. These words are practically undisturbed in the three other places where they occur: 6:71, 13:2, 13:26. *which should betray him]* The purpose is represented as already present if hitherto undefined. Now it took shape. Judas expressed what others felt (*the disciples*, Matt. 26:8; *some*, Mark 14:4).” (Brooke Foss **Westcott** and Arthur **Westcott**, eds., *The Gospel according to St. John Introduction and Notes on the Authorized Version, Classic Commentaries on the Greek New Testament* (London: J. Murray, 1908), 177.)

**5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? (KJV)**

(**AMP**) Why was this perfume not sold for 300 denarii [a year’s wages for an ordinary workman] and that [money] given to the poor (the destitute)?

(**VOICE**) **Judas Iscariot:** *How could she pour out this vast amount of fine oil? Why didn’t she sell it? It is worth nearly a year’s wages; the money could have been given to the poor.*

COMMENTARY: “Not everyone was impressed with Mary’s gesture of devotion. *One of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ‘Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.’* Taken at face value, and adopting a utilitarian approach to things, Judas’ objection would be justified. The perfume was very valuable—‘worth a year’s wages’ (lit. 300 denarii, one denarius being a working man’s wage for one day). One has only to calculate what this means in today’s currencies to realize just how much money would be involved. Great good could have been done for the poor with such a large sum of money.” (Colin G. Kruse, *John: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 4, **Tyndale New Testament Commentaries** (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 259.)

**6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. (KJV)**

**(NET)** (Now Judas said this not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief. As keeper of the money box, he used to steal what was put into it.)

COMMENTARY: “This is a parenthetical note by the author. This is one of the indications in the gospels that Judas was of bad character *before* the betrayal of Jesus. John states that he was a *thief* and had responsibility for the finances of the group. More than being simply a derogatory note about Judas’ character, the inclusion of the note at this particular point in the narrative may be intended to link the frustrated greed of Judas here with his subsequent decision to betray Jesus for money. The parallel accounts in Matthew and Mark seem to indicate that after this incident Judas went away immediately and made his deal with the Jewish authorities to deliver up Jesus. Losing out on one source of sordid gain, he immediately went out and set up another.” (***New English Translation notes***)

**7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. (KJV)**

**(PHIL)** But Jesus replied to this outburst, “Let her alone, let her keep this for the day of my burial.

COMMENTARY: TNTC gives the two main interpretations: (1) “The woman still has some of the perfume left, which Jesus wants her to be allowed to keep for the anointing of His body when the day for the laying out of the body comes. (2) Jesus’ words become what they were surely meant to be, a reply to Judas’ question. Jesus therefore is saying in effect, ‘Leave the woman alone; she had not sold her perfume and given the money to charity in order that she might be able to use it now with a view to my burial.’” (***The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (TNTC)***)

**8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always. (KJV)**

**(NET)** For you will always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me!”

COMMENTARY: TPINTC says: “Jesus is alluding to the Scripture, ‘There will always be poor people in the land’ (Deut.15:11). John’s suggestion that Judas did not care about the poor (v.6) has implied that Christians *should* care.” (***TPI New Testament Commentaries (TPINTC)***) PNTC says: “Here the verse makes sense as part of the rebuke to Judas Iscariot. That the poor are always present is not an excuse for stinginess in almsgiving, but a reminder that they would still be around to receive the alms distributed amongst them long after Jesus himself had been taken away: *you will not always have me*. Were a mere mortal to claim such priority, he would be very ill or unspeakably arrogant. Jesus speaks this way as a matter of course, not only because he sees his cross and burial on the near horizon, but also because he knows he is to receive the same honour that is due the Father.” (***Pillar’s New Testament Commentary (PNTC)***)

**9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. (KJV)**

**(VOICE)** Word spread of Jesus’ presence, and a large crowd was gathering to see Jesus and the formerly deceased Lazarus, whom He had brought back from the dead.



COMMENTARY: "As was the case in chapter 7, the [crowd] consists of pilgrims who had come for the Passover feast. Many of these had come days before, and their number grew constantly....The news spread in Jerusalem and in its environs in the most natural way, for Jesus and his little band were part of the caravan that moved from Jericho toward Jerusalem, and while Jesus halted at Bethany, the rest went on to the city...The account regarding Lazarus had spread, and so crowds flocked out to Bethany all day Saturday to see not only Jesus, who had wrought this astounding miracle, but Lazarus as well, the man who had been dead and buried for four days." (*Commentary on the New Testament (LENSKI)*, p848-9)

METACOMMENT: Please refer to this article which is under copyright: (Aultman, Lela May, "*We Commemorate the Victorious Christ*", *Sentinel* Vol. 38 (4 April 1936), p. 605.)

JSH-Online: <https://sentinel.christianscience.com/issues/1936/4/38-31/we-commemorate-the-victorious-christ>

**10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; (KJV)**

**(CEB)** The chief priests decided that they would kill Lazarus too.

COMMENTARY: "According to John 11:53 the Jewish leadership had already planned to kill Jesus. This plot against *Lazarus* apparently never got beyond the planning stage, however, since no further mention is made of it by the author." (*New English Translation notes*) "It is already clear....that the Evangelist wants his readers to understand Jesus' entry into Jerusalem in the light of the raising of Lazarus. Now the attention of the 'chief priests' was focused on Lazarus. They took counsel how they could eliminate him as well as Jesus because, as the Evangelist repeats, 'on account of him [Lazarus] many of the Jews were going [to Bethany] and were believing in Jesus,' without, however, further commenting on the nature of this faith. The Evangelist's concern now is to point to the miracle as the cause of growing support for Jesus among the people, who no longer allow themselves to be intimidated by the authorities." (*Ridderbos*, Herman, *The Gospel of John*, Trans. By John Vriend, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B Eerdmans, 1991, p421)

**11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus. (KJV)**

**(EXB)** Because of Lazarus many of the Jews were leaving [going away from; deserting] them and believing in Jesus.

COMMENTARY: "*Grk* "the Jews." Here the phrase refers to the residents of Jerusalem who had heard about the resurrection of Lazarus and as a result were embracing Jesus as Messiah." (*New English Translation notes*) "The hatred of the Sanhedrin contrasts with Mary's love for Jesus. The intensity of both feelings, shared by many other people, pointed to the inevitability of a major conflict soon." (*Expository Notes (CONSTABLE)*)

NOTES:

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