

I L L U S T R A T E D
Weekly Bible Notes
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DIGEST EDITION

Biblical background on this week's Bible Lesson verses on

Truth

For study the week of **July 17 - 23, 2023**

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

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GOLDEN TEXT

Psalms 19:8 (G)

8 The Lord's instruction is right; it makes our hearts glad. His commands shine brightly, and they give us light. (CEV)

COMMENTARY: "*The statutes of the Lord* - The word here rendered statutes properly means mandates, precepts - rules given to anyone to guide him. It refers to the laws of God considered as appointed, or as the result of divine authority. The verb from which this word is derived (Hiphil) means to set over, to give the oversight, to appoint. Hence, the idea of laws, or statutes, as the result of such an appointment, or such an authority. *Are right* - Are equal, just, proper. They are such as are founded in wisdom and equity; not such as are the mere result of arbitrary appointment. The idea is that they are not merely appointed, or made binding by authority, but that they are in themselves equitable and just. *Rejoicing the heart* - Making the heart glad by the fact that they are equitable and just - and glad as the result of obedience. It is always a source of true happiness when we can feel that we are under just and equal laws; laws in themselves right, and laws administered in righteousness and truth. *The commandment of the Lord* - An appellation of the law of God from the idea of setting up, appointing, constituting; hence, of charging, or commanding. The idea here is not so much that the thing is right in itself as that it is appointed or ordered by God; that it is what he requires. *Is pure* - Free from all stain; from all imperfection; from any corrupt tendency. *Enlightening the eyes* - That is, giving us light and knowledge. The eyes are mentioned, as it is by them that we see where to go. The reference here is undoubtedly to the mind or soul as being enlightened by the truth of God. We are made by these commandments to see what is right and proper; to understand what we should do." (**Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES)**) METACOMMENT: "David realized that right rules for living—statutes of Truth—were a most necessary and valuable possession for the man who was seeking to know God and follow in His ways. Neither did he leave one in doubt as to wherein lay their value when applied to daily life, but pointed out their effectiveness in "enlightening the eyes," "making wise the simple," and serving as a warning against hidden danger." (**Field, Henrietta A., "The Statutes of Truth", Sentinel Vol. 12 (12 February 1910), p. 464.**)

RESPONSIVE READING

James 1:5,18 (R)

5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. (KJV)

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (KJV)

(V5) COMMENTARY: ACCS quotes a relatively late Christian writer, "Theophylact of Ohrid (c.1050-c.1108), archbishop of what is now Bulgaria. 'James is here referring to spiritual wisdom, not the human kind. Spiritual wisdom is the cause of all perfect action. This is the heavenly wisdom, and when we have been strengthened by it we can do anything perfectly.' COMMENTARY ON JAMES." (**Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (ACCS)**) "The wisdom that we need has three distinct characteristics: (1) **It is practical**—The wisdom from God relates to life even during the most trying times. It is not a wisdom isolated from suffering and trials. This wisdom is the tool by which trials are overcome. An intelligent person may have profound ideas, but a wise person puts profound ideas into action. (2) **It is divine**—God's wisdom goes beyond common sense. Common sense does not lead us to choose joy in the middle of trials. This wisdom begins with respect for God, leads to living by God's direction, and results in the ability to tell right from wrong. (3) **It is Christlike**—Asking for wisdom is ultimately asking to be like Christ. The Bible identifies Christ as the "wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24; 1 Corinthians 2:1-7)." (**Life Application New Testament**)

Commentary (LANTC) (V18) COMMENTARY: “James is thinking of the way in which the heavenly bodies, sun, moon and stars, are evidence of the Father’s creative activity. They appear changeable as we observe them from earth. The Creator does not change. ‘With him there is no variation.’ We are justified then, in taking this verse to be a reference to the greatest of the perfect gifts which a loving Father bestows, the gift of new birth which comes about when anyone hears and responds to the message of the gospel. Christians are the firstfruits of the new creation: such a perspective points to a harvest yet to come.” (*Epworth Commentaries (EPW)*)

James 3:13,14,17,18 (R)

True Wisdom from Above

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. (KJV)

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. (KJV)

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. (KJV)

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. (KJV)

(V13) COMMENTARY: BST translates James’s answer to his own question: “By his good life let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.” “Wisdom is the God-given ability to see how in all our ways we may acknowledge (literally, ‘know’) him. This God given-wisdom cannot be had if our lives are not constantly being kept in a right relationship with God himself, in which we are daily nourished with grace and more grace (4:6-10).” (*The Bible Speaks Today (BST)*) **(V14)** COMMENTARY: “Bitter envy and selfish ambition are contrary to humility. If, then, humility marks the wise person these negative qualities exclude a person from being considered wise. Some who pride themselves on their wisdom and understanding are displaying a jealous, bitter partisanship that is the antithesis of the humility produced by true wisdom.” (*Pillar’s New Testament Commentary (PNTC)*) **(V17)** COMMENTARY: “Like true faith, true wisdom is identified by the quality of life that it produces....The first, and preeminent, attribute that wisdom produces is purity. The word *pure* connotes innocence and moral blamelessness...The seven qualities that follow in the list are specific dimensions of this overall purity.” (*The Pillar New Testament Commentary (PNTC)*, p174-5) “Wisdom that finds its origin in God is pure because God himself is pure, that is, holy. We compare purity with light that dispels the darkness, illumines everything, but is not influenced by anything.” (*New Testament Commentary (NTC)*) **METACOMMENT:** “Divine wisdom will appear as our hearts are receptive, and as we seek the truth in humility. Mrs. Eddy writes (Miscellany, p. 228): “Who shall inherit the earth? The meek, who sit at the feet of Truth, bathing the human understanding with tears of repentance and washing it clean from the taints of self-righteousness, hypocrisy, envy,—they shall inherit the earth, for ‘wisdom is justified of her children.’” (*Brown, Percy W., “A Loving and Humble Spirit”, Sentinel* Vol. 22 (18 October 1919), p. 126.) **(V18)** COMMENTARY: “For James, the wisdom from above is in contrast to and on a plane above the wisdom of this world. What follows in [James] 3:17 is the picture of how the church’s aims should be set, and that includes Christians living a life under the wise rule of God. The result is a body that is united and is walking with one accord by aiming at the ideals of peace. ‘Peace’ is in fact the ruling idea in verses 17-18 and is placed near the beginning and at the end of the virtue-list.” (*Word Biblical Commentary (WBC)*) “Those who are possessed of the heavenly wisdom James called ‘peacemakers.’ By another agricultural allusion, peacemakers act like a sower who sows the seed of peace. Like God who sows the seed of the living Word (cf. Matthew 13:19), believers are to sow peaceable deeds that will produce a harvest of righteousness.” (*The New American Commentary (NAC)*)

Galatians 5:1,5,7,10,13 (R)

Freedom in Christ

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (KJV)

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. (KJV)

7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? (KJV)

10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. (KJV)

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. (KJV)

(V1) COMMENTARY: “Paul declares that the purpose of Christ’s work was **for freedom**.” “The concept of freedom, which is a basic theme of Galatians, is connected throughout Paul’s letters primarily with freedom *from*: freedom from the law, from sin, or from death. Freedom is also equated with the Spirit and is used as a way to describe the Christian life. Underscoring the point he has made repeatedly, Paul charges his converts not to put themselves in a position of submitting to a **yoke of slavery**.” (*New International Bible Commentary (NIBC)*) METACOMMENT: “The demand upon us is to give no quarter to the falsities of mortal mind, but to obey the injunction of the apostle, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” This is the freedom that is ours by virtue of the fact that we have come to know that man is the spiritual idea of God, and that the law which claims to hold mortals in subjection to sin, sickness, and death is illegitimate—is in fact not law at all, but only a counterfeit of law which is spiritual.” (Nall, Robert, “*Called unto liberty*”, *Sentinel* Vol. 13 (8 October 1910), p. 103.) (V5) COMMENTARY: In this short verse Paul gave his doctrine of justification by faith: **we** (all believers, even the wavering Galatians) **who live by the Spirit** (not through anything we can do or have done, and not through the law) **eagerly wait to receive** (we don’t work for righteousness; we wait for God to grow his righteousness in us) **everything promised to us** (a certain event that has not yet occurred) **who are right with God** (Christian perfection that God helps us reach in our lives and then grants completely in glory) **through faith** (in Christ and his faithfulness, and not in works or even the strength of our believing).” (*Life Application New Testament Commentary (LANTC)*) (V7) COMMENTARY: “Paul compliments the Galatian believers for *running a good race*. Running a race was one of Paul’s favorite images for living the Christian life. Here this image portrays how well they were *obeying the truth*. The gospel set the course for their life, and they were running well in that course. The reality of their belief in the truth about Christ was demonstrated by their obedience to Christ. But then they were distracted, tripped and so hindered from running this race. Paul asks them, *Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth?* The question is rhetorical. Paul knows the answer.” (*The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)*, p158) METACOMMENT: “How long are we going to stand doubting whether it is necessary to handle the claims of mortal mind? How much longer shall we wait, and how much more evidence do we want, before we believe that (unless handled in Science, as our Leader teaches us in her book) jealousy, malice, hatred, and revenge will make sick and eventually murder a man,—that is, to mortal sense.... What is the reason? Did not Paul refer to this experience when he said in Galatians (v. 7) “Ye *did* run well! Who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the Truth?”... What made them stop? What would make us halt today? Animal Magnetism it must be; for included in this term is every kind of sickness and every kind of sin.” (Perry, A., “*The Present Fool*”, *Journal* Vol. 6 (January 1889), p. 518.) (V10) COMMENTARY: “Paul has expressed on several occasions grave concern over the Galatians, but here he seems to revert to another view of them: he thinks they will listen to him, forget the Judaizers, and continue in the way of Christ and the Spirit...this statement is probably strategic in his entire letter: he becomes positive in order to help them make a good decision.” (*The NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC)*, p251) (V13) COMMENTARY: “Paul is dealing with the practical implications of the doctrine of Christian freedom which he has been expounding in the last two chapters. God intends, as the apostle has just been telling us, that every Christian man should be free to live his life without being hemmed in by a host of prohibitions and restrictions, and without feeling that he is at the mercy of some malignant fate which controls his destiny. But there is also the danger, inherent in Paul’s doctrine, that the nature of that freedom may be misunderstood. It certainly does not mean that a Christian is free to do what he likes. That is to confuse freedom with *license*.” (*The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible (CBC)*, p77)

SECTION 1

Psalm 25:4,5 (1)

4 Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. (KJV)

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. (KJV)

(V4) COMMENTARY: *“Teach me your paths.* In this context the Lord’s “ways” and “paths” refer to the moral principles which the Lord prescribes for his followers.” **(New English Translation notes)** “The psalmist sensed his need for divine guidance and instruction. He wanted to walk in the Lord’s righteous ways but needed help in discerning them.” **(Expository Notes (CONSTABLE))** **(V5)** COMMENTARY: “The Lord’s commandments are referred to as *truth* here because they are a trustworthy and accurate expression of the divine will.” **(New English Translation notes)** *Teach me)* NC says: “The psalm begins with a prayer which lists many requests. While the psalmist understands the nature, character, and precepts of God in general, he awaits God’s instruction on how his ways are implemented in his particular circumstance.” **(The New Commentary on the Whole Bible (NC))**

Psalm 119:34,41,45,104,111,137,142 (2)

34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with *my* whole heart. *(KJV)*

41 Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation, according to thy word. *(KJV)*

45 And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts. *(KJV)*

104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. *(KJV)*

111 Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart. *(KJV)*

137 Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments. *(KJV)*

142 Thy righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* the truth. *(KJV)*

(V34) COMMENTARY: *Give me understanding)* “The psalmist prays for wisdom in the biblical sense—not intellectual acumen, but the ability to see how all things in God’s creation work together, and specifically to see how his commandments bring ‘life’, the goal of all human striving.” **(The New Jerome Biblical Commentary (NJBC))** **METACOMMENT:** “Truth is unchangeable and everlasting. True success must be the result of the understanding and demonstration of Truth, which is power. “Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law;” and Job says, “To depart from evil is understanding.” “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,” and if the same mind surely the same results, and this is the only way out of this labyrinth of error. This one Mind, this secret place of the most High, this perfect protection and rest so beautifully pictured in the ninety-first Psalm, is the kingdom of heaven within us of which Christ spoke, and we may become conscious of this kingdom here and now. This is the price: To think no evil—to know only good.” **(Van Ostrand, Alice, “Understanding”, Sentinel Vol. 4 (6 February 1902), p. 368.)** **(V41)** COMMENTARY: Boice translates: “May your unfailing love come to me.” “The first of these three stanzas [119:41-43] concentrates on God’s love, which is the most wonderful of his attributes and certainly a fitting place for the psalmist to begin. Surprisingly, it is the first stanza [of Psalm 119] in which he speaks of God’s love, not only that, but it is also the first stanza in which he speaks of God’s salvation.....the proof of God’s love is his provision of salvation for sinners. It is out of the great love of God that salvation comes.” **(An Expositional Commentary (BOICE))** **(V45)** COMMENTARY: “To be morally free (verse 45). Soul liberty is not mere freedom to act, not license; it is the spontaneous action of love. Where ‘the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.’ A reigning love for God breaks all the shackles of the soul, and dispreads a sphere of action as wide as immensity.” **(The Biblical Illustrator (BI))** **(V104)** COMMENTARY: “A true understanding; a correct view of things; a knowledge of thee, of myself, of the human character, of the destiny of man, of the way of salvation – the best, and the only essential knowledge for man. This knowledge the psalmist obtained from the ‘precepts’ of God; that is, *all* that God had communicated by revelation.” **(Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES), p208)** **“I hate every false way.** This expression contains two meanings: I hate any position that is based on a lie, and I hate any position that teaches a person to lie and to deceive. The past form ‘I hate,’ parallels the future form, ‘I gain understanding,’ and both denote continuous actions in the present.” **(Hakham, Amos, Psalms, with the Jerusalem Commentary, Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 2003, p252)** **(V111)** COMMENTARY: *Thy testimonies* - Thy law; thy revealed will; the revelation which thou hast given considered as thy solemn ‘testimony’ as to what is true and right. *Have I taken as an heritage for ever* - As my inheritance; as my property; as that which I consider to be of real and permanent value. The Hebrew word used here - *nachal* - means to receive as a possession; to acquire; to possess as wealth; and then, to inherit. It is usually applied to the possession of the promised land as an inheritance. Here it means that the law of God was to him as such a possession. He regarded it as one does a rich inheritance. He chose it as his portion above all things else. *For they are the rejoicing of my heart* - My happiness is in them. I find constant comfort in them.” **(Notes on the Old and the New**

Testaments (BARNES) (V137) COMMENTARY: “His [the psalmist’s] testimony concerning God. 1) Concerning the Divine character. (a) God’s righteousness has no standard but Himself What He does is right, not because it conforms to anything outside Himself, but because it conforms to His nature. (b) God’s righteousness agrees with the moral constitution of the universe. Universal conscience agrees with it. ‘Just and right are Thy ways.’ 2) Concerning His Word. (a) Faithful. His Word is truth (b) Pure as the purest gold, free from all dross, pure as the purest sunbeam, absolutely free from all erroneous thoughts, from all unholy sentiments and passions. (*Homilist.*)” (**The Biblical Illustrator (BI) (V142) COMMENTARY:** “Verse 142 sounds in English highly condensed, but the ordinary Hebrew man would easily understand its thrust. ‘The loving concern for others which I have received from God will never cease, now that God has rescued me and put me in a right relationship with himself’ is what it says; ‘for his *Torah* is trustworthy.’ This is a great statement of faith by one who, in the next verse admits that this wonderful relationship to God does not exclude *trouble* and *anguish*...” (**The Daily Study Bible (DSB)**, p254)

Psalm 43:3,5 (3)

3 O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. (*KJV*)

5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. (*KJV*)

(V3) COMMENTARY: “God’s deliverance is compared here to a *light* which will lead the psalmist back home to the Lord’s temple. Divine deliverance will in turn demonstrate the Lord’s *faithfulness* to his people.” (**New English Translation notes**) **METACOMMENT:** “No student of Christian Science who has seen this real light can ever forget the illumination that followed. However faintly it was perceived, it brought with it the promise, This is “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Consciousness aroused knew that never again could it wander, overwhelmed and hopeless; because it had known light! Never again could the darkness seem real.” (**Bedford, Daisy, “And there was light”**, *Journal* Vol. 40 (January 1923), p. 398.) **(V5) COMMENTARY:** “The burden of the refrain is hope and confidence. Notwithstanding the woes of the present, the writer has no doubt in respect of the future; he will yet have occasion to ‘praise’ God, whom he feels to be *his* God—his Health and Salvation.” (**The Complete Pulpit Commentary (PUL)**)

II Kings 20:3 (4)

3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. (*KJV*)

COMMENTARY: “There is no doubt that he [Hezekiah] summed up his life to God a little idealistically, and yet it was basically true. He had sought truth, he had sought to do what was right, he had sought to please God, he had lived a relatively godly life.” (**Pett Commentary on the Bible (PETT)**)

SECTION 2

Proverbs 23:12,23,26 (5)

12 Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge. (*KJV*)

23 Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding. (*KJV*)

26 My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. (*KJV*)

(V12) COMMENTARY: *apply* “*Heb* “bring.” The Hiphil imperative “come; enter” means “to apply the heart,” to use the heart or mind in the process. The same would be true in the second half: “to bring the ears” would mean to listen very carefully. Cf. TEV ‘Pay attention.’” (**New English Translation notes**) “The heart and the ears. Observe the connection between the application of the heart and the ears. The heart open to sound advice or moral precept is yet shut to Christ and His doctrine. It is closed up in unbelief, prejudice, indifference, and the love of pleasure. A listless heart, therefore, produces a careless ear. But when the heart is graciously opened, softened, and enlightened, the attention of the ear is instantly fixed. This, indeed, is the Lord’s creative work; yet wrought by a God of order in the use of His own means. Awakened desire brings to prayer. Prayer brings the blessing. And precious

then is every word of knowledge. (C. Bridges, M.A.)" (*The Biblical Illustrator (BI)*) (V23) COMMENTARY: *Buy the truth*) "Why are we commanded to buy? Does God receive a price from us for his truths? By no means. But we are commanded to buy because we must grudge no expense or toil in seeking the truth. On no account must we sell the truth. Surely they have a small regard for the truth, or for the great Author of it, who wantonly cast away this precious pearl, and take a pebble in its place." (Lawson, George, *Commentary on Proverbs* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1980 reprint of 1829 ed.)) (V26) COMMENTARY: "Give me thine heart. Do not waste thy powers and affections on evil objects, but set thy soul with all its best faculties on me, Wisdom, who alone can satisfy its desires and aspirations....*Let thine eyes observe my ways; keep closely to the paths of virtue which I teach thee, especially the path of purity.*" (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Proverbs, The Pulpit Commentary* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 444.)

I Kings 3:5-7,9,11,12 (6)

5 In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. (KJV)

(V5) PRONUNCIATION: "Gibeon (gib'ee-uhn), a town five and a half miles northwest of Jerusalem," [Audio](#) (*Harper Collins Bible Dictionary (HBD)*, p376). MAP: "Gibeon," Map and article, [BibleAtlas.org](#) Solomon: See the [Bible Character Notes](#) for this week. COMMENTARY: I Kings 3 opens with a report of King Solomon's marriage to the daughter of an unknown Pharaoh. After beginning the construction of the Temple, he goes to Gibeon to sacrifice to the Lord, as the *New Interpreter's Study* notes. "verses 5-15 record *Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom*." At this time Solomon was at least 20 years old. The following chapters show how Solomon put this wisdom into practice. (*New Interpreter's Study Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003))

Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom

6 And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. (KJV)

7 And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. (KJV)

9 Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? (KJV)

(V6) David: See the [Bible Character Notes](#) for this week. COMMENTARY: "Solomon shows himself deserving of his request. Before he utters his wish for a 'listening heart,' he refers to the circumstances to which he is obligated. First he mentions David, the founder of the dynasty who walked before God 'in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart.' Essentially these three terms form a biblical teaching on virtue: 'faithfulness' is cleaving to the one God, 'righteousness' represents this realization of a communal relationship with the people, and 'uprightness of heart' describes the unity of thought and deed." (Fritz, Volkmar, 1& 2 Kings, *A Continental Commentary*, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, Press, 2003, p38) (V7) COMMENTARY: "Solomon's succession is the subject of verses 6b-7a. There are multiple links back to chapter 1. Verses 7b-8 bring the problem into focus and lead on to Solomon's request. Solomon's 'little child' is a rhetorical way of expressing the humility natural to prayer. 'To go out or come in' is a general expression for the duties of leadership with military leadership especially in mind. The whole section on the request and its justification is unified by interlocking vocabulary: 'great and steadfast love,' 'thy servant', and 'thy people.'" (*Interpretation, a Bible commentary for teaching and preaching (IBC)*, p33) (V9) COMMENTARY: *An understanding heart*) "Solomon asks for an 'understanding mind' ('hearing heart')....The purpose of discerning between good and evil is that justice may prevail....Implicit in the question is the fundamental reason Solomon asked for an understanding mind to govern. He knows that human resources alone are not sufficient for his task. He needs divine empowerment." (*The International Theological Commentary (ITC)*) METACOMMENT: "...a desire for a righteous discrimination, a desire to be led; tractableness is a virtue which leads to heaven's gate. In his humility he asks Divine assistance. Jesus said: "I can do nothing of myself." A child-like faith, an honest desire to know the right. His great responsibility as a public leader came across his thought, and he was conscious that only Divine power could advance the people. "Leaning on the Infinite is rich with blessings." (Science and Health). Jesus was tempted

forty days and forty nights; so subtle were his temptations that it was almost impossible to determine whether they were of good (day) *light*, or of evil (night) *darkness*. Solomon, aware of the subtlety of evil and the possibility of believing wrong, was led aright; he prayed for an understanding heart (a capability of correct discrimination).” (Mason, C.S.B, F. E., “*Christian Science Bible Lessons*”, *Journal* Vol. 6 (November 1889), p. 441.)

God Grants Wisdom, Riches, Honor

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; (KJV)

12 Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. (KJV)

(V11) COMMENTARY: “This verse with verse 12a is a preamble to the granting of Solomon’s wish...noting in contrast a number of blessings for which Solomon did not ask, his request for wisdom is clearly emphasized....This elaboration denotes more emphatically that wisdom was Solomon’s charisma, and perhaps draws a deliberate contrast between this particular charisma and military charisma (he did not ask for the life of your enemies) with which Saul had been endowed.” (New Century Bible Commentary (NCB), p128) (V12) COMMENTARY: *An understanding heart*) God grants what Solomon asked in verse 9, to be a good governor, which IB translates “to have an understanding mind.” “We can look up to God, the Father of all men, and pray for his other children whom he has made of one blood with us. By such repeated praying we can sensitize our imaginations until we approach the understanding sympathy of Jesus. Solomon looked up to God first. We must try to see human beings as God sees them.” (The Interpreter’s Bible (IB))

1 Corinthians 2:9,10,12 (7)

Wisdom from the Spirit of God

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. (KJV)

10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (KJV)

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. (KJV)

(V9) COMMENTARY: “He [Paul] declares that Scripture reveals that what he has been describing is beyond human comprehension. It is describing what man could neither see, nor hear, nor know within. It therefore results in something that is naturally outside man’s ability to understand. Yet it speaks of what God has prepared for those who love Him....The verse in mind is Isaiah 64:4 possibly amplified by Isaiah 65:16 c (LXX).” (Pett Commentary on the Bible (PETT)) METACOMMENT: “In these words, addressed to the Christians at Corinth, Paul hinted at the infinite blessings which the loving Father-Mother God has prepared for those who love Him. Wonderful prospect! So full of promise that mankind may well set about to establish relations with the bestower of such munificence. To seek and attain to the perfect state which God has already prepared for His beloved, is the highest aim of mortals.” (Gilmore, Albert F., “*Infinite Receptivity*”, *Sentinel* Vol. 25 (25 August 1923), p. 1030.) (V10) COMMENTARY: “Paul’s focus now turns to the role of the Spirit as the mediator of the christological wisdom (verse 10). This distinctly divine wisdom is revealed only by the Holy Spirit: *God has revealed it to us by his Spirit*. This general statement is further elaborated in verses 10-16. The Spirit reveals this wisdom because he alone *searches all things* (verse 10), not in the sense of conducting a search to find out something but of penetrating, knowing, perceiving. The Spirit knows all things about God, *even the deep things of God*, the humanly unfathomable realities that are impenetrable in God’s mind and being.” (The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)) (V12) COMMENTARY: “Paul reiterates his central point that humans cannot themselves comprehend God and that the Spirit is an absolute necessity, given by God and received by humanity, in order that humans may understand God’s will and work...For Paul, the character of this world requires that whatever truth humans know about God must come to them from God as a powerful, gracious gift....God’s goodness and grace are seen in the gift of **the Spirit who is from God** so that the Christians **may understand what God has freely given** in the cross of Jesus Christ.” (New International Bible Commentary (NIBC), p61)

SECTION 3

Psalm 40:8-10 (8)

- 8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart. (KJV)
- 9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. (KJV)
- 10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation. (KJV)

(V8) COMMENTARY: "...it seems clear that the psalmist, having experienced a new awareness and understanding as the result of divine opening of his ears [verse 6], now perceives the 'scroll' as speaking directly to his circumstance. As a result he becomes willing to do Yahweh's will. The 'scroll,' then, challenges the psalmist to internalize Yahweh's instruction in his heart and to 'proclaim righteousness in the great assembly.'" (*The NIV Application Commentary (NIVAC)*) (V9) COMMENTARY: "*I have freely proclaimed your righteousness in the great Church. See, Lord, I will not keep my lips sealed, you know it.*" "This is said to warn us that we must not out of fear restrain our lips from proclaiming what we have believed. The lips must proclaim what is in the heart: this is an injunction against fear. But the heart must have in it what the lips say: this is an injunction against insincerity. If you seek peace from God, be reconciled with yourself; let there be no harmful conflict between your mouth and your heart." (*Saint Augustine* in his *Expositions of the Psalms*, translated by Maria Boulding, O.S.B. (Hyde Park: New City Press, 2000-2004)) (V10) COMMENTARY: "The words 'faithfulness,' 'salvation,' and 'steadfast love' come pouring out of the psalmist. These are the great, God-given realities which now underpin his life. Not to share this 'glad news' is for him unthinkable." (*Davidson*, Robert, *The Vitality of Worship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998)) *I have not hid/concealed*) IBC remarks: "In the rest of the statement the whole vocabulary used to speak of God's saving action is used to expand on the theme: righteousness, salvation, loving-kindness, and faithfulness. The psalmist has done what the saved are supposed to do—proclaim the good news of God's salvation to others, that they may be led to trust in the righteousness of God." (*Interpretation, a Bible commentary for teaching and preaching (IBC)*)

John 8:1,2,12,13,28,30-32 (9)

- 1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. (KJV)
- 2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. (KJV)

(V1) MAP: "Walled city of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives," [map](#) COMMENTARY: "*The Mount of Olives* is a hill running north to south about 1.8 mi (3 km) long, lying east of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley. It was named for the large number of olive trees that grew on it." (*New English Translation notes*) "[The mount of Olives], which occurs three or four times in each Synoptic, is found only here in John. Luke 21:37 says that during the last days of his life Jesus lodged on the Mount of Olives. (*The Anchor Bible (AB)*) (V2) COMMENTARY: "The outer court served as the venue for many scribes to gather their students around them and expound the law to them. Jesus used the same facilities, even if his content could not easily be compared with what the others taught." (*The Pillar New Testament Commentary (PNTC)*, p334)

Jesus the Light of the World

- 12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. (KJV)
- 13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. (KJV)
- 28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. (KJV)
- 30 As he spake these words, many believed on him. (KJV)

(V12) COMMENTARY: "The coming of Jesus into the world provokes judgment: A choosing up of sides becomes necessary. The one who comes to the light, that is, who follows Jesus, will *not* walk in the darkness. The one who

refuses to come, *will* walk in the darkness. In this contrast, there are only two alternatives. So it is with a person's decision about Jesus. Furthermore, this serves as an implicit indictment of Jesus' opponents, who still walk in the darkness, because they refuse to come to him. This sets up the contrast in chap. 9 between the man born blind, who receives both physical and spiritual sight, and the Pharisees (John 9:13, 15, 16) who have physical sight but remain in spiritual darkness." (**New English Translation notes**) **METACOMMENT**: "The light of the world is here, even though it shines in the darkness and is not comprehended. When, mortal belief is corrected, the "eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness," and the light of Truth and Love will illumine the way. That which made plain the way for Jesus was what he knew about God and man. He must have referred to this spiritual understanding when he said, "I am the light of the world." The understanding of what God is and what man is, emanates from divine Mind; it cannot originate in that which is mortal and material. This understanding dispels the darkness of ignorance, doubt, and fear, and how true it is that he who has this light "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." When it is understood that all the discord and suffering of earth, all the sin, sickness, and death, are the shadows of darkness, it will be seen that the light of spiritual understanding is the one and effectual remedy." (**Gross, Willis F., "The Light of the World", Sentinel Vol. 11 (8 May 1909), p. 703.**) **(V13) Pharisees**: See the [Bible Character Notes](#) for this week. **COMMENTARY**: "Not all were willing to accept Jesus' claim to be the light of the world. *The Pharisees challenged him, 'Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid.'* According to rabbinic teaching, testimony to oneself was not valid in law; only testimony by another could be accepted. In the Mishnah, for example, we read, 'So, too, if there were two men and one said, "I am a priest", and the other said, "I am a priest", they may not be believed; but when they testify thus of each other they may be believed' (*Ketubot* 2:7). The Pharisees accused Jesus of bearing testimony to himself." (Colin G. Kruse, *John: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 4, **Tyndale New Testament Commentaries** (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 201–202.) **(V28) COMMENTARY**: *When ye have lifted up*) "When ye have crucified me, and thus filled up the measure of your iniquities, ye shall know that I am the Christ, by the signs that shall follow; and ye shall know that what I spoke is true, by the judgments that shall follow. To be lifted up, is a common mode of expression, among the Jewish writers, for to die, or to be killed." (**Clarke's Commentary on the Bible (CLARKE)**) **(V30) COMMENTARY**: "He has much more to say to them, even if his word will be a word of judgment. *But* this does not mean he is now speaking on his own, for all that Jesus tells to the world he has heard from the one who sent him, and that one is true. So compelling was Jesus' teaching that many put their faith in him." (**Pillar's New Testament Commentary (PNTC)**)

The Truth will Set You Free

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; (*KJV*)

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (*KJV*)

(V31) COMMENTARY: "In verse 30 we have been told that, 'many believed in him.' The verb 'believed' is in perfect participial form, normally denoting completed past action...Many find it incredible that current believers in Jesus could receive the tongue-lashing from him that follows in this chapter, and so translate the participle [in verse 31] 'who *had* believed in him,' assuming a different audience from the believers of verse 30....Another possibility is that some of the believers of John's day in the group he stigmatizes as *the Jews* have a wrong faith in Jesus that merits bitter correction by the Johannine community. They are not 'truly' his disciples because they have not persevered in his word." (**Interpretation, a Bible commentary for teaching and preaching (IBC)**, p102) "True discipleship, as Jesus says clearly in verse 31, means abiding in His word, i.e. welcoming it, being at home with it, and living with it so continuously that it becomes part of the believer's life, a permanent influence and stimulus in every fresh advance in goodness and holiness. Christ's word is indistinguishable from Christ himself. He is the Word. To abide in His word is therefore to abide in Him, to be always within earshot of His voice; and when a believer abides in Christ, Christ abides in him, and Christ's life invigorates and sustains the believer's life. This is genuine discipleship..." (**The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (TNTC)**, p117) **METACOMMENT**: "To "continue in his word" implies, first, knowing of what he taught, and, having learned, remaining firm in the consciousness thereof....In the next verse he adds, "And ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free." Rotherham renders this passage, "And ye shall *understand* the Truth" etc. This text shows that salvation is the result of understanding Truth. Personality does not

save, but Truth saves from all that enslaves man. Jesus was the Teacher, and the disciples were students seeking understanding of what he taught. He taught Truth and he who seeks an understanding of his teachings seeks an understanding of Truth....A disciple of Christ, then, is a student of Truth, one who asks, seeks, and strives to understand. The promise of understanding and salvation is made on condition; "If ye *continue* in my word." This means the living of Truth as known. Progress comes through abiding in the knowledge gained. Without this living there is no growth. The true disciple desires Truth above all things, and having found it he lives it." (W. F. G., "*The Disciples of Christ*", *Journal* Vol. 8 (December 1890), p. 875.) (V32) COMMENTARY: *The truth*) The Greek noun *aletheia*, "truth," "hovers between the meanings of 'reality', or 'the ultimately real', and 'knowledge of the real'. On one side at least, the knowledge of God which is life eternal is an apprehension of ultimate reality—that reality which stands above the world of phenomena, and is eternal while they change and pass away. It is now clear that what is here promised to the disciples of Christ is liberty through knowledge of divine reality." (Dodd, C. H., *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge, 1953)

John 1:17 (10)

17 For the law was given by Moses, **but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.** (KJV)

COMMENTARY: "The gospel is here, as in other places, called *grace*. The word *grace*, in its most obvious meaning, signifies *favour*; favour flowing from mercy and beneficence, to which the person who receives it can make no claim as of right. In this sense, the gospel is most particularly and emphatically *grace*; in all and every part of it, it was the gift of God, which we could not in any manner be said to deserve. The gospel is *grace*, as it promises the faithful saints, not only an exemption from punishment, but a resurrection to eternal life. The gospel is *grace*, as it promises us the divine assistance to comfort us in afflictions, and enable us to work out our salvation. The gospel may be called *grace*, with respect to the manner in which it was revealed. The law was delivered with a pomp and majesty that struck terror; but the gospel made its appearance with mildness and condescension, and was introduced by the Son of God, conversing familiarly with men, teaching them by his doctrine and example. Whatsoever was burdensome in the law of Moses, was abolished in the gospel. The gospel is *grace*, as it contains righteous and equitable laws; the duty that it teaches towards God is a reasonable service, which we are bound in gratitude to perform; and that duty which we owe to our neighbour promotes the happiness of mankind, while that which is enjoined by it to ourselves tends to moderate and subdue every unruly passion. The gospel is *grace*, as it is a gift offered to all, an invitation from which none are excluded. Again, *grace* in some places of the New Testament means those extraordinary powers which the Holy Ghost conferred upon the apostles and first believers, as well as the ordinary influences of the Spirit; and in this sense the gospel emphatically is *grace*. Lastly, *grace* means holiness, goodness, and moral virtue; in which sense the gospel is *grace*, as it sets pure morality in a clear light, and enforces the practice of it by the best and most effectual motives. The gospel is called *truth*, in opposition to the falsehood of paganism, which had over-run the world—*truth*, as it is the accomplishment of the prophecies of future favours made under the law, and because an image and representation of *good things to come* was contained in the law; whereas in the gospel these good things are brought to light. The gospel therefore is *truth*, in opposition to the Jewish dispensation, as it is the substance and reality of all those things which are figured by the law; or as they were mere shadows compared to that solid and substantial *truth* which Christ has discovered to us." (A *Commentary on the Holy Bible* (COKE)) METACOMMENT: "St. John refers to this new spiritual idea, or Christ, as the Word. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." He further says, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." There was a period of nearly seven hundred years, from the time of Isaiah's vision of the Christ child, before the Christian era, or the manifestation of the Christ in the fleshly form, or in the child Jesus. Here we see how the divine manifestation of God came to the flesh to destroy incarnate error; for while the blessed Jesus was tempted like as we are in all points, yet was without sin, it was because the ever-present, indwelling Christ consciousness enabled him to meet and overcome every temptation and suggestion that the world had to present to him." (Logwood, James A., "*The Everpresent Christ*", *Sentinel* Vol. 2 (15 February 1900), p. 388.)

SECTION 4

Jeremiah 31:33 (11)

33 But **this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.** (KJV)

COMMENTARY: "In one of the most famous passages of Jeremiah, we hear about a 'new covenant.' This is the only reference to a new covenant in the OT, but the language and images of such newness are important in the restoration promises of the prophets, including a new heart and a new spirit and new things.... God promises a new kind of obedience to the covenant stipulations. God will affect the human heart so that people can keep the covenant requirements." (*The New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)*, p812) "Radical changes were necessary to get the people to obey the law from the heart and not just pay superficial or lip service to it....The Lord will...take away their "stony" heart and give them a new heart. With this heart they will be able to obey his laws, statutes, ordinances, and commands. The new covenant does not entail a new law; it is essentially the same law that Jeremiah has repeatedly accused them of rejecting or ignoring. What does change is their inner commitment to keep it." (*New English Translation notes*) METACOMMENT: "What a wonderful world it would be if each one's life—his daily going—preached the truth he had made his own and was involuntarily reflecting good to all within his sphere of activity! Surely such daily spiritualization of individual thinking and living would be the means of bringing into operation the new covenant spoken of by Jeremiah....In this prophetic vision all have come to the knowledge of God, good; and thus have ignorance and sin given everlasting place to spiritual understanding and holiness, and God's kingdom has come 'in earth, as it is in heaven.'" (*Metelerkamp, Joan E., "Self Sanctification", Journal Vol. 44 (October 1926), p. 398.*

Jeremiah 33:6 (12)

6 Behold, I will bring it health and cure, **and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.** (KJV)

COMMENTARY: "Jerusalem is again being personified, and her political and spiritual well-being are again in view." (*New English Translation notes*) "**cure**—literally, the long linen bandage employed in dressing wounds. **truth**—that is, stability; I will bring forth for them abundant and *permanent* peace, that is, prosperity." (Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 541.)

Luke 4:14,15,17-19 (13)

Jesus Begins His Ministry

14 And **Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee:** and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. (KJV)

15 **And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.** (KJV)

17 **And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,** (KJV)

18 **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,** (KJV)

19 **To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.** (KJV)

(V14) MAP: "Galilee," [BibleHistoryOnline](http://www.biblehistoryonline.com) COMMENTARY: "Once again Jesus is directed by *the Spirit*. Luke makes a point about Jesus' association with the Spirit early in his ministry." (*New English Translation notes*) "In Matthew and Mark the beginning of the mission of Jesus coincides with the end of John the Baptist's. Luke, on the other hand, seems to have preferred to associate the main turning-points in the life of Jesus with the working of the Holy Spirit

rather than the career of John the Baptist.” (*The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible (CBC)*, p53) **METACOMMENT:** “[Jesus’] demonstration of dominion over the claims of evil constrains us to conclude that he was continuously conscious of “the power of the Spirit.... Moreover, he plainly indicated that this power could be shared by all who would obey the will of the Father....[T]he understanding which constitutes spiritual consciousness, that is, the kingdom of heaven, is accompanied with power over the false claims of evil in demonstration of man’s dominion, which we are assured that God, the Father, gave him....Even Christian Scientists themselves have barely glimpsed the import of the fact that they, like Jesus, may constantly abide in the consciousness of Spirit, demonstrating dominion over every phase of evil exactly in proportion to their grasp of spiritual truth.” (*Gilmore, Albert F., “The power of the Spirit”*, *Journal* Vol. 41 (December 1923), p. 464.) **(V15) COMMENTARY:** TPINTC explains that “synagogues” are a later development, some say in Ezra’s time, others in the Hellenistic period. “It is not used in the OT for a building or place of assembly. It first appears in this sense in the first century AD in Josephus, Philo, and the NT. Synagogues either had schools attached or were themselves used as schools. When the temple was destroyed they survived.” (*TPI New Testament Commentaries (TPINTC)*) “It was the synagogue that enabled Judaism to survive the destruction of the temple. Synagogue worship begins and ends with prayers and benedictions; its core is the reading of the law, as a rule by several lectors...The Hebrew text was translated into the Aramaic vernacular and usually explained by one or more individuals. Any man – women were excluded – could announce his intention to read by standing up;...The reader would sit to begin his explanation.” (*The Good News Commentaries (SCHWEIZER)*, p88) **(V17) PRONUNCIATION:** “Esaias (i-zay’yuhs), Greek for Isaiah,” [Audio](#) (*Harper Collins Bible Dictionary (HBD)*) **ILLUSTRATION:** “Jesus unrolls the book in the synagogue,” James Tissot, 1886-94, [Image](#) **COMMENTARY:** MNTC explains the procedure: “The selection of the passage from **the book of the prophet Isaiah** may have been due to a local order for the day or it may have been due to the choice of Jesus. Ascending the platform at the invitation of the presiding leader, who was accustomed to extend such courtesies to visiting Rabbis or teachers, Jesus opens the book...and reads the commission there given to the prophet.” (*The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (MNTC)*) **(V18) COMMENTARY:** “By reading Isaiah 61:1-2 (LXX) [and mixing in an allusion to Isaiah 58:6] Jesus not only announces fulfillment of prophecy but defines what his messianic role is. Isaiah 61 is a servant song, and ‘anointed me’ means ‘made me the Christ or Messiah.’ When understood literally, the passage says the Christ is God’s servant who will bring to reality the longing and the hope of the poor, the oppressed, and the imprisoned. The Christ will also usher in the amnesty, the liberation, and the restoration associated with the proclamation of the year of jubilee.” (*Interpretation, a Bible commentary for teaching and preaching (IBC)*) “The phrase *he has anointed me* is an allusion back to Jesus’ baptism in Luke 3:21-22. *The poor* is a key term in Luke. It refers to the pious poor and indicates Jesus’ desire to reach out to those the world tends to forget or mistreat....Jesus is commissioned to do this. *Deliverance*) The *release* in view here is comprehensive, both at a physical level and a spiritual one, as the entire ministry of Jesus makes clear. Again, as with the previous phrase, *regaining of sight* may well mean more than simply miraculously restoring physical sight, which itself pictures a deeper reality. The essence of Jesus’ messianic work is expressed in the phrase *to set free*. This line from Isaiah 58 says that Jesus will do what the nation had failed to do. It makes the proclamation messianic, not merely prophetic, because Jesus doesn’t just proclaim the message—he brings the deliverance. The word translated *set free* is the same Greek word (*aphesis*) translated *release* earlier in the verse. Again, as with the previous phrases, *oppressed* may well mean more than simply political or economic oppression, but a deeper reality of oppression by sin.” (*New English Translation notes*) **METACOMMENT:** “The healing of the broken heart (wounded egotism), the deliverance (from the senses), the recovery of sight (spiritual awakening), the setting at liberty (the freedom of Truth), are all one in the action of divine Principle, Love, and mark the stages by which the darkness of mortal unhappiness, impurity, and ingratitude is dispelled.” (*Braithwaite M.A., J. S., “The Dead Past”*, *Sentinel* Vol. 9 (4 May 1907), p. 657.) **(V19) COMMENTARY:** “In summary, it is the prophet’s obligation to proclaim **the acceptable year of the Lord**. This is a symbolic reference to the year of Jubilee [the fiftieth year], when debts were canceled. Jesus’ ministry is its practical expression, for it is a ministry of liberation to the poor and the oppressed....The political language of the text is unmistakable. Greco-Roman auditors would associate with these prophetic words the kinds of expectations that were pronounced at the beginning of an imperial reign....Standard processes of political action are therefore put on notice in Jesus’ reading of the future...” (*Danker, Frederick, Jesus and the New Age*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988, p107)

Luke 13:11-17 (14)

Jesus Heals a Woman on the Sabbath | Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath (GNT)

- 11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself*. (KJV)
- 12 And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. (KJV)
- 13 And he laid *his hands on her*: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. (KJV)
- 14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. (KJV)
- 15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?* (KJV)
- 16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? (KJV)
- 17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him. (KJV)

(V11) “a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years”: See the [Bible Character Notes](#) for this week. **PRONUNCIATION:** “bowed (boud) [as in “loud”] [Audio 3](#). to bend or curve downward”; “19. to bend into the form of a bow; curve,” (*The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (RAND)*) **COMMENTARY:** ““A spirit that had crippled her” (NRSV) is literally ‘a spirit of weakness.’ ‘Weakness’ can refer to various sorts of diseases and ailments. Even though Jesus does not address the spirit, as in an exorcism, attributing the woman’s condition to a spirit relates her to other persons possessed by evil or unclean spirits. This view is strengthened in verse 16, where her condition is described as bondage to Satan, the evil power behind the demons. The woman is another person on the margins of Jewish society...for she has been afflicted by an evil, unclean spirit for eighteen years.” (*Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC)*, p218) (V12) **COMMENTARY:** “*Woman* was a polite form of address, similar to “Madam” or “Ma’am” used in English in different regions.” (*New English Translation notes*) *Thou art loosed*) “When he saw her, and without being asked to do so, Jesus told the woman that she was liberated of her infirmity. The perfect tense *apolelytai* ‘liberated’, indicates that the woman’s ensuing cure would be permanent.” (Pate, C. Marvin, *Moody Gospel Luke Commentary*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1995) **METACOMMENT:** “‘Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity’—the lie that has claimed to keep you bound for the past eighteen years is no part of your real selfhood; that selfhood is the image and likeness of God, the perfect reflection of the perfect creator! Christ Jesus’ consciousness abode in the realm of reality. In consequence, he was constantly about his Father’s business, always knowing the truth about God and His idea, man. At all times he saw only the divine idea, governed by its perfect Principle.” (Wardle, James, *“Fidelity and Faith”*, *Sentinel* Vol. 30 (7 January 1928), p. 365.) (V13) **ILLUSTRATION:** Jesus heals the bowed woman, [Image](#) **COMMENTARY:** “She immediately praised God,” as LBC points out. “What could be more wholesome in the synagogue on the Sabbath, than that the works of Satan should be destroyed, and that men should lift their hearts to God in praise for this.” (*The Layman’s Bible Commentary (LBC)*) (V14) **COMMENTARY:** “*Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath*, the synagogue ruler speaks to the word. Rather than address Jesus directly, he complains to the people, ‘*There are six day for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.*’ He ignores the liberation of this woman from her pain. He ignores the release of power through Jesus that has allowed this to take place. He gives no indication of compassion or of joy that God has worked.” (*The IVP New Testament Series (IVP)*, p241) (V15) **COMMENTARY:** “The analogy in verse 15 is relevant because it concerns freeing an animal that was confined (‘untie’ in the NRSV translated *luo*, which could also be translated ‘free’ or ‘release’). This language puts a specifically Lukan perspective on Jesus’ healing, for, on the one hand, it agrees closely with the summary statement in Acts 10:38 and, on the other hand, it fits Jesus’ proclamation of ‘release to the captives’ in his inaugural sermon. One of the kinds of captivity from which Jesus frees people is Satanic oppression in the form of physical ailments, but this may be accompanied by social oppression through being stigmatized.” (*Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (ANTC)*, p219) (V16) **COMMENTARY:** “If you release an

animal from restraint and give it relief, how much more ought you to do for a human...*Satan has bound her*:...Luke uses *deo* ('bind') in this metaphorical sense only here, but the notion of being bound by evil is obviously present in 'release of captives', exorcism of the violent demoniac and the dumb demoniac as well as in the 'release' of sins. This connection is important, for the essence of the Sabbath was to be a 'rest,' that is a time of 'liberation' as the notion of the Sabbath year indicated, when debts were redeemed and slaves were freed." (*Sacra Pagina (SP)*, p212) **METACOMMENT:** "The narrative tells us, further, that Jesus called this woman to him, having through his wonderful spiritual perception read her thought, discerning her faith in God. This is shown very clearly, because later on he referred to her as "a daughter of Abraham." If we refer to the word "Abraham" on page 579 of *Science and Health*, we shall find that Mrs. Eddy defines it as "fidelity; faith in the divine Life and in the eternal Principle of being." Thus we are shown the mental qualities which Jesus recognized in this sufferer, namely, her faith in the divine Life and her fidelity to the revelation she had of God." (**Wardle, James, "Fidelity and Faith", *Sentinel*** Vol. 30 (7 January 1928), p. 365.) **(V17) COMMENTARY:** "Jesus logic was unanswerable. *All his adversaries were put to shame* when they saw their conduct and attitude in the clear light of Jesus' illustration and questions. The people rejoiced at all the things Jesus was doing. This is a pattern in Luke and in Acts – the success of Jesus and his cause versus the failure of his opposition." (**Summers, Ray, *Commentary on Luke***, Waco, TX: Word Books, 1972, p168)

John 17:1 (15)

1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: (KJV)

COMMENTARY: *the hour*) "The time has come. Jesus has said before that his "hour" had come, both in 12:23 when some Greeks sought to speak with him, and in 13:1 where just before he washed the disciples' feet. It appears best to understand the "hour" as a period of time starting at the end of Jesus' public ministry and extending through the passion week, ending with Jesus' return to the Father through death, resurrection, and exaltation. The "hour" begins as soon as the first events occur which begin the process that leads to Jesus' death." (***New English Translation notes***)

John 18:37 (16)

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. (KJV)

COMMENTARY: [Jesus is talking to Pilate.] Verse 37 c-d is a distillation of theological themes that have run throughout the Gospel. First, it stresses the connection between Jesus' origin with God and his witness to the truth...Second, the expression 'Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice' recalls the claims of the shepherd discourse of John 10; to 'belong to the truth' is thus to be one of Jesus' sheep... 'To belong to the truth' is to recognize in Jesus the truth of God, to see the fullness of God revealed in Jesus, to hear the words of God in Jesus' voice." (***The New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)***, p817)

SECTION 5

Psalms 15:1,2 (17)

1 LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? (KJV)

2 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. (KJV)

(V1) COMMENTARY: "The Psalmist asks, Who is worthy to dwell, like Eli and Samuel of old, in the sacred courts; who is fitted for that close and constant communion with God which such a dwelling implies? For God's Presence and His Revelation of Himself were, under the Old Testament, connected with a certain *place*. And hence the love and ardent desire so constantly expressed for the place itself." (**Perowne, J. J. Stewart, *Commentary on the Psalms*** (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1989 reprint of 1873 edition)) **(V2) COMMENTARY:** "*He that walketh uprightly* - Hebrew, "walking perfectly;" that is, one who walks or lives "perfectly." The word "walk" in the Scriptures is often used to denote the manner of life; life being represented as a journey. The word here rendered "uprightly," or, in the Hebrew, "perfectly," means that which is complete in all its parts; where no part is missing or is defective. The Word is not

used in the sense in which it is often employed now, as denoting absolute freedom from sin, but as meaning that the character was complete in all its parts; or that the person referred to was upright alike in regard to God and to man. *And worketh righteousness* - Does right. That is, he does what is proper to be done in relation to God and to man. The doctrine is everywhere laid down in the Scriptures that no man can be a friend of God who does not do habitually what is right. *And speaketh the truth in his heart* - He uses language that is sincere, and that is in accordance with his real belief. This is opposed to all mere outward professions, and all hypocritical preferences. His religion has its seat in the heart, and is not the religion of forms; his acts are the expressions of upright intentions and purposes, and are not performed for selfish and hypocritical ends. This is everywhere the nature of true religion." (**Notes on the Old and the New Testaments (BARNES)**)

James 1:17,18,25 (18)

- 17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (KJV)
- 18** Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (KJV)
- 25** But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. (KJV)

(V17) COMMENTARY: "With God, there is "no variation or shifting shadow." The language is evocative and difficult (see the fourth additional note on 1:17), but the main point is clear: God is unchangeable and entirely trustworthy (cf. Mal. 3:6). Ordinary heavenly lights produce shadows, but God's light is shadowless. Ordinary lights wax and wane, shift, move around, go through phases, and fade; even the sun is occasionally eclipsed. And all such lights cast shadows that are both inconstant and evanescent....God's light is unchanging; it is not subject to variation. Unlike the sun and moon, God's light cannot be overshadowed, nor does it make "shifting shadows" (cf. 1 John 1:5: "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all"). The literalistic but memorable turn of phrase "no . . . shadow of turning" used in the KJV, even if not an exact representation of the semantic equivalent of the metaphor that James uses, captures the notion of God's faithfulness and steadiness. Given the instability of the world in which the nascent community of believers lived, the solidity and reliability of the wisdom of God was important, and the steadiness of the believers as lights is an important corollary in demonstrating that divine wisdom to the world." – (**McCartney, Dan G., James, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 2009**) **(V18)** COMMENTARY: "The difficulty of the passage is that there are three possible ways of interpreting James' reference to God's gift of birth. First, it may be understood as a reference to the creation of man 'Adam, the son of God', on the divine decision 'let us make man' and by the creative word of Genesis 1; and to the giving to man of dominion over the rest of creation...Secondly, the reference could be taken to be to the creation of Israel, God's son whom he begat, and who has a special status over against other nations because of the divine choice....Thirdly, James may be seen to echo the familiar description of Christian converts as, on divine initiative, re-born and become the children of God....The *word of truth* would now....be the gospel." (**Black's New Testament Commentaries (BNTC), p75-6**) *A kind of firstfruits* "...an archaic biblical phrase for 'the pick of creation,' Christians being the choicest product of the divine creative purpose...in whom the divine purpose was to be realized in its choicest form. James does imply, of course, that they must live up to their exalted destiny." (**The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (MNTC)**) **METACOMMENT:** "As "the word of truth" is declared in Christian Science, the truth about man becomes apparent to human consciousness, and this never includes sin, disease, or death. It lays bare the falsity of mortal belief and uncovers all that needs to be exposed,—the hidden fear or sin which seems to delay healing or the restoration of harmony. The truth must first be known, then lived, then declared,—silently or audibly as the need requires,—but there is no doubt as to its power." (**Knott, Annie M., "The word of Truth."**, *Sentinel* Vol. 13 (29 July 1911), p. 950.) **(V25)** COMMENTARY: "The law that shows him his true self is described as a **perfect law**. The central idea of perfection is of wholeness. The **blessing** may be a promise for the future: the man is, i.e. will be, blessed for what he does, or it may be inherent in the obeying of the law to perform which carries its own experience of blessing with it." (**Baker's New Testament Commentaries (BNTC)**) **METACOMMENT:** "It is apparent that action is contingent on thinking, or the result of it, and it necessarily follows that if the thought prompting an act is a divine idea, the act itself must be good. Christian Science maintains that this

is the philosophy of true living, and proves it in the only logical way possible by demonstration.” (Weaver, Forrest P., *“A True Mental Attitude”*, *Sentinel* Vol. 16 (17 January 1914), p. 385.)

Galatians 5:1,7 (19)

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (KJV)

7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? (KJV)

(V1, 7) COMMENTARY: These verses are repeated from the Responsive Reading.

SECTION 6

Proverbs 3:1-3 (20)

Trust in the Lord

1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: (KJV)

2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. (KJV)

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: (KJV)

(V1) COMMENTARY: “This is not the stern language of command. It is our Father’s voice in all the endearing persuasiveness of promise – *My son* – He had before instructed us to *seek and search* after wisdom, and set out before us its invaluable blessings. Now he calls us to bring it into practical exercise – *Forget not my law*. The willful forgetfulness of the heart, not the infirmity of the memory is here implied. *Let thine heart*, like the ark of the testimony, be *the keeping-place of my commandments*.... Indeed no laws, but God’s bind the heart. All acceptable obedience begins here. The heart is the first thing that wanders from God: the first also that returns.” (Bridges, Charles, *Proverbs, Geneva Series of Commentaries*, Southampton, Great Britain: The Camelot Press, Ltd., 1846, reprinted 1983, p21) **(V2) COMMENTARY:** “This inspired teacher is to be revered as a spiritual father. His word is to be regarded as a law published by Solomon, but binding on us by the authority of God. Interest dictates to us the propriety of keeping God’s commandments. Peace is enjoyed by the godly, even that peace of God which passes all understanding, and it keeps their hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. Outward prosperity is enjoyed by them, as far as it is consistent with their spiritual interests.” (Lawson, George, *Commentary on Proverbs* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1980 reprint of 1829 edition)) **(V3) COMMENTARY:** “The words used here for ‘loyalty’ and ‘faithfulness’ are frequently paired in OT texts. Only on very rare occasions do they seem to refer to noncovenantal human relationships. By far the most common usage is in contexts referring to the qualities of God as they are demonstrated through God’s relationship with Israel....But in Prov. 3:3, it is the abstract quality of ‘loyalty and faithfulness’ rather than the very specific commandments which the ‘son’ is urged to ‘bind’ around his neck. Rather than on tablets of stone, a metaphorical ‘tablet’ of one’s ‘heart’ (which might better be translated ‘mind,’ since the Hebrew word connotes the seat of human decision making) is the place in which the wisdom teacher’s commandments should be kept.” (*The International Theological Commentary (ITC)*, p35-6)

Psalm 33:4,21 (21)

4 For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth. (KJV)

21 For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. (KJV)

(V4) COMMENTARY: “The psalmist proceeds to give reasons why God is to be praised, and puts in the forefront this reason: For the word of the lord is right; *i.e.* the revealed will of God is exactly in accord with the eternal rule of right. We cannot imagine it otherwise, for God would contradict his own nature, if he ordained by a positive law anything contrary to that rule. But still we maybe thankful that there is no such contradiction—that ‘the Law is holy, just, and good’ (Romans 7:12). **And all his works are done in truth** (comp. Psalm 111:7, Psalm 111:8, ‘The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and equity’). All God’s working, all his dealings with his creatures have truth and equity and faithfulness for their

basis. He can be thoroughly trusted. This is a second and very strong ground for thanksgiving.” (***The Complete Pulpit Commentary (PUL)***) (**V21**) COMMENTARY: *Our heart shall rejoice*) “The Psalmist’s assurance of the future is derived from the possession of a faith already tried and proved to be truly in existence. It is because he has trusted that he knows he shall rejoice. Our safety and protection are in him alone.” (**Alexander**, Joseph A, *The Psalms Translated and Explained* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975 reprint of 1873 edition))