

Bible Characters for Your Weekly Bible Study

Compiled by Lt Gen C. Norman Wood, USAF (Ret), Burke, VA 22015

For week of April 26 – May 2, 2010

SUBJECT: EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

Brock, Helen K., "Everlasting Punishment," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.21 (23 August 1919), p. 1003.

--The semiannual recurrence of this subject in our Lesson-Sermon never fails to bring to the writer a deep sense of gratitude for deliverance from false belief in regard to it.

• The doctrine of everlasting punishment as a means for frightening sinners into repentance has been tenaciously adhered to by various schools of so-called orthodox theology for generations.

--As the years passed by, bringing deeper habits of thought, it was soon plain that this could not be a true understanding of God, because it did not agree with the statements of the Bible that God is Love, the Father of all, just and true and merciful.

--Everlasting or eternal punishment...must be clearly seen to be the complete destruction of all error, that the everlasting or eternal manifestation of all good may appear.

SECTIONS II and III: Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15: 11-24)

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Acts 17: 28

TIME LINE: The last months of Jesus' ministry, 30 AD.

"This might be called the pearl and crown of all parables of Scripture; one containing within itself such a circle of doctrine as abundantly to justify the title sometimes given it of *Evangelium in Evangelio*, The Gospel within the Gospel." (Trench Notes on a Parable) "The parable of the dissolute, sinful son, is related both to other Bible stories, for example, that of Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25-36) and of Joseph and his older brothers (Genesis 37-50), and to stories in the Greco-Roman tradition, for example, to the one told by Terence, *The Brothers*....As Jesus told it, the story was a parabolic metaphor that breaks through and contradicts domestic order." (Eerdmans Commentary)

The "prodigal son" was the younger son, who wastes his inheritance in Jesus' parable in Luke. He experiences his father's forgiveness while his dutiful older brother protests the father's actions. This parable declares God's welcome to the outcasts and, by implication, the Gentiles, and the recalcitrant attitude of the Jews. "Its significance has been variously assessed, depending upon which character is thought to be the central means of giving expression to it." (Oxford Commentary)

"To the parables of the lost sheep and lost coin Luke joins the story of the lost son. Traditionally called the parable of the prodigal son, the story displays mastery of this figure of speech." (Peake's Commentary) "This parable...is intended to show what joy there is in heaven at the conversion of sinners, and, therefore, how wrong the Pharisees were to murmur, because [Jesus] consorted with sinners to convert them. The father is God; the elder son is just persons, or rather those who think themselves and are thought by others to be such, here, in particular, the Pharisees.... The younger son is all penitent sinners, here, in particular, the publicans and sinners of vv. 1, 2. The portion

of goods [v.12] is the whole of a man's faculties and powers, which he ought to exercise and enjoy in his father's house, i.e. in dependence upon God and in His service, but which the prodigal son demands to have under his own control, to use according to his own pleasure. The lack of love and apostasy of heart shown in this demand is soon followed by apostasy of life, for not many days after (v.13), he gathers all together, i.e. deliberately resolves to devote his whole fortune and all his powers to the pursuit of pleasure, and journeys into a far country, i.e. into the world of sin where God is not, or rather where he is forgotten, and wastes his substance in riotous living, i.e. throws off even the semblance of piety and responsibility, and ruins not only his soul, but his health and fortune in extravagance and debauchery." (Dummelow Commentary)

To feed the swine [v.15] "was the worst sort of degradation imaginable for Jesus' Jewish audience; swine were the worst sort of unclean animals." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Would fain have filled his belly with the husks [v.16] "i.e., carob [husks] used to feed swine but [are] virtually indigestible for humans." (Ibid)

"This self-centered life is not his true self, and the young man realizes it." [*when he came to himself*, v.17] (People's NT Commentary)

The fattened calf [v.23] "was reserved only for the most special of occasions—a sacrifice or a feast of great celebration." (Ibid)

"a certain man had two sons"

"The father's part pictures God's love for lost sinners. He is kind, waits for the son, goes to meet him, perhaps to save him the deserved punishment he might have received from others for disgracing his family and village, and forgets his past life." (King James Bible Commentary)

"the youngest of them"

"**PRODIGAL SON** [is a] popular term used to identify Jesus' parable in Luke 15:11-32. English translations do not use the term *prodigal* meaning, 'reckless' or 'wasteful,' though they speak of the younger son's wasting or squandering his property (15:13)." (Holman Bible Dictionary)

"The portion [he requested], according to the Jewish law, would be the half of what the elder brother would receive (Deut. xxi.17)." (Trench Notes on the Parables)

"Some interpreters have seen this story principally as a story of repentance and restoration for the younger son who left home." (Mysteries of the Bible)

Swinney, Mark (CSB, Lecturer, Managing Editor, Website Editor, Contributing Editor, and President; Bradenton, FL), "**The Father's Welcome Home**," MODERN-DAY PRODIGAL SON, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.110 (15 December 2008), p. 6.

--Over the years, I've seen signs of God's constant presence countless times as I've prayed for people.

- Whether the apparent estrangement from Him has presented itself as illness, loss, addiction, or abuse, I've seen healing after healing confirm that God never leaves anyone's side, even for a moment. Although you may not have been aware of it all your life, you haven't been just near God; you've actually been one with your Father-Mother.

--God's presence is what makes you who you are.

---Your very existence, in fact, is a result of God in action.

- “*In him we live, and move, and have our being,*” says the Bible (Acts 17:28).

--Jesus once told a parable I find very helpful in discovering how God truly feels about us. The account in Luke’s Gospel begins, “*A certain man had two sons*” (See Luke 15).

Woodward, Daisy, “**The Prodigal**,” POEM, Christian Science Journal, Vol.47 (January 1930), p. 557.

Father, the hour is come
When, like the prodigal, I see
I must arise and wend my way to Thee,
Secure in knowing that Thy tender love
Is ever waiting to forgive my sin,
And prove Thy pardon by destruction
Of its seeming power and victory....

I thank Thee, Father, for Thy wondrous gift,
The ring, the everlasting circle of Thy boundless love!
And the best robe, the robe of righteousness—
The garment of salvation!
Thus hath the prodigal returned
To find himself enriched beyond all hope,
A royal heir, inheritor of good!

DeWindt, Mrs. Beverly Bemis Hawks (CSB, Arcadia, CA), “**You are worthy!**,” TAKING STOCK, Christian Science Journal, Vol.117 (July 1999), p. 35.

--Worthiness in its truest sense is found in reflecting the qualities of God.

--The prodigal son, in one of Jesus’ parables [Luke 15: 11-32], foolishly believed his substance and worth to be in matter.

--It is wrong to believe that we are personally unworthy or personally worthy

- The one God, our Father, is the source of all that’s genuinely good and worthy.

--If there are corrections needed in our character, they can be made through the transforming power of divine Love.

--As we work along to do better, we can recognize our progress and not continue to beat ourselves down because we haven’t completely proved our God-given perfection.

Gilchrist, Helen, “**From a Far Country**,” POEM, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.32 (15 February 1930), p. 469.

Whether you sail a foam-swept, lifting sea,
Or broad wings lift you out along the air,
Or thought runs troubled through a long, dark night,
Remember this—that God is everywhere.

One presence, Spirit, one eternal Mind,
Whose harmony needs yours to be complete;
One Love so vast the dream of darkness breaks;
And, for your homeward steps, one mercy seat!

SECTION IV: Jesus Pardons Zacchaeus, a Wealthy Convert (Luke 19: 2-10)

TIME LINE: Near the end of the last months, March, 30 AD, in Jericho.

"*Jericho* [v.1] was on a main trade route, and was an important customs center." (New Oxford Annotated Bible) "As Jesus passes through Jericho, we learn of a man named Zacchaeus, a chief tax (or toll) collector, who was rich, information the author gave us only at the end of the story of the (rich) ruler (18:18-23)." (Eerdmans Commentary)

"'Chief tax-collector' [v.2] is not found elsewhere in the NT and probably not outside it." (Oxford Commentary) "Zacchaeus probably oversaw a large tax district, and had other tax collectors working for him." (MacArthur Commentary)

"The reader is reminded [*he sought to see*, v.3] of the immediately preceding story of healing the blind man (18:35-42)." (People's NT Commentary)

The *sycamore tree* (v.4) is "a sturdy tree with low, spreading branches. A small person could get out on a limb and hang over the road. This was an undignified position for someone of [Zacchaeus'] rank, but he was desperate to see [Jesus]." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"This title [v.10 *Son of man*] of Christ was [his] favorite, and was never used by the disciples as they addressed [him]." (King James Bible Commentary) "The closing pronouncement recalls the parables of Luke 15 and also the missed opportunity of the rich man in 18:18-30." (HarperCollins Bible Commentary)

Zacchaeus

[Zack key' us] (Greek from Heb. "pure one")

"Taxes and tax collection systems varied widely by locale and period within the Hellenistic and Roman Empires....Duties were collected on goods in transit and in marketplaces by local publicans who paid a flat rate for the right to collect these taxes." (Cambridge Companion to the Bible) "Zacchaeus is sometimes identified with Matthew (also known as Levi), who was also a publican, but even though their stories are somewhat similar there is no evidence that they were the same man." (All the People in the Bible)

"Luke alone tells the delightful story of the chief tax-collector, Zacchæus, who was very rich because the Jericho taxes constituted a fruitful source of income and he had contracted for the right of collecting the revenues of that district." (Who's Who in the New Testament) Many thought Zacchaeus had "grown rich through overtaxing the people." (Who Was Who in the Bible) "When Jesus came to Jericho, probably among the crowd of pilgrims on the way up to Jerusalem for the Passover festival, Zacchæus wanted to meet him. He was, however, a little man, and he therefore went on ahead and climbed into a tree overlooking the road along which Jesus was likely to come. As Jesus came level with him, he looked up, and called to him, 'Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.' (Luke 19:5). Zacchaeus made haste to come down and received Jesus joyfully." (Who's Who in the New Testament)

When the crowds saw what had happened, they were resentful and murmured that Jesus had gone to the house of a sinner. Zacchæus denied this by outlining his generosity to the poor, and pledged to restore anything that was looked upon as fraud. Jesus acknowledged his redemption and declared that, although he was "lost," he was saved. "Zacchaeus' promise to contribute to the poor and

restore fourfold those wrongfully treated stands in sharp contrast to the response of the rich ruler (Luke 18:18-25)." (HarperCollins Dictionary)

"Luke brings out very clearly Jesus' application of the word 'lost' to the publicans, as though their livelihood made them inevitable 'sinners.'" (Who's Who in the New Testament) This story shows Jesus' familiar intercourse with publicans and sinners was justified by its results. "Zacchaeus, the outcast son of Abraham, has salvation extended to him." (Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels) "An unfortunate consequence of the descriptive powers of the Third Evangelist is the fact that for many readers the most notable characteristic about Zacchaeus is that he was short." (Eerdmans Commentary)

Gottschalk, Stephen, "**Who was Zacchaeus?**," FOR CHILDREN, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.89 (30 November 1987), p. 32.

--First of all, as people's sizes go, Zacchaeus was short.

- Not tall.
- Not medium.
- But short—very short.

---So short that when Zacchaeus wanted to get a good look at Jesus coming along the road, he had to climb a tree to see over the crowd. It was a sycamore tree—a tree with fine soft wood and wide-spreading branches.

--The town where Zacchaeus lived was called Jericho.

- It was in the Jordan Valley not far from Jerusalem.

---Just before Jesus came through Jericho on his way to Jerusalem, he had healed a blind beggar, named Bartmaeus, who called out to him above the noise of the crowd from where he sat by the road outside of Jericho.

--If you have read the story of Zacchaeus in Luke [See Luke 19:1-10] you know what happened when Jesus came into Jericho. He passed under the very tree Zacchaeus had climbed to see him better.

Winfield, Helen Oscar, "**Incident at Jericho**," POEM, Christian Science Journal, Vol.83 (October 1965), p. 521.

Short of limb, but agile still, the publican
Searched for a spot and found it in a sycamore,
A vantage point above the heads of pressing crowd,
From which to see and hear the one
Who came teaching and preaching
Christ.

And as he climbed, greed fled the heights
And restitution winged its way
To where he was and rested there.
The Master recognized and welcomed it,
And him, and called his name—
Zacchaeus.

Not all were healed who came to hear,
Because their hearts were closed
Tighter than the fists of him they shunned
Had been, the one the Master came to save,
And did, calling him, lovingly—

Son of Abraham.

SECTION V: The healing of the crippled man at Bethesda (John 5: 1-9 *there*, 14, 24 *He* [to ;])
TIME LINE: The Year of Popularity and Fundamental Principles (Jesus' 2nd year of ministry), in Jerusalem at Bethesda, March, 28 AD.

“a certain man...which had an infirmity”

“The scene shifts back again to Jerusalem (5:1), and we enter a new period of Jesus’ ministry. Although a Jewish festival is mentioned, it is not specified which is in mind, nor that its attendance was the primary purpose of Jesus’ return to the city. Instead the reader later discovers that the focus of the whole passage lies on the *Sabbath* rather than on any particular feast.” (Eerdmans Commentary)

In v.2 the reference to the *sheep market* is "most likely...to the gate [rather than a *market*] identified in Nehemiah 3:1,32; 12:39. It was a small opening in the north wall of the city, just west of the northeast corner." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"John included the figure [*thirty-eight years*, v.5] to emphasize the gravity of the debilitating disease that afflicted the individual." (Ibid)

“Jesus takes the initiative and speaks first [*Wilt thou be made whole*, v.6]; the sovereign Jesus...acts unilaterally.” (People’s NT Commentary)

“Jesus’ admonition [*Rise, take up thy bed, and walk*, v.8] is nearly identical with that of Mk 2:9,11, one of the many indications that the author of the Fourth Gospel had a direct knowledge of Mark.” (Oxford Bible Commentary)

“This miracle may be regarded as a parable illustrating the deadly effects of sin, and the power of the Saviour to deal with the most hopeless cases. This poor man in his youth had shattered his nervous system by a life of sensual indulgence (v. 14) and had lain for thirty-eight years a hopeless paralytic (v. 5). This being an extreme case, the usual order of Christ’s miracles is reversed. Instead of being wrought as a reward of faith (see v. 13), the miracle is wrought to produce faith. The man was too much broken down in mind and body to believe, until some signal mercy had been vouchsafed to him. The mercy was vouchsafed, and repentance and faith followed (v. 14).” (Dummelow Commentary)

Jesus’ astonishing promise (v.24) is that not only is eternal life the promise of God for all believers, it is more than a promise—it is a present reality!

“Does God collaborate with ‘lady luck’?” Christian Science Monitor (25 April 1988), p. 18.

--The Bible tells us that Christ Jesus visited to pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem.

- Many sick and crippled people surrounded the pool.
 - They believed that an “*angel*” sporadically stirred the water and endowed it with power to heal the one who first plunged in.
 - A man crippled for thirty-eight years poured out his hard luck story to Jesus: someone else always got into the pool first because he had no one to help him.
 - Jesus’ response refuted the idea that one must compete for a mysterious beneficence.
 - He told the man to rise and walk, healing him instantly.

---But Jesus stressed the importance of moral regeneration, telling him: “*Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*” [John 5:14]

Bemis, Kenneth E., III, “Health care: can it really be bought?” Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.95 (11 October 1993), p. 4.

--Mrs. Eddy yearned to understand the directives of Jesus, to follow his example, and to explain his healing method to others.

--This healing method, discovered and explained by Mrs. Eddy, is uncomplicated and straightforward.

--Jesus proved that there’s no need for becoming absorbed with physical circumstances.

• When he healed the man at the pool of Bethesda who had been ill for thirty-eight years, he did not ask for a doctor’s prognosis or for a second medical opinion.

---He never accepted as reality an appearance of imperfection but understood the truth of man’s spiritual wholeness; and this understanding healed the man (see John 5:2-9).

--In a time of increasing concern over health care, we can look to a higher source for true health.

SECTION VI: John sees a vision of a new heaven and a new earth, and hears the words of an angel (Rev 21: 1-4)

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written 93-96 AD, probably by John at Patmos, to the first-century Christians in Asia [**Turkey**] who were in a crisis of identity.

“Revelation ends with a vivid and dramatic image of a new heaven, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem (21:1—22:7).” (Theological Bible Commentary)

"John...sees a new heaven and a new earth, which have replaced their earlier counterparts that have 'passed away' (21:1; cf. 20:11)." (HarperCollins Bible Commentary)

New Jerusalem (v.2) "comes from heaven as the dwelling place of redeemed humanity with God—the union of heaven and earth, or of the bride and her husband Christ (cf. 19:7-8)." (Oxford Bible Commentary)

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

“Although philosophical arguments for the character-building value of these built-in afflictions of the human condition [*all tears...death...sorrow...crying...pain*, v.4] can be made, John is not writing philosophy. He is the prophetic mediator of the word of that One who declares that the ‘former things’ (with this one phrase he sums up all the world’s misery of all the ages) have ‘passed away,’ because he makes all things new.” (Interpretation series: Revelation)

John the Disciple

(Abbreviated)

“The author of the fourth Gospel was the younger of the two sons of Zebedee.” (Baker Encyclopedia) **John and his father and brother were fishermen, and lived in Capernaum, possibly Bethsaida [Golon Heights of Syria], on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Although it is not certain that Salome and Mary were sisters, if it were so it would make James and John cousins of Jesus. Luke describes John and James as partners with Peter and**

Andrew. John, James, and Peter formed the inner circle of the disciples of Jesus. This special position seems to have caused some envy among Jesus' other followers....

"In the reign of Domitian (AD 81-96) John was banished to 'the isle that is called Patmos' (a small, rocky, and almost uninhabited island on the Aegean Sea), 'for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ' (Rev 1:9). Irenaeus and Eusebius say that this took place near the end of Domitian's reign. John's return from exile took place during the brief but tolerant reign of Nerva." (Baker Encyclopedia) He later returned to Ephesus "as the scene of his later ministrations, and it is probable that the seven churches of Asia (in the vicinity of Ephesus) enjoyed his care (Rev.1:11)." (Peloubet's Bible Dictionary) He died at Ephesus sometime after Trajan became emperor in A.D. 98....

"The book [of Revelation] calls itself an apocalypse or revelation, which Jesus gave, for his servants, through his angel to John, but it begins in letter form, 'John to the seven churches that are in Asia, grace to you and peace' (1:4), and ends like a Pauline letter with the 'grace.' (22:21). The risen Christ appears to John on the island of Patmos, off the coast of the Roman province of Asia, and orders him to write to the seven churches (chaps. 2-3); the messages warn the complacent and the worldly, and encourage the faithful. Summoned up into heaven, John sees God enthroned, holding a sealed scroll no one can open." (Oxford Guide to People & Places) "It is likely that chap. 21 and some passages in the rest of the Gospel were added to the book by an editor who belonged to the same group as the evangelist, as 21:24 suggests." (Abingdon Bible Handbook)....

Vincent, Rev. Fred J. (DD, CS), "John, the Beloved Disciple," Christian Science Journal, Vol.16 (September 1898), p. 396.

--As we read the writings of John — whether it be the Gospel, or Epistles, or the Apocalyptic Vision, commonly called the Book of Revelation — we cannot fail to catch such a glimpse of the true man that we no longer wonder that this one of the chosen twelve should be spoken of as the one "*whom Jesus loved*," "the Apostle of Love," and by many such beautiful cognomens.

- We know from our own experience that love attracts love, and therefore we wonder not that the great, loving heart of Jesus should go out in such a flood of love to this disciple, the youngest of the little band of chosen followers; for in the bosom of that one it found a more responsive and sympathetic chord than in the bosoms of the others; and further, Jesus the enlightened, could read the character of the man before him and read it aright.

Slaughter, Cora, "God's will: 'in earth, as it is in heaven,'" Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.91 (30 January 1989), p. 18.

--No matter where we are or what we're doing, we can prove that safety is God's will and His kingdom *is* come.

--New horizons come into view as we accept God, infinite Life, Truth, Love, as the one guiding Principle of our experience.

- Our advancing spiritually reveals more of the universe of Spirit, all-encompassing Love.

--It is divine assurance that takes away human anxiety and fear of the unexpected and begins to show us ways to meet the human needs and responsibilities that further safety and honest concern for one another.

• Consider St. John’s vision of “*a new heaven and a new earth*”: “*Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*” [Rev 21:1,3]
--Isn’t this God’s will for all of us, for you and me today—to know and prove His kingdom come, His will done, “*in earth, as it is in heaven*”?

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Bible Translations

King James Version (KJV). Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 1611 (1955 ed.)

Metzger, Bruce M. and Roland E. Murphy (eds.), The New Oxford Annotated Bible (NRSV). Oxford University Press: New York, NY, 1991.

Moffatt, James, A New Translation of the Bible. Harper & Brothers Publishers: New York, NY, 1922 (1954 ed.)

New English Bible, The (NEB). Oxford University Press: New York, NY, 1961 (1972 ed.).

New International Version (NIV): Student Bible. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI, 1986 (2002 ed.).

Schuller, Robert H. (ex.ed.), Possibility Thinkers Bible: The New King James Version (NKJV). Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, TN, 1984.

Scofield, Rev. C.I., D.D., The Scofield Reference Bible (KJV). Oxford University Press: New York, NY, 1909 (1945 ed.)

Thompson, Frank Charles (ed.), The New Chain-Reference Bible (KJV). B.B. Kirkbride Bible Co: Indianapolis, IN, 1964.

Today’s Parallel Bible (KJV, NIV, NASB, NLT). Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI, 2000.

Bible Paraphrased Interpretations

Peterson, Eugene H., The Message. NavPress: Colorado Springs, CO, 1993 (2002 ed.)

Phillips, J.B., The New Testament in Modern English. Macmillan Publishing Co.: New York, NY, 1958 (1973 edition).

Commentaries

Achtemeier, Paul J., Romans: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1985.

Barton, John and John Muddiman (ed.), The Oxford Bible Commentary. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2001.

Best, Ernest, II Corinthians: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.

John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1987

Black, Matthew and H.H. Rowley (eds.), Peake's Commentary on the Bible.
Van Nostrand Reinhold (UK) Co., Ltd: London, ENG, 1962.

Boring, M. Eugene, Revelation: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.
John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1989.

Boring, M. Eugene and Fred B. Craddock, The People's New Testament Commentary. Westminster
John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 2004.

Brueggemann, Walter, Genesis: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.
John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1982.

Buttrick, George Arthur (comm.ed., et al), The Interpreter's Bible. Abingdon Press: New York, NY,
1953.

Cousar, Charles B., Galatians: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.
John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1982.

Craddock, Fred B., Luke: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.
John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1990.

Creach, Jerome F.D., Joshua: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.
John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 2003.

Davies, G. Henton, et.al. (ed.), The Twentieth Century Bible Commentary. Harper & Brothers,
Publisher: New York, NY, 1932 (1955 ed.)

Dobson, Edward G. (cont. et al), King James Bible Commentary. Thomas Nelson Publishers:
Nashville, TN, 1999.

Dummelow, The Rev J.R. (ed.), A Commentary on the Holy Bible. MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc:
New York, NY, 1908 (1975 ed.).

Dunn, James D.G. (gen.ed.), Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible. William B. Eerdmans Publishing
Co.: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003.

Eiselen, Frederick C. (ed.), The Abingdon Bible Commentary. Abingdon Press: New York, NY, 1929.

Fretheim, Terence E., Exodus: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.
John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1991.

Gore, Charles, Henry Leighton Goude, and Alfred Guillaume (eds.), A New Commentary on Holy
Scripture. The Macmillan Company: New York, NY, 1928.

Hare, Douglas R.A., Matthew: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.
John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1993.

Hays, Richard B., I Corinthians: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.

John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1997.

Henry, Matthew, Commentary on the Holy Bible (in six volumes), 1706. Reprinted by MacDonald Publishing Co.: McLean, VA.

Laymon, Charles M. (ed.), The Interpreter's One-volume Commentary on the Bible. Abingdon Press: Nashville, TN, 1971.

Miller, Patrick D., Deuteronomy: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1990.

Nickelson, Ronald L. (ed.), KJV Standard Lesson Commentary: International Sunday School Lessons, 2007-2008. Standard Publishing: Cincinnati, OH, 2007.

MacArthur, John, The MacArthur Bible Commentary. Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, TN, 2005.

Matera, Frank J., II Corinthians: The New Testament Library. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 2003.

Mays, James L. (gen ed.), HarperCollins Bible Commentary. Harper: San Francisco, CA, 2000.

McKenna, Megan, On Your Mark. Orbis Books: Maryknoll, NY, 2006.

Nelson, Richard., First and Second Kings: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1987.

Newsom, Carol A. and Sharon H. Ringe (eds.), Women's Bible Commentary. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1998.

O'Day, Gail R. and David L. Petersen (eds.), Theological Bible Commentary. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 2009..

Olson, Dennis T., Numbers: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1996.

Perkins, Pheme, First and Second Peter, James, and Jude: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1995.

Sloyan, Gerard S, John: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1988.

Smith, D. Moody, First, Second, and Third John: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1991.

Weiser, Artur, The Psalms: The Old Testament Library. Westminster Press: Philadelphia, PA, 1962.

Whiston, William (tr.), Josephus: The Complete Works. Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, TN, 1998 (reprinted). [100 AD]

Williamson, Lamar, Jr., Mark: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1983.

Willimon, William H., Acts: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 1988.

Dictionaries

Achtemeier, Paul J. (ed.), The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary. Harper: San Francisco, 1996.

Brownrigg, Ronald, Who's Who in the Bible. The New Testament. Bonanza Books: New York, NY, 1980.

Beebe, Mary Jo; Olene E. Carroll, and Nancy H. Fischer, New Testament Healings: Peter, Paul, and Friends. General Publications Bible Products, CSPS: Boston, MA, 2003.

Butler, Trent C., Ph.D. (gen.ed.), Holmon Bible Dictionary. Holman Bible Publishers: Nashville, TN, 1991.

Buttrick, George Arthur (ed.), The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (in four volumes). Abingdon Press: Nashville, TN, 1962.

Comay, Joan, Who's Who in the Bible: The Old Testament. Bonanza Books: New York, NY, 1980.

Evans, Craig A. & Stanley E. Porter (eds.), Dictionary of New Testament Background. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL, 2000.

Freedman, David Noel (editor-in-chief), The Anchor Bible Dictionary. Doubleday: New York, NY, 1992.

_____, Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, MI, 2000.

Gehman, Henry Snyder (ed.), The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible. The Westminster Press: Philadelphia, PA, 1970.

Green, Joel B. and Scot McKnight (eds.), Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL, 1992.

Jacobus, Melancthon, D.D., et.al (eds.), Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary. Funk and Wagnalls Co.: New York, NY, 1936 (Third Revised Ed.)

Losch, Richard R., All the People in the Bible. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, MI, 2008.

Metzger, Bruce and Michael D. Coogan (eds.), The Oxford Guide to Ideas & Issues of the Bible. Oxford University Press: New York, NY, 2001.

_____, The Oxford Guide to People & Places of the Bible. Oxford University Press: New York, NY, 2001.

Meyers, Carol (gen.ed.), Women in Scripture. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, MI, 2001.

Peloubet, F.N., Peloubet's Bible Dictionary. The John C. Winston Co: Philadelphia, PA, 1947.

Smith, William, LLD, A Dictionary of the Bible. American Baptist Publication Society: Philadelphia, PA, 1893.

Who Was Who in the Bible. Thomas Nelson: Nashville, TN, 1999.

www.crosswalk.com, Baker's Evangelical Dictionary.

www.crosswalk.com, Easton's Bible Dictionary.

Handbooks

Blair, Edward P., Abingdon Bible Handbook. Abingdon Press: Nashville, TN, 1975.

Bowker, John (ed.), The Complete Bible Handbook. DK Publishing, Inc: London, UK, 1998.

Halley, Henry H., Halley's Bible Handbook. Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapid, MI, 1927 (1965 ed.)

Unger, Merrill F., Unger's Bible Handbook. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 1967.

Atlases, Maps, and Geography

DeVries, LaMoine F., Cities of the Biblical World. Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody, MA, 1997 (2nd Printing Aug 1998).

Frank, Harry Thomas (ed.), Atlas of the Bible Lands. Hammond Inc.: Maplewood, NJ, 1990.

Isbouts, Jean-Pierre, The Biblical World: an illustrated atlas. National Geographic: Washington, DC, 2007.

Nelson's Complete Book of Maps & Charts. Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, TN, 1996.

Then and Now Bible Map Book. Rose Publishing: Torrance, CA, 1997.

Webster's Geographical Dictionary. G. & C. Merriam co.: Springfield, MA, 1949 (1963 ed.).

Whitney, Rev. George H., D.D., Hand-Book of Bible Geography. Phillips & Hunt: New York, NY, 1879.

Wright, Paul H., Holmon Quick Source Bible Atlas. Holmon Bible Publishers: Nashville, TN, 2005.

Time Lines

Bible Time-Line. Christian Science Publishing Society: Boston, MA, 1993.

Bible Time Line. Rose Publishing Inc.: Torrance, CA, 2001.

Grun, Bernard, The Timetables of History. Simon & Schuster: New York, NY, 1975 (3rd ed.)

Miscellaneous

Andruss, Bessie Edmond, Bible Stories as Told To Very Little Children. Coward-McCann, Inc.: New York, NY, 1937.

Asimov, Isaac, Asimov's Guide to the Bible: Two Volumes in One. Wings Books: New York, NY, 1969.

Baker, Mark (ed.), The Baker Encyclopedia of Bible People. Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI, 2006.

Barber, Wayne, Eddie Rasnake, and Richard Shepherd, Following God: Learning Life Principles from the Women of the Bible, Book One. AMG Publishers: Chattanooga, TN, 2006 (13th printing)

Beebe, Mary Jo; Olene E. Carroll, and Nancy H. Fischer, Jesus' Healings, Part 1. General Publications Bible Products, CSPS: Boston, MA, 2002

_____, Jesus' Healings, Part 2. General Publications Bible Products, CSPS: Boston, MA, 2002.

_____, Jesus' Healings, Part 3. General Publications Bible Products, CSPS: Boston, MA, 2002.

Begbie, Harold (ed.), The Children's Story Bible. The Grolier Society: New York, NY, 1948.

Bible Through the Ages, The. The Reader's Digest Association, Inc.: Pleasantville, NY, 1996.

Children's Bible, The. Golden Press: New York, NY, 1965.

Click, E. Dale, The Inner Circle. CSS Publishing Company, Inc.: Lima, OH, 2000.

Crossan, John Dominic, The Birth of Christianity. HarperCollins Publishing: San Francisco, CA, 1998.

Deem, Edith, All of the Women of the Bible. HarperCollins: San Francisco, CA, 1955.

Dewey, David, A User's Guide to Bible Translations. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL, 2004.

Essex, Barbara J., Bad Boys of the New Testament. The Pilgrim Press: Cleveland, OH, 2005.

Feiler, Bruce, Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths. William Morrow (HarperCollins Publishers Inc): New York, NY, 2002.

Getty-Sullivan, Mary Ann, Women in the New Testament. The Liturgical Press: Collegeville, MN, 2001.

Great People of the Bible and How They Lived. The Reader's Digest Association, Inc.: Pleasantville, NY, 1974 (3rd Printing).

Guignebert, Charles, The Jewish World in the Time of Jesus. University Books: New Hyde Park, NY, 1959.

Haag, Herbert and Dorothee Soelle et.al., Great Couples of the Bible. Fortress Press: Minneapolis, MN, 2004 (English Translation, 2006)

Hill, Craig C., Hellenists and Hebrews. Fortress Press: Minneapolis, MN, 1992.

Howell, James C., The Beatitudes for Today. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 2006.

Kee, Howard Clark, et al, The Cambridge Companion to the Bible. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1997.

Keller, Werner, The Bible as History. William Morrow and Co.: New York, NY, 1964 (revised).

Kirsch, Jonathan, The Harlot by the Side of the Road: Forbidden Tales of the Bible. Ballantine Books: New York, NY, 1997.

Landis, Benson Y., An Outline of the Bible Book by Book. Barnes & Noble Books: New York, NY, 1963.

Lockyer, Herbert, All the Women of the Bible. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI, 1967.

McBirnie, William Steuart, Ph.D., The Search for the Twelve Apostles. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.: Carol Stream, IL, 1973.

Miller, Madeleine S. and J. Lane, Harper's Encyclopedia of Bible Life. Harper & Row Publishers: San Francisco, CA, 1978.

Murphy, Kathleen, The Women of the Passion. Liguori Publications: Liguori, MO, 2005.

Mysteries of the Bible. The Reader's Digest Association, Inc.: Pleasantville, NY, 1988.

Saldarini, Anthony J., Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co: Grand Rapids, MI, 2001.

Schmithals, Walter, The Office of the Apostle in the Early Church. Abingdon Press: Nashville, TN, 1969.

Smith, Wilbur M., D.D. (ed.), Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons. W.A. Wilde Co.: Boston, MA, 1943.

Snipes, Joan Koelle, Bible Study for Children. Bible Teaching Press: Shepherdstown, WV, 1999.

Tosto, Peter (ed.), Found Volumes, Version 2007 (software). www.foundvolumes.com: Marietta, GA, 2007.

Trammell, Mary Metzner & William G. Dawley, The Reforming Power of the Scriptures: A Biography of the English Bible. The Christian Science Publishing Society: Boston, MA, 1996.

Trench, R.C., Notes on the Parables of Our Lord. Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1948.

Walker, Peter, In the Steps of Paul. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI, 2008.

Willmington, Harold L., The Outline Bible. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.: Carol Stream, IL, 1999.

Zondervan Bible Study Library 5.0., Family Edition (software). Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003.

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