

BIBLE CHARACTERS MENTIONED IN THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE LESSON-SERMON*
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SUBJECT: **Love**

RESPONSIVE READING: Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 8: 40; 10: 25 -37)

"a certain Samaritan"

TIME LINE: The Year of Opposition (Jesus' 3rd year of ministry)

This parable is unique to Luke. The lawyer mentioned here is not to be confused with the lawyer of Matthew 22, or the scribe of Mark 12 although this parable seems to be based on that story. In Luke the question concerns the gaining of life eternal, whereas in Mark the scribe is concerned with the principal commandment of the Law.

The "Samaritan has an ancestry from mixed nations, mixed marriages, and mixed customs." (Eerdman Bible Commentary) The Good Samaritan defines who one's neighbor is: one who is in need, regardless of what ethnic origin or physical condition.

Hickman, Jane, "Being a good Samaritan," Christian Science Sentinel (9 September 1985), p. 1535.

--Most of us are familiar with Christ Jesus' parable of the man who fell among thieves and was robbed, wounded, and left to die.

· We read that he was ignored by a passing priest and by a Levite but that "a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him."

---The Samaritan dressed his wounds and took him to an inn to recover.

· After relating this parable, Jesus instructed his listeners, "Go, and do thou likewise."

---How can we best obey this command?

--All around us every day we see and hear about the troubles of our fellowmen, our neighbors.

--[it is important] that we follow Jesus' instruction to do what the good Samaritan did--and not just in time of great need but also in lesser matters.

Womack, Keith Austin (CSB and Lecturer, Corpus Christi, TX), "**Christian Science treatment: a good Samaritan,**" Christian Science Journal (August 1997), p. 29.

--Throughout Jesus' teachings we discover the elements found in effective treatment.

· His parable of the good Samaritan is a perfect example.

---This captivating parable relates that after a priest and a Levite passed by a man who had been beaten, robbed, and left for dead by thieves, "a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."

--From this parable we learn that a dedicated life and sincere, spiritual love for others make a difference.

· Equally important, as the foundation for spiritual treatment,

are compassion and consecration, which forward healing and regeneration.

---Effective treatment reflects God's great love for all His children.

SECTIONS II, III, IV, and V:

David, Nabal, and Abigail (I Sam 25: 2-14)

(I Sam 25: 18-35)

(I Sam 25: 36-42)

David Against the Amalekites (I Sam 30: 1-19)

Nabal

[Nay'bal] ("foolish")

TIME LINE: @1000 BCE

Caleb

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Nabal= Abigail

Nabal is a descendant of Caleb who dwelt at Maon (I Samuel 25), the modern Maon, 7 miles south-east of Hebron. He was "very great, and he had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats...but the man was churlish and evil in his doings." During his wanderings David came into that district, and hearing that Nabal was about to shear his sheep, he sent ten of his young men to ask "whatsoever cometh unto thy hand for thy servants." Nabal insultingly resented the demand, saying, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse?" (I Samuel 25:10,11). One of the shepherds that stood by and saw the reception David's messengers had met with, informed Abigail, Nabal's wife, who at once realized the danger that threatened her household. She forthwith proceeded to the camp of David, bringing with her ample stores of provisions (25:18). She so courteously and persuasively pled her cause that David's anger was appeased, and he said to her, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel which sent thee this day to meet me."

On her return she found her husband incapable from drunkenness of understanding the state of matters, and not till the following day did she explain to him what had happened. He was stunned by a sense of the danger to which his conduct had exposed him. "His heart died within him, and he became as a stone." About ten days after "the Lord smote Nabal that he died" (1 Samuel 25:37,38). Not long after David married Abigail.

"Casting your vote on the Iraqi conflict," Christian Science Monitor
(15 October 2002), p. 23.

--A Bible story that has helped me in my prayers about the events going on between the US and Iraq is an account in the Old Testament in I Samuel, chapter 25.

· It tells how a military buildup was defused by intelligence, resourcefulness, and inspired action.

--The story begins with David, who is preparing to go to war with a man named Nabal.

· Nabal had benefited from the protection that David had provided him.

---He refused, however, to pay or to recognize David for his work.

--So David gathers up his army and prepares to do Nabal harm.

· Before he is able to do so, however, Nabal's wife, Abigail intercedes and convinces David not to go to war.

---She overcomes David's wrath with gentleness and sound reasoning.

---Peace is achieved as David's military aggression is

tempered with Abigail's intelligence and insight.

Key, Lt Col Robert Ellis, RA (Ret) (CSB and Editor), "**The Wife of Nabal**," EDITORIAL, Christian Science Sentinel (9 July 1949), p. 1209.

--Nabal was a rich man who lived at Maon.

· He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats grazing on the slopes of Carmel.

---But with all his wealth, Nabal was a churlish creature.

· His wife, Abigail, admitted as much to David.

---"Nabal is his name," she said, " and folly is with him."

· Nabal gave little thought to the courtesies of life.

---He was wealthy, and may have thought his riches would command respect without the exercise of the sentiments.

---Thus in his perverted view of life Nabal entertained a false material sense of substance.

· No doubt his material possessions impressed his neighbors; perhaps they induced a sense of servility on the part of the lesser landowners of the district, and thus gratified his pride and tickled his ambition.

Abigail

[Ab'ih gale] ("father [i.e.'leader'] of the dance, or 'of joy'")

TIME LINE: @1000 BCE

Abigail = Nabal
= David
Chileab/Daniel

Abigail is the wife of the churlish Nabal, who dwelt in the district of Carmel (I Sam 25:3). She showed great prudence and delicate management at a critical period of her husband's life. She was "a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance." After Nabal's death she became the wife of David (25:14-42), and was his companion in all his future fortunes (27:3; 30:5; II Sam 2:2). By her David had a son called Chileab (II Sam 3:3), elsewhere called Daniel (I Chron 3:1).

Frith, Grace Mary, "'Of good understanding'," Christian Science Sentinel (13 October 1951), p. 1782.

--Abigail...is described as being "a woman of good understanding."

· And if one turns to I Samuel and carefully reads the twenty-fifth chapter, he will see how truly wise Abigail was.

---It would appear by her actions that she had gained the ability to distinguish between truth and error and to see that in the expression of such qualities as tenderness, understanding, and humility lay the answer to difficulties caused by pride and presumptuousness.

· Her clarity of thought bestowed on her a peace which also brought peace to others.

---Toward the end of the chapter, we read, "And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth."

· Surely in this expression of humility lay the beauty of Abigail's character.

Fuller, Elizabeth Rachel (Retold by), "**Abigail the peacemaker**," FOR CHILDREN, Christian Science Sentinel (2 August 1994), p. 24.

--Abigail gives us an example of how love for God and man can help prevent war.

· This love is important today, because there are still situations that need peacemakers.

---And this love is natural for us to express toward each

other as God's children.

· It helps us to hear his voice and learn to do what will save others from anger and revenge.

--The Bible called Abigail a woman "of a beautiful countenance" (I Sam 25:3).

· Wasn't it describing more than her looks?

---Wasn't it talking about the beauty of kindness and intelligence and generosity?

· These God-given qualities enabled her to see that returning evil for evil isn't in accord with God's will.

David

[Dā'vid] ("beloved")

TIME LINE: 1020-971 BCE

Jesse (father/Ruth's grandson)
Zeruah (half-sister)
Abishai

Abner (uncle)

Joab

Asahel
Abigail (sister)
Amasa

Eliab

Abihail

Abinadab

Shammah

Nethaneel

Raddai

Ozem

Elihu

David (youngest of brothers)
Ahinoam (the Jezreelitess)

Michal (Saul's 2nd daughter)

Amnon (eldest son)

Abigail (widow of Nabel)

Chileab

⇔ Maachah (daughter of King of Geshur)

Absalom (killed Amnon)

Tamar

Tamar (violated by Amnon)

Haggith

Adonijah (4th son/eldest at end of David's reign))

Eglah

Bathsheba (Uriah's wife)

(infant boy died)

(two other brothers?)

Solomon (youngest son)

Other wives and concubines

David exhibited many roles during his lifetime: warrior, fugitive hero, King of Judah, King of Israel, musician, and ancestor of Jesus. He was the second king of Israel, who enlarged the kingdom, moved the capital to Jerusalem, and strengthened the armed forces. In later times, David was looked on as the ideal ruler who would return, or it was believed that a descendant of his would arise, to restore the kingdom of Israel. His life may be divided into three portions: His youth before his introduction to the court of Saul; His relations with Saul; His reign.

David's story emerges primarily in the books of Samuel, concluding in I Kings chapters 1 and 2.

As a Youth

His youth was spent in Bethlehem and he was the keeper of his father's sheep. He played the harp, and music figured prominently in his life. Many of the psalms in the book of Psalms are attributed to him. He was anointed as a future king of Israel by the prophet Samuel.

Relations with Saul

Some time after David's anointing King Saul began to experience acute attacks of depression. Saul's servants had heard of David, and brought the young David to play his harp and to sing songs before Saul. It was during this period with Saul that David learned of governmental affairs which would better prepare him for his future roll.

After the Philistine's invaded, Saul called the shepherd boy to battle with Goliath whom he killed with a single stone from his sling. Although Saul should have been grateful for this feat, he became jealous of the prophecy of David being the future king and remained hostile to him forcing David to flee with Saul in pursuit. He at first found a home at the court of Achish, among the Philistines; but his stay was short. His presence revived the national enmity of the Philistines against their former conqueror, and he only escaped by feigning madness. His first retreat was the cave of Adullam. In this vicinity he was joined by his whole family and by a motley crowd of debtors and discontented men, which formed the nucleus of his army.

After Saul, and his son Jonathan, were killed in battle, the tribe of Judah elected David king and placed him on the throne in Hebron for 7 ½ years.

King David

Subsequently, he was elected king of all Israel and began work to establish a united kingdom (Judah and Israel). The success and glory of David's reign from its beginning to its end reflect David's dependence upon his living God for guidance in everything he considered doing. He established Jerusalem as the capital of his new kingdom and moved to re-establish the worship of God. He moved the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, and started the construction of a temple to worship God. Solomon, David's son and successor finished the temple.

Although David was a righteous king, he was subject to sin. On one occasion when his army went to battle, David stayed home. This led to his great sin with Bath-sheba. While Uriah, the Hitite, Bath-sheba's husband, was away in battle, David committed adultery with her. Then in an effort to cover his sin, he finally had Uriah killed in battle. David was confronted by the prophet Nathan, who courageously exposed his wrongdoing. Faced with his sin, David repented and asked for God's forgiveness (See Psalms 51).

During all David's calamities and in spite of David's failures, God gave David the unspeakable comfort of loyal friends. David's greatness is seen in many ways, especially in the extremes of devotion given to him by men of noble character. This mark of true leadership is also an evidence of God's special grace. Such men were:

David's own household

Ittai the Gittite

Zadok and Abiathar, the priests who returned to Jerusalem

The messengers who were the sons of Zadok and Abiathar

Hushai the Arkite, in Jerusalem
Barzillai the Gileadite, in Mahanaim in Transjordan

It was Solomon, David's son and successor, who finally erected the first temple in Jerusalem.

David died after serving for more than 40 years as King. Jesus' genealogy was traced back to the ancestry of David by both Matthew and Luke.

Bergenheim, Richard C. (CSB, Editor-in-Chief, and Contributing Editor; New York, NY), "**David—shepherd, musician, warrior, king,**" INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE: For Kids, Christian Science Sentinel (31 August 2002), p. 19. **[Map Activity]**

--Word came to David that Nabal, a rich man in Carmel, was shearing (cutting the wool off) his sheep.

· The Festival of Shearing was a happy time with feasts and celebrations.

--David and his men had helped Nabal's shepherds defend the herd of sheep from thieves and wild animals.

· So he thought Nabal would reward him and his men for their work.

--But Nabal was selfish and greedy.

· When David's men arrived, he didn't give them anything.

---He insulted them.

· They were very angry and went back and told David everything Nabal had said.

Robinson, Russell D., "**Basis for a Happy Marriage,**" Christian Science Sentinel (10 July 1965), p. 1189.

--marriages are blessed or not blessed according to the expression and recognition of spiritual qualities.

· Marriage built on physical attraction alone is doomed to failure from the start.

---Christian Science teaches that spiritual and moral unity is the only sure basis of marriage.

--Marriage is continuing teamwork.

· It is well to remember that the most blessed marriage is not without cares.

--In the overcoming of each marital problem, a Christian scientist will be alert to see the perfection of the real man in the other partner, right where imperfection may seem to be, rather than be tricked into concentrating on the seeming imperfection in the other where perfection ought to be.

Amalekites

TIME LINE: @1500-1000 BCE

Esau

Eliphaz = wife (a Horite)

Amalek

"Shortly after the Exodus, the Amalekites attacked Israel, but Israel succeeded in repulsing the attack. The enmity created is reflected in the bloodthirsty declaration 'I will blot out the name of Amalek...The Lord's war against Amalek is from generation to generation' (Ex 17:14,16)

The Amalekites raided the Israelites in the days of the judges. Later, King Saul made a concerted effort to destroy Amalek, following the prophet Samuel's call for the ban, but enough Amalekites survived to destroy David's city of Ziklag. Nevertheless, after Ziklag the Amalekites ceased to trouble Israel." (Who Was Who in the Bible)

Bates, William Edgar, "No Amalek Here," Christian Science Journal
(January 1952), p. 35.

--Through the early annals of the Old Testament, from the days of Moses to the time of David, runs the story of Amalek and his tribe, persistent enemies of Israel.

· Mighty were the spiritual wrestlings of the prophets in their conflict with the materialistic Amalek, and pointed are their experiences when compared with ours today.

--An Amalek of today, masquerading in religion or in politics, is not different in essence or in purpose from the Amalek of yesterday.

· It is merely negative material belief endeavoring to disprove man's God-given individual dominion.

---We of today must demonstrate this dominion.

· We must not forget "when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed" (Ex 17:11)

--Today Christian Science is finally and for all time reckoning with the belief of Amalek in human consciousness.

Bååth, Frida, "Mental Emancipation," Christian Science Journal (July 1926), p. 232.

--The greatest elucidator of practical Christianity in this age, Mary Baker Eddy, has revealed religion as a demonstrable Science.

· Through her writings, especially through the textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," Mrs. Eddy has become, after Christ Jesus, the greatest religious emancipator in the world's history.

---In the textbook of Christian Science, just referred to, she has given the complete, scientific, and practical exposition of the way to gain mental emancipation from slavery of all kinds of false masters.

· Under the marginal heading "Mental emancipation," on pages 224 and 225 of Science and Health Mrs. Eddy writes concerning it: "Truth brings the elements of liberty. On its banner is the Soul-inspired motto, 'Slavery is abolished.' The power of God brings deliverance to the captive. No power can withstand divine Love. What is this supposed power, which opposes itself to God? Whence cometh it? What is it that binds man with iron shackles to sin, sickness, and death? Whatever enslaves man is opposed to the divine government. Truth makes man free."

Ahinoam

[A hi no'am] ("my brother is pleasantness")

David= Michal (Saul's 2nd daughter)
= **Ahinoam** (the Jezreelitess)
 Amnon (eldest son)
= **Abigail** (widow of Nabel)
Chileab
= other wives

Ahinoam was a woman from Jezreel whom David married after Saul gave Michal to another husband. She and Abigail, the widow of Nabal, seem to have been David's only wives prior to the beginning of his reign in Hebron. His marriage to Abigail is mentioned first, with some details, followed by the statement that he had previously married Ahinoam (I Sam 25:39-44). Three times they are mentioned together, Ahinoam always first (I Sam 27:3; 30:5; II Sam 2:2), and Ahinoam is the mother of David's first son and Abigail of his second (II Sam 3:2; I Chron 3:1). Ahinoam's son was Amnon. The record really represents David's polygamy as a series of bids for political influence.

Babin, Maria, "'Christ cometh of the seed of David'," Christian Science Sentinel (24 December 1960), p. 2258.

--Though at times David's problems seemed to overwhelm him and he committed errors, yet his thoughts still reached out to God, and he taught glimpses of spirituality, holiness, and harmony.

· When he was rash in action, he learned to be gentle, for gentleness is strength.

· When he was impatient, he learned patience, for patience endures.

---His trust in and faithfulness to God enlightened and strengthened him with the nature of the Christ.

--God is ever-present divine Principle of eternal harmony; the all-knowing divine Love, which meets every human need; omnipotent and supreme Truth, before which troubles melt away.

Blair, Vernon H., "**The Third Day**," Christian Science Sentinel (20 April 1957), p. 661.

--Of special significance to the student of Christian Science is that stage of progress referred to as the third day.

--As a symbol of a spiritual idea, the third day seems to have influenced Jewish law and custom.

On one occasion Moses commanded the people to wash their clothes and sanctify themselves for two days.

---On the morning of the third day a thick cloud appeared on Mount Sinai, and amidst thunder and lightening Moses brought the people forth from the camp to meet with God.

--Christian Science, ever directing thought above the symbol to the perception of true substance, unfolds the original spiritual meaning of the third day.

--In "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" Mary Baker Eddy writes (pp. 508,509): "The third stage in the order of Christian Science is an important one to the human thought, letting in the light of spiritual understanding. This period corresponds to the resurrection, when Spirit is discerned to be the Life of all, and the deathless Life, or Mind, dependent upon no material organization. Our Master reappeared to his students, - to their apprehension he rose from the grave, - on the third day of his ascending thought, and so presented to them the certain sense of eternal Life."

"an Egyptian in the field"

As David pursues the Amalekites, a chance meeting with an exhausted, sick, and famished Egyptian slave who was left to die yields vital intelligence. "The Egyptian was probably recognized from his clothing. After reviving the Egyptian and questioning him carefully, it becomes obvious that he had been engaged in enemy operations against Ziklag; however, he secured an undertaking from David that he would not take revenge upon him or deliver him to his previous master, and in return he took them down to the Amalekite camp." (Oxford Bible Commentary) David and his troops attacked, and everyone (including David's two wives, Abigail and Ahinoam) and everything was recovered.

Guthrie, Edith J., "'David encouraged himself in the Lord'," Christian Science Journal (October 1932), p. 401.

--In the thirtieth chapter of I Samuel is the account of David's finding, on his return to Ziklag, that the city had been destroyed and the inhabitants taken captive.

· His distress was intensified at first when those who were with him "spoke of stoning him."

---But while the thoughts of his followers were filled with

malice, as it is written, "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God."

· In other words, David prayed.

--he was inspired to forget the human sense of self and to press forward.

the qualities of faith and courage which called forth noble and selfless deeds on behalf of himself and others, were in reality part of his true selfhood.

--David found that as he obeyed God, he was able to go forward with joy and confidence to the overcoming of error.

McKenzie, William P. (CSD, "First Member," Pleasant View Household, CSPS Trustee, Lecturer, and Editor), "**Christian Science and the Freedom of Man**," LECTURE, Christian Science Journal (June 1902), p. 130.

--The struggle of man to escape from slavery is the story of the ages.
--As ancient task-masters compelled Egyptian hordes to labor under the driver's whip, so to-day men are driven to put forth their strength in multitudes, under the lash of prejudice and partisanship and fear.

· The pharaohs of to-day are not throned in palaces, but as false theories of life, as un-Christian philosophies, as cruel dogma and unprovable doctrine, they hold men in slavery through fear.

---Tyrants have always claimed a power indefinite; by arrogance, assumption of control, and mysterious threats, they have striven to instil dread into their subjects.

· Fear is their hold on their victims, but it is not external; they work on a mental condition.

SECTION VI: Jesus' Restoration of Sight to the Blind Men of Jericho
(Matt 20: 30-34)

"two blind men"

This story is peculiar to Matthew. Blindness...is exceedingly common in the East, and several miracles of restoring sight to the blind are recorded in the Gospels. In this case (Jesus) elicited a definite act of faith from the men before healing them. The act of touching their eyes was probably intended to aid their faith." (Dummelow)

Gregory, Louis A., "**The Blind See**," Christian Science Journal (May 1918), p. 91.

--The promise that the blind shall see is prominent in Jewish prophecies of the works of the Messiah.

The Messianic era was foretold as a period of general enlightenment.

---In that connection the Scriptural references to the healing blindness have rich figurative as well as literal significance. Jesus completely fulfilled the prophecies.

---He opened many blind eyes, but his supreme accomplishment was the correction of seeming spiritual blindness or sin.

Following Christ Jesus as the Wayshower, Christian Science heals both physical and mental blindness through the power of God, and proves that the restoration of physical sight is inseparably connected with increased spiritual discernment.

---The physical healing of this Science is, as Mrs. Eddy tells us (Science and Health, p.150), "to attest the reality of the higher mission of the Christ-power to take away the sins of the world."

Morrison, Miss Margaret (CSB, Lecturer, and Associate Editor), "**'Then touched he their eyes'**," EDITORIAL, Christian Science Journal (October 1945), p. 520.

--On page 352 of the textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," Mary Baker Eddy gives the basis on which Christ Jesus performed the works which proved him to be master of the limitations and evil beliefs which restrict, disable, and destroy mankind.

· There she writes that "to Jesus, not materiality, but spirituality, was the reality of man's existence."

--As spirituality is the reality of man's existence, the faculties of man are spiritual and indestructible.

--Their faith, touched by spiritual discernment, revealed the reality and unmarred perfection of spiritual vision and dispelled the darkness of false belief.

--Today Christian Science is touching our eyes, awakening our spiritual discernment that we may see.

Spiritual discernment sees only the perfection of reality, and one can consistently and intelligently cultivate this faculty.

--listen for...hear, and...accept as real only the voice of Truth declaring the infinite perfection of being, of Soul's indestructible faculty of hearing.

--see with the eyes of spiritual discernment, and...hear with the ears of spiritual understanding.

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*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, who discovered Christian Science.

