

LESSON 14
“Who is My Neighbor?”
Matthew 18; Luke 10

OVERVIEW:

We must become as little children. The parable of the unmerciful servant. The parable of the Good Samaritan.

SCRIPTURES:

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
ST MATTHEW
CHAPTER 18

How we are to treat our offending brethren—The Son of Man came to save that which was lost—All of the Twelve receive the keys of the kingdom—Why we should forgive.

MATTHEW

MARK 9

1 AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the ^agreatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

(They were in Peter's home, so he probably took one of Peter's children. DNTC, 1:415)

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, (childlike and not childish) and become as little ^achildren, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall ^ahumble himself as this little ^bchild, the same is greatest in the

33 ¶ And he came to Capernaum:

and being in the house he asked them, What (why) was it that ye ^adisputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace (being afraid): for by the way they had ^adisputed among themselves, who ~~should be~~ (was) the ^bgreatest (among them).

35 ~~And he~~ (Now Jesus) sat down, and called the twelve, and sai(d)th unto them, If any man desire to be ^afirst, *the same* shall be last of all, and ^bservant of all.

36 And he took a child, and set him (sat) in the midst of them: and when he had taken him (the child) in his arms, he said unto them, (Don't be a position seeker. It doesn't matter where we serve, but how we serve.)

37 ^aWhosoever shall ~~receive one of such~~ ^bchildren in my name (humble himself like one of these children, and) receiveth me(, ye shall receive in my name): and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me (only), but him that sent me(, even the

kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my ^aname receiveth me.

6 But whoso shall ^aoffend one of these little ones which believe in me, (Also in principle, adults who through repentance and conformity to the gospel have become as little children and who are thus themselves also heirs of salvation. DNTC, 1:420) it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and ~~that~~ he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 ¶ Woe unto the world because of ^aoffences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut ~~them~~ (it) off, and cast ~~them~~ (it) from thee: (for) it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

Father).

38 ¶ And John answered (spake unto) him, saying, Master, we saw one ^acasting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followe(d)th not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a ^amiracle in my ^bname, that can ^{highly} speak evil of me. (“From our Lord’s reply it is evident that he was a member of the kingdom, a legal administrator who was acting in the authority of the priesthood and the power of faith. Either he was unknown to John who therefore erroneously supposed him to be without authority or else John falsely supposed that the power to cast out devils was limited to the Twelve and did not extend to all faithful priesthood holders. It is quite possible that the one casting out devils was a seventy. There is no New Testament record of the calling of the first quorum of seventy, but when Jesus (at a later date) called a second quorum of seventy into the ministry, he expressly gave them the power to cast out devils.” (Luke 10:1-20.) DNTC, 1: 417)

40 For he that is not against us is ^aon our part.

41 For (And) whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not ^alose his ^breward.

42 And whosoever shall ^aoffend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 ^aAnd (Therefore) if thy hand offend thee, ^bcut it off: (or if thy brother offend thee and confess not and forsake not, he shall be cut off.) it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into ^chell, (For it is better for thee to enter into life without thy brother, than for thee and thy brother to be cast into hell,) into the fire

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell ^afire. (And a man's hand is his friend, and his foot, also; and a man's eye, are they of his own household.)

that never shall be quenched:

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And (again,) if thy foot ^aoffend thee, cut it off: (for he that is thy standard, by whom thou walkest, if he become a transgressor, he shall be cut off.) it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

~~46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.~~

47 (Therefore, let every man stand or fall, by himself, and not for another; or not trusting another. Seek unto my father, and it shall be done in that very moment what ye shall ask, if ye ask in faith, believing that ye shall receive.) And if thine eye (which seeth for thee, him that is appointed to watch over thee to show thee light, become a transgressor and) offend thee, pluck ~~it~~ (him) out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

48 (For it is better that thyself should be saved, than to be cast into hell with thy brother,) Where their ^aworm dieth not, and (where) the fire is not quenched.

49 For every one shall be ^asalted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50 ~~Salt is~~ (But the salt must be) good: ~~but~~ (For) if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? ((the sacrifice;) therefore it must needs to that ye) Have salt in yourselves, and have ^apeace one with another. (Elder McConkie said: "Every member of the Church shall be tested and tried in all things to see whether he will abide in the covenant 'even unto death,' regardless of the course taken by the other members of his family or of the Church. To gain salvation men must stand on their own feet in the gospel cause and be independent of the spiritual support of others. If some of the saints, who are themselves the salt of the earth, shall fall away, still all who inherit eternal life must remain true, having salt in themselves and enjoying peace one with another." DNTC, 1:421)

MATTHEW 18

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these ^alittle ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father ~~which~~ (who) is in heaven. (“Should they die before arriving at the years of accountability, their angels or spirits, being pure and clean, are qualified to return to the presence of the Father, that is, they are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven.” MD, p. 606-607)

11 For the ^aSon of man is come to ^bsave that which was ^clost. (And to call sinners to repentance; but these little ones have no need of repentance, and I will save them.)

12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred ^asheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? (This was an attention grabber. It is not wise for a shepherd to leave his flock of 99 to seek after one lost sheep. He would first make sure his 99 sheep are secure before going after a lost one.)

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more ~~of that sheep,~~ (over that which is lost,) than ~~of~~ (over) the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these ^alittle ones should ^bperish. (Joseph Smith: The hundred sheep represent one hundred Sadducees and Pharisees, as though Jesus had said, If you Sadducees and Pharisees are in the sheepfold, I have no mission for you; I am sent to look up sheep that are lost; and when I have found them, I will back them up and make joy in heaven. This represents hunting after a few individuals, or one poor publican, which the Pharisees and Sadducees despised... like I way unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety-and-nine just persons that are so righteous [self-righteous]; they will be damned anyhow; you cannot save them. TPJS, 277-78)

15 ¶ Moreover if thy brother shall ^atrespass against thee, go and ^btell him his ^cfault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. (It is not the sinner, the trespasser, the offender, who is to take the initiative in restoring peace and unity among brethren. If perchance he should do so, well and good. But the Lord commands the innocent person, the one without fault, the one who has been offended, to search out his brother and seek to repair the breach. Thus: If thy brother trespass against thee, wait not for him to repent and make restitution; he is already somewhat hardened in spirit because of the trespass itself; rather, go to him, extend the hand of fellowship, shower him with love, and perchance thou hast gained thy brother.” DNTC, 1: 422-23)

16 But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three ^awitnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the ^achurch: but if he ^bneglect to hear the ^cchurch, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ^abind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (...the remainder of the Twelve, all nine of them, received the keys of the kingdom of heaven. These keys, in their nature, were the right and power of full presidency, the right and power to preside over and direct all of the affairs of the kingdom of God on earth, and the right and power to bind and loose on earth and in heaven. MM, 3:92)

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall ^aagree on earth as ^btouching any thing that they shall ^cask, (that they may not ask amiss,) it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are ^agathered ^btogether in my ^cname, there am I in the ^dmidst of them. (In the principle of unity is power. “We have almost no way of knowing the wonders and marvels that would attend the Lord’s work on earth if all of those who are engaged in it were perfectly united together in the same mind and in the same judgment. “Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine,” he says (D&C 50:29). Our souls can scarcely conceive of the gifts and blessings that would be showered upon each of us individually if we possessed that faith which it is within our power to receive. MM, 3:93)

21 ¶ Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I ^aforgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus said^(d)th unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until ^aseventy times seven. (There is no limit to the times we should forgive others. This means indefinitely to those who seek forgiveness. The law of forgiveness is found in the D&C 98:39-48. This applies to those who do not ask for forgiveness. 39 And again, verily I say unto you, if after thine ^aenemy has come upon thee the first time, he repent and come unto thee praying thy forgiveness, thou shalt forgive him, and shalt hold it no more as a testimony against thine enemy— 40 And so on unto the second and third time; and as oft as thine enemy repenteth of the trespass wherewith he has trespassed against thee, thou shalt ^aforgive him, until seventy times seven. 41 And if he trespass against thee and repent not the first time, nevertheless thou shalt forgive him. 42 And if he trespass against thee the second time, and repent not, nevertheless thou shalt forgive him. 43 And if he trespass against thee the third time, and repent not, thou shalt also forgive him. 44 But if he trespass against thee the fourth time thou shalt not forgive him, but shalt bring these testimonies before the Lord; and they shall not be blotted out until he repent and ^areward thee four-fold in all things wherewith he has trespassed against thee. 45 And if he do this, thou shalt forgive him with all thine heart; and if he do not this, I, the Lord, will ^aavenge thee of thine enemy an hundred-fold; 46 And upon his children, and upon his children's ^achildren of all them that ^bhate me, unto the ^cthird and fourth generation. 47 But if the ^achildren shall repent, or the children's children, and ^bturn to the Lord their God, with all their hearts and with all their might, mind, and strength, and ^crestore four-fold for all their trespasses wherewith they have trespassed, or wherewith their fathers have trespassed, or their fathers' fathers, then thine indignation shall be turned away; 48 And vengeance shall ^ano more come upon them, saith the Lord thy God, and their trespasses shall never be brought any more as a testimony before the Lord against them. Amen.)

23 ¶ Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, ~~which~~ (who) would ^atake account (settle accounts with) of his ^bservants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, ~~which~~ (who) owed him ten thousand talents. (Millions of dollars)

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be ^asold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 (And) The servant ~~therefore fell down, and worshipped~~ (besought) him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. (The servant, therefore, fell down and worshipped him.)

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him ^aan hundred pence (approximately three months' wages of a poor working man): and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very ^asorry, (Gr distressed) and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that ^adebt, because thou desiredst me:

33 ^aShouldst not thou also have had ^bcompassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had ^cpity (Gr compassion) on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts ^aforgive not every one his brother their trespasses. (The actual ratio in this is 10 million to 20. You owed me 10 million dollars which I forgave, but he owed you \$20.)

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
ST LUKE
CHAPTER 10

Jesus calls, empowers, and instructs the seventy—They preach and heal—Those who receive his disciples receive Christ—The Father is revealed by the Son—Jesus gives the parable of the good Samaritan. (See the talk at the end of the lesson for insights into the parable of the Good Samaritan.)

- 1 AFTER these things the Lord ^aappointed other ^bseventy also, and sent them ^ctwo and two before his face into every city and place, ~~whither~~ (where) he himself would come.
- 2 ~~Therefore said he~~ (And he said) unto them, The ^aharvest truly *is* great, but the labourers ~~are~~ few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.
- 3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as ^alambs among wolves.
- 4 Carry neither ^apurse, nor scrip, nor shoes: ~~and salute no man~~ (nor salute any man (don't get sidetracked)) by the way. (Don't stop by the way to make or renew personal friendships; your message is urgent; be about your Father's business.)
- 5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, ^aPeace ~~be~~ to this house.
- 6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.
- 7 And ~~in the same house~~ (into whatsoever house they receive you,) remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the ^alabourer is worthy of his ^bhire. Go not from house to house. (Don't just be mechanical in going door to door. Seek out the honest in heart, be guided by the Spirit to those you should talk to about the gospel.)
- 8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they ^areceive you, eat such things as are set before you:
- 9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say ~~unto them~~, The ^akingdom of God is come nigh unto you.
- 10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,
- 11 Even the very ^adust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.
- 12 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in ~~that~~ (the) day (of judgment) for Sodom, than for that city.
- 13 (Then began he to upbraid the people in every city wherein his mighty works were done, who received him not, saying,) Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they ~~had a great while ago~~ (would have) repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.
- 14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon ~~at the~~ (in the day of) judgment, than for you.
- 15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. (All three of these cities are but piles of rocks and ruins today.)
- 16 (And he said unto his disciples,) ^aHe that ^bheareth you heareth me; and he that ^cdespiseth (Gr rejects) you ^ddespiseth me; and he that ^edespiseth me despiseth him ~~that~~ (who) sent me.
- 17 ¶ And the ^aseventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject ~~unto~~ us through thy name.
- 18 And he said unto them, ~~I beheld Satan~~ as lightning fall(eth) from heaven(, I beheld Satan also falling).
- 19 Behold, I (will) give unto you ^apower ~~to~~ ^btread on (over) serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means ^churt you.
- 20 Notwithstanding in this ^arejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather ^brejoice, because your names are ^cwritten in heaven.
- 21 ¶ In that hour Jesus ^arejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things ^bfrom the (them who think they are) wise and ^cprudent, and hast revealed them

unto ^dbabes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

22 All things are ^adelivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth ^bwho the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he- (that the Son is the Father, and the Father is the Son, but him) to whom the Son will ^creveal *him* (it).

23 ¶ And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the ^aeyes which see the things that ye see:

24 For I tell you, that many ^aprophets and ^bkings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

25 ¶ And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit ^aeternal life? (The lawyer was trying to embarrass Jesus.)

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy ^aheart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt ^alive.

29 But he, willing to ^ajustify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my ^bneighbour?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* (each of us) went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, (it is 17 miles between the two cities and goes from an elevation of about 2500 feet above sea level [Jerusalem] to about 800 feet below sea level [Jericho – the lowest city on earth]. It is like going from heaven to earth. The road between the two cities was known as the “bloody path” or the “red way”, because of the hideouts for those preyed on solitary travelers.) and fell among thieves (Satan and his followers are trying to steal our eternal life), *which* (who) stripped him of his raiment (we sin and are exposed to the law), and ^awounded *him* (the effects of sin), and departed, leaving *him* half dead. (spiritually dead)

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest (he was according to the law of Moses supposed to draw the people closer to God) that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side (of the way). (In ancient Jericho, many priests who worked in the temple lived there and traveled to Jerusalem.)

32 And likewise a Levite (was to assist the priest in the sanctuary), when he was at the place, came and looked (up) *on him*, and passed by on the other side (of the way; for they desired in their hearts that it might not be known that they had seen him). (The priest and Levite could not help him because they had not the power to do so. The lesser priesthood cannot save.)

33 But a certain ^aSamaritan, (In Jesus’ day, there was no such thing as a “good” Samaritan. Jesus, who was despised. He also was part Jew as the Samaritans) as he journeyed, came where he was (He sought out the injured one): and when he saw him, he had ^bcompassion *on him*, (willing to do his Father’s will.)

34 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 ^acare of him. (He atoned for our sins in Gethsemane and on the cross)

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took ~~out two pence~~ (money), and gave *them* to the ^ahost, (Gr innkeeper) and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. (The atonement was infinite, whatever the cost, he would pay.)

36 *Which* (Who) now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He ~~that~~ (who) she (o)wed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do ~~that~~ likewise. (Be like Christ, do what He did.)

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, ~~that he~~ (they) entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named ^aMartha received him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art ^acareful (Gr worried) and troubled about many things:

42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath ^achosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from

her. (Elder Talmage said: “We must suppose that Mary had been a willing helper before the Master’s arrival; but now that He had come, she chose to remain with Him. Had she been culpably negligent of her duty, Jesus would not have commended her course. He desired not well-served meals and material comforts only, but the company of the sisters, and above all their receptive attention to what He had to say. He had more to give them than they could possibly provide for Him.” Jesus the Christ, p. 402)

THE BOOK OF MOSIAH CHAPTER 3

King Benjamin continues his address—The Lord Omnipotent shall minister among men in a tabernacle of clay—Blood shall come from every pore as he atones for the sins of the world—His is the only name whereby salvation comes—Men can put off the natural man and become saints through the atonement—The torment of the wicked shall be as a lake of fire and brimstone. [About 124 B.C.]

17 And moreover, I say unto you, that there shall be ^ano other name given nor any other way nor means whereby ^bsalvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the ^cLord Omnipotent.

18 For behold he judgeth, and his judgment is just; and the infant perisheth not that dieth in his infancy; but men drink ^adamnation to their own souls except they humble themselves and ^bbecome as little children, and believe that ^csalvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the ^datonement blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.

19 For the ^anatural ^bman is an ^cenemy to God, and has been from the ^dfall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, **unless** he ^eyields to the enticings of the Holy ^fSpirit, (Even though we are fallen, the Holy Ghost entices us to repent.) and ^gputteth off the ^hnatural man and becometh a ⁱsaint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a ^jchild, ^ksubmissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father. (Bruce R. McConkie: “If a man ‘yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord’ (Mosiah 3:19), then he is born again. His spiritual death ceases. He becomes alive to the things of the Spirit; he returns to the presence of God because he receives the gift of the Holy Ghost; and he is alive to the things of righteousness. He crucifies the old man of sin, becomes a new creature of the Holy Ghost, and walks in a newness of life. This is what is meant by being born again.” (*The Promised Messiah*, p. 350))

20 And moreover, I say unto you, that the time shall come when the ^aknowledge of a ^bSavior shall spread throughout ^cevery nation, kindred, tongue, and people. (The Book of Mormon is to be the instrument by which this prophecy is to be fulfilled. DCBM, 2:154. The complete fulfillment of this prophecy will be millennial.)

21 And behold, when that time cometh, none shall be found ^ablameless before God, except it be little children, only through repentance and faith on the name of the Lord God Omnipotent.

THE BOOK OF MOSIAH CHAPTER 4

King Benjamin continues his address—Salvation comes because of the atonement—Believe in God to be saved—Retain a remission of your sins through faithfulness—Impart of your substance to the poor—Do all things in wisdom and order. [About 124 B.C.]

16 And also, ye yourselves **will** ^asuccor those that stand in need of your succor; ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need; and ye will not suffer that the ^bbeggar putteth up his

petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish. (Joseph F. Smith said: “We have always managed to give something to the poor, and refuse no one who asks for food. I believe this is the general sentiment and character of the Latter-day Saints. I think all the Mormon people are kindly disposed, and are generous toward the poor and unfortunate, and that there is not a Latter-day Saint under the sound of my voice or anywhere that would not divide his portion with his fellow creature in case of need.... I have seen men go away from my door with good bread and butter in their hands (good enough for any king to eat, for my folks make good bread and good butter, as good as I ever ate on earth) and when out of the gate they have thrown it into the street. It was not food they wanted. They wanted money. For what? That they might go to some gambling [hall] or to some drinking saloon. Of course they are responsible for that. We can only judge by appearances and by the promptings of the good spirit within us; and it is better to give to a dozen that are unworthy than to turn away empty one worthy person.” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith*, Pr/RS Manual, p. 194) How should this verse be interpreted in a modern context? All of the social rules that governed Benjamin’s society have changed dramatically. Benjamin’s people were primarily agricultural and rural. His people had no monetary economy, but rather one built on exchange. Thus for Benjamin, one who had no food was one who had somehow become displaced from his land, and therefore his ability to grow his own food. Whether through war or illness, the removal of a person from his land created a condition of *need*, not *poverty* in the sense that we might understand it. In a modern society, need is now much more complex, and related to a monetary economy. The beggars who put their petition to us may or not be in need of food. What we *give* is money and not food, and the *money* offering may or may not be used for the need of the body. Thus in the modern world, the complexities of society have changed to the point where the nature of our charity must also change. As will be evident in the next verse, the real problem is the pride of the giver, and we may give freely to fast offerings. The ability to give freely and generously gives us the ability to learn generosity and humility, and the needy will be taken care of. Brant Gardner.)

17 Perhaps thou shalt ^asay: The man has brought upon himself his misery; therefore I will stay my hand, and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance that he may not suffer, for his punishments are just— (Suppose that in this community there are ten beggars who beg from door to door for something to eat, and that nine of them are impostors who beg to escape work, and with an evil heart practice imposition upon the generous and sympathetic, and that only one of the ten who visit your doors is worthy of your bounty; which is best, to give food to the ten, to make sure of helping the truly needy one, or to repulse the ten because you do not know which is the worthy one? You will all say, Administer charitable gifts to the ten, rather than turn away the only truly worthy and truly needy person among them. If you do this, it will make no difference in your blessings, whether you administer to worthy or unworthy persons, inasmuch as you give alms with a single eye to assist the truly needy. (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol.8, p.12, March 5, 1860))

18 But I say unto you, O man, whosoever doeth this the same hath great cause to repent; and except he repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever, and hath no interest in the kingdom of God.

19 For behold, **are we not all ^abeggars?** Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have, for both food and raiment, and for gold, and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind? (As all are dependent on the nurturing help of others, so all are required to extend those same blessings to those in need. DCBM, 2:165)

20 And behold, even at this time, ye have been calling on his name, and begging for a ^aremission of your sins. And has he suffered that ye have begged in vain? Nay; he has poured out his ^bSpirit upon you, and has caused that your hearts should be filled with ^cjoy, and has caused that your mouths should be stopped that ye could not find utterance, so exceedingly great was your joy.

21 And now, if God, who has created you, on whom you are dependent for your lives and for all that ye have and are, doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask that is right (Neal A. Maxwell said: “Consider... how many sincerely believe that if they simply ask for something in prayer, God will grant it, especially if they ask with at least a modicum of faith. King Benjamin counseled us, however, that while we are to

pray in faith, it should be for that [which] is right (Mosiah 4:21). The resurrected Jesus so confirmed, saying: And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you (3 Ne 18:20). The phrase *which is right* is correlated [among various prophetic utterances]. Not surprisingly, Paul also understood the need for inspired prayers, saying, Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered (Rom 8:26). I hope I am not the only one in this audience who has sometimes wondered what to pray for. Therefore, how much in the complexities of life's situations, we need to have our very prayers inspired!" (John W. Welch, and Stephen D. Ricks, *King Benjamin's Speech: Made Simple*, p. 9) As God grants only that which is right, so must we. We must give as freely as God gives, seeking to do in the wisdom that is his. Unwise giving can create addiction, indolence, and dependence; it can be destructive to the character and spirit of man. DCBM, 2:165.), in faith, believing that ye shall receive, O then, how ye ought to ^aimpart of the substance that ye have one to another.

22 And if ye ^ajudge the man who putteth up his petition to you for your substance that he perish not, and condemn him, how much more just will be your ^bcondemnation for withholding your substance, which doth not belong to you but to God, to whom also your life ^cbelongeth; and yet ye put up no petition, nor repent of the thing which thou hast done.

23 I say unto you, wo be unto that man, for his substance shall perish with him; and now, I say these things unto those who are ^arich as pertaining to the things of this world.

24 And again, I say unto the poor, ye who have not and yet have sufficient, that ye remain from day to day; I mean all you who deny the beggar, because ye have not; I would that ye say in your hearts that: I ^agive not because I ^bhave not, but if I had I would ^cgive.

25 And now, if ye say this in your hearts ye remain guiltless, otherwise ye are ^acondemned; and your condemnation is just for ye covet that which ye have not received.

26 And now, for the sake of these things which I have spoken unto you—that is, for the sake of retaining a remission of your sins from day to day, (Even more important is that God gives you a remission of your sins from day to day. That is great if that happens. They stay with you; nevertheless, a remission of your sins means another chance. You will be given another chance. He knows you are going to sin some more, too, but he will still give you another chance just as long as you are in the flesh. Remember that marvelous verse where Nephi said: “And the days of the children of men were prolonged, according to the will of God, that they might repent while in the flesh.” 2 Nephi 2:21. We live far longer than we need to, but that gives us a better chance to repent. He said that is the purpose of lengthening it beyond the age of procreation, etc. Hugh Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, 1:477) that ye may ^awalk guiltless before God—I would that ye should ^bimpart of your substance to the ^cpoor, every man according to that which he hath, such as ^dfeeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants. (If we don't teach people how to help themselves, we are hurting them. We should be careful not to be hurting a beggar spiritually because we are helping them physically in a wrong way.)

The Good Samaritan:

Forgotten Symbols

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One of the most influential stories told by Jesus Christ is the parable of the good Samaritan. Jesus recounted this parable to a man who had asked, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus responded by asking, “What is written in the law?”

The man answered, referring to Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart ... and thy neighbour as thyself.”

When Jesus promised, “This do, and thou shalt live,” the man challengingly replied, “And who is my neighbour?” In answer to this man’s questions, Jesus told the parable of the good Samaritan. (See Luke 10:25–35.)

Deeper Levels of Meaning

The Savior spoke often in parables because each has a deeper meaning understood only by those who have “ears to hear” (Matthew 13:9). The Prophet Joseph Smith affirmed that unbelievers did not understand the Savior’s parables. “Yet unto His disciples [the Lord] expounded [the parables] plainly,” and we can understand the parables, taught the Prophet, “if we will but open our eyes, and read with candor.”¹ Knowing this principle invites reflection on the symbolic message of the good Samaritan. In light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, this masterful story brilliantly encapsulates the plan of salvation in ways few modern readers may have noticed.

This parable’s content is clearly practical and dramatic in its obvious meaning, but a time-honored Christian tradition also saw the parable as an impressive allegory of the Fall and Redemption of mankind. This early Christian understanding of the good Samaritan is depicted in a famous eleventh-century cathedral in Chartres, France. One of its beautiful stained-glass windows portrays the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden at the top of the window, and, in parallel, the parable of the good Samaritan at the bottom. This illustrates “a symbolic interpretation of Christ’s parable that was popular in the Middle Ages.”² Seeing this window led me to wonder: what does the Fall of Adam and Eve have to do with the parable of the good Samaritan?

I soon discovered the answer.³ The roots of this allegorical interpretation reach deep into early Christianity. In the second century A.D., Irenaeus in France and Clement of Alexandria both saw the good Samaritan as symbolizing Christ Himself saving the fallen victim, wounded with sin. A few years later, Clement’s pupil Origen stated that this interpretation came down to him from earlier Christians, who had described the allegory as follows:

“The man who was going down is Adam. Jerusalem is paradise, and Jericho is the world. The robbers are hostile powers. The priest is the Law, the Levite is the prophets, and the Samaritan is Christ. The wounds are disobedience, the beast is the Lord’s body, the [inn], which accepts all who wish to enter, is the Church. ... The manager of the [inn] is the head of the Church, to whom its care has been entrusted. And the fact that the Samaritan promises he will return represents the Savior’s second coming.”⁴

This allegorical reading was taught not only by ancient followers of Jesus, but it was virtually universal throughout early Christianity, being advocated by Irenaeus, Clement, and Origen, and in the fourth and fifth centuries by Chrysostom in Constantinople, Ambrose in Milan, and Augustine in North Africa. This interpretation is found most completely in two other medieval stained-glass windows, in the French cathedrals at Bourges and Sens.

A Type and Shadow of the Plan of Salvation

Readers gain much by pondering the scriptures, especially as these writings testify of Jesus Christ (see John 5:39). **The parable of the good Samaritan testifies of Christ. It teaches of the plan of salvation, the Savior’s atoning love, and our journey toward inheriting eternal life. It can be read as a story**

not only about a man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, but also about all who come down from the presence of God to live on earth. This meaning becomes most visible in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ restored through His latter-day prophets.

Let us examine the story, starting in Luke 10:30.

“A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves ...”

A certain man. Early Christians compared this man to Adam. This connection may have been more obvious in ancient languages than in modern translations. In Hebrew, the word adam means “man, mankind,” “the plural of men,” as well as “Adam” as a proper name.⁵ Thus, Clement of Alexandria rightly saw the victim in this allegory as representing “all of us.” Indeed, we all have come down as Adams and Eves, subject to the risks and vicissitudes of mortality: “For as in Adam all die ...” (1 Corinthians 15:22).

Went down. The early Christian writer Chrysostom saw in this phrase the descent of Adam from the garden into this world—from glory to the mundane, from immortality to mortality. The story in Luke 10 implies that the man went down intentionally, knowing the risks that would be involved in the journey. No one forced him to go down to Jericho. He apparently felt that the journey was worth the well-known risks of such travel on the poorly maintained roads in Jesus’s day.⁶

From Jerusalem. (Jerusalem is about 2300 feet above sea level) Jesus depicts the person as going down not from any ordinary place but from Jerusalem. Because of the sanctity of the holy temple-city, early Christians readily saw in this element the idea that this person had come down from the presence of God.

To Jericho. Jericho was readily identified with this world. At more than 825 feet (250 m) below sea level, Jericho is the lowest city on earth. Its mild winter climate made it a hedonistic resort area where Herod had built a sumptuous vacation palace. Yet one should note that the traveler in the parable had not yet arrived in Jericho when the robbers attacked. That person was on the steep way down to Jericho, but he had not yet reached bottom.

Fell. It is easy to see here an allusion to the fallen mortal state and to the plight of individual sinfulness: “Yea, all are fallen and are lost” (Alma 34:9).

Among thieves. The early Christian writers variously saw the thieves (or robbers) as the devil and his satanic forces, evil spirits, or false teachers. The Greek word for “robbers” used by Luke implies that these thieves were not casual operators. The traveler was assailed by a band of pernicious highwaymen in a scheming, organized society that acted with deliberate and concerted intent.

“... which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.”

Stripped him of his raiment. Early Christians sensed that Jesus spoke of something important here. Origen and Augustine saw the loss of the traveler’s garment as a symbol for mankind’s loss of immortality and incorruptibility. Chrysostom spoke of the loss of “his robe of immortality” or “robe of obedience.” Ambrose spoke of the traveler being “stripped of the covering of spiritual grace which we [all] received [from God].”

The attackers apparently wanted the traveler's clothing, for no mention is made of any wealth or commodities he might be carrying. For some reason, the robbers seem interested in his garment, something brought down from the holy place and something they envy and want to take away.

Wounded. This term was seen as a similitude of the pains of life, travails of the soul, and afflictions due to diverse sins and vices. Indeed, the enemies of the soul leave wounds (see Jacob 2:8–9). Transgression has real effects (see Alma 41:10).

Half dead. The robbers departed, leaving the person precisely “half dead.” We may see in this detail an allusion to the first and second deaths. The person had fallen, had become subject to sin, and had suffered the first death, becoming mortal. But the second death, the permanent separation from God, could still be averted (see Alma 12:32–36).

“And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.”

By chance. The arrival of the Jewish priest was “by chance,” not the result of a conscious search. His presence there was not by anyone's plan.

A certain priest ... and likewise a Levite. The early Christian commentators all saw the priest as symbolizing the law of Moses. In their minds the problem was not that bearers of the Old Testament priesthood did not want to help fallen man, but that **the law of Moses did not have the power to save him**. Indeed, the law of Moses was only a type and shadow of the Atonement that was yet to come, not its full efficacy (see Mosiah 3:15–17).

The Levite was seen as representing the Old Testament prophets, whose words the Lord came to fulfill (see Matthew 5:17; 3 Nephi 15:2–5). A lesser class of priests, the Levites did chores in the temple. At least this Levite came close to helping; he “came” and saw. He may have wanted to help, but perhaps he viewed himself as too lowly to help; **he also lacked the power to save the dying person**.

“But 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 ...”

Samaritan. The early Christian writers unanimously saw the good Samaritan as a representation of Christ. Chrysostom suggests that a Samaritan is an apt depiction of Christ because “as a Samaritan is not from Judea, so Christ is not of this world.” (Also the Samaritans were despised by the Jews. They were half Jewish and half Gentile. Jesus was half Jewish and half immortal.)

Jesus's audience in Jerusalem may well have recognized here a reference by the Savior to Himself. Some Jews in Jerusalem rejected Jesus with the insult, “Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan?” (John 8:48). Because Nazareth is across the valley north of Samaria, these two locations could easily be lumped together. And just as the Samaritans were viewed as the least of all humanity, so it was prophesied that the Messiah would be “despised and rejected of men” and “esteemed not” (see Isaiah 53:3).

As he journeyed. It would appear that the Samaritan (representing Christ) was purposely looking for people in need of help. The text does not say that he arrived by happenstance. Origen noted that “he

went down intending to rescue and care for the dying man.” The Savior came purposefully with oil and bandages “to bring redemption unto the world” (3 Nephi 9:21).

Compassion. This important word speaks of the pure love of Christ. The Greek word says that the Samaritan’s bowels were moved with deep, inner sympathy. This word is used in the New Testament only when authors wish to describe God’s divine emotions of mercy. It appears prominently in the parables of the unmerciful servant, in which the Lord (representing God) “was moved with compassion” (Matthew 18:27), and of the prodigal son, in which the father (again representing God) saw his son returning and “had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him” (Luke 15:20). Likewise, the Samaritan represents the divinely compassionate Christ, who suffered so “that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people” (Alma 7:12).

Bound up his wounds. Some early Christians said that the bandages represented love, faith, and hope, “ligatures of salvation which cannot be undone.” Others saw the bands as Christ’s teachings, which bind us to righteousness. Latter-day Saints would add that the rescued person is bound to the Lord through covenants (see D&C 35:24; 43:9).

Oil. An olive oil lotion would have been very soothing. While most of the early Christian writers saw here a symbol of Christ’s words of consolation, Chrysostom saw this as a “holy anointing”—which may refer to several priesthood ordinances, the healing of the sick (see James 5:14), the gift of the Holy Ghost (often symbolized by olive oil), or the anointing of a king or a queen.

Wine. The Samaritan also poured wine onto the open wound to cleanse it. Late Christian writers saw this wine as the word of God—something that stings—but the earlier Christian interpretation associated the wine with the blood of Christ, symbolized by the sacrament (see Matthew 26:27–29; 3 Nephi 18:8–11). This wine, the atoning blood, washes away sin and purifies the soul, allowing God’s Spirit to be with us. In addition to rendering physical help, a truly good Samaritan administers the saving principles and ordinances of the gospel as well. The atoning wine may sting at first, but its effects soon bring healing peace.

“... and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.”

Set him on his own beast. Christ, fulfilling prophecy, bears our infirmities (see Isaiah 53:4; Alma 7:11). The Samaritan’s beast was thought to symbolize Christ’s body. Being placed on his beast is to believe that God became flesh, bore our sins, and suffered for us.

Inn. For the early Christians this element readily symbolized the Church. An “inn” was “a public house open to all.” A public shelter is comparable to the Church of Christ in several ways. A wayside inn is not the heavenly destination but a necessary aid in helping travelers reach their eternal home.

Took care of him. The Samaritan stayed with the injured person and cared for him personally the first night. He did not turn the injured person over too quickly to the innkeeper but stayed with him through the dark hours. As Origen commented, Jesus cares for the wounded “not only during the day, but also at night. He devotes all his attention and activity to 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.”

On the morrow. Early commentators saw here the idea that Jesus would rise on Resurrection morning. Christ ministered in person to His disciples for a short time. After His Ascension, He left the traveler to be cared for by the Church.

The host. Accordingly, early commentators saw the host, or innkeeper, as Paul or the other Apostles and their successors. If the inn refers to the Church in general, however, the innkeeper and his staff can represent all Church leaders and workers who are entrusted by the Lord to nurture and care for any rescued soul who seeks healing.

When I come again. The Christ-figure openly promises to come again, a ready allusion to the Second Coming of Christ. The Greek word translated “to come again” appears only one other time in the New Testament, in Luke 19:15, referring to the parable of the Lord who would return to judge what the people had done with the money they had been given. That linkage markedly strengthens this allusion to the Second Coming.

Repay or reward. Finally, the innkeeper is promised that all his costs will be covered: “I will reward you for whatsoever you expend.” Perhaps more than any other element in the story, this promise—in effect giving the innkeeper a blank check—has troubled modern commentators who understand this story simply as a real-life event. Who in his right mind would make such an open-ended commitment to a strange innkeeper? But when the story is understood allegorically, this promise makes sense, for the Samaritan (Christ) and his innkeeper already know and trust each other before this promise is given. (Also, since the atonement was an infinite atonement, there was no price he couldn't pay.)

An Eternal Imperative

Because of our difficulty in comprehending His infinite nature and divine fulness, God speaks to us in similitudes (see Moses 5:7). Symbols draw our finite minds to sacred truths that are embedded in the mystery of Christ's incomparable gospel, and an allegorical understanding of the parable of the good Samaritan adds eternal perspectives to its moral imperatives.

In His parables, Jesus taught the essentials of the Father's plan of salvation. As a type and shadow of this plan, the good Samaritan places our deeds of neighborly kindness here in mortality within the eternal context of where we have come down from, how we have fallen into our present plight, and how the binding ordinances and healing love of the promised Redeemer and the nurture of His Church can rescue us from our present situation, as we serve and live worthy of reward at His Second Coming.

Seeing the parable in this light invites readers to identify with virtually every character in the story. At one level, people can see themselves as the good Samaritan, acting as physical rescuers and as saviors on Mount Zion, aiding in the all-important cause of rescuing lost souls. Jesus told the Pharisee, “Go, and do thou likewise” (Luke 10:37). By doing as the Samaritan, we join with Him in helping to bring to pass the salvation and eternal life of mankind.

Disciples will also want to think of themselves as innkeepers who have been commissioned by Jesus Christ to facilitate the long-term spiritual recovery of injured travelers.

Or again, readers may see themselves as the traveler. As the parable begins, everyone sympathizes and identifies with the lone and weary traveler. We all need to be saved. As the story ends, all travelers can feel safe, having learned that, according to this interpretation, He who “was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves” (Luke 10:36) is none other than the merciful Christ. He is the most exemplary Neighbor.

This realization answers the lawyer’s second question, “And who is my neighbour?” At the same time, it also answers the first, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Eternal life comes by loving God “with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind” (Luke 10:27) and by loving His Son (thy neighbor) as thyself. And that is done by going and doing as the Savior did, in loving our fellow beings, for when we serve them we are only in the service of our God (see Mosiah 2:17).

Symbols from the Parable of the Good Samaritan

Symbol	An Early Christian Interpretation
Good Samaritan	Jesus Christ
Victim	Man wounded with sin
Jerusalem	Paradise
Jericho	World
Priest	Law of Moses
Levite	Prophets
Beast	Christ’s body
Inn	Church
Manager of the inn	Head of the Church
Notes	

1. History of the Church, 2:266.
2. Malcolm Miller, *Chartres Cathedral* (1985), 68.
3. For a full discussion of and sources for the quotations in this article, see John W. Welch, “The Good Samaritan: A Type and Shadow of the Plan of Salvation,” *Brigham Young University Studies*, spring 1999, 51–115. Other Latter-day Saints, including Hugh Nibley, Stephen Robinson, Lisle Brown, and Jill Major, have interpreted parts of the parable of the good Samaritan in similar ways.
4. Origen, Homily 34.3, Joseph T. Lienhard, trans., *Origen: Homilies on Luke, Fragments on Luke* (1996), 138.
5. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (1980), “Adam,” 1:10.
6. See *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (1992), “Travel and Communication,” 6:644–46. Because of the high risk of being attacked by robbers while traveling in the ancient world, people would rarely travel alone, as the characters in the parable do, which is another clue that the account is well understood as a similitude.