



The Lord will not cast off
his people, neither will he
forsake his inheritance.

—Psalms 94:14



Christian Science Sentinel
Bible Lens

**Everlasting
Punishment**

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Everlasting Punishment

from the Golden Text

Romans 11:1

Hath God cast away his people? God forbid.

“God forbid” appears two dozen times in Scripture. As today, it is sometimes used as an emphatic way of saying “No!” or “Certainly not!”—usually to express fervent hope that something specific will not happen. When Joshua charges the Hebrew people to choose whether they will serve pagan gods or the one God, for instance, they reply, “God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods” (Joshua 24:16).

from Section 3

10 | I Samuel 14:24, 27

Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.... But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.

After a battle victory against the Philistines, King Saul unreasonably orders that his troops go without food until their enemy is entirely conquered—a demand that renders his army weak (see v. 28). After unwittingly disobeying his father’s command, Jonathan’s “eyes were enlightened”—meaning that he felt refreshed.

Although Jonathan had brought about the victory (see vv. 1–23), Saul stubbornly in-

sists that his disobedience be punished by death. The other soldiers protest strongly, attributing Jonathan’s victory to his working with God (see v. 45). Saul gives in—and also abandons his pursuit of the Philistines (see v. 46). Scholars suggest that delays due to his self-will cost him his military advantage.

from Section 4

12 | Mark 3:7, 8

Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judæa, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon ... came unto him.

At this early point in Jesus’ ministry, news of his healing works had already spread to areas beyond the land where Judaism was the main religion. The sites mentioned here represent regions far to the south (Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea) and east (beyond Jordan). Tyre and Sidon lay to the north.

Idumea was associated with the ancient people of Edom, believed to be descendants of Esau. Hebrew community rules specified, “Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother” (Deuteronomy 23:7).

13 | Mark 6:1–3

[Jesus] came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things?

An exploration of Bible citations from the *Christian Science Quarterly*® Bible Lessons

“...a lesson on which the prosperity of Christian Science largely depends.” —Mary Baker Eddy

and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

The Master’s trip to his hometown was clearly more than a family visit. He traveled as a rabbi, or teacher, accompanied by his disciples and beginning his instruction in the synagogue. His listeners took offense for two reasons: He was merely a working man, and they knew his family. To them, it was inconceivable that a tradesman from their own community could be a worker of miracles and a teacher of the things of God.

Jesus’ siblings are not mentioned often in the Bible. Only James later emerges as an early Christian leader (and perhaps as the author of the book of James).

from Section 5

15 | Romans 6:14

Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Paul hadn’t yet met the members of the church in Rome (see 1:13). But according to one commentary, his epistle to them “contains the longest and most sustained argument in any of Paul’s letters.” The letter, it continues, “has been read as Paul’s theological ‘last will and testament,’ a reflection on and a summary of the gospel of salvation in Christ.”

In his argument, the apostle warns that legalistic adherence to Hebrew law brings condemnation for sin, not freedom from

it. Christianity teaches liberty from sin by divine grace.

Some feared that Paul advocated dropping all moral restraint. Yet he explains, “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (v. 18).

from Section 6

19 | Luke 13:1–5

There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilæans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilæans were sinners above all the Galilæans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay.

The two accounts described here aren’t included elsewhere in the New Testament. In the first, Pilate killed a group of Jews while they were offering temple sacrifices. The horror of this brutality was exacerbated by the mingling of their blood with the sacrificial blood—making it impossible for relatives to mourn them properly and desecrating their place of worship. In the second, a tower wall collapsed, killing several people.

Both events were widely seen as God’s retribution for the victims’ sins. Jesus decisively refutes this belief and calls for universal repentance from sin.

Resources quoted in this issue

Cit. 15: Coogan, Michael D., et al., eds. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Mercy on Interstate 5

By Katherine C. Pennington

From the June 17, 2002, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

Going at top speed on a hot summer day, I suddenly looked in the rear-view mirror and saw the flashing red lights of the California Highway Patrol.

I was driving my new red MGB on its first road trip from midCalifornia, up to see my sister in Oregon. And I'd been looking forward to it for weeks.

[But] I'd recently started a new job and was worn out from the long hours. I wasn't feeling especially well. And at 100 degrees, the temperature was still climbing. To top it off, I'd started out almost three hours late.

I'd put the top down on the convertible and hit the interstate—with no regard for speed-limit signs. After Sacramento, I was cruising at about 85 miles per hour—at a time when the national speed limit was only 55. Now I pulled over and waited for the officer to get out of his car. He slowly approached, asked for my driver's license and registration, and returned to his cruiser.

After what seemed like forever, he returned and stood there writing me a ticket, while explaining the dangers of speeding. Still, all I could think of was how long this stop was delaying me. I accepted the ticket and took off (at the speed limit). The officer pulled out behind me and began to keep pace.

"OK," I kept thinking, "go around, so I can pick up my speed again." All of a sudden it dawned on me that God was loving me, showing me mercy, by keeping that cop right with me. I felt immediately humbled, and asked God's forgiveness for being disobedient.

But that was not the end of the blessing. I continued north to Redding, praying, talking with God. I was giving gratitude for His loving me, and listening for what He had to say to me.

Then I heard the message to stop part-way and stay overnight. I found a quiet motel, tucked in, and spent the rest of the evening praying. In my prayers, I continued to feel deep gratitude that God's love for me was constant under every circumstance, even when I wasn't conscious of it. After spending the evening talking with my Father, I felt completely well.

The next morning I was up early, and ready to travel. As I was washing the windshield while gassing up, the station attendant motioned me over to the right front of the car with an amazing comment. The right front tire had almost completely separated from the wheel, and he was amazed I'd been able to drive on it at all.

Again, I felt the mercy of God, my real Father, at work. Had I been traveling over high elevation passes the night before, at high speeds and not feeling well, the tire could have blown, sending me hurling over the side of a mountain.

I didn't escape paying the State of California for my speeding ticket, but I did experience a deeper, more lasting, justice. I found myself actually wanting to keep my speed down! To this day, I don't speed.

The Bible says, "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever" (I Chronicles 16:34). I did give thanks to God wholeheartedly. I even wrote a note to the officer who gave me the ticket, thanking him and sharing the story of how I was kept from harm. And I ended up having a great weekend with my sister.

To read the entire article, which has been adapted to fit this page, go to jsh.christianscience.com/mercy-on-interstate-5.