

MESSENGERS

Today's text reveals important information about angels. Further information is revealed in Hebrews 1:14. As you consider these texts, match the Scripture references with the one to whom an angel came as messenger. See if you can do this without looking up the references first.

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| ___ 1. Joseph | A. Genesis 19:1-21 |
| ___ 2. Lot | B. Zechariah 1:9, 14 |
| ___ 3. Mary | C. Matthew 1:18-24 |
| ___ 4. Paul | D. Luke 1:26-38 |
| ___ 5. Zechariah | E. Acts 27:21-25 |



iStockphoto®

In what ways is the messenger subordinate to the one originating the message?



Hemera

IT'S TIME!

In your own words, summarize Galatians 4:4, 5 and Hebrews 1:1, 2 below.

What time is it in your own relationship to God and his Son? What is it time for you and your church to do with the gospel?



iStockphoto®

WHAT AND WHY

In imploring us *what* to do, today's text tells us *why* to do it. Find the five occurrences of *let us* (in three of the six verses) of the text and fill in the blanks on the left with the prescribed action that immediately follows. Then fill in the five blanks to the right (from the remaining three verses) with reasons for doing so.

Let us _____ because _____!

Let us _____ because _____!

Let us _____ because _____!

Let us _____ because _____!

Let us _____ because _____!



Hemera

“OLD 100TH” AND I

The words of Psalm 100 were put to hymn poetry in the sixteenth century, then set to music and included in the Genevan Psalter. Its contents are very similar to the thoughts of today's text in Psalm 95 that call for us to sing to the Lord. For each phrase of that hymn in italics below, answer the accompanying question.

All people that on earth do dwell,

Q: What Christians can you name in other countries?

Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.

Q: How can you make this happen personally?

Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell;

Q: Who will hear your praise today?

Come ye before Him and rejoice.

Q: How can you bring more joy to worship assemblies?

The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;

Q: What convinces you that the Lord is God?

Without our aid He did us make;

Q: How will you remind yourself of this fact often?

We are His flock, He doth us feed,

Q: How will you express gratitude for this today?

And for His sheep, He doth us take.

Q: How can you share this fact with an unbeliever?

A large, faint, stylized number 100 is visible in the background of the form. The form consists of several horizontal lines for writing answers.

Hemera

GOOD AND NOT SO GOOD SHEPHERDS

Because shepherding was an essential element of ancient agricultural economies, references to them are numerous in the Bible. Some shepherds were conscientious about their job, others not so much (in accusation if not in reality). In which of the following do you see the shepherds of Luke 2 mirrored in some way? Why? Write your thoughts on the lines.

- Genesis 26:19-21 _____
- Genesis 29:1-3, 7-10 _____
- Genesis 37:2 _____
- Exodus 2:17 _____
- 1 Samuel 17:20, 34, 35 _____
- 1 Samuel 17:28 _____
- 1 Samuel 25:4-7, 14-16 _____



A NEW TASK

After the shepherds had the marvelous experiences of hearing the angelic announcement and seeing God's Word in the manger, they took on a new task. Their new task is ours as well.



What is there about the revelation in today's study that most elicits your praise of God?

What is there about witnessing the events in today's study that makes you want to spread the word as the shepherds did?

To whom will you be a Bethlehem shepherd in sharing the good news?

Which truth from today's text will you ponder in your heart all week?



POWER IN PERSON

The picture of Jesus in today's text is that of a power in person. Identify at least five examples of the demonstration of his power in the text.



Standard Publishing

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Why were the apostles' reactions in verse 33 proper in the presence of one wielding such power? Jot your answer in the box.

What is it about Jesus that causes you to want to worship him? Say why here. →

AROUND THE SEA

Much of Jesus' ministry took place in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee (or "the Lake of Gennesaret" in Luke 5:1). Look at the map and write in the following places at correct locations:

Region of the Gadarenes (Gerasenes)

Capernaum

Gennesaret

Site of the feeding of 5,000

Use your concordance and/or Bible dictionary to discover something significant about each place as it relates to Christ. Jot your discoveries below.



Map image copyright © Google Earth Library. <http://www.gelb.com/global-terrain-map.htm>. ASTER GDEM is a product of METI and NASA.

TYPES AND PRINCIPLES

Jesus' examples of requests may be grouped into at least two types. How would you identify these?



From verses 5-7: _____

From verses 11, 12: _____

Summarize Jesus' prayer principles below.

According to verses 8-10: _____

According to verse 13: _____

Based on the prayer principles you see, what improvements do you need to make to your prayer life?

JESUS, MAN OF PRAYER

Today's text opens with a disciple impressed by the pattern and the practice of Jesus' prayer life. Look at the following descriptions of Jesus in prayer. What impresses you most in each?

	<u>OCCASION</u>	<u>STRONGEST IMPRESSION</u>
Matthew 15:32-36	_____	_____
Mark 1:32-35	_____	_____
Mark 14:32-39	_____	_____
Luke 6:12, 13	_____	_____
Luke 22:31, 32	_____	_____
Luke 23:34	_____	_____
John 11:39-42	_____	_____



Standard Publishing

What is your overall impression of Jesus' prayer life? How does that compare and contrast with your own life of prayer? Jot your ideas below.

WHAT TO PRAY FOR

Jesus set an example in John 17 regarding matters worthy to be prayed for. From which verse or verses do you find each of the following matters to be “prayer worthy”?



- ___ A. Acknowledgment of divine inspiration of God’s Word
- ___ B. Life of joy
- ___ C. Protection from evil, Satan’s efforts in the world
- ___ D. Being made holy by the power of God’s truth
- ___ E. Removal of any tendencies to worldliness
- ___ F. Church growth—new believers added to fellowship
- ___ G. The unity of all believers on essential doctrine

OTHERWORLDLY

Secular culture has its definition of *otherworldly*, but Christians have another. What would you say is the secular concept?

What is the Christian’s concept? See John 8:23; 17:14-18; and 18:36 as you ponder your answer.



Are you “otherworldly”? How so? You may find Colossians 2:8-23 to be helpful in framing your answer.

MEGA HIGH PRIEST

Hebrews 4:14 in the Greek refers to Jesus as the *mega* high priest, the word *mega* meaning “greater.” Which verse(s) in today’s text identify each of these attributes of Jesus’ greatness as priest?

- A. Shares in our humanity _____
- B. Gives the gift of salvation _____
- C. Works in Heaven on our behalf _____
- D. Patiently works with those who wander _____
- E. Identifies with our lack of strength _____
- F. Never sinned _____
- G. Offers grace and mercy _____
- H. Understands both suffering and obedience _____



Hemera

PRIEST? WHO, ME?

The New Testament designates each follower of Christ to be a priest, both in name and deeds of service. What do you find your priestly status and responsibility to be in each of the following texts?

Romans 12:1 _____

1 Peter 2:5 _____

1 Peter 2:9 _____

Revelation 1:6; 5:10 _____



Digital Vision

What does this priesthood of all believers imply about religious systems that set aside a priestly class that is thought to be in closer relationship to God than the average person? Jot ideas below.

What does your personal priesthood responsibility imply about your relationship to other people, both believers and nonbelievers? Jot ideas below.

PRINCIPLE FOR PRAYER

In this maze is a foundational principle affirmed in James 5:16 (try not to look!) regarding prayer. Starting with the letter where the arrow points, trace your pencil from letter to adjacent letter (any direction) to discover the principle. No letter will be used twice. The underlined letter is where you will end. Write the solution on the blanks.

O R E P A
 F T S E Y R
 P T H E G I
 O E H A R H
 R W R S T O
 E F U L U E

POWERFUL PRAYERS AND PRAY-ERS

The title of this activity has two elements: *prayers* refers to content of communication with God, and *pray-ers* refers to the individuals doing the praying. When James uses an example of the latter, he chose Elijah. Look at the others listed below and decide what made their prayers powerful. Jot ideas in the blanks.



Abraham, Genesis 18:23-33

Isaac, Genesis 25:21

Moses, Numbers 14:13-20

Samson, Judges 16:28-30

Hannah, 1 Samuel 1:11, 20

Hezekiah, 2 Chronicles 30:18-20

Nehemiah, Nehemiah 1:5-2:8

Daniel, Daniel 9:4-19

Jonah, Jonah 2

Cornelius, Acts 10:1-8



FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES



Finalize your plans for type of fast, length of time, and prayer focus—then stick with it to the best of your ability.

Ask God for strength to stay true to your commitment.

Start slowly if this is your first time, perhaps by skipping one meal or drinking only juice.

Try to fast discreetly so you can keep this experience between you and God.

Inspect your heart to make sure your motives for fasting are pure.

Never underestimate Satan's desire to disrupt your fast and interfere with your goal of drawing closer to God.

Give yourself plenty of time to pray and focus on God by eliminating worldly distractions.

COMMITMENT TO FAST

Fill out the following commitment pledge and keep it in a secret place until your fast is complete.

I, _____, commit to complete the following fast:

___ A total fast from food

___ A partial fast in which I will give up the following food and/or activity: _____

My fast will begin on _____ and will last for ___ hours.

My prayer focus during this time will be: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

THE SCOOP ON THE GOOD SAMARITAN

If a reporter for JNN (*Jewish News Network*) interviewed the characters in Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan, the result may have gone something like this:

Reporter: We are here today with the victim of a horrible crime in the story Jesus told about how to be a good neighbor. Sir, we appreciate your taking the time to talk to us today.

Victim: I'm happy to be here—in fact, I'm happy to be anywhere. For a while, I thought I was a goner.

Reporter: Can you tell us exactly what happened to you?

Victim: Well, I was headed from Jerusalem to Jericho when a vicious gang of robbers attacked me.

Reporter: So they took your money?

Victim: They took everything I had, including my clothes, and beat me to a pulp. I felt life slipping away.

Reporter: As I understand it, three people who could have helped you came by at various times.

Victim: Right—but only one of them actually helped. And it was the last person I would have ever expected to do so!

Reporter: Those three men are also with us today, and we'll give each of them a chance to tell his own side of the story. First, we will hear from the priest. Sir, please step up to the microphone and identify yourself.

Priest (*arrogantly*): I am a descendant of Aaron. I perform sacred duties in the temple, such as offering sacrifices. I am a highly respected leader in the Jewish community.

Reporter: I see. And in Jesus' parable, he says that you walked right by this poor guy over here who'd been badly beaten, that you totally ignored him.

Priest: Technically, it's true, but I had a good reason. I am a priest, and if I had touched his bloody wounds I would have been unclean.

Reporter: But weren't you heading *away from* Jerusalem at the time, your religious duties finished?

Priest: What of it? I can't waste my time on someone who by his own carelessness got himself in such a big mess.

Reporter: All right then. Now let's turn our attention to the Levite in Jesus' story. Sir, please introduce yourself.

Levite: As a member of the tribe of Levi, I assist the priests in the temple.

Reporter: That sounds important. So you help with worship, maintain the buildings . . .

Levite (*interrupting*): . . . and I clean up after the animals.

Reporter: I see. And according to Jesus, you looked at the victim, but you too passed by on the other side of the road.

Levite: I wanted to be sure it wasn't anyone I knew. Then I had to move on before those bandits did the same to me!

Reporter: Hmm, interesting. Well, let's meet the man who *did* stop to help—the Samaritan. Were you surprised Jesus chose a Samaritan to be the hero in his story?

Samaritan: Totally! Jews and Samaritans have been enemies for centuries. Most Jews are so contemptuous of us that they won't even walk through our land.

Reporter: So, what prompted you to help out a Jewish man?

Samaritan: Human to human compassion. When I saw what bad shape he was in, my heart just went out to him.

Reporter: And what did you do?

Samaritan: Cleaned up his wounds with oil and wine and bandaged them. Then I put him on my donkey and took him to an inn, where I stayed up taking care of him. But then I had to leave.

Reporter: Is that all?

Samaritan: I left the innkeeper money to care for him. I told the innkeeper I'd settle up on my return.

Reporter: There you have it, folks. A great lesson for all of us on what it means to be a good neighbor.

SECRET MESSAGE

Following the instructions, cross off words in the listing below. Some words may be eliminated by more than one instruction. When you finish, the remaining words will summarize the message of today's text. The message will read from top to bottom, left to right.



Cross out all words . . .

- Rhyming with *kite*
- That are synonyms of *little*
- With the letters of the word *art* (in any order)
- Ending with the letter *k*
- That name a flower
- Containing the letter *v*
- Having only three letters
- Containing exactly three occurrences of the letter *e*
- That are geographical locations

London	Book	Are	Small	Every	Rose	Smite
Tight	Between	Each	Petunia	Tears	Iceland	Too
Luck	Tiny	Height	Verdict	Sequence	Needy	Elected
Person	Love	Texas	Could	Crater	Trap	Miniature
Can	Paris	Gawk	Be	Egypt	Avoid	Orchid
Tulip	Unpack	Our	Fright	Wee	Stare	Jesus
Parent	Incognito	Petite	Teeter	Ornate	Hot	Rock

Answer: _____

CHRISTIAN AND SECULAR CHARITIES

Many charitable organizations were started by Christians who wanted to help the hurting and spread the gospel. Can you match the founders with the charities they started?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| ___ 1. Big Brothers Big Sisters | A. Bob Pierce and Franklin Graham |
| ___ 2. Boys Town | B. William and Catherine Booth |
| ___ 3. Goodwill Industries | C. David Wilkerson |
| ___ 4. Habitat for Humanity | D. Edgar J. Helms |
| ___ 5. Salvation Army | E. Ernest Kent Coulter / Ladies of Charity |
| ___ 6. Samaritan's Purse | F. Edward J. Flanagan |
| ___ 7. Teen Challenge | G. Millard and Linda Fuller |



How do Christian and secular charities differ in purpose, approach, and outcome? Jot ideas below:

ARM YOURSELF!

Although Satan has quite an arsenal of weapons, we have powerful armor and weapons to defeat his attacks. From the six parts of God’s armor, which would you use and how would you use it in each of the following situations? (Note: each entry may call for use of more than one piece of armament.)

Satan’s Attack	Satan’s Weapon	Our Armor and How to Use It
1. “God doesn’t love you or he wouldn’t let such a bad thing happen to you.”	Lies	
2. “You’ve done so many bad things that God could never forgive you.”	Doubt	
3. “Sinning again! What a loser. Even God can’t help someone like you.”	Accusation	
4. “Go ahead and look at that website. No one will know. What can it hurt?”	Temptation	
5. “You will have more time for Bible study later if you get some chores done first.”	Distraction	
6. “She’ll think you’re crazy if you mention the gospel! Don’t risk the friendship.”	Fear	

WEAPON MAINTENANCE

A dull sword is not much good to a soldier in battle! Evaluate how battle-ready your armament is in the following areas by circling a number from 1 (very weak) to 5 (very strong).

1. Belt of truth 1 2 3 4 5
2. Breastplate of righteousness 1 2 3 4 5
3. Footwear gospel-prepared. 1 2 3 4 5
4. Shield of faith. 1 2 3 4 5
5. Helmet of salvation 1 2 3 4 5
6. Sword of the Spirit 1 2 3 4 5



iStockphoto®

What are some ways you can improve your weakest area? Jot ideas below.

IDENTITY CHECK

Read through the following items. Put a lower-case letter **j** beside those that apply to John the Baptist and an capital letter **J** by those that apply to Jesus.

- ___ 1. He was born first.
- ___ 2. He was the “voice of one calling in the wilderness.”
- ___ 3. He took away the sins of the world.
- ___ 4. He was sent to baptize with water.
- ___ 5. He was sent to baptize with the Spirit.
- ___ 6. He was the Lamb of God.
- ___ 7. He received the Spirit from Heaven in the form of a dove.
- ___ 8. He denied any identity as the Messiah.
- ___ 9. He surpassed and was preferred before the other one.
- ___ 10. He came to “Make straight the way for the Lord.”
- ___ 11. He baptized the other one.
- ___ 12. He existed before the other one.



Standard Publishing

WILL YOU TESTIFY?

Just as John the Baptist boldly gave his testimony concerning what he believed about Jesus, we should also be prepared to talk about our own beliefs and experiences regarding our Savior. Use the descriptions and titles below from John’s testimony to write a brief personal testimony about Jesus that you could share with someone who is not a believer.

SON OF GOD

Giver of the Holy Spirit

God’s Chosen One

Takes Away Sin

Creator

Lesson 1

Messengers: 1-C; 2-A; 3-D; 4-E; 5-B.

Lesson 2

What and Why:

Let us: sing (v. 1a), shout aloud (v. 1b), come before him (v. 2), bow down in worship (v. 6a), kneel (v. 6b)

Because: God is the great God (v. 3a), God is the great King (v. 3b), all creation is his (vv. 4, 5), he is our God (v. 7a), we are his people (v. 7b); *note: there can be some variation in the “because” answers*

Lesson 3

A variety of subjective and reflective responses to both activities are possible.

Lesson 4

Power in Person: 1. walked on water; 2. empowered Peter to walk on water; 3. saved Peter; 4. caused wind to cease; 5. cured diseases. Response of worship and confession appropriate to one who can supersede the laws of nature—God himself.

Lesson 5

Requests and Responses: A good case can be made for identifying two types in various ways: urgent, not urgent; unexpected, expected; etc. Prayer principles should reflect the text.

Jesus, Man of Prayer: Matthew 15:32-36, Feeding of the 4,000; Mark 1:32-35, near Capernaum; Mark 14:32-39, Garden of Gethsemane; Luke 6:12, 13, a mountain in Galilee; Luke 22:31, 32, the last supper (Jerusalem); Luke 23:34, on the cross; John 11:39-42, resurrection of Lazarus (near Bethany).

Lesson 6

What to Pray For: A—verse 17; B—verse 13; C—verse 15; D—verse 17; E—verse 16; F—verse 20; G—verse 21. (Other answers are possible.)

Lesson 7

Mega High Priest: A—4:15; 5:2, 7; B—5:9; C—4:14; D—5:2; E—4:15; F—4:15; G—4:16; H—5:8

Lesson 8

Principle for Prayer

Q R E P A
F T S E Y R
P T H E G I
O E H A R H
R W K S T O
E F U L U E

Secret message: The prayers of the righteous are powerful!

Lesson 11

Secret Message: Each needy person could be Jesus incognito.

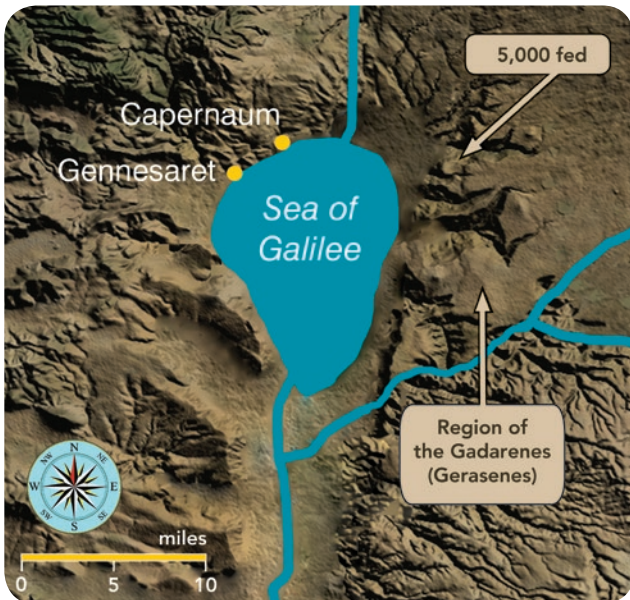
Christian and Secular Charities: Answers: 1—E; 2—F; 3—D; 4—G; 5—B; 6—A; 7—C.

Lesson 12

Arm Yourself: Learners may see a variety of applications.

Lesson 1 (spring, included with winter)

Identity Check: John the Baptist—1, 2, 4, 8, 10, 11; Jesus—3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12.



Around the Sea: Region of the Gadarenes (Gerasenes): Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39

Capernaum: Matthew 4:13; 8:5; 11:23; 17:24; Mark 1:21; 2:1; 9:33; Luke 4:23, 31; 7:1; 10:15; John 2:12; 4:46; 6:17, 24, 59

Gennesaret: Matthew 14:34; Mark 6:53

5,000 fed: Matthew 14:15; Mark 6:35; Luke 9:12; John 6:1