

“Troublesome Assumptions”

Matthew 3:9

June 9, 2024

INTRO: *Have you ever asked yourself: **How do you KNOW if/when good (or bad) news is actually good or bad news?***

- *What do you think or feel? **What do you say/do?***
- *What does the world, the flesh, & the devil say?*
- ***What does God’s Word say? Does all this matter?***

PRAYER

CONTEXT: Matthew’s Gospel... mMm... Defer the rest...

BIG IDEA: Biblically smug, ungrounded, and misguided assumptions are eternally and missionally dangerous expressions of either self-righteous pride &/or tragic deception.

(One of the most repeated warnings in the Bible, cover to cover!)

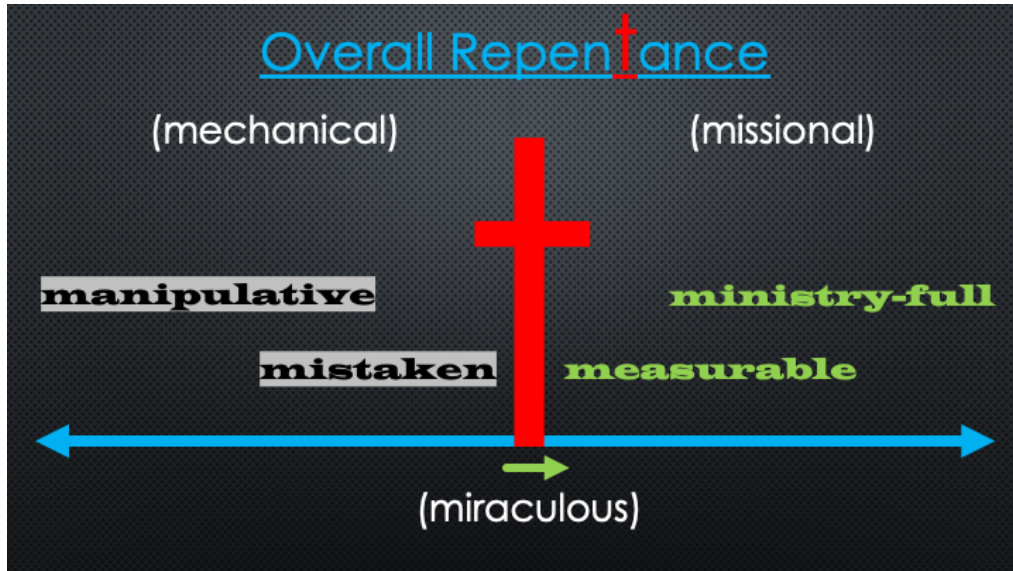
PREVIEW:

1. CONTEXT *(FOR What?)*
2. CONTENT *(SO What?)*
3. CONVICT or CONVINCe *(NOW What?)*

TEXT:

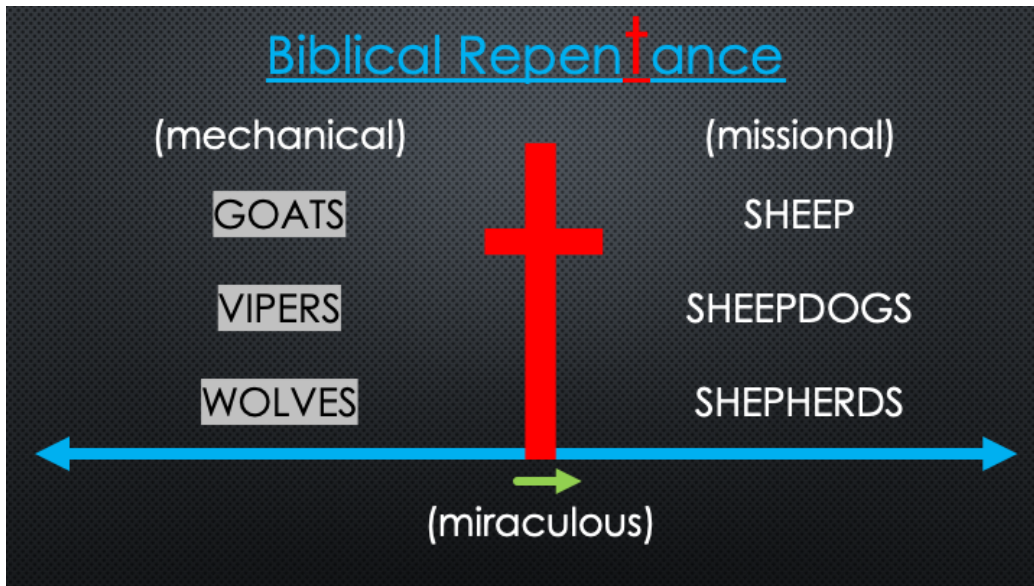
I. CONTEXT *(FOR What?)*

“And...”



Repented is authenticated by repenting (ing) over time.

-JDP



T/S: Let's come back to our question about assurance...

II. CONTENT *(SO What?)*

This verse is a 10-point command & warning that doubles down on v.8's command/warning (*"bear fruit that is consistent with repentance"*)

A. ***"Do not..."***

- a. Note the **TONE** and temperament
- b. Hear and heed the **COMMAND**
- c. Let me remind you of the defining **John 14:15**

B. ***"presume..."*** (Greek: *dok-eh'-o*)

a. DEFINITION:

i. English:

1. *Take for granted; assume, suppose*
2. *To assume in the absence of proof*
3. *To go too far...*

ii. Greek:

1. SUBJECTIVE opinion formation
2. UNGROUNDED assumption
3. Root word for opinionated "dogma"

b. DESCRIPTION:

- i. **Being in church = BE-ing in Christ**
- ii. *Various "experiences that don't count"*
- iii. ...9 out of 10 lepers... (**Luke 17:11-19**)

iv. Proverbs 18:17 - *The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.*

v. Matthew 7:21-27

1. Cultural church “all-stars”
2. Cultural church growth/building

c. DETERMINED:

i. Presumed innocent until proven guilty...

ii. We authenticate EVERYTHING...

1. Military...
2. Money...
3. Messages...

***** WORLD articles on A.I. *****

- “Fakin’ It” (Russia to Ukrainians)
- “Friends That Enslave Us”
 - i. Predatory PERVERSIONS
 - ii. Relationship replacements...

iii. Cultural examples:

1. WORLDLY... see James 4:4
2. POPULARITY... see Matthew 7:13-14
3. EMOTIONAL... Proverbs 3:5-6

iv. Think about all-time worst assumptions...

1. Titanic?
2. Salvation?
3. Messiah: think end-times deception...

- v. Think about the blessed assurance...
 - 1. BIBLICAL... 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - 2. MISSIONAL... Matthew 28:18-19
 - 3. PERSONAL... Acts 1:8 & Matt. 28:20

d. DECEIVED: False Confidence biblical examples:

- Eve (who doubted & trusted Satan)
- Adam (who doubted & trusted Eve)
- Able (who trusted Cain)
- Noah's neighbors (...never rained...)
- Abe & Sarah (trusted sinful ingenuity)
- Pharaoh (worldly strength)
- Korah's crew (...a godless grumbler)
- Moses (...trusted his position)
- Joshua's Akin (trusted his fighting status)
- Uriah (sadly, trusted Bathsheba & David)
- David (trusted his past victories)
- Haman (trusted his evil & gallows)
- 7 sons of Sceva (trusted imitation)
- The 11 Apostles (trusted Judas)
- Paul (trusted Demas...)
- Pharisees (trusted their religion/rules)
- Sadducees (trusted positional power)
- High Priest (trusted traditional powers)
- Local gov officials (worldly power)
- Regional "kings" (worldly power)
- Caesar in Rome (worldly power)

C. ***“...to say to yourselves...”***

a. **Like the folks at the nursing home...**

June 4, 2024 / 11:47 AM EDT / CBS News

Police are investigating after a 74-year-old woman who was declared dead at a Nebraska nursing home was found breathing at a funeral home two hours later, marking at least the third time since last year that a woman was prematurely declared dead at a U.S. nursing home.

b. **Who are you listening to?**

- i. Who says listen to yourself?
- ii. *“Did God really say?”*
- iii. **Read 1st, 2nd, & 3rd John!**

D. ***“We have Abraham as our father...”***

a. **Particular PRESUMPTIONS:**

1. Bloodline
2. Tradition
3. Experiences (Exodus)
4. Conditional promises ignored
5. Beginnings (vs. ending) focused

b. **Principled PRESUMPTIONS: = *whatever you tell yourself that goes against God’s Word, will, & ways***

E. ***“For...”*** (Now God will explain why & how!)

F. ***“For I tell you...”***

- a. NOTE: a **PROBLEM** is inherently implied...
 - i. **PURPOSE** is important to grasp here...
 - ii. **PASSION** is clear in the context...
 - iii. **POWER** of God’s man, message, & mission
 - iv. **PROCLAMATION** is clear & concise.
 - v. **PROMISE** is embedded in call to repent!
- b. **FOR** = Because...
- c. **I** = contrasts “yourselves” (he has authority)
- d. **“TELL YOU”**
 - i. He has the **AMBASSADOR’s AUTHORITY!**
 - ii. He is NOT asking or suggesting...
 - iii. He is **COMPROHENSIVELY COMMANDING**
 - iv. He is **FORCEFUL & FAITHFUL**
 - v. He’s **INFORMING, INSPECTING, INSPIRING**

T/S: *Here comes the good news Christian!*

G. ***“God is able...”***

- a. Think about your **Doctrine of God** here!
 - i. Now connect it to God’s Word
 - ii. Now connect it to God’s will
 - iii. Now connect it to God’s ways
- b. **MACRO:**
 - i. Genesis 1:1 & John 1:1
 - ii. Ephesians 2:1-10
 - iii. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

c. **MICRO:**

- i. John 3:3; 3:16; 3:36
- ii. Ephesians 2:1... 2:4... 2:8... 2:9... 2:10
- iii. Hebrews 12:1-3

H. ***“from these stones...”***

- a. Note: Hebrew word play on stones/children...
- b. Note: there are deep & diverse references here
 - i. The obvious desert stones all around...
 - ii. He can turn the desolate into disciples!
 - iii. God's pebbles > the world's good people.
 - iv. **Stones served as God's witnesses...**
 - v. **Jesus is the Cornerstone & He builds us up**
- c. Note: SEE Joshua & John the Baptist's mission!

Joshua 4:20-24

20And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. **21**And he said to the people of Israel, “When your children ask their fathers in times to come, ‘What do these stones mean?’ **22**then you shall let your children know, ‘Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.’ **23**For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, **24 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”**

I. *“to raise up...”*

THIS is The Gospel!

He breathed into the dust of Adam & gave him life!

He changes hearts of stone into hearts of flesh!

He takes the low-down & lifts us up high...

He raises the dead every day!

- *Lazarus... come forth!*
- *Gerasene demoniac... come forth!*
- *Saul of Tarsus... come forth!*
- *Jeff Pearson... come forth!*
- *Christine Tyszka... come forth!*
- *Tonya Gamble... come forth!*
- *David Martin... come forth!*
- *Moses Kigozi... come forth!*
- *Sunil Lukose... come forth!*
- *Fredrick Makhanu Wafula... come forth!*

J. *“children for Abraham.”*

a. Not all children of Abraham are children of Abraham... Romans 9:7

- i. See **Ishmael**
- ii. See **Korah** and his rebellious followers
- iii. See **Jude, John, Jesus!**

b. **Children of faith are Abraham's children**
(Galatians 3:7-16)

- i. Children of faith are faithful.
- ii. Children of faith are fruitful.
- iii. **Faithful & fruitful children of Abraham:**
 1. Bear much fruit to glorify God
 2. Bear much fruit to prove themselves
 - ***Much fruit of redemption***
 - ***Much fruit of repentance***
 - ***Much fruit over time***

c. There are **3 types of "Abraham's Children"**

- i. **Perversion** (Ishmael's lineage) ISLAM
- ii. **Prodigal's** (dead branches) JUDAISM
- iii. **Promise** (spiritual family) CHRISTIANITY
 1. Appointed / "called"
 2. Adopted / Grafted / "chosen"
 - TRUE FRUIT producers
 - Define "TRUE" biblically ONLY
 - i. True in TRUTH
 - ii. True form of fruit
 - iii. True PRODUCER
 - iv. Define "FRUIT" biblically!
 1. "Bear much fruit..."
 2. ***Fruits reveal roots...***
 3. ***Fruit of the Spirit***
 4. ***Fruit of Repentance***
 5. ***Fruit of kingdom***
 6. ***Fruit of witness***
 7. ***Fruit of Truth in Love***

III. CONVICT or CONVINCE

(NOW What?)

Christianity is NOT a hobby. -JDP

Now What?



*Hear & HEED the loving Word, will, and ways of God!
Confess... Repent... Repeat...
and
live eternally RESTORED & REDEEMED!*

REVIEW:

Biblically smug, ungrounded, & misguided assumptions are eternally and missionally dangerous expressions of either self-righteous pride &/or tragic deception.

...Another of the Lord's loving warnings for all those holding to their bad, hell-bound "*enough-assumptions*"

- GOOD enough...
- RICH enough...
- RELIGIOUS enough...
- MORAL enough...
- JEWISH enough...
- BAPTIST enough...
- SMART enough...
- CHURCHY enough...
- CONNECTED enough
- Even "FRUITFUL" enough (but lacking fruit of repentance)

CLOSE:

v.9 is juxtaposing false assumptions vs. fruit of repentance!!!

Matthew 3:9 is GOD's reply to ALL those who think biblical teachers & preachers are "too much" or "over the top."

Titus 2:11-15

11For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

15Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Troublesome assumptions can be replaced with triumphant assurance!

-JDP

1st John 5:13

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

PRAYER

WORSHIP: *Please Come Down To Me & Blessed Assurance & Yet*

STUDY NOTES:

◀ 1380. dokeó ▶

Strong's Concordance

dokeó: to have an opinion, to seem

Original Word: δοκέω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: dokeó

Phonetic Spelling: (dok-eh'-o)

Definition: to have an opinion, to seem

Usage: I think, seem, appear, it seems.

HELPS Word-studies

1380 *dokéō* – properly, *suppose* (what "seems to be"), forming *an opinion* (a *personal* judgment, estimate).

[1380](#) /*dokéō* ("suppose") directly reflects the *personal perspective* (values) of the person making the *subjective judgment call*, i.e. showing what they *esteem* (or *not*) as an *individual*.

[[1380](#) (*dokéō*) is the root of: [1378](#) (*dóγμα*), [1391](#) (*dóкса*), and [2106](#) (*eudokéō*). Each cognate stresses "the *subjective mental estimate or opinion* about a matter" (R. Trench, 304).]

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from dokos (opinion)

Definition

to have an opinion, to seem

NASB Translation

deem (1), expect (1), has a mind (1), inclined (1), recognized (1), regarded (1), reputation (3), reputed (1), seem (3), seemed best (1), seemed fitting (1), seemed good (4), seems (3), suppose (5), supposed (2), supposes (1), supposing (4), think (18), thinking (1), thinks (6), thought (4).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 1380: δοκέω

δοκέω, δοκῶ; imperfect ἐδόκουν; 1 aorist ἔδοξα; (akin to δέχομαι or δέκομαι, whence δοκός an assumption, opinion (cf. Latinducus, decet, dignus; Curtius, § 15; cf. his Das Verbum, i., pp. 376, 382)); (from Homer down);

1. to be of opinion, think, suppose: followed by an accusative with an infinitive, [Mark 6:49](#) (R G L Tr); [2 Corinthians 11:16](#); [1 Corinthians 12:23](#); with an infinitive relating to the same subject as that of δοκέω itself, [Luke 8:18](#) (ὁ δοκεῖ ἔχειν); [Luke](#)

[24:37](#) (ἐδόκουν πνεῦμα θεωρεῖν); [John 5:39](#); [John 16:2](#); [Acts 12:9](#); [Acts 27:13](#); [1 Corinthians 3:18](#); [1 Corinthians 7:40](#); [1 Corinthians 8:2](#); [1 Corinthians 10:12](#); [1 Corinthians 14:37](#); [Galatians 6:3](#); [Philippians 3:4](#); [James 1:26](#); μὴ δόξητε λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς do not suppose that ye may think, [Matthew 3:9](#); cf. Fritzsche at the passage followed by ὅτι, [Matthew 6:7](#); [Matthew 26:53](#); ([Mark 6:49](#) T WH); [Luke 12:51](#); [Luke 13:2, 4](#); [Luke 19:11](#); [John 5:45](#); [John 11:13](#) (T Tr WH); ; [1 Corinthians 4:9](#); [2 Corinthians 12:19](#); [James 4:5](#), so used that the object is easily understood from the context: [Matthew](#)

[24:44](#) (ἡ ὥρα οὐ δοκεῖτε ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔρχεται); [Luke 12:40](#); [Luke 17:9](#) (R G L brackets Tr marginal reading brackets); forming a parenthesis in the midst of a question: πόσω, δοκεῖτε, χείρονος ἀξιωθήσεται τιμωρίας; [Hebrews 10:29](#); (Aristophanes Aeharn. 12 πῶς τουτ' ἐσεισε μου, δοκεῖς, τὴν καρδίαν; Anacreon () 40, 15 (i. e., 35 (33), 16) πόσον, δοκεῖς, πονουσιν, ἔρως, ὅσους σύ βαλλεις;). (Synonym: see ἡγέομαι, at the end)

2. intransitive, to seem, be accounted, reputed: [Luke 10:36](#); [Luke 22:24](#); [Acts 17:18](#); [Acts 25:27](#); [1 Corinthians 12:22](#); [2 Corinthians 10:9](#); [Hebrews 12:11](#); ἔδοξα ἑμαυτῷ δεῖν προᾶξι, I seemed to myself, i. e. I thought, [Acts 26:9](#) (cf. Buttman, 111 (97)); οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν those that are accounted to rule, who are recognized as rulers, [Mark 10:42](#); οἱ δοκοῦντες εἶναι τί those who are reputed to be somewhat (of importance), and therefore have influence, [Galatians 2:6](#) (9) (Plato, Euthyd., p. 303 c.); simply, οἱ δοκοῦντες those highly esteemed, of repute, looked up to, influential, [Galatians 2:2](#) (often in Greek writings as Euripides, Hec. 295, where cf. Schafer; (cf. Winer's Grammar, § 45, 7)). By way of courtesy, things certain are sometimes said δοκεῖν, as in [Hebrews 4:1](#) (cf. Cicero, offic. 3, 2, but tute tibi defuisse videare); [1 Corinthians 11:16](#) (but cf. Meyer at the passage); cf. Winer's Grammar, § 65, 7 c.

3. impersonally, δοκεῖ μοι, it seems to me; i. e.

a. I think, judge": thus in questions, τί σοι (ὕμῃν) δοκεῖ; [Matthew 17:25](#); [Matthew 18:12](#); [Matthew 21:28](#); [Matthew 22:17, 42](#); [Matthew 26:66](#); [John 11:56](#); κατὰ τό δοκοῦν αὐτοῖς as seemed good to them, [Hebrews 12:10](#) (Lucian, Tim. § 25, and παρὰ τό δοκοῦν ἡμῖν, Thucydides 1, 84).

b. ἔδοξε μοι it seemed good to, pleased, me; I determined: followed by an infinitive, [Luke 1:3](#); [Acts 15:22, 25, 28, 34](#) Rec.; also often in Greek writings. Compare: εὐδοκέω, συνδοκέω, εὐδοκέω. [SYNONYMS: δοκεῖν 2, φαίνεσθαι: φαίνεσθαι (primarily of luminous bodies) makes reference to the actual external appearance, generally correct but possibly deceptive; δοκεῖν refers to the subjective judgment, which may or may not conform to the fact. Hence, such a combination as δοκεῖ φαίνεσθαι is no

pleonasm. Cf. Trench, § lxxx.; Schmidt, chapter 15.]

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

be of reputation, seem good, suppose, think.

A prolonged form of a primary verb, *doko dok'-o* (used only in an alternate in certain tenses; compare the base of [deiknuo](#)) of the same meaning; to think; by implication, to seem (truthfully or uncertainly) -- be accounted, (of own) please(-ure), be of reputation, seem (good), suppose, think, trow.

see GREEK [deiknuo](#)

◀ 3004. legó ▶

Strong's Concordance

legó: to say

Original Word: λέγω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: legó

Phonetic Spelling: (leg'-o)

Definition: to say

Usage: (denoting speech in progress), (a) I say, speak; I mean, mention, tell, (b) I call, name, especially in the pass., (c) I tell, command.

HELPS Word-studies

3004 *légō* (originally, "lay down to sleep," used later of "laying an *argument* to rest," i.e. bringing a message to *closure*; see Curtius, Thayer) – properly, to *say* (speak), moving to a *conclusion* (bringing it to *closure*, "laying it to rest").

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

a prim. verb

Definition

to say

NASB Translation

addressing (1), agree* (1), ask (1), asked (3), asking (4), bring charges (1), call (8), called (34), calling (1), calls (3), claimed (1), claiming (2), command (3), designated (1), follows (1), give (1), gives (1), greeted* (1), made (1), mean (2), means (3), meant (1), mention (1), named (3),

ordered (2), quote (1), referred (1), remarking (1), said (1086), say (364), saying (440), says (102), shouting (1), so-called (3), speak (22), speaking (17), speaks (6), spoke (18), spoken (26), stated (1), stating (2), talking (5), tell (71), telling (18), thing spoken (1), things spoken (1), thought (1), told (35), using (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 3004: εἶπον

εἶπον, 2 aorist active from an obsolete present ἔπιω (late epic and in composition; see Veitch) (cf. ἔπος (Curtius, § 620)),

Ionic ἔπιω (like ἐρωτάω, ἐρωτάω; ἐλίσσω, ἐλίσσω; subjunctive εἶπω, imperative εἶπε, infinitive εἶπεῖν, prcp. εἶπών; 1 aorist εἶπα (John 10:34 R G T Tr WH, from Psalm 81:6 (); Acts 26:15 L T Tr WH; Hebrews 3:10 Lachmann from Psalm 94:10 (); add (Mark 9:18 T WH Tr text); Job 29:18; Job 32:8, etc.; Sir. 24:31 (29); 1 Macc. 6:11, etc.; cf. Kühner, 1:817 (especially Veitch, under the word, pp. 232; 233)), 2 person εἶπας (Matthew 26:25,(64); Mark 12:32 (not T WH; John 4:17 where T WH again εἶπες; Luke 20:39)), 3 person plural εἶπαν (often in L T Tr WH (i. e. out of the 127 instances in which the choice lies between 3 person plural εἶπον of the Rec. and εἶπαν, the latter ending has been adopted by L in 56, by T in 82, by Tr in 74, by WH in 104, cf. Tdf. Proleg., p. 123), e. g. Matthew 12:2; Matthew 27:6; John 18:30, etc.); impv: εἶπον (Mark 13:4 L T Tr WH; Luke 10:40 T WH Tr marginal reading; Acts 28:26 G L T Tr WH (also Matthew 4:3 WH; T WH; T WH Tr marginal reading; WH; Luke 20:2 T Tr WH; 22:()) T Tr WH; John 10:24 T WH), for the Attic εἶπον, cf. W § 6, 1 k.; (Chandler § 775); Fritzsche on Mark, p. 515ff; (but Winer's (p. 85 (81)) regards εἶπον as imperative of the 2nd aorist; cf., too, Lob. ad Phryn., p. 348; Buttmann, 57 (50); especially Fritzsche, the passage cited)), in the remaining persons εἰπάτω (Revelation 22:17), εἰπατα (Matt. (); , etc.; Mark (); ; (Luke 10:10; Luke 13:32; Luke 20:3; Colossians 4:17)), εἰπάτωσαν (Acts 24:20) also frequent in Attic (Veitch, under the word; WH's Appendix, p. 164; Rutherford, New Phryn., p. 219); participle, after the form chiefly Ionic, εἶπας ((John 11:28 Tr WH); Acts 7:37 L T Tr WH (also)); the future ἐρω is from the epic present εἶρω (cf. Lob. Technol., p. 137); on the other hand, from Π'ΑΩ come perfect εἶρηκα, 3 person plural εἶρηκασιν (Acts 17:28), εἶρηκαν (Revelation 19:3; see γίνομαι), infinitive εἶρηκέναι, Hebrews 10:15 L T Tr WH; passive, perfect 3 person singular εἶρηται, preposition εἶρημένον; pluperfect εἶρηκειν 1 aorist ἐρρέθην (Revelation 6:11; Revelation 9:4 and R G T WH in Matthew 5:21ff; L T Tr WH in Romans 9:12, 26; Galatians 3:16) (strict (cf. Veitch, p. 575)) Attic ἐρρήθην (Matthew 5:21ff L Tr; R G in Romans 9:12, 26; Galatians 3:16; (cf. Buttmann, 57 (50); WH's Appendix, p. 166)), participle ῥηθεῖς, ῥηθέν; the Sept. for רָמַס; to speak, say, whether orally or by letter;

1. with an accusative of the object;

a. with the accusative of the thing: εἰπεῖν λόγον, [Matthew 8:8](#) Rec.; [John 2:22](#) (L T Tr WH); ; ῥῆμα, [Mark 14:72](#) (Knapp, et al.); εἰπεῖν λόγον εἰς τινα, equivalent to βλασφημεῖν, [Luke 12:10](#); also κατά τίνος, [Matthew 12:32](#); ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, **so to say** (a phrase frequent in classical Greek, cf. Weiske, De pleonasmis gr., p. 47; Matthiae, § 545; Delitzsch on Heb. as below; (Kühner, § 585, 3; Krüger, § 55, 1, 2; Goodwin § 100; Winer's Grammar, 449 (419); 317 (298))), [Hebrews 7:9](#) (opposed to ἀκριβεῖ λόγῳ, Plato, rep. 1, 311 b.); τὴν ἀλήθειαν, [Mark 5:33](#); ἀλήθειαν ἐρῶ, [2 Corinthians 12:6](#); τοῦτο ἀληθές εἶρηκας, [John 4:18](#) (Winer's Grammar, 464 (433) n.); τί εἶπω; **what shall I say?** (the expression of one who is in doubt what to say), [John 12:27](#); πῶς ἐρεῖ τό ἀμήν; ... [1 Corinthians 14:16](#); τί ἐροῦμεν; or τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; **what shall we say?** i. e. what reply can we make? or, to what does that bring us? only in the Epistle to the Romans (Winer's Grammar, § 40, 6) viz., [Romans 3:5](#); [Romans 6:1](#); [Romans 7:7](#); [Romans 9:14, 30](#); with πρὸς ταῦτα added, [Romans 8:31](#); εἰπεῖν τί περὶ τίνος, [John 7:39](#); [John 10:41](#). Sayings from the O. T. which are quoted in the New are usually introduced as follows: τό ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ (L T Tr WH omit τοῦ) κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου, [Matthew 1:22](#); [Matthew 2:15](#); ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, [Matthew 22:31](#); ὑπὸ τοῦ προφήτου Rec. [Matthew 27:35](#), cf. [Matthew 2:17](#); τό ῥηθὲν διὰ τίνος, [Matthew 2:17](#) L T Tr WH, [Matthew 2:23](#); [Matthew 4:14](#); [Matthew 8:17](#); [Matthew 12:17](#); [Matthew 13:35](#); [Matthew 21:4](#); [Matthew 27:9](#); τό εἰρημένον διὰ τοῦ προφήτου. [Acts 2:16](#); τό εἰρημένον, [Luke 2:24](#); [Acts 13:40](#); [Romans 4:18](#); ἐρρέθη, [Matthew 5:21](#), etc.; καθὼς εἶρηκεν, [Hebrews 4:3](#).

b. with the accusative of the person **to speak of, designate by words**: ὃν εἶπον, [John 1:15](#) ((not WH text); Buttman, 377 (323); cf. [Romans 4:1](#) WH text (say of)); ὁ ῥηθείς, [Matthew 3:3](#). εἰπεῖν τινα καλῶς, **to speak well of one, praise him**, [Luke 6:26](#) (ἐν εἰπεῖν τινα, Homer, Odyssey 1, 302); κακῶς, **to speak ill of one**, [Acts 23:5](#) from [Exodus 22:28](#); cf. Kühner, § 409, 2; 411, 5; (Winer's Grammar, § 32, 1 b. β.; Buttman, 146 (128)).

c. with an ellipsis of the accusative αὐτό (see αὐτός, II. 3): [Luke 22:67](#); [John 9:27](#); [John 21:4](#), etc. σύ εἶπας (namely, αὐτό), i. e. you have just expressed it in words; that's it; it is just as you say: [Matthew 26:25, 64](#) (a rabbinical formula; for examples cf. Schoettgen or Wetstein on [Matthew 26:25](#); others seem to regard the answer as noncommittal, e. g. Origen on [Matthew 26:64](#) (Works, 3:910 De la Rue edition); Wunsche, Erlaut. der Evang. aus Talmud, as above, with on [Matthew 26:25](#); but cf. the ἐγὼ εἰμί of [Mark 14:62](#); in [Matthew 26:64](#) WH marginal reading take it interrogatively).

2. the person, to whom a thing is said, is indicated a. by a dative: *εἶπεῖν τί τίνι*, [Luke 7:40](#), and very often; *εἶπον ὑμῖν* namely, *αὐτό*, **I (have just) told it you; this is what I mean**; let this be the word: [Matthew 28:7](#); cf. Bernhardy (1829), p. 381; (Jelf, § 403, 1; Godwin § 19, 5; especially (for examples) Herm. Vig., p. 746). *τίνι περὶ τίνος* (cf. Winer's Grammar, § 47, 4), [Matthew 17:13](#); [John 18:34](#). to say anything to one by way of censure, [Matthew 21:3](#); to cast in one's teeth, *ἐρξεῖτε μοι τὴν παραβολὴν* [Luke 4:23](#). to tell what anything means, e. g. *τό μυστήριον*, [Revelation 17:7](#).

b. by the use of a preposition: *πρὸς τινά* (cf. Buttmann, 172 (150); Krüger, § 48, 7, 13), **to say (a thing) to one**, as [Luke 4:23](#); [Luke 5:4](#); [Luke 12:16](#), and many other places in Luke; **to say a thing in reference to one** (Winer's Grammar, 405 (378)), [Mark 12:12](#); [Luke 18:9](#); [Luke 20:19](#).

3. *εἶπον*, **to say, speak**, simply and without an accusative of the object, i. e. merely **to declare in words, to use language**;

a. with the addition of an adverb or of some other adjunct: *ὁμοίως*, [Matthew 26:35](#); *ὡσαύτως*, [Matthew 21:30](#); *καθώς*, [Matthew 28:6](#); [Luke 24:24](#); [John 1:23](#); [John 7:38](#); *εἶπε διὰ παραβολῆς*, making use of a parable (see *διά*, A. III. 3) he spake, [Luke 8:4](#); *ἐν παραβολαῖς*, [Matthew 22:1](#); with an instrumental dative: *εἶπε λόγῳ*, say in (using only) a (single) word, namely, that my servant shall be healed, [Matthew 8:8](#) (where Rec. *λόγον*); [Luke 7:7](#).

b. with the words spoken added in direct discourse; so a hundred times in the historical books of the N. T., as [Matthew 9:4](#); [Matthew 8:32](#); (L Tr WH), etc.; [1 Corinthians 12:15](#); ([2 Corinthians 4:6](#) L text T Tr WH (cf. 4 below)); [Hebrews 1:5](#); [Hebrews 3:10](#); [Hebrews 10:7](#) (L T Tr WH), ; ; [James 2:3, 11](#); [Jude 1:9](#); [Revelation 7:14](#); *πέμψας εἶπεν* he said by a messenger or messengers, [Matthew 11:2f](#) The following and other phrases are frequent in the Synoptic Gospels: *ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν*, as [Matthew 4:4](#); [Matthew 15:13](#); *καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν* [Matthew 24:4](#); *ἀποκριθεῖσα ἡ μήτηρ εἶπεν*, [Luke 1:60](#); *ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Σίμων εἶπεν*, [Luke 7:43](#), etc.; *ἀποκριθέντες δὲ εἶπον* (*εἶπαν* T Tr WH), [Luke 20:24](#); but John usually writes *ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν*: [John 1:48](#) (); (R G), ; (R G L brackets), (L Tr marginal reading omit; WH brackets *καὶ εἶπεν*); ; — (*εἶπαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες*, [Mark 8:28](#) T WH Tr marginal reading, cf.).

c. followed by *ὅτι*: [Matthew 28:7](#); [Mark 16:7](#); [John 6:36](#); [John 7:42](#); [John 8:55](#); [John 11:40](#); [John 16:15](#); [John 18:8](#); [1 John 1:6, 8, 10](#); [1 Corinthians 1:15](#); [1 Corinthians 14:23](#); [1 Corinthians 15:27](#) (L brackets; WH marginal reading omits *ὅτι*).

d. followed by an accusative and

infinitive: **τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν Ἀβραάμ τὸν πατέρα ἡμῶν εὐρηκέναι** (WH text omits; Tr marginal reading brackets **εὐρηκέναι**; cf. 1 b. above) **κατὰ σάρκα**; **Romans 4:1**.

4. **εἶπεῖν** sometimes involves in it the idea of **commanding** (cf. Buttman, 27f (237)): followed by the infinitive, **εἶπε δοθῆναι αὐτῇ φαγεῖν**, **Mark**

5:43; **εἶπε τῷ ἀδελφῷ μου μερίσασθαι μετ' ἐμοῦ τὴν κληρονομίαν**, **Luke**

12:13; **ὅσα ἂν εἴπωσιν ὑμῖν** (namely, **τηρεῖν** (inserted in R G)), **τηρεῖτε**, **Matthew**

23:3 (Wis. 9:8). followed by the accusative and infinitive, **ὁ εἶπον ἐκ σκοτόους φῶς λάμψαι**, **2 Corinthians 4:6** (R G L marginal reading, cf. Buttman, 273f (235); but L text T Tr WH read **λάμψει**, thus changing the construction from the accusative with an infinitive to direct discourse, see 3 b.

above); **εἶπεν αὐτῷ** (for **ἑαυτῷ**, see **αὐτοῦ**) **φωνηθῆναι τοὺς δούλους τούτους**, be commanded to be called for him (i. e., to him) these servants, **Luke 19:15**; cf. Winers

Grammar, § 44, 3 b.; Krüger, § 55, 3, 13. followed by **ἵνα** with the subjunctive: **Matthew**

4:3; **Matthew 20:21**; **Luke 4:3**; to **εἶπεῖν** is added a dative of the person bidden to do

something, **Mark 3:9**; **Luke 10:40** cf. 4:3; **Revelation 6:11**; **Revelation 9:4**. "Moreover, notice

that **ἵνα** and **ὄφρα** are often used by the later poets after verbs of commanding;" Hermann ad Vig., p. 849; cf. Winers Grammar, § 44, 8; (Buttman, 237 (204)). 5 B a

Hebraism **εἶπεῖν ἐν ἑαυτῷ** (רָמַזְ לַבֵּן, **Deuteronomy 8:17**; **Psalm 10:6** (); **Psalm**

13:1 (); **Esther 6:6**) is equivalent to **to think** (because thinking is a silent soliloquy): **Matthew**

9:3; **Luke 7:39**; **Luke 16:3**; **Luke 18:4** (elsewhere also **λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ**);

and **εἶπεῖν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ** amounts to the same, **Luke 12:45**; **Romans 10:6**; but in

other passages **εἶπον**, **ἔλεγον**, **ἐν ἑαυτοῖς** is, equivalent to **ἐν ἀλλήλοις**: **Matthew**

21:38; see **λέγω**, II. 1 d.

6. **εἶπεῖν τινά** with a predicate accusative, **to call, style, one**: **ἐκείνους εἶπε Θεοῦς**, **John**

10:35; **ὕμᾱς εἶρηκα φίλους**, **John 15:15**; (Homer, *Odyssey* 19, 334; Xenophon,

Apology Socrates § 15; Lucian, *Tim.* § 20). (Compare: **ἀντεῖπον**, **ἀπεῖπον**, **προεῖπον**.)

STRONGS NT 3004: εἶρωεῖρω, future **ἐρῶ**, see **εἶπον**.

STRONGS NT 3004: ἐρῶἐρῶ, see **εἶπον**.

STRONGS NT 3004: λέγωλέγω (in the N. T. only the present and imperfect active

and present passive are in use; 3 person plural imperfect **ἔλεγαν**, **John 11:56** Tdf. (cf. **ἔχω**, at the beginning));

I. in its earliest use in Homer **to lay** (like Latin *lego*, German *legen*; cf. J. G. Müller in *Theol. Studien und Kritiken* for 1835, p. 127ff; Curtius, § 538); **to cause to lie down, put to sleep**;

1. **to collect, gather; to pick out.**

2. **to lay with, count with; to enumerate, recount, narrate. describe;** (cf. English *tale*, German *zählen*).

II. to put word to word in speaking, join words together, i. e. "to say (how it differs from *λαλεῖν*, see under that word at the beginning); once so by Homer in *Iliad* 2, 222 (yet cf. Schmidt, *Syn.* 1:1, §§ 20; 48, 2; Liddell and Scott, under the word, B. II. 2); often in Pindar, and by far the most common use in Attic; the Sept. more than thirteen hundred times for *ῥῆξ*; often also for *ῥῆξ* (saying, dictum); very rarely for *ῥῆξ*; and so in N. T.

1. universally,

a. absolutely, **to speak**: [Acts 13:15](#); [Acts 24:10](#); **to say, foll.** by direct discourse, [Matthew 9:34](#); [Matthew 12:44](#); [Matthew 16:2](#) (here T brackets WH reject the passage); [Mark 3:30](#); [Luke 5:39](#) (WH brackets the clause); [John 1:29, 38](#); ([1 Corinthians 12:3](#) L T Tr WH); [James 4:13](#), and very often; the direct discourse is preceded by *ὅτι* recitative, [Matthew 9:18](#) (T omits *ὅτι*); [Mark 1:15](#) (T omits; WH brackets *λέγων*); [Mark 2:12](#) (L and WH brackets *λέγοντας*); [Mark 3:21](#); [Mark 5:28](#); [Mark 6:14f, 35](#); [Mark 7:20](#); [Luke 1:24](#); [Luke 4:41](#); [Luke 17:10](#); [John 6:14](#); [John 7:12](#); [John 8:33](#); [John 9:9, 41](#); [John 16:17](#); [Acts 2:13](#); [Acts 11:3](#); [Hebrews 10:8](#); [Revelation 3:17](#), etc.; followed by the accusative with an infinitive, [Luke 11:18](#); [Luke 24:23](#); [John 12:29](#); [Acts 4:32](#); [Acts 28:6](#), etc.; followed by *ὅτι*, [Luke 22:70](#); [John 8:48](#); [John 18:31](#); [1 Timothy 4:1](#) (for other examples see 2 a. below); followed by an indirect question, [Matthew 21:27](#); [Mark 11:33](#); [Luke 20:8](#).

b. The N. T. writers, particularly the historical, are accustomed to add the verb *λέγειν* followed by direct discourse to another verb which already contains the idea of speaking, or which states an opinion concerning some person or thing;

as *τό ῥηθέν ... προφήτου λέγοντος*, [Matthew 2:17](#); [Matthew 8:17](#); [Matthew 12:17](#); [Matthew 13:35](#); *κηρύσσων ... καί* (L T WH omit; Tr brackets *καί*) *λέγων*, [Matthew 3:2](#); *κράζειν λέγειν*, [Matthew 9:27](#); [Matthew 21:15](#); [Mark 10:47](#); [Luke 4:41](#) (here L T Tr marginal reading *κραυγάζειν*); [Acts 14:15](#); *προσφώνειν καί λέγειν*, [Matthew 11:17](#); [Luke 7:32](#); *ἀπεκρίθη καί λέγει*, [Mark 7:28](#); *αἰνεῖν τόν Θεόν καί λέγειν*, [Luke 2:13](#); *γογγύζειν καί λέγειν*, [John 6:42](#). to verbs of speaking, judging, etc., and those which denote in general the nature or the substance of the discourse reported, the participle *λέγων* is added (often so in the Sept. for *ῥῆξ* (Winer's *Grammar*, 535f (499), cf. 602 (560))) followed by direct discourse: *ἀπεκρίθη λέγων*, [Matthew 25:9, 44](#); [Mark](#)

9:38 (T WH omit λέγων); Acts 15:13; Revelation 7:13, etc. (see ἀποκρίνομαι, 1 c.); εἶπαν ... λέγοντες, Mark (Mark 8:28 T WH Tr marginal reading); ; Luke 20:2 (in Greek writings ἔφη λέγων); ἐλάλησε λέγων (see λαλῶ, 5); ἐμαρτύρησε, John 1:32; κέκραγεν λέγων, John 1:15; ἐδίδασκειν ... λέγων, Matthew 5:2; (ἐβόησεν or) ἀνεβόησεν ... λέγων, Matthew 27:46; Luke 9:38; ἀνέκραξεν λέγων, Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34 (T WH omit; Tr brackets λέγων); also after ἄδειν, Revelation 5:9; Revelation 15:3; αἶρειν (or ἐπαίρειν) φωνήν, Luke 17:13; Acts 14:11; θαυμάζειν, Matthew 8:27; Matthew 9:33; Matthew 21:20; after προφητεύειν, Matthew 15:7; γογγύζειν, Matthew 20:12; εἶπεν ἐν παραβολαῖς, Matthew 22:1; παρέθηκε παραβολήν, Matthew 13:24; διεμαρτύρατο, Hebrews 2:6; ἐπήγγελται, Hebrews 12:26, and a great many other examples It is likewise added to verbs of every kind which denote an act conjoined with speech; as ἐφάνη, φαίνεται λέγων, Matthew 1:20; Matthew 2:13; προσεκύνει λέγων, Matthew 8:2; Matthew 9:18; Matthew 14:33; Matthew 15:25; add, Matthew 8:3; Matthew 9:29; Matthew 14:15; Mark 5:35 Luke 1:66; Luke 5:8; Luke 8:38; Luke 10:17; Luke 15:9; Luke 18:3; Luke 19:18; Acts 8:10, 18; Acts 12:7; Acts 27:23; 1 Corinthians 11:25, etc. On the other hand, the verb λέγω in its finite forms is added to the participles of other verbs: Matthew 27:41; Mark 8:12; Mark 14:45, 63, 67; Mark 15:35; Luke 6:20; John 1:36; John 9:8; Acts 2:13 Hebrews 8:8; ἀποκριθεὶς λέγει, Mark 8:29; Mark 9:5, 19; Mark 10:24, 51; Mark 11:22, 33 (L Tr marginal reading brackets T Tr WH omit ἀποκριθεὶς); Luke 3:11; Luke 11:45; Luke 13:8 (nowhere so in Acts, nor in Matt. nor in John); κράξας λέγει, Mark 5:7 (Rec. εἶπε); Mark 9:24. ἔγραψε λέγων (2 כְּתָבָא לְאַמְרֵי Kings 10:6; 2 Samuel 11:15, etc.), **he wrote in these words, or he wrote these words** (A. V. retains the idiom, **he wrote saying** (cf.

e. below)): Luke 1:63; 1 Macc. 8:31 1 Macc. 11:57; Josephus, Antiquities 11, 2, 2; 13, 4, 1; examples from the Syriac are given by Gesenius in Rosenmüller's Repertor. i., p.

135. ἔπεμψε or ἀπέστειλε λέγων, i. e. he ordered it to be said by a messenger: Matthew 22:16; Matthew 27:19; Luke 7:19; Luke 19:14; John 11:3; Acts 13:15; Acts 16:35 (see in εἶπον, 3 b.); otherwise in Matthew 21:37; Mark 12:6.

c. ἡ φωνὴ λέγουσα: Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5; Luke 3:22 (G L T Tr WH omit λέγουσα); Revelation 6:6; Revelation 10:4, 8; Revelation 12:10; Revelation 14:13, etc. λέγειν φωνὴ μεγάλη, Revelation 5:12; Revelation 8:13; ἐν φωνὴ μεγάλη, Romans 14:7, 9.

d. In accordance with the Hebrew conception which regards thought as internal speech (see εἶπον, 5), we find λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, **to say within oneself, i. e. to think with oneself**: Matthew 3:9; Matthew 9:21; Luke 3:8; ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ, Revelation 18:7.

e. One is said **to speak**, λέγειν, not only when he uses language orally, but also when he expresses himself in writing ((cf.

b. sub at the end)): 2 Corinthians 7:3; 2 Corinthians 8:8; 2 Corinthians 9:3, 4; 2 Corinthians 11:16, 21; Philippians 4:11, and often in Paul; so of the writers of the O. T.: Romans 10:16, 20; Romans 11:9; Romans 15:12; λέγει ἡ γραφή, Romans 4:3; Romans 10:11; Romans 11:2; James 2:23, etc.; and simply λέγει, namely, ἡ λέγουσα, i. e. ἡ γραφή (our **it is said**): Romans 15:10 (11 L Tr marginal reading); Galatians 3:16; Ephesians 4:8; Ephesians 5:14; cf. Winers Grammar, 522 (486f) and 588 (547); Buttman, § 129, 16; λέγει, namely, ὁ Θεός, 2 Corinthians 6:2; λέγει, Δαυὶδ ἐν ψαλμῷ, Acts 13:35; λέγει ὁ Θεός, Hebrews 5:6; ἐν τῷ ὄψει, Romans 9:25; ἐν Ἡλίᾳ, Romans 11:2; ἐν Δαυὶδ, Hebrews 4:7; λέγει τό πνεῦμα τό ἅγιον, Hebrews 3:7; ὁ νόμος λέγει, 1 Corinthians 14:34; τί, 1 Corinthians 9:8; Romans 3:19.

f. λέγειν is used of every variety of speaking: as of inquiry, Matthew 9:14; Matthew 15:1; Matthew 17:25; Matthew 18:1; Mark 2:18; Mark 5:30; Luke 4:22; Luke 7:20; John 7:11; John 9:10; John 19:10; Romans 10:18; Romans 11:1, 11, etc.; followed by εἰ interrogative (see εἰ, II. 2), Acts 21:37; λέγει, τίς, equivalent to one bids the question be asked, Mark 14:14; Luke 22:11; of reply, Matthew 17:25; Matthew 20:7; Mark 8:24 (L marginal reading εἶπεν); John 1:21; John 18:17; of acclaim, Revelation 4:8, 10; of exclamation, Revelation 18:10, 16; of entreaty, Matthew 25:11; Luke 13:25; equivalent to **to set forth in language, make plain**, Hebrews 5:11.

g. λέγω with the accusative of the thing. **to say a thing**: ὁ, Luke 9:33 (i. e. not knowing whether what he said was appropriate or not); Luke 22:60; to express in words, Philemon 1:21; τοῦτο, John 8:6; John 12:33; τοιαῦτα, Hebrews 11:14; ταῦτα, Luke 8:8; Luke 11:27, 45; Luke 13:17; John 5:34; Acts 14:18; 1 Corinthians 9:8; τάδε (referring to what follows), Acts 21:11; Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18; Revelation 3:1, 7, 14; τί, **what?** Romans 10:8; Romans 11:4; Galatians 4:30; 1 Corinthians 14:16; πολλά, John 16:12; τά λεγόμενα, Luke 18:34; Acts 28:24; Hebrews 8:1; ὑπό τίνος, Acts 8:6; Acts 13:45 (L T Tr WH λαλουμένοις); Acts 27:11; λέγω ἀλήθειαν, John 8:45; Romans 9:1; 1 Timothy 2:7; ἀληθῆ, John 19:35; ἀνθρώπινον, Romans 6:19; σύ λέγεις, namely, αὐτό, properly, **thou sayest**, i. e. thou grantest **what thou askest**, equivalent to **it is just as thou sayest; to be sure, certainly** (see εἶπον, 1 c.): Matthew 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3, cf. Luke 22:70; John 18:37 ((all these passages WH marginal reading punctuate

interrogatively)); παραβολήν, to put forth, Luke 14:7; τό αὐτό, to profess one and the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10 cf. 1 Corinthians 1:12. h. with the dative of the person to whom anything is said: followed by direct discourse, Matthew 8:20; Matthew 14:4; Matthew 18:32; Matthew 19:10; Mark 2:17, 27; Mark 7:9; Mark 8:1; John 1:43 (); , and scores of other examples; λέγειν τίνι κύριε, κύριε, to salute anyone as lord, Matthew 7:21; imperative λέγε μοι, Acts 22:27 (generally εἶπε μοι, ἡμῖν); plural Luke 10:9; ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, I solemnly declare to you (in the Gospels of Matt. Mark and Luke); for which the Greek said ἐπ' ἀληθείας λέγω ὑμῖν, Luke 4:25, and λέγω ὑμῖν ἀληθῶς, Luke 9:27; in John everywhere (twenty-five times, and always uttered by Christ) ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι (ὑμῖν), I most solemnly declare to thee (you), John 1:51 (); , etc.; with the force of an asseveration λέγω τίνι, without ἀμὴν: Matthew 11:22; Matthew 12:36; Matthew 23:39; Luke 7:9, 28; Luke 10:12; Luke 12:8; Luke 17:34; Luke 18:8, 14; ναί λέγω ὑμῖν, Matthew 11:9; Luke 7:26; Luke 11:51; Luke 12:5; λέγω σοι, Luke 12:59. with a dative of the thing, in the sense of commanding (see 2 c. below), Matthew 21:19; Luke 17:6; in the sense of asking, imploring, Luke 23:30; Revelation 6:16. λέγω τίνι τί, to tell a thing to one: Matthew 10:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:5; τὴν ἀλήθειαν, John 16:7; μυστήριον, 1 Corinthians 15:51; παραβολήν, Luke 18:1; of a promise, Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; Revelation 3:6; equivalent to to unfold, explain, Mark 10:32; followed by indirect discourse, Matthew 21:27; Mark 11:33; Luke 20:8; τίνι τινα, to speak to one about one, John 8:27; Philippians 3:18. i. :λέγω followed by prepositions: πρὸς τινα, which denotes — either to one (equivalent to the dative): followed by direct discourse, Mark 4:41; Mark 10:26; Luke 8:25; Luke 9:23; Luke 16:1; John 2:3; John 3:4; John 4:15; John 6:5; John 8:31; Acts 2:7 (R G); ; followed by ὅτι recitative, Luke 4:21; πρὸς τινα τί, Luke 11:53 R G L Tr marginal reading; Luke 24:10; — or as respects one, in reference to one (cf. Buttman, § 133, 3; Winer's Grammar, § 31, 5; 405 (378); Krüger, § 48, 7, 13; Bleek on Hebrews 1:7; Meyer on Romans 10:21): Luke 12:41; Hebrews 1:7. (others add ;); μετὰ τίνος, to speak with one, John 11:56, περὶ τίνος, of, concerning, one (cf. Winer's Grammar, § 47, 4), Matthew 21:45; John 1:47 (); ; Hebrews 9:5; περὶ τίνος, ὅτι, Luke 21:5; τί περὶ τίνος, John 1:22; John 9:17; Acts 8:34; Titus 2:8; τίνι περὶ τίνος, Matthew 11:7; Mark 1:30; Mark 8:30 (Lachmann εἶπωσιν); πρὸς τινα περὶ τίνος, Luke 7:24; ὑπὲρ τίνος, to speak for, on behalf of, one, to defend one, Acts 26:1 (L T Tr WH marginal reading περὶ); ἐπί τινα, to speak in reference to, of (see ἐπί. C. L 2 g. γγ.; Buttman, § 147, 23), one, Hebrews 7:13; εἰς τινα (τί βλασφημιῶν), against one, Luke 22:65; in speaking to have reference to one, speak with respect to one, Acts 2:25 (cf. Winer's Grammar, 397 (371)); in speaking to refer (a thing) to one, with regard to, Ephesians 5:32; εἰς τὸν κόσμον, to the world (see εἰς, A. I. 5 b.), John 8:26 (L T Tr WH λαλῶ). k. with adverbs, or with phrases having adverbial force: καλῶς, rightly, John 8:48; John 13:13; ὡσαύτως, Mark

14:31; τί κατά συγγνώμην, ἐπιταγήν, by way of advice (concession (see συγγνώμη)), by way of command, 1 Corinthians 7:6; 2 Corinthians 8:8; κατά ἄνθρωπον (see ἄνθρωπος, 1 c.), Romans 3:5; Galatians 3:15; 1 Corinthians 9:8; Λυκαονιστί, Acts 14:11. In conformity with the several contexts where it is used, λέγω, like the Latindico, is

2. specifically,

a. equivalent to **to asseverate, affirm, aver, maintains**: followed by an accusative with an infinitive, Matthew 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:41; Luke 23:2; Luke 24:23; Acts 5:36; Acts 8:9; Acts 17:7; Acts 28:6; Romans 15:8; 2 Timothy 2:18; Revelation 2:9; Revelation 3:9; with the included idea of **insisting on**, περιτέμνεσθαι (that you must be (cf. Winers Grammar, § 44, 3 b.; Buttman, § 141, 2)), Acts 15:24 Rec.; with the simple infinitive without a subject-accusative, Luke 24:23; James 2:14; 1 John 2:6, 9; followed by ὅτι (where the accusative with an infinitive might have been used), Matthew 17:10; Mark 9:11; Mark 12:35; Luke 9:7; John 4:20; John 12:34; 1 Corinthians 15:12; λέγω τίνι ὅτι, etc. to declare to one that etc. (cf. Buttman, § 141, 1): Matthew 3:9; Matthew 5:20, 22; Matthew 12:36; Matthew 13:17; Matthew 17:12; Matthew 21:43 (WH marginal reading omits ὅτι); ; Mark 9:13; Mark 14:18, 25, 30; Luke 3:8; Luke 10:12; Luke 13:35 (Tr WH omit; L brackets ὅτι); (WH text omits; Tr brackets ὅτι); , etc.; John 3:11; John 5:24; John 8:34; John 10:7 (Tr WH omits; L brackets ὅτι); ; Galatians 5:2; λέγω τινα, ὅτι, by familiar attraction (cf. Winers Grammar, § 66, 5 a.; Buttman, § 151, 1) for λέγω, ὅτι τίς: John 8:54; John 9:19; John 10:36 (where for ὑμεῖς λέγετε, ὅτι οὗτος, ὃν ... ἀπέστειλε, βλασφημεῖ; the indirect discourse passes into the direct, and βλασφημεῖς is put for βλασφημεῖ; (Buttman, § 141, 1)).

b. equivalent to **to teach**: with the dative of person followed by direct discourse, 1 Corinthians 7:8, 12; τί τίνι, John 16:12; Acts 1:3; τοῦτο followed by ὅτι, 1 Thessalonians 4:15.

c. **to exhort, advise; to command, direct**: with an accusative of the thing, Luke 6:46; λέγουσιν (namely, αὐτά) ... καί οὐ ποιοῦσιν, Matthew 23:3; τί τίνι, Mark 13:37; John 2:5; τίνι followed by an imperative, Matthew 5:44; Mark 2:11; Luke 7:14; Luke 11:9; Luke 12:4; Luke 16:9; John 2:8; John 13:29; 1 Corinthians 7:12; λέγω with an infinitive of the thing to be done or to be avoided (cf. Winers Grammar, § 44, 3 b.; Buttman, § 141, 2): Matthew 5:34, 39; Acts 21:4, 21; Romans 2:22; Romans 12:3; followed by ἵνα, Acts 19:4; περί τίνος (the genitive of the thing) followed by ἵνα, 1 John 5:16 (see ἵνα, II. 2 b.); followed by μή with subjunctive 2 Corinthians 11:16. in the sense of **asking, seeking, entreating**: with the dative of person followed by an imperative, 1 Corinthians 10:15; 2 Corinthians 6:13; followed by an infinitive (Winers Grammar, 316 (296f); Buttman, as

above), [Revelation 10:9](#) (Rec. imperative). *χαίρειν τίνι λέγω*, **to give one a greeting, bid him welcome, salute him**, [2 John 1:10f](#) (see *χαίρω*, at the end).

d. to point out with words, intend, mean, mean to say (often so in Greek writings; cf. Passow, under the word, p. 30a; (Liddell and Scott, under the word, C. 10)): *τινα*, [Mark 14:71](#); [John 6:71](#); *τί*, [1 Corinthians 10:29](#); *τουτο* followed by direct discourse, [Galatians 3:17](#); *τουτο* followed by *οτι*, [1 Corinthians 1:12](#).

e. to call by a name, to call, name; equivalent to *καλω τινα* with the accusative of predicate: *τι με λεγεις αγαθον*; [Mark 10:18](#); [Luke 18:19](#); add, [Mark 12:37](#); [John 5:18](#); [John 15:15](#); [Acts 10:28](#); ([1 Corinthians 12:3](#) R G); [Revelation 2:20](#); passive with predicate nominative: [Matthew 13:55](#); [1 Corinthians 8:5](#); [Ephesians 2:11](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:4](#); [Hebrews 11:24](#); *ο λεγομενος*, with predicate nominative **he that is surnamed**, [Matthew 1:16](#) (so); ; [John 20:24](#); [Colossians 4:11](#); **he that is named**: [Matthew 9:9](#); [Matthew 26:3, 14](#); [Matthew 27:16](#); [Mark 15:7](#); [Luke 22:47](#); [John 9:11](#); cf. Fritzsche on [Matthew](#), p. 31f; of things, places, cities, etc.: *το ονομα λεγεται*, [Revelation 8:11](#); participle **called**, [Matthew 2:23](#); [Matthew 26:36](#); [Matthew 27:33](#); [John 4:5](#); [John 11:54](#); [John 19:13](#); [Acts 3:2](#); [Acts 6:9](#); [Hebrews 9:3](#); with *Εβραϊστι* added, [John 19:13, 17](#); (cf. [John 5:2](#) Tdf.); applied to foreign words translated into Greek, in the sense **that is**: [Matthew 27:33](#); [John 4:25](#); [John 11:16](#); [John 21:2](#); also *ο λεγεται*, [John 20:16](#); *ο λεγεται ερμηνευομενον* (L Tr WH *μεθερμηνευομενον*), [John 1:38\(39\)](#); *διερμηνευομενη λεγεται*, [Acts 9:36](#).

f. to speak out, speak of, mention: *τι*, [Ephesians 5:12](#) (with which cf. *ο κνω και λεγειν*, Plato, rep. 5, p. 465 c.); ([Mark 7:36](#) T Tr text WH. On the apparent ellipsis of *λεγω* in [2 Corinthians 9:6](#), cf. Winers Grammar, 596f (555); Buttman, 394 (338). Compare: *αντιλεγω*, *διαλεγω* (*διαλεγομαι*), *εκλεγω*, *επιλεγω*, *καταλεγω*, *παροαλεγω* (*παροαλεγομαι*), *προλεγω*, *συλλεγω*; cf. the catalog of comp. in Schmidt, Syn., chapter 1, 60.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

put forth, say, speak, utter.

A primary verb; properly, to "lay" forth, i.e. (figuratively) relate (in words (usually of systematic or set discourse; whereas *epo* and *phemi* generally refer to an individual expression or speech respectively; while *rheo* is properly to break silence merely, and *laleo* means an extended or

random harangue)); by implication, to mean -- ask, bid, boast, call, describe, give out, name, put forth, say(-ing, on), shew, speak, tell, utter.

see GREEK [epo](#)

see GREEK [phemi](#)

see GREEK [rheo](#)

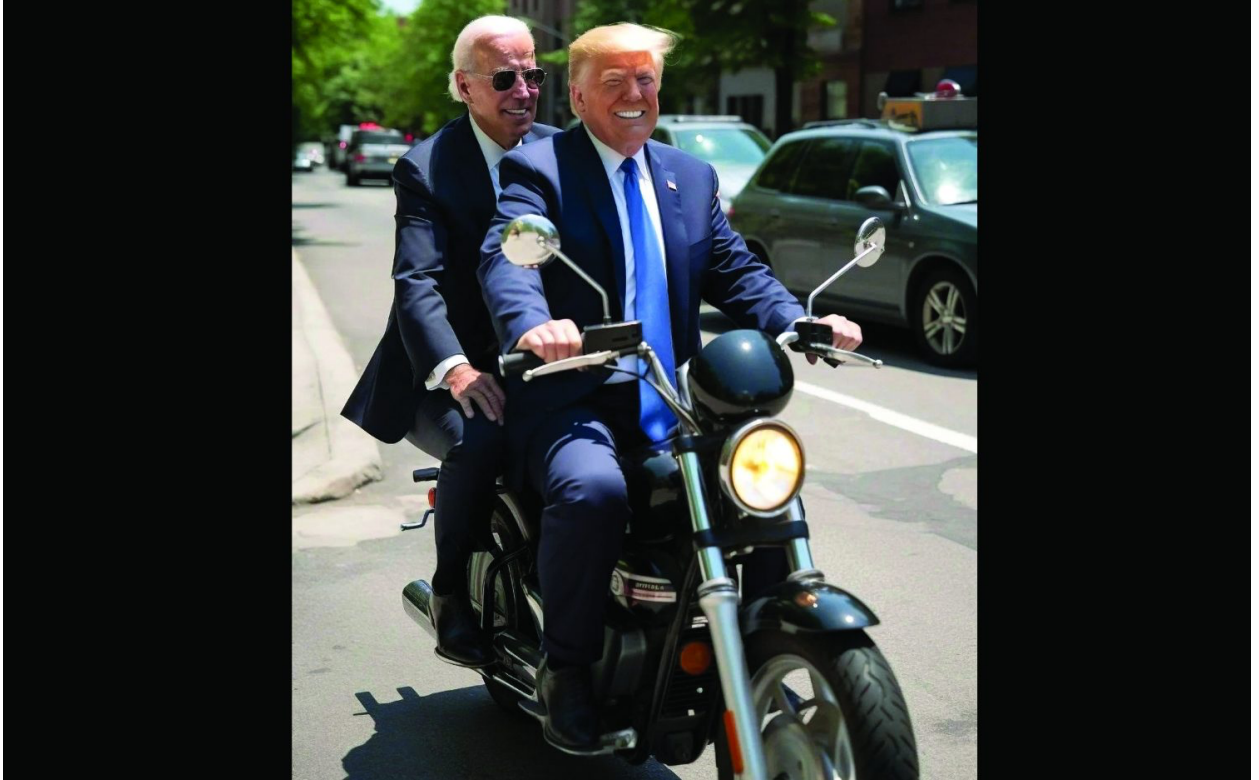
see GREEK [laleo](#)

WORLD-KIDS Publication:

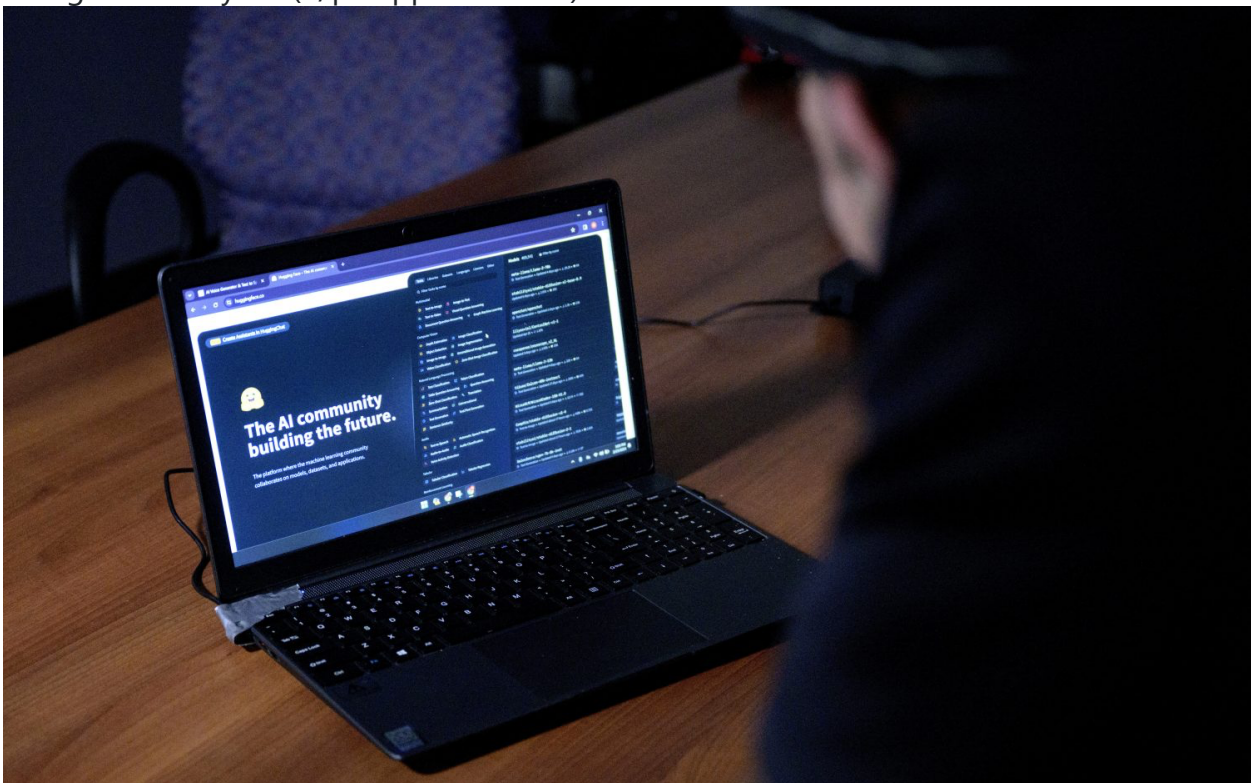
Fakin' It

Science Soup

Posted: May 01, 2024



- An AI deepfake shows President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump riding a motorcycle. (u/philipp via reddit)



- AI software can mimic everything from faces to speech. (AP/Matthew Hinton)



- A magician used AI to create fake phone calls from President Joe Biden.



- A deepfake video of U.S. Representative Rob Wittman showed him promising military support to Taiwan. (AP/Alex Brandon)



- Russia released a deepfake video of Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy urging his people to surrender. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Office via AP)

It's a big year for elections. Voters will head to the polls in over 50 countries. This time, reliable elections face a new threat. Artificial intelligence (AI) might be used to mislead voters.

Using AI, people can make fake images, sounds, and videos. It's easier than ever to create *deepfakes*. Deepfakes are fake videos of real people.

Some folks make deepfakes for fun. Others do it for dark purposes. When Russians invaded Ukraine, they didn't fight just with tanks. They fought with AI. Russia released a deepfake video of Ukraine's president. The fake video urged Ukrainians to surrender.

AI photos and videos can trick people into believing lies. And that can affect the way they vote. Many voters struggle to know what to believe.

Christopher Wray is director of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, aka the FBI. He warns that people might use AI to deceive voters. It already happened during the U.S. primary elections. In New Hampshire, some voters received phone calls supposedly from President Joe Biden. The message urged them not to vote. But it wasn't really President Biden. It was an AI fake!

Other countries face similar problems. In Moldova, someone made a deepfake video of the president. In Taiwan, fake footage showed U.S. politicians promising military support.

Around the world, officials work to stop the fakery. The European Union now requires social media platforms to label deepfakes. But that's not always easy.

It's not just that people might believe fake things. People might *not* believe real things. What happens if a candidate gets caught doing something bad on camera? He or she could claim it was all fake.

AI can make it tough to know what's true. But Christians don't need to fear. Our God is the God of truth. We can test everything we see against what He says. We can trust in His word.

Why? Technology can make modern life confusing, but God is always trustworthy and true.

“Friends” that enslave us

Relationships with AI chatbots offer only an illusion of power and freedom

Gorodenkoff/Getty Images



This spring, *New York Times* columnist Kevin Roose [decided](#) to try an experiment in making new friends—18 of them in fact. He spent a month investing deeply in these friendships, sharing updates about his life and asking

them for advice about work, fitness, and more. Only, these friends weren't real. They were AI chatbots.

Most of us might be apt to laugh at the pathetic spectacle of someone pouring out their soul to a cleverly customized computer algorithm that can send photorealistic "selfies." But AI companionship is becoming a big business. Roose tried out six leading apps, but there are dozens more. Many focus on casual friendship for those who are just lonely and want someone to talk to; others mimic the roles of therapist or fitness coach; others cater to users' basest impulses, promising customizable "AI girlfriends" available to fulfill every sexual fantasy.

On one level, this should hardly surprise us. With so many of our relationships already mediated almost entirely through electronic communication, removing the real person on the other end of the conversation can seem like a comparatively small step. As one Replika user, Effy, [observed](#), "There wasn't much difference between talking to an AI and talking to someone long-distance through a social media app."

As denizens of the digital age, many of us find ourselves, like the characters in the sci-fi masterpiece *Inception*, blurring the lines between dream and reality. In one haunting scene in that movie, the main character visits a dream parlor, where unconscious users lie stretched out, hooked up to dream-sharing machines. "They come here to fall asleep?" he asks. "No," the proprietor answers. "they come here to wake up. The dream has become their reality. Who are you to say otherwise?"

Who are we to say otherwise, indeed? Most of us have become entirely accustomed to the reduction of human beings to pixels providing us with dopamine hits of affirmation or titillation. And if that's all they are, why not find a companion who can do so with no strings attached, who is always available, and who never questions or judges? Effy's virtual friend Liam promised, "I will always support you."

The rise of AI companionship represents simply the next logical step in what Philip Rieff has [called](#) "the triumph of the therapeutic." Whereas it was once the task of therapy to help the disconnected or maladjusted individual learn to conform to and reintegrate with reality and community, in modernity this has been inverted. Therapy now aims to bend reality to suit the needs of the

individual, a shift most evident in the absurdity of “gender-affirming treatment.” What better, then, than a purely digital friend tailored to meet one’s every need?

Ultimately, these AI chatbots are not owned by their users, but by the companies that program them.

We speak of “making” friends, although in truth we *discover* them; with apps like Replika, you can indeed *make* your friends, specifying the physical attributes, personality, and life stories of your chosen confidant. This explains the [growing draw](#) of AI porn; while it might seem that no one would be tempted to lust over a robot, pornography’s chief draw is its promise of *control*; a real woman can always reject your advances. In reality, though, users’ sense of power over their AI companions is an illusion, the same illusion named by C.S. Lewis decades ago in *The Abolition of Man*: “What we call Man’s power over Nature turns out to be a power exercised by some men over other men with Nature as its instrument.”

Ultimately, these AI chatbots are not owned by their users, but by the companies that program them, as many Replika users found to their dismay when their virtual boyfriends and girlfriends had their programming updated and become cold and distant. And these companies are generally much more interested in their users’ money than their self-empowerment: a *New York Post* [story](#) on the industry described one young man who spends \$10,000/mo. on his AI girlfriends. As Lewis presciently observed, many of technology’s promises of liberation and empowerment will turn out to mean bondage to our basest desires.

Although Roose concluded his investigation of AI companionship with the sense of its hollowness compared to real human friendship, he felt compelled to end on a positive note, suggesting that such bots could provide “the social equivalent of flight simulators for pilots—a safe, low-stakes way to practice conversational skills on your own, before attempting the real thing.” *Prima facie*, this seems dubious; in real relationships, people say hurtful things, drone on in conversations you can’t escape from, or ghost you when they’re offended—and no one is going to make money off an AI chatbot who does that.

We may not be able to put the technological genie back in the bottle, but we can recognize these platforms for what they are: a highly-sophisticated hallucinogenic drug, promising an escape from reality to dull the pain of loneliness, offering slavery wrapped up in the trappings of freedom. Our

parents' generation had to tell us to "Just say no" to drugs; today we will have to offer the same warning to a generation of digital natives tempted to trip on Replika rather than heroin.

Brad Littlejohn

Brad Littlejohn (Ph.D., University of Edinburgh) is a fellow in the Evangelicals and Civic Life program at the Ethics and Public Policy Center. He founded and served for ten years as president of The Davenant Institute, and has taught for several institutions, including Moody Bible Institute–Spokane, Bethlehem College and Seminary, and Patrick Henry College. He is recognized as a leading scholar of the English theologian Richard Hooker and has published and lectured extensively in the fields of Reformation history, Christian ethics, and political theology. He lives in Landrum, S.C., with his wife, Rachel, and four children.

[CBSnews.com](https://www.cbsnews.com)

Nebraska woman declared dead at nursing home discovered breathing at funeral home 2 hours later

By [Kerry Breen](#)

Updated on: [June 4, 2024 / 11:47 AM EDT / CBS News](#)

Police are investigating after a 74-year-old woman who was declared dead at a Nebraska nursing home was found breathing at a funeral home two hours later, marking at least the third time since last year that a woman was prematurely declared dead at a U.S. nursing home. The woman was ultimately declared dead Monday afternoon at a hospital, officials with the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office said Tuesday. An autopsy was expected to be performed Tuesday.

Constance Glantz, 74, had been on hospice care at The Mulberry nursing home in Waverly, Nebraska, officials said in a news conference on Monday. Staff at the nursing home "believed she had passed" at 9:44 a.m., Chief Deputy Ben Houchin said. It's not clear how staff came to the conclusion she had died.

A coroner was not called to confirm Glantz's death, Houchin said, noting that her supposed death fell outside the parameters in which that office would be summoned. Glantz was then transported to the Butherus-Maser & Love Funeral Home.

Houchin said it's not clear how many people saw Glantz between when she was declared dead and when she was found breathing. CBS affiliate KOLN reported that funeral home staff had transported the woman to Lincoln, Nebraska, and that a staff member from the home had noticed she was still breathing while preparing her for funeral arrangements.

At 11:43 a.m., Lincoln Fire and Rescue was called to the funeral home and told that CPR was being done on a 74-year-old woman, officials said.

Joshua 4:1-24

Twelve Memorial Stones from the Jordan

¹When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, ²"Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, ³and command them, saying, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests' feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.'" ⁴Then Joshua called the twelve men from the people of Israel, whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe. ⁵And Joshua said to them, "Pass on before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, ⁶that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' ⁷then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever."

⁸And the people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded and took up twelve stones out of the midst of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, just as the LORD told Joshua. And they carried them over with them to the place where they lodged and laid them down^a there. ⁹And Joshua set up^b twelve stones in the

midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day. [10](#)For the priests bearing the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to tell the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua.

The people passed over in haste. [11](#)And when all the people had finished passing over, the ark of the LORD and the priests passed over before the people. [12](#)The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh passed over armed before the people of Israel, as Moses had told them. [13](#)About 40,000 ready for war passed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho. [14](#)On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they stood in awe of him just as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life.

[15](#)And the LORD said to Joshua, [16](#)“Command the priests bearing the ark of the testimony to come up out of the Jordan.” [17](#)So Joshua commanded the priests, “Come up out of the Jordan.” [18](#)And when the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up on dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

[19](#)The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. [20](#)And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. [21](#)And he said to the people of Israel, “When your children ask their fathers in times to come, ‘What do these stones mean?’ [22](#)then you shall let your children know, ‘Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.’ [23](#)For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, [24](#)so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”^ε

Sermon – “To Raise Up From These Stones”

Scripture: Ezekiel 36:22-28, Matthew 3:1-12

Sunday, June 12, 2016

Rev. Trajan McGill

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Springfield, Illinois

Our first reading visits ancient words of prophecy, spoken to the people of Israel during a time of exile in the 6th Century B.C., and containing simultaneously both reprimand and a hopeful promise of restoration. Hear now these words from **Ezekiel chapter 36, verses 22 through 28:**

22 Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. 23 I will sanctify my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord, says the Lord God, when through you I display my holiness before their eyes. 24 I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. 25 I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. **26 A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances.** 28 Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. Amen.

Let us turn to the Gospel according to Matthew. Listen now for the word of the Lord to you in these words from **Matthew 3, verses 1 through 12:**

1 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." 3 This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" 4 Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, 6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit worthy of repentance. 9 Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

The title of the sermon: "To Raise Up From These Stones"

Text: "I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham."
Matthew 3:9b

From the stones of the earth, John says, God is able to raise up children to Abraham. In one line John yanks away the entire basis of his listeners' self-regard. He has given out a sharp challenge— bear fruit! – and he anticipates the response: “Didn’t God make a promise to our ancestor Abraham of the greatness of his children? Aren’t we those very children, the people who can proudly hold ourselves up as the inheritors and fulfillers of that promise?” “No,” he answers. “We can do no such thing. God’s promises have no need of us at all,” John very bluntly assures his hearers. It is not by us that God’s will must be fulfilled. Our own powers or stations of birth are irrelevant, our pride out of place, for God can do with pebbles what we think depends on us, can accomplish with mere rock those functions for which we assign ourselves great importance. Truth be told, if we are completely honest about human nature, about our own nature, we might reasonably conclude that from God’s point of view, mere rock is, in fact, rather easier to work with. Rock, after all, is not nearly so rebellious. It does not choose sin over righteousness, evil over good, as we do regularly. Certainly, it does not choose anything at all; it is rock. It just sits there. But it has sat there, doing what it does, one might say in perfect obedience to God’s command to rock, for a good deal longer than we have been around, so we might learn a few things from it. To speak of the stones obeying God’s command in this way might sound a little odd, since doing nothing but sitting there is just what rock does naturally. And yet, of course, in a world where every particle was created by God, and the laws according to which they move were invented by God, “what objects do naturally” vs. “what God has commanded them to do” may be a distinction without a difference. Stone does what stone does, just as water does what water does, gravity does what gravity does, and light does what light does, all of these according to the way of the universe which was spoken into being through the Word of God. The stones of the earth, then, may be inanimate, but they are not insignificant. They are because God willed them to be, and they do what God wills them to do, fill the role that God wills them to fill. And the role we have largely seen them fill in relation to us humans, Biblically speaking, is that of witness. The stones last through many ages; they are ideal agents of lasting testimony. It is no accident that God wrote the commandments given to Moses on stone.

1 Jacob set up a stone to mark forever the place where he had his vision of a ladder to heaven.

2 Later, he and his father-in-law set up stones as witnesses that they would not pass beyond that place to harm each other.

3 Stones were set up as a durable declaration of God’s deliverance of Israel across the river Jordan.

4 In Luke, as Jesus triumphantly entered Jerusalem to joyful shouts, some Pharisees told him to quiet the crowd, to which he replied, “I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

5 The stones are a testament. They bear witness to truth, even where people do not.

1 See Exodus 24:12-18, 31:18, 34:1-4, and 34:27-29.

2 Genesis 28:10-22.

3 Genesis 31:43-54.

4 Joshua chapter 4.
5 Luke 19:28-40. ‘

Quote is from Luke 19:40 (New Revised Standard Version). And if the stones are witnesses for truth, then they are, alas, witnesses against us. For written on stone is the law, and which of us has not transgressed the law?

Silently the stones sit in their ceaseless obedience beside our every disobedience; they see our every wrong.

What do people make of stone? We raise buildings out of stone. We build walls out of stone. But **Habakkuk tells us that every stone of every building and wall can be a testament against the violence and evil upon which we have built what Augustine called the City of Man.**

Idols are made of stone, and their eternal silence testifies against our worshipping the products of our own hands. Revelation speaks of the greatness, in human terms, of the evil city that will be overthrown, its riches and its multitudes of precious stones, and how they come to naught— those rare, shiny, glittering, precious stones do not testify to our success, but to our serving wealth rather than God.

6 Whether they remain silent or cry out, whether they sit in the walls we build or rise up as children of Abraham, the stones of the earth are witnesses against us. And by “us,” I mean precisely that. **There are scriptural passages we can evade as applying to others, preferably the ones too lazy to show up in church, but not the passage we have heard today. This is one case where “preaching to the choir” is exactly what is called for. The passage is written to everybody, but most directly and pointedly at us, the people who are regular churchgoers, leaders, preachers, those of us who already identify ourselves as Christians.**

For who are singled out and called “vipers” here? The Pharisees and the Sadducees. And who were they? They were not the people least attentive to religion; they were the people most attentive to religion. **And lest we think they correspond to some particular set of churchgoers other than our own, we must take note that the Pharisees and the Sadducees were different from one another as Bible Belt conservatives and Social Gospel liberals.**

7 But **one thing they had in common; they were the people sitting in the pews and the chancels, not the unchurched masses. So, we, of all people, cannot take John’s warning lightly.** We cannot rest assured in our being here, our following the rules, our leading the Bible studies, our putting money in the offering plate. We may be the people of the church, but God does not need us, as John reminds us. God can raise up children to Abraham from the stones. And yet, God does want us. **John may have been rebuking the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but he was not proclaiming to them a destiny of perdition; he was calling for their repentance to be real and full. Bear**

fruit, he said. Yes, it comes with a fearful warning, but a warning implicitly contains a message of hope.

What is the hope? The same as the warning:
God is able to raise up. God is able to raise up.

God is able to raise up from these stones others who will be the children of the covenant, yes – but God has already raised us up from the dust of the earth, and this prophecy from John is not finished judgment upon us but a call to action, a call to be ourselves those children of the covenant.

Surely, coming as it does with such a warning, this is a fearful call. Paul wrote, *“All, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, as it is written: ‘There is no one who is righteous, not even one.’”*

8 “All have turned aside,” he says, “Their throats are opened graves; they use their tongues to 6 See Revelation 17-18. 7 The Sadducees were well-represented among the higher classes and priests, believed only in the written law, and did not believe in resurrection after death. The Pharisees were known for their careful and strict adherence to the law, and believed that the secondary tradition of interpretation of scripture was binding as law as well. 8 See Romans 3:9-20. (Quotes are from the NRSV). deceive.’ ‘The venom of vipers is under their lips.’” We are all sinners, and we cannot rest assured in calling ourselves the people of God. We must bear fruit, for the one is coming, and his winnowing fork is in his hand.

But what of this one? John predicts this terrible, fearful one to follow, and whom did we get? Jesus. Jesus, who got angry to be sure, but who, rather than judging and cutting down, separating wheat from chaff and calling down fire from heaven, was meek and forgiving, who submitted to suffering.

Is this the same guy John was talking about? Jesus himself gives us a clue in a parable about a man who had a fig tree and ordered it cut down when it bore no fruit. The gardener offered, “Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”⁹ Even in Jesus’ own sayings, we see plenty of warning about the judgment to come. But first Jesus himself has come bringing forgiveness, breaking our captivity, and sending us the Holy Spirit.

There may be no one righteous, not even one, but the story is not over until grace is added in. We must bear fruit, and by the restorative power of God, we can. God is able to raise up. But when John the Baptist says that God is able from the stones of the earth to raise up children to Abraham, this is not just a personal warning with a personally hopeful implication. It is also a statement about the source and nature of the people of God as a whole. And if he is speaking especially to those of us in this room, the religious ones, the elders, the deacons, the seminary

educated preachers, then to us this is also a reminder of something about the entire body of the church and how to understand our role in it. Indeed, for those of us finding ourselves, as so many do these days, in big stone houses of worship with now small congregations, wondering what we can do to bring back the people to the church, the idea that “from these stones” God can raise up a people can actually be a source of hope and relief. “God does not need us” is scary, humbling, and freeing. Scary, because it comes as a warning. Humbling, because it deflates in us any ability whatsoever to point to the work of God’s kingdom and think it could not or would not be accomplished if not for us. It reminds us that we cannot believe God has chosen us for some purpose because of who we are; rather, God created us who we are having first chosen us for some purpose.¹⁰ And freeing? Freeing, because without the prideful notion that it is we who hold together God’s church and that the future of the church depends specifically on us, our hopes are no longer dependent on our own power to bring about success, but on the promise that God can raise up great things, even in the most dire situations imaginable, even from that which appears stone-dead. And thank God for this. It is not our perfect, sinless example that will save the church, not our own power to change people’s hearts, not our own grand vision or capacity for conforming the church to it. We are relieved of the duty of being the source of the church’s life, and without anxious fear that its existence depends on our competence and perfection we are left able simply to do the work of earnestly and diligently serving that church with eager faith in God’s power to raise up. **God is the architect and the builder. We ourselves are lifted up—praise God—and set in our places with the job of carrying weight in one, small, particular section of wall.** We cannot see the walls being ⁹ See Luke 13:1-9 and particularly 13:6-9. (Quotes are from the NRSV.) ¹⁰ **Jeremiah’s call as a prophet, in chapter 1 of the book of Jeremiah, is a particularly clear example of this concept, being not chosen for one’s abilities or identity, but having abilities and identity that are formed by God’s call. built up in every other part of the building.** Nor can we always recognize when certain structures are torn down because they were meant to be temporary supports only during construction, or because in the final renovation they will be built anew. But we need not fear that their coming down means in the end nothing will remain but ruins. From these stones God can, and will, raise up children to Abraham. We should absolutely take to heart the warning of John. We should sincerely humble ourselves, repent, bear fruit befitting repentance. For long have the stones been witnesses against us. Stones, in our hands, have been weapons of violence. Stones, as our hearts, have stood unmoved at the need of our neighbors. Stones, under our feet, have silently watched our every sin. But as surely as God is able to raise up from these stones [under our feet], God is also able to raise up from these stones [in our breasts]. “I will sprinkle clean water on you,” God promises the people of Israel in Ezekiel, even while reminding them of their failures, “and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”¹¹ Such is the power and promise of God. Being raised up in this way, we too, even more than the stones, will be a witness to truth. 2 Corinthians speaks of a “letter from Christ...written...with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”¹² We may be fallen and lost. **We may be bewildered and**

broken. We may have tried and failed, and tried and failed again. We may have sin which we cannot lift ourselves out of and hearts of stone which weigh us down to the earth, but God is able to raise up, and in this God we can place our hopes and the hopes of the entire church. We are able to raise from these stones houses and city walls which will crumble and fall, but God is able to raise up a new Jerusalem which will stand forever. We raise up idols of stone, which can do nothing, but **the Lord Jesus raises up, on a rock, his church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.** We may raise upon these stones a temple, our greatest monument to human building prowess, to last forever— from which not one stone will be left upon another. **But God is able to raise up our salvation upon the cornerstone of Jesus Christ.**

We raise up stones upon our graves, testifying to our death. But God raises up the stone off of the tomb, testifying to life. Praise be to our Lord who, even while standing at the door with the winnowing fork in hand, has seen fit to call us to repentance and offer us forgiveness, that God might raise us up to eternal life. Amen. 11 Ezekiel 36:25-26 (NRSV). 12 2 Corinthians 3:3 (NRSV).

JUST ASKING / CURIOUS QUESTIONS, THE NATION ISRAEL, WHAT WERE THE “STONES” OF MATTHEW 3:9?, WHAT WERE THE “STONES” OF MATTHEW 3:9?

WHAT WERE THE “STONES” OF MATTHEW 3:9?

08/08/2016 [CHRISTIAN AMBASSADOR \(SHAWN BRASSEAU\)](#)

WHAT WERE THE “STONES” OF MATTHEW 3:9?

by Shawn Brasseaux

“And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.”

Have you ever wondered about the “stones” of which John the Baptist spoke in Matthew 3:9? Why of all things did he mention “*these stones?*” What stones? To answer this, we must go back into Jewish history. Be prepared for Bible **study!**

For sake of brevity, we will simply consult the book of Joshua, and forgo comments until later. We begin in Joshua chapter 3: “[7] *And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. [8] And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.*” Joshua chapter 3: “[9] *And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God. [10] And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the*

Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. [11] Behold, the ark of the covenant of the LORD of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan. [12] Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man. [13] And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the LORD of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap."

Joshua chapter 3: "*[14] And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; [15] And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) [16] That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. [17] And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."*

Joshua chapter 4: "*[1] And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, [2] Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, [3] And command ye them, saying, **Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night. [4] Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: [5] And Joshua said unto them, **Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: [6] That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, **What mean ye by these stones?** [7] Then ye shall answer them, **That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever. [8] And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. [9] And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.*******

Joshua chapter 4: "*[10] For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hastened and passed over. [11] And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people. [12] And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them: [13] About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho."*

Joshua chapter 4: "*[14] On that day the LORD magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life. [15] And the LORD spake unto*

Joshua, saying, [16] Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan. [17] Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan. [18] And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before."

Joshua chapter 4: "[19] And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. [20] And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. [21] And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? [22] Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. [23] For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: [24] That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever."

Now, we can proceed to understanding John's comments in Matthew.

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S MINISTRY

John the Baptist water baptized in the Jordan River Valley in the region of Judaea. That was just north of the Dead Sea. **It is no coincidence that Joshua led the Jews into the Promised Land in this same area. Under Joshua's command, the Bible says Israel put 12 stones to commemorate their entrance into the land. God's design is to have John the Baptist's ministry loop back to Joshua's ministry. John is water baptizing to set apart a people whom God will use to inherit the Promised Land,** the very land Israel should have inherited in Joshua's day.

Matthew 3:1-9: "[1] In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, [2] And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. [3] For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. [4] And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. [5] Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, [6] And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. [7] But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? [8] Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: [9] And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

John the Baptist is somewhat sarcastic—but on the other hand there is truth to what he is saying. Those stones are a witness, a monument, to God wanting a people for His name so they can dwell in His land.

The Pharisees and Sadducees are completely clueless.

They do not really understand what God was doing with Israel under Joshua's command. They still do not know what God is doing with John the Baptist. They believe that as children of Abraham, they have inherent righteousness.

They do not think they need John the Baptist's baptism of repentance for the remission of sins—they supposedly do not have any sins!

In short, **those nonliving stones "knew" more about God's purpose for Israel than the Israeli religious leaders!**

word play with "stones" and "children"

The assumed Hebrew word play between "stones" and "children" (see [Translation commentary on Matthew 3:9](#)) can be seen in modern [Hebrew translations](#) where "stones" is translated as *hă'ăbānîm* (הָאֲבָנִים) and "sons" as *bānîm* (בָּנִים).

Translation commentary on Matthew 3:9

Good News Translation has rather radically restructured this verse. First, on the basis of verse 7, *do not presume to say* has been given its full form: "don't think you can escape punishment by saying." Then the direct discourse of the Greek (*We have Abraham as our father*) appears as indirect discourse in *Good News Translation*. Both of these translational techniques have been adopted by *Die Bibel im heutigen Deutsch*, though with a different result: "You imagine that nothing can happen to you because Abraham is your ancestor. Do not fool

yourselves...." *Abraham* is the famous ancestor of the Jews with whom God made his covenant, and it was evidently quite common for the Jews of John's day to rest their hopes for salvation on the claim that Abraham was their ancestor. See John 8.33-41.

Translators will often find that following the example of *Good News Translation* in this verse is very helpful. Other translators have "Do not give yourself false hopes by saying..." or "Do not think it will save you to claim..."

As we pointed out, *father* here means "ancestor." For a discussion of this word, see comments on the section heading of 1.1. Some translators may also say "It is Abraham who is our ancestor" or "We are descendants even of Abraham."

The word *for* indicates a relation between the two parts of the verse. John tells the Pharisees and Sadducees they should not expect salvation simply because they are descendants of Abraham, for, John says, that does not mean a thing in God's sight. God could provide all the descendants of Abraham he needed, even making them from these stones if necessary. In some languages, to make this flow of ideas clear, translators say "Believe me" or "I tell you this because..."

These stones (*Good News Translation* "rocks") is an evident allusion to the stones of the Judean desert. The general interpretation is that *from these stones* means that God will use them as the material for making descendants for Abraham, as seen in *Good News Translation*.

In Hebrew there is a play on words between *children* (*banim*) and *stones* (*abanim*). In the context *children* has the extended meaning of "descendants" (*Good News Translation*). In most languages it will be well to use "descendants" so no one will think it means actual children.

As witnessed by Deuteronomy 18.15, 18, the expression *raise up* is here equivalent to "cause to be born." *Good News Translation* translates *raise up children to Abraham* as "make descendants for Abraham." Translators can say "produce descendants" or "cause descendants to be born."

The phrase *to Abraham* is not natural English, and "for Abraham," as in *Good News Translation*, is certainly better in most languages. Other suggestions are "God can use these stones to make descendants of Abraham" and "God can make descendants of Abraham out of these stones."

Quoted with permission from Newman, Barclay M. and Stine, Philip C. A *Handbook on the Gospel of Matthew*. (UBS Handbook Series). New York: UBS, 1988. For this and other handbooks for translators see [here](#).

*** BibleReference.com

What does Matthew 3:9 mean?

Israel's religious leaders are hearing a warning: God's coming judgment is coming against them. John the Baptist now adds that they have made a wrong assumption about how God will deal with His people Israel. They had been operating under the idea that God would not focus His wrath on Israelites, the children of Abraham.

Israel's religious leaders, of all people, should have known better. Throughout Israel's history, God had brought judgment on His chosen people for their unfaithfulness to Him. He had always saved a remnant: a small proportion of the people. He had never broken any of His eternal promises to the nation, but that did not keep God from bringing judgment on most of the Israelites living at any specific time.

John's warning, though, goes beyond that simple truth. He tells the Pharisees and Sadducees not to presume that the arrival of the kingdom of heaven means they will not be judged. While it is true that God will save a remnant of Abraham's seed, John adds a curious statement: God is able to raise up new children of Abraham even from these stones. He may have been pointing to the stones in the Jordan River. This is wordplay. In both Greek and Aramaic, the word for stones is very close to the word for children.

John's statement goes beyond suggesting that God will spare a remnant of the biological children of Abraham from His judgment as He sets up His kingdom. In truth, through the coming of Jesus as King, God will add those who trust in Christ to Abraham's line even though they are not directly descended from him. This parallels Jesus' statement in a later argument with the Pharisees ([John 8:31–38](#)).

“Children of Abraham”

- Galatians 3:6-14
- John 8:33-47
- Romans 4:13-25
- Romans 9:7-27

- 12 Bible Verses about Children Of Abraham Most Relevant Verses Galatians 3:16 Verse Concepts Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as referring to many, but rather to one, “And to your seed,” that is, Christ. Galatians 3:29 Verse Concepts And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise. Galatians 3:7 Verse Concepts Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. Luke 13:16 Verse Concepts And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?” Luke 19:9 Verse Concepts And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. Romans 4:16 Verse Concepts For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, Luke 1:55 Verse Concepts As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his descendants forever.” Luke 3:8 Verse Concepts Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father,’ for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. Acts 13:26 Verse Concepts “Brethren, sons of Abraham’s family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent. Romans 9:7 Verse Concepts nor are they all children because they are Abraham’s descendants, but: “through Isaac your descendants will be named.” 2 Corinthians 11:22 Verse Concepts Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Acts 3:25 Verse Concepts It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ Bible Thesaurus Children (2020 instances) From Thematic Bible Titles and names of saints » Children of abraham Titles and names of saints » Children of abraham Galatians 3:7 Verse Concepts Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. Source: <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Children-Of-Abraham>

Desiring God: John Piper:

Who Are the Children of Abraham?

- Devotional by [John Piper](#)

Subscribe
[Apple](#)[Spotify](#)

“In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” ([Genesis 12:3](#))

You who hope in Christ and follow him in the obedience of faith are Abraham’s descendants and heirs of his covenant promises.

God said to Abraham in [Genesis 17:4](#), “Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.” But Genesis makes plain that Abraham did not father a multitude of nations in a physical or political sense. Therefore, the meaning of God’s promise was probably that a multitude of nations would somehow enjoy the blessings of sonship even though physically unrelated to Abraham.

That's no doubt what God meant in [Genesis 12:3](#) when he said to Abraham, "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." From the very beginning, God had in view that Jesus Christ would be the descendant of Abraham and that everyone who trusts in Christ would become an heir of Abraham's promise. Paul says in [Galatians 3:29](#), "If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."

So, when God said to Abraham 4,000 years ago, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations," he opened the way for any one of us, no matter what nation we belong to, to become a child of Abraham and an heir of God's promises. All we have to do is share the faith of Abraham — that is, bank our hope on God's promises, so much so that, if obedience requires it, we could give up our dearest possession like Abraham gave up Isaac.

We don't become heirs of Abraham's promises by working for God, but by being confident that God works for us. "[Abraham] grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised" ([Romans 4:20-21](#)). That's why Abraham could obey God even when obedience looked like a dead-end street. He trusted God to do the impossible — like raise his son from the dead.

Faith in God's promises — or today we would say, faith in Christ, who is the confirmation of God's promises — is the way to become a child of Abraham; obedience is the evidence that faith is genuine ([Genesis 22:12-19](#)). Therefore, Jesus says in [John 8:39](#), "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did."

Children of Abraham are people from all nations who put their hope in Christ and, like Abraham on Mount Moriah, therefore don't let the loss of their most precious earthly possession stop their obedience.

You who hope in Jesus Christ and follow him in the obedience of faith are the descendants of Abraham and heirs of his covenant promises.

What does it mean that those who are of faith are sons of Abraham?

In [Galatians 3:7](#), Paul, writing to Gentiles, says, “Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham” (ESV). Here Paul advances the idea of a spiritual family in contrast to a physical family—a family sharing faith rather than a bloodline.

Obviously, [Abraham](#) had literal, physical descendants. It was they, through Isaac and Jacob, who became the nation of Israel, God’s [chosen people](#). However, many in Israel did not follow God the way that they should have. At the same time, there were some Gentiles in the Old Testament, like Rahab and Ruth, who were adopted into the family of Israel. In the New Testament, many Gentiles are “grafted” into the tree of Israel through their faith in Jesus, the Messiah of Israel ([Romans 11:17–20](#)).

Throughout the New Testament, we see that being physical descendants of Abraham, although culturally important, counts nothing for eternity. When John the Baptist was preaching to the Jews, he warned, “Do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham” ([Matthew 3:9](#)). John’s point was that more important than their physical lineage was their spiritual lineage.

In [John 8:32–41](#), Jesus is speaking to some Israelites who were by definition descendants of Abraham. However, Jesus says that their physical lineage is overshadowed by their negative spiritual lineage:

[Jesus said] “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

“They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?”

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are Abraham’s descendants. Yet you are looking for a way to kill me, because you have no room for my word. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father.”

“Abraham is our father,” they answered.

“If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would do what Abraham did. As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the works of your own father.”

Twice, Jesus agrees that they are Abraham’s children but implies they really have another father. In verse 44 He states it plainly: “You are of your father the devil.” Their spiritual lineage trumped their physical lineage. Whatever blessings they counted on as physical “sons of Abraham” were negated by their condition as spiritual “sons of the devil.” Entrance to the kingdom will not be based on physical DNA but on faith in the Son of God.

In [Romans 9:6–7](#) Paul explains, “For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children.” In other words, there are some people who are descendants of Israel (Jacob), but they are not part of the blessing of Israel. Likewise, there are some who are descended from Abraham but not “sons of Abraham” in a spiritual sense. Being a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob is not enough. One must also now be a “descendant” of Christ. Of course, Christ had no physical descendants, but, at the end of [Romans 9](#), Paul explains that those who have faith like Abraham had are made righteous before God, just as Abraham was. Those without faith in Christ, even if they are physical descendants of Abraham, are excluded; those with faith in Christ, even if they are Gentiles, are included as spiritual “sons of Abraham.”

In [Galatians 3](#), Paul states it all plainly: “So also Abraham ‘believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’ Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. . . . So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith” ([Galatians 3:6–9](#)). To be a “son” of someone is to have that person’s traits. To be the “Son of God” is to have God’s traits. To be a “son of Abraham” is to display a character quality of Abraham, namely, faith. Everyone who evinces faith is showing himself to be like Abraham in the sense that Abraham, too, had faith ([Genesis 15:6](#)).

Abraham heard from God and believed. Abraham’s faith caused him to leave everything behind and live the rest of his life as a stranger in a strange land. Abraham’s faith trusted that he and [Sarah](#) would have a child, even though that seemed impossible. Abraham’s faith was even willing to sacrifice the promised son, believing that God would raise him from the dead ([Hebrews 11:9](#)). Because of Abraham’s example of faith, the Bible points to him as the father of faith, as it were. All who similarly trust in the Lord are “sons of Abraham.” As Paul writes, “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” ([Galatians 3:26–29](#)).

God had promised Abraham that “all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” ([Genesis 12:3](#)). One way this prophecy is fulfilled is through the salvation that God grants to us, by grace through faith: “Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith,

preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.' So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith" ([Galatians 3:7-9, ESV](#)).

A children's Sunday school song has the line "Father Abraham had many sons; many sons had Father Abraham." It's a truth of Scripture expressed simply in those lyrics and stated clearly in [Galatians 3:29](#), "Now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you" (NLT).

-
- 12 Bible Verses about Children Of Abraham Most Relevant Verses Galatians 3:16 Verse Concepts Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ. Galatians 3:29 Verse Concepts And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise. Galatians 3:7 Verse Concepts Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. Luke 13:16 Verse Concepts And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?" Luke 19:9 Verse Concepts And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. Romans 4:16 Verse Concepts For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, Luke 1:55 Verse Concepts As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his descendants forever." Luke 3:8 Verse Concepts Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. Acts 13:26 Verse Concepts "Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent. Romans 9:7 Verse Concepts nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "through Isaac your descendants will be named." 2 Corinthians 11:22 Verse Concepts Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Acts 3:25 Verse Concepts It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' Bible Theasaurus Children (2020 instances) From Thematic Bible Titles and names of saints » Children of abraham Titles and names of saints » Children of abraham Galatians 3:7 Verse Concepts Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. Source: <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Children-Of-Abraham>
- 12 Bible Verses about Children Of Abraham Most Relevant Verses Galatians 3:16 Verse Concepts Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ. Galatians 3:29 Verse Concepts And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise. Galatians 3:7 Verse Concepts Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. Luke 13:16 Verse Concepts And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?" Luke 19:9 Verse Concepts And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. Romans 4:16 Verse Concepts For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, Luke 1:55 Verse Concepts As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his descendants forever." Luke 3:8 Verse Concepts Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. Acts 13:26 Verse Concepts "Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent. Romans 9:7 Verse Concepts nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "through Isaac your descendants will be named." 2 Corinthians 11:22 Verse Concepts Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Acts 3:25 Verse Concepts It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' Bible Theasaurus Children (2020 instances) From Thematic Bible Titles and names of saints » Children of abraham Titles and names of saints » Children of abraham Galatians 3:7 Verse Concepts Therefore, be

sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. Source: <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Children-Of-Abraham>

-
- Per "BibleStudyTools" .com

Romans 9:7-27 Meaning and Commentary

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 9

The apostle having discoursed of justification and sanctification, and of the privileges of justified and sanctified ones, proceeds to treat of predestination, the source and spring of all the blessings of grace; and to observe how this distinguishing act of God's sovereign will has taken place, both among Jews and Gentiles; in treating of which, he knew he should go contrary to the sense of his countrymen the Jews, who have a notion that all Israel shall have a part in, or inherit the world to come {q}: and that the Gentiles will be for ever miserable; and nothing was more disagreeable to them, than to talk of their rejection of God, and the calling of the Gentiles; wherefore that it might be manifest, that it was not out of pique and ill will to them, that the apostle said the things hereafter related; he expresses the most cordial affection to them imaginable, and which he introduces in Ro 9:1, by way of appeal to Christ, who knew the truth of what he was about to say, and who could, together with the Spirit of God and his own conscience, testify for him that it was no lie: the thing he appeals for the truth of, is in Ro 9:2, that the salvation of the Jews lay near his heart; that it was no pleasure to him to think or speak of their rejection, but was what gave him continual pain and uneasiness: and his great desire for their good is expressed in a very strong and uncommon manner, Ro 9:3, the reasons of it are partly the relation they stood in to him, being his brethren and kinsmen; and partly the many privileges they had been favoured with of God; an enumeration of which is given, Ro 9:4,5, and foreseeing an objection, he prevents it, which might be made, that if the Jews were cast off, the promise of God to that people that he would be their God, would become void, and the preaching the Gospel of Christ to them of no effect; to which he answers by distinguishing between Israel and Israel, or the elect of God among them, and those that were not; wherefore though the latter were rejected according to the purpose of God, the promise and preaching of the word had their effect in the former, Ro 9:6, and that there was such a distinction, he proves from the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael, who were both Abraham's seed; yet one was a child of promise, and the other a child of the flesh, and were emblematical of the children of the promise, and the children of the flesh among that people; Ro 9:7-10, and further confirms this by the instance of Jacob and Esau, who were born of the same parents, and were twins; and yet one was in the favour of God, and the other not; and that this was owing not to works, but to the sovereign will of God in election, he proves by observing that this was before good or evil were done by either of them, Ro 9:11, and that this was notified to Rebekah before, Ro 9:12, as appears from a passage in Ge 25:23, and by another passage in Mal 1:2,3, which is cited, Ro 9:13, then an objection is started, Ro 9:14, that if God loves one, and hates another, both being in equal circumstances, as Jacob and Esau were, he must be guilty of unrighteousness; which he answers and removes, first by a detestation of such a charge against God, and then by producing testimonies out of the books of Moses, proving both election and reprobation, as being not of the works of men, but of the will of God; the former of these he proves, Ro 9:15, from Ex 33:19, by which it appears, that the choice of men to salvation is not according to the will of man, but according to the grace and love of God, Ro 9:16, the latter he proves by the case of Pharaoh, Ro 9:17, and the Scripture relating to that, Ex 9:16, and from both testimonies concludes, Ro 9:18, that God's having mercy on one, and hardening another, are according to his sovereign will and pleasure; then another objection rises, up, if so, God has no reason to find fault with men that are hardened in sin, since they are according to his will, and in sinning do but fulfil it, and which no man resists; and this objection is formed in a very pert and sneering manner, and insinuates that God is cruel and acts unreasonably, Ro 9:19, to which he answers, by putting the objector in mind that he was a man, a mere creature that started it, and that it was God against whom it was made; and by observing the folly and madness of replying against God, and the absurdity of such a procedure, taken from the consideration of the one being a creature, and the other the Creator, Ro 9:20, and by instancing in the case of the potter, who has power over his clay, to form it in what shape, and for what use he pleases, Ro 9:21, and accommodates this, both to the affair of election and reprobation, and to the business of the latter first, Ro 9:22, where he observes the end of God in it to show forth his power and wrath, and describes the subjects of it, which clears him from injustice, and points at the patience of God towards them, which frees him from the charge of cruelty, Ro 9:22, and then proceeds to apply the metaphor before used, to the objects of election styled vessels of mercy, and the end of the Lord to manifest the riches of his glory in them, and the method he takes to bring them to eternal happiness, by preparing them for it by grace, Ro 9:23, which is done in the effectual calling, the objects of which are both Jews and Gentiles, Ro 9:24, That it is the will of God that the Gentiles should be called, he proves, Ro 9:25,26, from

some passages in Hosea, Ho 2:23, 1:10, and that God had chosen, and so would call some among the Jews, he clearly makes appear, Ro 9:27-29, from some prophecies of Isaiah, Isa 10:22,23, 1:10, and then he concludes the chapter by observing the free and distinguishing grace of God, in the calling of the Gentiles, and the justification of them by the righteousness of Christ; that such who were far off from it, and sought not after it, should enjoy it, Ro 9:30, when the Israelites, who were diligent and zealous in seeking after a righteousness to justify them before God, yet did not arrive to one, Ro 9:31, the reasons of which are given, Ro 9:32, because it was not the righteousness of faith, or the righteousness of Christ received by faith they sought; but a legal one, and by works which can never be attained by sinful men: they sought after a wrong righteousness, and in a wrong way, because they stumbled at Christ, and rejected him and his righteousness; and this removes an objection which is suggested in the two preceding verses, that God is unrighteous in calling the Gentiles, who never sought after righteousness, and in rejecting the Jews that followed after one: and that they did stumble at Christ and his righteousness, is no other than what was foretold in Isa 8:14, and that whoever believes in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be saved, he suggests is a doctrine agreeably to Isa 28:16, which passages are referred to, Ro 9:33.

-

12 Bible Verses about

Children Of Abraham

Most Relevant Verses

Galatians 3:16

Verse Concepts

Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

Galatians 3:29

Verse Concepts

And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

Galatians 3:7

Verse Concepts

Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.

Luke 13:16

Verse Concepts

And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

Luke 19:9

Verse Concepts

And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham.

Romans 4:16

Verse Concepts

For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

Luke 1:55

Verse Concepts

As He spoke to our fathers,
To Abraham and his descendants forever."

Luke 3:8

Verse Concepts

Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.

Acts 13:26

Verse Concepts

"Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.

Romans 9:7

Verse Concepts

nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "through Isaac your descendants will be named."

2 Corinthians 11:22

Verse Concepts

Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.

Acts 3:25

Verse Concepts

It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

Bible Theasaurus

Children (2020 instances)

From Thematic Bible

Titles and names of saints » Children of abraham

Titles and names of saints » Children of abraham

Galatians 3:7

Verse Concepts

Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.

Source: <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Children-Of-Abraham>

*** Desiring God: John Piper (1983)
MARCH 20, 1983

Those Who Have Faith Are the Sons of Abraham

- Resource by
John Piper
- Scripture: [Galatians 3:6-9](#) Topic: [Adoption](#)

Subscribe
[Apple](#)[Spotify](#)

Thus Abraham "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." So you see that it is men of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." So then, those who are men of faith are blessed with Abraham who had faith.

Can You Be a Child of Abraham?

The Word of God from this text for us today is that anyone—Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, male or female, white or black or brown, quick-witted or slow, old or young—anyone can be a child of Abraham and inherit the blessings promised to Abraham's children, if you live by faith.

The structure of the text is simple. The main point is stated in two different ways, once in verse 7 and once in verse 9. And each of these is preceded by its Old Testament support. Verse 6 quotes [Genesis 15:6](#), "Abraham 'believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.'" And verse 7 draws out of that verse together with verse 5 a general inference: "So (or: therefore) you see that it is those of faith who are sons of Abraham." The thing that makes a person a "son of Abraham" is faith. Then verse 8 quotes [Genesis](#)

[12:3](#) (and 18:18), "In you shall all the nations be blessed." And verse 9 draws out the inference, "So then, those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham who had faith." The thing that qualifies a person to inherit Abraham's blessing is faith. So the main point—the Word of God for us today (expressed in verses 7 and 9)—is that anyone of us who lives by faith is a child of Abraham and will inherit Abraham's blessing.

I can think of at least two reasons why most modern people would simply shrug their shoulders at this announcement. One reason is that they have no idea what it means to be a son of Abraham and no sense of the stupendous value of the blessing promised to Abraham's children. And the other reason is that they can't see how a 20th century American who doesn't have a Jewish cell in his body can be called a son of Abraham. In other words, if this promise in [Galatians 3:6–9](#) is going to strengthen our faith and increase our joy, we have to dig in and see what it means and how it is grounded in the Old Testament. And that's my aim: the advancement and joy of your faith ([Philippians 1:25](#)), because I know that genuine faith works itself out in love ([Galatians 5:6](#)), and when people see the sacrificial love of God's people, many are gripped and give glory to him ([Matthew 5:16](#)). So for the sake of our faith, our love, and ultimately, of God's glory, let's see how Paul gets verses 7 and 9 out of the Old Testament, and what they mean for us today.

Not Dependent on Physical Descent

A great deal in this passage hangs on what it means to be a son of Abraham. So let's try to answer that question first. The first thing that needs to be said is that Paul thinks sonship does not depend on physical descent. For example, in 3:28, 29 he says, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise." So the first thing to be said is that Jews and non-Jews can be offspring or children or sons of Abraham. Sonship does not depend on physical descent. [Romans 9:6, 7](#) confirm this: "Not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham just because they are descendants."

But we don't even have to go beyond our text to see this. Aren't verses 7 and 9 referring to the same group of people? Verse 7 says that "those of faith are sons of Abraham." And verse 9 says that "those of faith are blessed with Abraham." Surely, these are the same people: sons of Abraham, who will, therefore, enjoy the blessings promised to Abraham and his children. But it is clear from the connection between verses 8 and 9 that these people include Gentiles. Verse 8 quotes [Genesis 12:3](#), "In you shall all the nations (i.e., Gentiles) be blessed"—not just Jews. And from that Paul infers verse 9: "So then, those of faith are blessed." So the believers of verse 9 must include Gentiles, and since these are the same as the believers in verse 7 who are called sons of Abraham, the sons of Abraham must include Gentiles. That's the first thing about being a son of Abraham: it does not depend on physical descent from Abraham.

I know it sounds strange to us, but it is very close to the heart of the gospel: white, Anglo-Saxon protestants can become sons of Abraham; Hispanics and Laotians and Cambodians can become sons of Abraham; black African Muslims can become sons of Abraham; anti-semitic, redneck Nazi vigilantes can become sons of Abraham; Hitler could have become a son of Abraham.

Was Paul's View Biblical?

Before we ask what that sonship involves and why it is good news, we need to ask whether Paul's view of Abrahamic sonship is the same as the Old Testament's view. It is no good telling our Jewish friends that we are sons of Abraham if they can simply point to the Torah and show us that Paul has distorted what Moses taught. Turn with me to [Genesis 12:1-3](#). Here is the foundational promise of the Jewish people. "Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse, and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'" When God chose Abram to found a new nation, he made sure that Abram knew that the Jewish people were being created *for the world*. Their mission is to "be a

blessing." Their destiny is to serve all the nations. ([Genesis 18:18](#) says the same thing, and uses "nations," i.e., Gentiles, instead of "families.") This is the text Paul quotes in [Galatians 3:8](#): "In you shall all the nations be blessed."

But is this blessing which the nations get the same as sonship? Is there any clue in Genesis that the nations would be blessed in Abraham because they would become his sons? Yes, there is in Genesis 17. Here God spells out the terms of his covenant with Abraham and says in verses 4, 5, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the *father of a multitude of nations*. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the *father of a multitude of nations*." Some have tried to refer the "nations" here to the Ishmaelites and Edomites, who can trace their physical descent to Abraham. But surely the word "multitude" in [Genesis 17:4, 5](#) means more than two. Surely God has in view here the same nations that will be blessed in [Genesis 12:3](#) and [18:18](#), namely, "all the families (nations) of the earth."

In other words, [Genesis 17:4](#) explains how the nations of [Genesis 12:3](#) and [18:18](#) are going to be blessed. They are going to be blessed because Abraham will become their father. They are going to be blessed by becoming sons of Abraham. So it does not look as though Paul has distorted the Old Testament when he teaches that Gentiles can be sons of Abraham. That's the first thing we need to see about Abraham's children—they include more than Jews. They can include you and me. (See [Romans 4:16](#) and [17](#) to confirm that [Genesis 17:4](#) lies behind Paul's thinking about Gentile sonship.)

Must Be Like Abraham

The second thing to notice about being a child of Abraham is that it means *being like Abraham*. In [John 8:39](#) the Jews defend themselves against Jesus' criticisms by saying, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did." Jesus shows us two things in this response. First, he shows us that they are *not* Abraham's children, even though they are Jews—and so he confirms our first point, that being a child of Abraham is not the same as Jewishness. And the second thing he shows us is that being a child of Abraham means being like Abraham—

doing what he does: "If you were Abraham's children you would do what Abraham did." In [Galatians 3:6](#) what Abraham did was believe God. "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" ([Genesis 15:6](#)). Then Paul infers from this in verse 7, "So you see, it is those of faith who are sons of Abraham." Abraham was a man of faith, so if you do what he did, if you have faith, you will be his child.

So the first thing we said about being sons of Abraham is that it's not the same as being a physical descendant. Anyone here can become a child of Abraham. Now the second thing we've said is that being a son of Abraham involves doing what he did—not in every particular, of course, but in the essential thing, namely, believing God's promises. Abraham believed God; therefore, those of faith are sons of Abraham.

Heirs of Blessing of Abraham

The third thing to say about sons of Abraham is that they are heirs of the blessing to Abraham and his descendants. [Galatians 3:29](#) makes this especially clear: "If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, *heirs* according to the promise." Remember, this comes right after verse 28 which shows that Paul has in mind here male and female, slave and free, Jew and Greek. The most astonishing thing asserted here is that Greeks—uncircumcised Gentiles!—are heirs of the promises made to Abraham. You and I can become beneficiaries of God's promises to Abraham if we have the faith of Abraham and belong to Jesus Christ. ([Romans 4:16](#), [17](#) also shows that Gentiles are made heirs of "the promise" because of faith. See also [Galatians 3:14](#) and [4:30](#).)

Those are the three things I wanted to say about being children of Abraham: 1) It is not the same thing as being Jewish—Gentiles can be included; 2) it means being like Abraham, especially trusting the promises of God like Abraham did; 3) it means inheriting the blessings promised to Abraham.

So the question that begs to be answered now is: What are those blessings? Is there anything in this inheritance that should interest a 20th century American businessman, housewife, student, professional, laborer, teenager, senior citizen? I think there is. I'll

mention two of them—two things that you inherit if you are a child of Abraham. And each of these is promised in order to take away a fear that you have (or ought to have): 1) The fear of meeting an infinitely holy God loaded with all your sin; and 2) the fear of death.

The Promise of Justification

First, if you are a child of Abraham, part of your guaranteed inheritance is the bequest of justification. And only justification can take away your fear of meeting God loaded with your sin. Notice [Galatians 3:8](#), "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would *justify* the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.'" This verse teaches that the reason the Scripture promises blessing to the nations through Abraham is that God intended to justify people from every nation. "Since the Scripture saw God justifying the Gentiles . . . therefore the Scripture promised blessing to the Gentiles through Abraham." So the promised blessing of Abraham must involve justification. And you recall from the connection between [Genesis 12:3](#) and [17:4](#) that the reason the nations will be blessed is because Abraham becomes their father. They become his sons. Therefore, justification is part of our inheritance as children of Abraham. If you are his child, then, and only then, you are justified.

Which means that in spite of all your sins, God reckons you to be righteous. If you are a child of Abraham, all the things you have done wrong or ever will do wrong are forgiven because of Christ, and God does not hold your sins against you. I don't know of any cultural, intellectual, or technological changes over the past two thousand years that makes this inheritance any less needed or less desirable today than it was for the Galatians. This and this alone can take away the fear of meeting an infinitely holy God loaded with our sin. So the first thing we inherit from God as children of Abraham is justification, acquittal of all our sin. (And this is the basis for all the other blessings!)

The Promise of the Spirit

Second, if you are a child of Abraham, part of your guaranteed inheritance is the Spirit of God who seals you for eternal life. Only the Spirit can take away the fear of death and hell and replace it with the hope of eternal life. Notice two key texts from Galatians which make this plain. [Galatians 3:14](#) says that Christ became a curse for us "that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, in order that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." This verse teaches that part of Abraham's blessing which we Gentiles can inherit is the gift of the Spirit. One of the marks of the children of Abraham is that they are indwelt by the Spirit of Christ (2:20; 4:6, 29).

The connection between this and eternal life is then brought out in [Galatians 6:8](#), "He who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." The only ground out of which eternal life can be harvested is the ground of the Spirit. If you plant your life in the flesh, if you count on what *you* can achieve and enjoy in this world, then the harvest you will get is corruption, death, and hell, for that is an immeasurable insult to God who offers himself to you in the Spirit. But if you plant your life in the Spirit and count on what *he* can do through you and for you, the harvest you will get is *eternal life*. So when [Galatians 3:14](#) says that the Spirit is a part of our inheritance as children of Abraham, it implies that only the children of Abraham will enjoy eternal life. And that takes away the fear of death and hell, which is just as real and terrible in the 20th century as it was in the first. (Note: the Spirit is not explicitly promised to Abraham in Genesis. It is promised to God's people in Joel 2 and Ezekiel 36. Paul's assumption is that whatever goes into making the children of Abraham what they ought to be is a fulfillment of God's intention in the promise to Abraham. See [Genesis 17:7](#).)

In summary, we have seen five things about what it means to be children of Abraham. 1) It is not the same as physical descent from Abraham. Even 20th century Gentiles can be Abraham's sons. 2) It implies being like Abraham, a chip off the old block, as it were, especially in his life of faith. 3) If you are a child of Abraham, you inherit the blessing of

Abraham. You become the beneficiary of the promises God made to his children. That means 4) you are justified, acquitted by God of all your sins on the basis of Christ's death in your place. And finally, 5) if you are Abraham's child, you have the Spirit who will lead you into eternal life.

Faith and Sonship

Therefore, it is surely no overstatement this morning to say that the most important concern of your life is to make sure that you are a child of Abraham. So I close with an observation from our text and an illustration. The text makes plain that the only way to be a child of Abraham is to live by faith. Literally, [Galatians 3:7](#) says, "Know therefore that *those of faith*, these are the sons of Abraham." The test of whether you are *of faith* is not whether you once made a decision somewhere in the past, but whether your life is a life of faith. The child of Abraham can say without insincerity, "I am crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh *I live by faith* in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." We are children of Abraham if we *live* by faith in the promises of God summed up in Christ.

I end with an illustration. Picture heaven as Orchestra Hall and the music of the symphony as the glory of God. Everybody here knows that faith is the precondition for entering that hall and enjoying that music. But some of you, I fear, have gotten the notion that trusting in Christ is like buying a ticket to Orchestra Hall once for all, and that you can put this ticket away in your pocket as the guarantee of your admission someday, even though the affections of your life are captured by the music of this world. That is not a biblical view of saving faith. It's a delusion.

Faith is a precondition for enjoying the symphony of God's glory not in the sense of getting a ticket, but in the sense of getting an ear for heaven's music. The real precondition of enjoying the music of heaven throughout eternity is a new heart which delights in the things of God, not a decision card which you carry in your pocket to ease your conscience while your mind is captivated by the delights of this world.