

28.61 Blessed Peter; Cursed Peter (Matthew 16:13–28; Mark 8:27–9:1; Luke 9:18–27)

✓ “Check” it out: opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher, not the student. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and/or visual aids found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check also “Activities” and “Handwork” below for additional suggested items.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *Peter*: “a stone” (small as opposed to a rock)
- *the New Testament church*: not buildings but believers in Jesus Christ

Scripture: (NASV)

Matthew 16:13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” 20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. 28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Mark 8:27 And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” 28 And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” 29 And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” 30 And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

31 And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

34 And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. 36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? 37 For what can a man give in return for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed

of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

9:1 And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.”

Luke 9:18 Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” 19 And they answered, “John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen.” 20 Then he said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” And Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”

21 And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, 22 saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”

23 And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. 25 For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? 26 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. 27 But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”

Introduction/Review:

When the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians had asked Jesus for a sign from heaven, He gave them the sign of Jonah: as Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and nights, so Jesus would be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. This prophecy was a clear reference to Jesus’ death. Note that it would not be a permanent death because it was to last only how many days and nights? [Three .] However, it would be the difficult shadow of death for the Son of God.

Story:

Jesus headed directly north toward the highest mountain in Israel, Mount Hermon.* The area and city found about 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee was called Caesarea Philippi.** Let’s look at that name. Do you see the word Caesar—the Roman ruler? How about Philip? Remember, he was one of the four sons of Herod the Great among whom the land had been divided. Guess who ruled this district. It was Philip.

The question

While Jesus prayed in this place, His disciples were with Him. Then He asked them about something like sounds like a public-opinion poll. Here was His question: “Who do people say that I, the Son of Man, am?” In other words, “What are you hearing out there? When folks see My miracles and hear My preaching, who do they think I am?”

The disciples answered, “Some say John the Baptizer; others say Elijah; and others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

Now we’ve studied John the Baptizer recently. Why would people think Jesus was John? ✓People thought the strong preaching they were hearing from Jesus sounded like John’s. John had been executed by Herod. These people thought, “Perhaps John has risen from the dead.” They didn’t know that “One greater than John the Baptist” was there.

Elijah is a man we studied in the Old Testament. He performed many miracles—causing the rain to cease and then to rain again, calling fire down upon soldiers who were coming to capture him, bringing to life a widow’s dead son, and several other miracles. Jesus’ miracles reminded people of Elijah. Had he been resurrected?

People named one other prophet—Jeremiah—who preached at the time Babylon conquered Judah. He had

written a part of the Bible, but the king had burned what Jeremiah had written. So Jeremiah rewrote. This man was called “the weeping prophet” because of his passion for the sinful condition of the people and their need for repentance. With Jesus (and before Him, John) preaching repentance and faith, some people wondered, “Could Jesus possibly be Jeremiah raised from the dead.”

Although the words and works of these dead men were great, Jesus’ words and works were greater.

So much for public opinion. Moving on to personal opinions, Jesus asked the disciples, “But who do *you* say that I am?”

The good answer

Simon Peter piped up immediately with ten words that are so important that I want you to learn them: “You are [or Jesus is] the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). Good answer, Peter. [Point to each of ten fingers as you say each word. Repeat.]

Of course, Jesus knew that answer to be the correct one. He said, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.” Why was Peter blessed? Because God, not anyone else, had taught him that Jesus is God.

If you had been Peter, wouldn’t you have felt pretty special after Jesus had said something like that to you? ✓I’m sure Peter felt grateful that God had taught him these things.

The expanded answer

But Jesus was not finished. He said, “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

This statement needs some explanation. Roman Catholics have taken this verse as support for their idea that Peter was the first pope of the Roman Catholic church.*** “By the rock on which Christ builds his church, is meant, not the person of Peter; for Christ does not say, upon thee Peter, but upon this rock, referring to something distinct from him” (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/matthew-16-18.html>). The “rock” to which Jesus referred was likely Jesus Himself, for Peter’s statement rightly acknowledged Jesus as the Son of God.

However, if Peter is the foundation upon which the church was built, consider this explanation: “‘Thou art a rock. Thou hast shown thyself firm, and suitable for the work of laying the foundation of the church. Upon thee will I build it. Thou shalt be highly honored; thou shalt be first in making known the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles.’ This was accomplished. See Acts 2:14-36, where [Peter] first preached to the Jews, and Acts 10, where he preached the gospel to Cornelius and his neighbors, who were Gentiles. Peter had thus the honor of laying the foundation of the church among the Jews and Gentiles” (<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/matthew/16.htm>).****

The term “the gates of hell” indicates Satan’s stronghold, which will not be able to stand against God’s army, led by Jesus, the Head of the church.

The “keys of the kingdom” and “binding” and “loosing” are explained by the Bible commentator, Albert Barnes: “To bind a thing was to forbid it; to loose it, to allow it to be done. . . . When Jesus gave this power to the apostles, he meant that whatsoever they forbade in the church should have divine authority; whatever they permitted, or commanded, should also have divine authority - that is, should be bound or loosed in heaven, or meet the approbation of God” (<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/matthew/16.htm>). (See also John 20:23, which was spoken to all the disciples.)

Now, do you have any questions about this passage? Remember the important declaration of Peter: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Even though this was a truthful and great answer, at the time Peter declared it, Jesus “strictly charged” His disciples, “Don’t tell anyone that I am the Christ.”

The prophecy

Then Jesus began to talk to His friends plainly, as He would be doing more and more, about His soon-coming suffering—that the elders, chief priests, and scribes in Jerusalem would kill Him, but He would come back to life on the third day.

✓Peter, perhaps being full of himself after honor had just been bestowed upon him, didn't like to hear about Jesus' death. Indeed, in his mind it just couldn't be. So, taking Jesus aside, Peter did not say something profound as he had before. No! Peter started arguing with Jesus, saying, "You can't do that, Lord! You can't suffer and die. You shouldn't talk like this!"

Jesus, turning and seeing his disciples, said, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." What!? Yes, Jesus actually called Peter the devil because Peter did not think about God's plan but about men's plans. What a rebuke! Peter had been blessed, and now he was being cursed!

The thing greater than the entire world

Jesus had another admonition to the people who had gathered for this event. Listen, for it is a very practical message for each of us today: "Even if you could have everything there is in this world but your soul was lost—if you didn't know Christ as Saviour—your life and everything you had would be worthless." Imagine being a multi-billionaire able to buy or have anything your little heart desired. Pity the rich person who has everything except Jesus as Saviour! What good will all those things be at the judgment when that person will not enter into the joy of the Lord but into Hell itself? As Jesus put it, "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?"

One more thing—another very practical item—Jesus cautioned. This is it: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." Jesus wants us to be willing to live for Him no matter what it costs us. Such living for Jesus is worth everything. After all, He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. How can we be ashamed of Him who has done so much for us!

*"Such 'high places' in the Bible where Baal-Hermon was worshipped [were significant] to the Canaanites. The higher it was, the holier it was. As Israel's highest peak, Mount Hermon was the holiest of them all. Her slopes had other mystical attributes as well. This is where the Nephilim giants that Moses and Joshua defeated in the Old Testament lived (Genesis 6:1-8), and later where David slew one of their close cousins named Goliath. Although hard to fathom, the Bible lists over 30 verses about giants. . . .

"In New Testament times, it was at Mount Hermon's base that Jesus came with His disciples to Caesarea Philippi for a special Messianic revelation (Matthew 16:16). In the midst of the Baal shrines at Caesarea Philippi, etched into the side of Mount Hermon to worship Pan, Peter proclaimed Jesus to be the Christ. This was no coincidence that his testimony was made amongst pagan worship, and the best was yet to come!" (http://www.land-of-the-bible.com/Mount_Hermon).

***"Caesarea Philippi is the location of one of the largest springs feeding the Jordan River. This abundant water supply has made the area very fertile and attractive for religious worship. Numerous temples were built at this city in the Hellenistic and Roman periods" [especially the goat god who plays a flute, Pan. In fact, this town has been named Panias] (<https://www.bibleplaces.com/banias/>). We, too, live among blasphemous gods, religion, and life. We must proclaim Jesus as the only way to the Father and eternal life.

***Others say it was a Simon, all right, who was first pope, but it was Simon, the magician who tried to buy the power of God (Acts 8:9–24).

****“But Christ did not mean, as the Roman Catholics say he did, to exalt Peter to supreme authority above all the other apostles, or to say that he was the only one upon whom he would rear his church. See Acts 15, where the advice of James, and not that of Peter, was followed. See also Galatians 2:11, where Paul withstood Peter to his face, because he was to be blamed - a thing which could not have happened if Christ (as the Roman Catholics say) meant that Peter was absolute and infallible”
(<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/matthew/16.htm>).

Lessons from This Lesson:

- Jesus is God: He acknowledged Peter’s statement that He is the Son of God.
He prophesied His building the church.
He claimed that whoever loses his life for His sake and the gospel’s will save it.
He prophesied He will come with his angels and repay each person according to his deeds (judgment).
- If you don’t believe Jesus is truly the Son of God, there is no way you can be saved.
- Set your mind on the things of God, not on the things of men.
- Ask God for His grace to make you willing to deny yourself in order to live for Jesus Christ.
- Prepare yourself to stand up for Jesus in “this adulterous and sinful generation” by getting to know Him in all His splendor and ability. Think about what He suffered for you—if you are a believer.

Activities:

- Play dough: stone; rock; a mountain; keys; something desired by the student
- Sing “If I Gained the World” found below.
- Print and cut out pictures found below of worldly and spiritual things. Have students separate them into “best” and “not best” piles. (The photo of a couple is of missionaries.)
- Review questions: (Game: For each correct answer, put a stone in a transparent container—two containers if playing with teams.)
 1. What question did Jesus ask the disciples in the region of Ceasarea Philippi? [“Who do people say that I am?”]
 2. What did the disciples answer? [John the Baptizer, Elijah, Jeremiah.]
 3. What was Peter’s answer? [“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”]
 4. Who had shown Peter that answer? [God in heaven.]
 5. What did Jesus say He would build on the rock? [His church.]
 6. Fix this false statement: The church is a building. [The church is a body of believers in Jesus Christ.]
 7. What was Peter’s response when Jesus said He must be killed? [He rebuked Jesus, saying this couldn’t be.]
 8. Why did Jesus say to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan!”? [Peter was a hindrance to Jesus, for he did not set his mind on the things of God but on the things of man.]
 9. Jesus told the disciples not to tell people something. What was it? [He is the Christ, the Son of God.]
 10. What is better than having everything you could want in this world? [Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and thus not losing one’s soul.]

Handwork:

- Make a flip book with the two “Whom do people . . . you say?” pages below. After printing, cut each page in half lengthwise and cut off the margins at the top and the very bottom of *b* and *d*. Students may glue *a* and *b* together, putting glue on the margin of *a*. Repeat for parts *c* and *d*. Then glue the “People” side to the “You” side. Fold accordion style along the lines. Draw pictures in the blank sections.

Memory Verse:

- Matthew 16:15, 16— [Jesus] said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Ask students, “Who do you say Jesus is?” Students answer, “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Have students ask each other the question and answer.)

Caesarea Philippi

Peter

the church

a

b

Whom do people say

Jesus is?

Some say

John the

Baptizer.

Some say

Jeremiah.

Some say

Elijah.

Some say

a prophet.

c

Whom do **YOU** say

Jesus is?

d

the

Son

Jesus

of

the

is

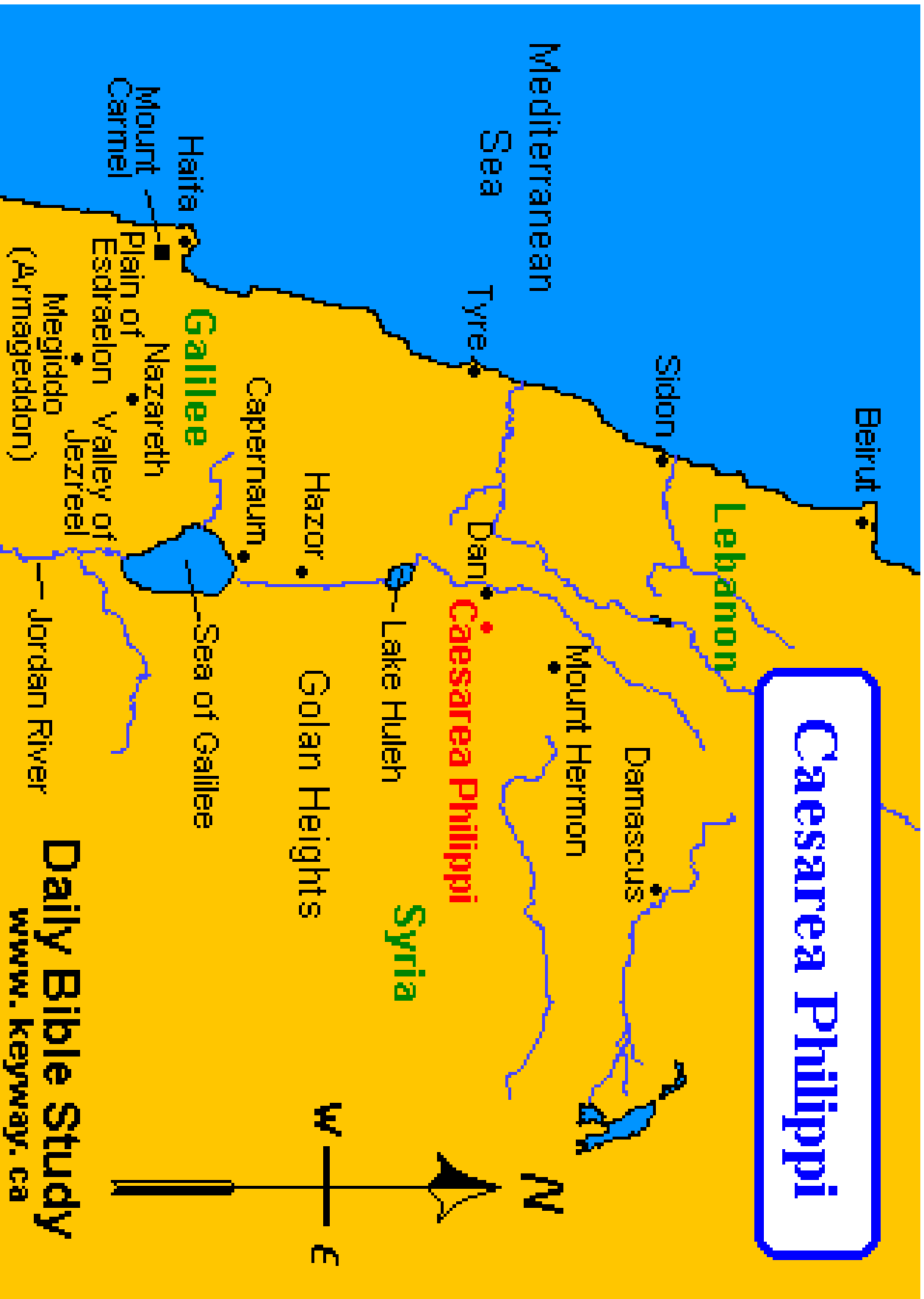
Living

the

Christ,

God

(Matthew 16:16).



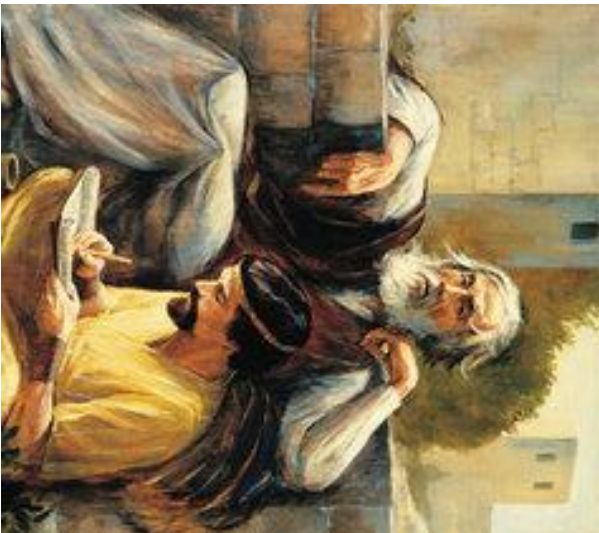


Ultimate Bible
Picture Collection

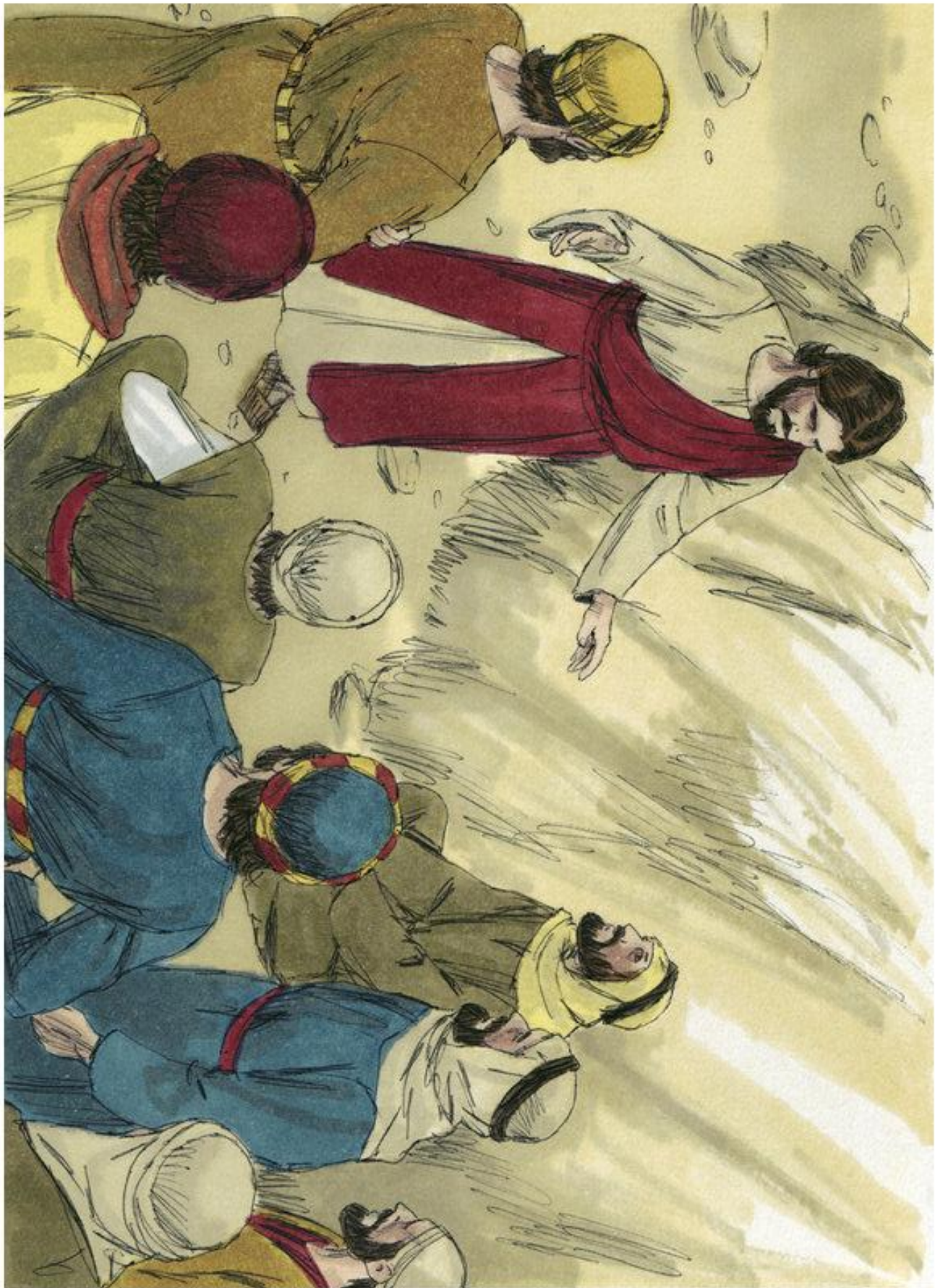
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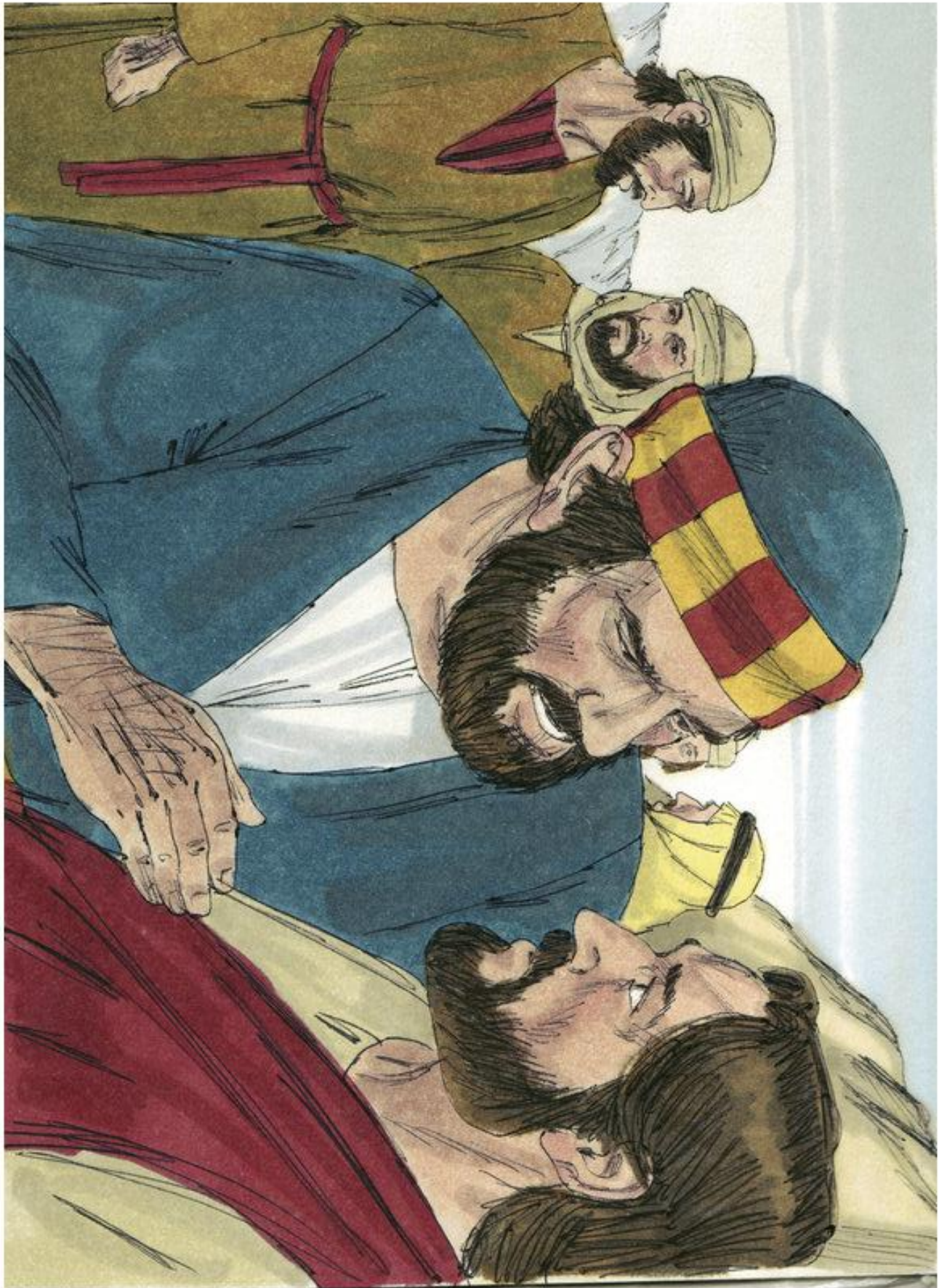
<http://www.deoluakinyemi.com/god-of-elijah-send-down-fire/>

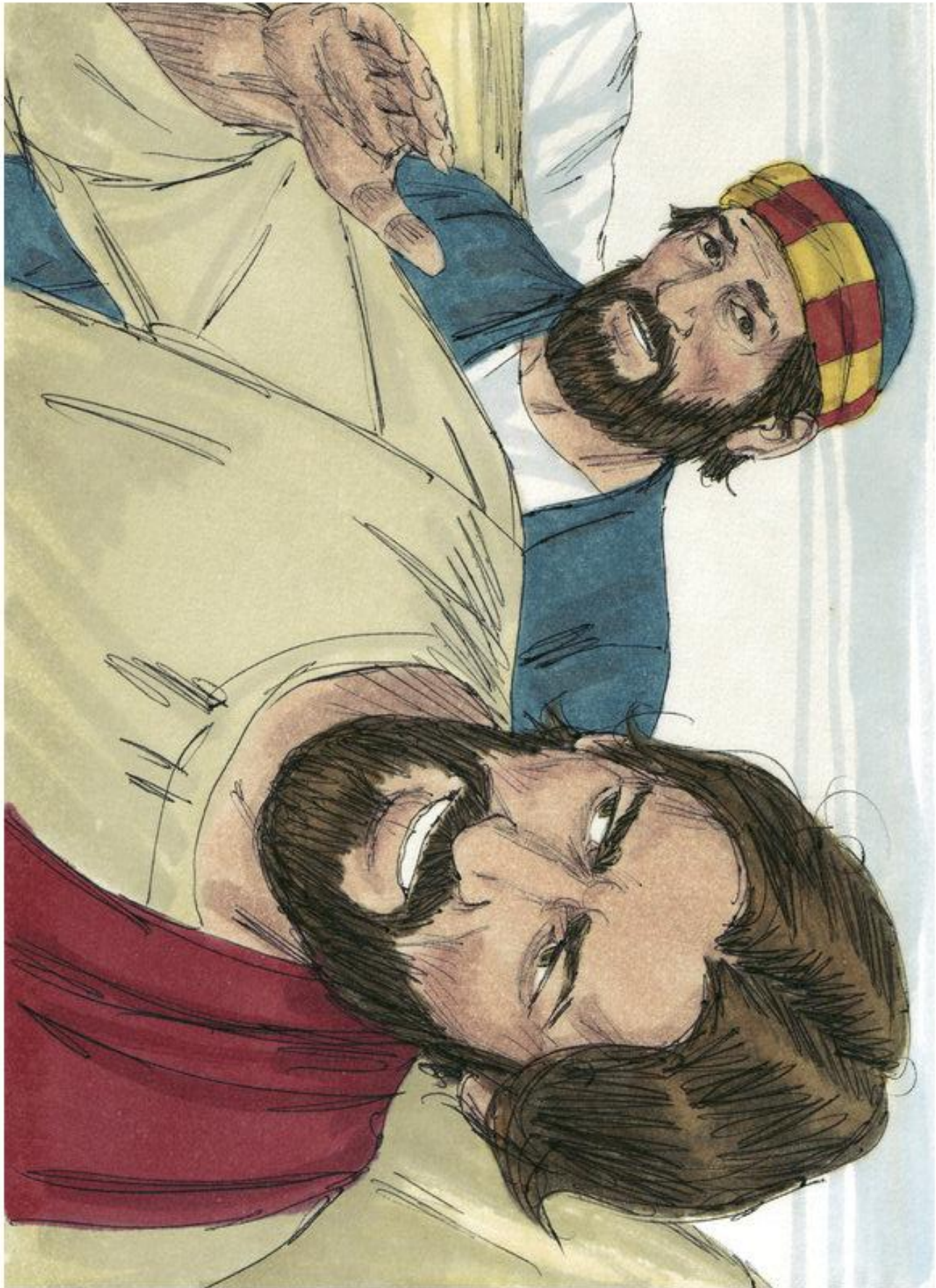


<https://www.goodsalt.com/search/jeremiah.html>









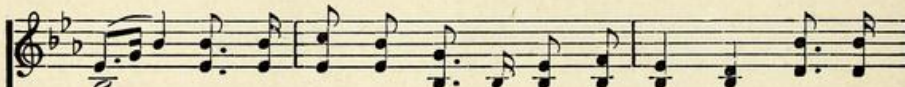
If I Gained the World

ANNA ÖLANDER
Tr. Composite

Swedish



1. If I gained the world, but lost the Savior, Were my life worth liv-ing for a
2. Had I wealth and love in full-est measure, And a name revered both far and
3. O what emp-ti-ness!—without the Savior 'Mid the sins and sor-rows here be-
4. O the joy of hav-ing all in Je-sus! What a balm the bro-ken heart to



day? Could my yearn-ing heart find rest and com - fort In the
near, Yet no hope be-yond, no har - bor wait - ing, Where my
low! And e - ter - ni - ty, how dark with-out Him!—On - ly
heal! Ne'er a sin so great, but He'll for - give it, Nor a



things that soon must pass a - way? If I gained the world, but lost the
storm-tossed ves - sel I could steer; If I gained the world, but lost the
night and tears and end-less woe! What, tho' I might live with-out the
sor - row that He does not feel! If I have but Je - sus, on - ly



Sav - ior, Would my gain be worth the life - long strife? Are all
Sav - ior, Who en-dured the cross and died for me, Could then
Sav - ior, When I come to die, how would it be? O to
Je - sus,—Noth - ing else in all the world be - side— O then



earth-ly pleasures worth com-par-ing For a mo-ment with a Christ-filled life?
all the world af-ford a ref - uge. Whither, in my an-guish, I might flee?
face the val-ley's gloom with-out Him! And without Him all e - ter - ni - ty!
ev - 'ry - thing is mine in Je - sus; For my needs and more He will pro-vide.



