



# CHRISTIAN SCIENCE Sentinel

## Bible Lens

NEW: Expanded edition

## Bible Lens—June 29–July 5, 2020

Subject: **God**

From the *Christian Science Sentinel* - June 29, 2020

**All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.**

—[Numbers 14:21](#)

## Exploring Bible Verses

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

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

### ***from the Golden Text***

#### **Isaiah 40:18**

*Who compares with God?*

*Is anything like him?*

—Contemporary English Version

Isaiah 40 introduces a multi-chapter denunciation of idolatry. It may seem baffling that the Israelites are tempted away from worship of Yahweh after He had freed them from bondage and established them in the Promised Land. But their devotion to Him is repeatedly tested by the widespread worship of pagan deities around them—and Hebrew prophets repeatedly remind them of their covenant with God (see examples in [Isaiah 54:10](#) and [Ezekiel 16:60](#)).

In this verse the writer echoes Moses' earlier queries, though dropping the reference to other gods: “Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” ([Exodus 15:11](#)).

### ***from the Responsive Reading***

#### **Acts 17:22, 23**

*Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you.”*

—New King James Version

*Areopagus* (also called “Mars’ hill” in the King James Version) is the name for both a specific hilltop in Athens and a judicial council that met there. Given its centuries-old tradition as the site of judgment, it was a natural place for Paul to be brought to explain the new doctrine of Christianity (see [vv. 18–21](#)). A commentary notes, “No place in Athens was so suitable for a discourse upon the mysteries of religion.”

The tribunal itself dated back over six centuries, enforcing laws, holding trials, and supervising the moral conduct and education of the populace—and it’s identified by some sources as the council that sentenced Socrates to death in 399 BC. In Paul’s case, the motive of his listeners appears to be genuine interest in his teachings rather than condemnation: “Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean” ([v. 20](#)).

## **from Section 1**

### **2 | [John 4:13](#)**

*Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*

While God had promised, “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh” ([Joel 2:28](#)), most Jews of this time saw this as a future event. For early Christians, by contrast, the empowering force of God’s presence was normal and celebrated—as seen by dozens of New Testament references to the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, including Christ Jesus’ promise of a “Comforter ...; even the Spirit of truth” ([John 14:16, 17](#)).

“It is the work of the Spirit,” writes a scriptural authority, “that makes us aware of God’s presence; and it is the work of the Spirit that gives us the certainty that we are truly at peace with God.”

#### **Translation**

*... God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us.*

—New Living Translation

#### **Translation**

### **3 | [Isaiah 43:10](#)**

*Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.*

• • •

*My people, you are my witnesses*

*and my chosen servant.*

*I want you to know me,*

*to trust me,*

*and understand*

*that I alone am God.*

*I have always been God;*

*there can be no others.*

—Contemporary English Version

## Definitions from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy

### 1 | 330:15

*The individuality of Spirit, or the infinite, is unknown, and thus a knowledge of it is left either to human conjecture or to the revelation of divine Science.*

**individuality:** unique nature

**conjecture:** guesswork

### 2 | 596:3–9

*Paganism and agnosticism may define Deity as “the great unknowable;” but Christian Science brings God much nearer to man, and makes Him better known as the All-in-all, forever near.*

*Paul saw in Athens an altar dedicated “to the unknown God.” Referring to it, he said to the Athenians: “Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.”*

**paganism:** worship of nature or of many gods

**agnosticism:** belief that God is unknown and unknowable

**ignorantly:** without knowledge or awareness

### 4 | 481:5

*Like the archpriests of yore, man is free “to enter into the holiest,”—the realm of God.*

**archpriests:** chief ministers in a church

**yore:** long ago

## ***from* Section 2**

### **5 | Jeremiah 23:23**

*Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?*

**at hand:** very near

#### **Translations**

##### **5 | Jeremiah 23:23, 24**

*Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.*

...

*“I am a God who is everywhere and not in one place only. No one can hide where I cannot see them. Do you not know that I am everywhere in heaven and on earth?”*

—Good News Translation

### **7 | II Samuel 24:2**

*The king said to Joab the captain of the host, which was with him, Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the people.*

Joab, King David’s nephew, was a formidable warrior who served David loyally for most of his life. But he was often brutal, as shown by his slaughter of Abner and Absalom (see [II Samuel 3:27](#); [18:14](#)). Yet in this instance, his counsel is apparently wiser than his uncle’s plans. He protests, “Why doth the lord my king delight in this thing?” ([24:3](#)).

Scholars puzzle over the reason David’s census is considered sinful. Moses had counted the people at God’s command (see [Numbers 1:1–3](#)). But David’s motives seem to have been ambition and pride, and he humbly repents of his action (see [II Samuel 24:10](#)).

“From Dan even to Beer-sheba” describes the entirety of Hebrew territory. The tribe of Dan was located at the far north of Palestine, Beersheba at the extreme south. Today the expression “from Dan to Beersheba” is used to mean everywhere.

### **10 | Hosea 1:10**

*The number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.*

Hosea is believed to have been married to and had children by an unfaithful wife, and his writing reflects this experience. During this period, worship of Canaanite gods was prevalent, so the prophet metaphorically represents God as a faithful husband and Israel as an adulterous wife (see chaps. 1–3).

In this verse, however, Hosea reveals the depth of God’s mercy. Even though the Israelites have left the “living God” to serve idols, he calls them children of God—and prefaces his words with the promise of divine abundance and care.

### Translation

*“... the time will come when Israel’s people will be like the sands of the seashore—too many to count! Then, at the place where they were told, ‘You are not my people,’ it will be said, ‘You are children of the living God.’”*

—New Living Translation

## Definitions from *Science and Health*

### 6 | 517:18–19, 22

*God has countless ideas, and they all have one Principle and parentage.... Even eternity can never reveal the whole of God, since there is no limit to infinitude or to its reflections.*

**countless:** too many to be counted

**parentage:** father or mother; origin

**infinitude:** state of being infinite; boundlessness

### 8 | 255:11–17

*Mortal man has made a covenant with his eyes to belittle Deity with human conceptions. In league with material sense, mortals take limited views of all things. That God is corporeal or material, no man should affirm.*

*The human form, or physical finiteness, cannot be made the basis of any true idea of the infinite Godhead.*

**belittle:** make someone or something seem small or unimportant

**in league with:** working together, often with a dishonest purpose

**Godhead:** divine nature

## from Section 3

### 12 | Daniel 3:1

*Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.*

The dimensions of Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image (up to 110 feet or 33.5 meters high by 9 feet or 2.75 meters wide) are far out of normal proportion for a human figure. Some commentaries surmise that the image was set on a high pedestal, or that it was instead a tall pillar known as a stele. And although statues of solid gold may have existed at the time, sources assume that this image was only plated with the precious metal.

Dura’s exact location is uncertain, but it was near Babylon. The name comes from the Akkadian word *duru*, used in several ancient city names to mean fortification or “walled place.”

## **12 | Daniel 3:4, 5**

*To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up.*

Hebrew captives in Babylon faced a dilemma that would not have troubled Nebuchadnezzar’s other subjects. Babylonians worshiped multiple gods, so honoring the king’s golden image did not threaten their polytheism. But for the Israelites, worship of any but the one God was sacrilege. The three young Hebrew men were willing to be punished rather than bow to a pagan image (see [vv. 16–18](#)).

## **13 | II Corinthians 3:17**

*Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

To Paul, liberty signifies freedom from restrictive codes and traditions, and more important, from the bondage of sin—a freedom available only through the Spirit of the Lord. In his epistle to the Romans, he affirms, “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” ([Romans 8:2](#)).

### **Translation**

#### **13 | II Corinthians 3:8, 17**

*How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?... Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

...

*So won't the agreement that the Spirit brings to us be even more wonderful?... The Lord and the Spirit are one and the same, and the Lord's Spirit sets us free.*

—Contemporary English Version

## Definitions from *Science and Health*

### 11 | 135:6–8

*The miracle introduces no disorder, but unfolds the primal order, establishing the Science of God’s unchangeable law.*

**unfolds:** reveals; opens to view

**primal:** original; basic

### 12 | 381:15–16

*God is the lawmaker, but He is not the author of barbarous codes.*

**barbarous:** cruel; merciless; uncivilized

**codes:** sets of rules; statements of law

### 13 | 225:29–31

*Men and women of all climes and races are still in bondage to material sense, ignorant how to obtain their freedom.*

**climes:** regions known by weather; climates

**bondage:** slavery

### 14 | 226:14–17

*God has built a higher platform of human rights, and He has built it on diviner claims. These claims are not made through code or creed, but in demonstration of “on earth peace, good-will toward men.”*

**platform:** foundation that supports principles or ideas

### 15 | 428:15–19

*We should consecrate existence, not “to the unknown God” whom we “ignorantly worship,” but to the eternal builder, the everlasting Father, to the Life which mortal sense cannot impair nor mortal belief destroy.*

**consecrate:** set apart or dedicate, especially for a sacred purpose

**impair:** weaken or damage

## from Section 4

### 14 | John 1:18

*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

Centuries earlier God had told Moses, “Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live” (Exodus 33:20).

Although the Hebrew people were not to look upon God, they did claim a covenant relationship with Him—a relationship that included some perception of His nature. Jeremiah prophesied, “They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:34).

Now John the Baptist announces that God’s Son is “declaring” God—providing a new understanding of Him. *Exēgeomai* (the Greek word translated *declared*) is the root of the English term *exegesis*, an explanation or interpretation. Being “in the bosom of the Father”—in spiritual unity with God—Christ makes God knowable to humanity. One scholar writes that in Christ “the distant, unknowable, invisible, unreachable God has come to men and women.”

### Translation

*No one has ever seen God.*

*The One and Only Son—*

*the One who is at the Father’s side—*

*He has revealed Him.*

—Holman Christian Standard Bible

## Definitions from *Science and Health*

### 18 | 473:7–12

*The God-principle is omnipresent and omnipotent. God is everywhere, and nothing apart from Him is present or has power. Christ is the ideal Truth, that comes to heal sickness and sin through Christian Science, and attributes all power to God.*

**attributes:** gives credit for

### from Section 5

### 16 | Romans 8:38, 39

*I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Paul has just posed an escalating series of rhetorical questions (see vv. 31–35). Now he answers the last one, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” (v. 35). Some sources believe that his mention of height and depth debunks the ancient fear that stars, either rising or setting, hold sway over people’s lives.

The apostle’s sweeping argument, including the catalog of earthly dangers in verse 35, removes every perceived obstacle to oneness with God.

### Translation

*Yes, I am sure that nothing can separate us from the love God has for us. Not death, not life, not angels, not ruling spirits, nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers, nothing above us, nothing below us, or anything else in the whole world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

—International Children’s Bible

## 17 | II Corinthians 6:16

*Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

From early Jewish history, the temple or tabernacle represented God’s promised presence: “I will set my tabernacle among you:… and I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people” (Leviticus 26:11, 12).

Paul cites this text from Leviticus in defining the community of Christians as God’s temple. And he uses the Greek noun *naos*—the inner sanctuary of the temple complex—to identify the church with the holiest space, consecrated to God.

### Translation

*… we are the sanctuary of the living God, as God said:*

*I will dwell among them*

*and walk among them,*

*and I will be their God,*

*and they will be My people.*

—Holman Christian Standard Bible

## 18 | Jeremiah 30:17

*I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord.*

Jeremiah had earlier lamented, “Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed?” (15:18). Now the prophet celebrates God’s healing power and declares the restoration of Israel.

*Wounds* (Hebrew, *makkâ*) can allude to plagues, slaughter, or stripes from beating. Figuratively, the term denotes the painful consequences of sin.

## Definitions from *Science and Health*

### 21 | 276:1–4

*Having one God, one Mind, unfolds the power that heals the sick, and fulfils these sayings of Scripture, “I am the Lord that healeth thee,” and “I have found a ransom.”*

**ransom:** release from captivity

### 22 | 221:1–4, 10

*I knew a person who when quite a child adopted the Graham system to cure dyspepsia. For many years, he ate only bread and vegetables, and drank nothing but water.... He passed many weary years in hunger and weakness, almost in starvation, and finally made up his mind to die, having exhausted the skill of the doctors, who kindly informed him that death was indeed his only alternative. At this point Christian Science saved him, and he is now in perfect health without a vestige of the old complaint.*

*He learned that suffering and disease were the self-imposed beliefs of mortals, and not the facts of being; that God never decreed disease,—never ordained a law that fasting should be a means of health. Hence semi-starvation is not acceptable to wisdom, and it is equally far from Science, in which being is sustained by God, Mind.*

**exhausted:** used up completely

**vestige:** smallest amount; trace of something that no longer exists

**self-imposed:** created or accepted for yourself

### 26 | 445:15

*You render the divine law of healing obscure and void, when you weigh the human in the scale with the divine, or limit in any direction of thought the omnipresence and omnipotence of God.*

**obscure:** unclear; uncertain

**void:** without authority, force, or effect

## from Section 6

### Translation

#### 19 | Zephaniah 3:17

*The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.*

...

*The Lord your God is with you;*

*his power gives you victory.*

*The Lord will take delight in you,*

*and in his love he will give you new life.*

*He will sing and be joyful over you,*

—Good News Translation

## Translation

### 20 | Hebrews 8:10

*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.*

...

*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will imprint My laws upon their minds, even upon their innermost thoughts and understanding, and engrave them upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

—Amplified® Bible Classic

## Definitions from *Science and Health*

### 27 | 15:25–30

*Christians rejoice in secret beauty and bounty, hidden from the world, but known to God. Self-forgetfulness, purity, and affection are constant prayers. Practice not profession, understanding not belief, gain the ear and right hand of omnipotence and they assuredly call down infinite blessings.*

**bounty:** abundance

**profession:** open declaration of belief

**assuredly:** certainly

### 30 | 103:15–16

*The maximum of good is the infinite God and His idea, the All-in-all.*

**maximum:** greatest or highest value

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## Related Healing Ideas

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## On a quest to know God

By Emily Byquist

From the September 19, 2005, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

During my teen years I had a deep yearning to know God. It was the 1960s, a time of great turbulence during which we questioned and challenged the status quo of everything—politically, morally, and socially.

By early August, in 1969, the now-famous Woodstock music festival was approaching, a weekend of concerts in Upstate New York. Before I went, I made the decision that I didn't want to do any more drugs—which is humorous, in hindsight, given what took place there. While I yearned to do good and make the right choices, human reasoning as to why I shouldn't take drugs was insufficient for me to make any lasting change.

Shortly after my friends and I arrived, I separated myself from them and went to a hill. I sat and looked at my surroundings—the grandeur and beauty of nature, the sun glistening on the rolling hills. And, at that moment, I saw that there was an infinite Spirit behind what I was seeing—that God was not in nature, but behind this grandeur was an intelligence that was pure Spirit.

When I caught this spiritual glimpse, I was clearheaded, I was articulate, I was myself. A spiritual sense of life had come to me with such clarity that I never took drugs again.

In that moment, I remember thinking with such simplicity, “What human parent would hide themselves from their child? So, one of two things is going to happen: If I searched for God with all my heart, and God existed, He would already be revealing Himself to me and I would find Him. And if I searched with all my heart and couldn't find Him—what a relief, because I would finally know for sure that there was no such thing as God.” I knew nothing about Christian Science at this time.

A day or two after I returned home from the festival, a friend, who was also not a Christian Scientist, invited me to go to a Christian Science lecture. I can't recall what the lecturer said, but during the lecture, I knew I had found the truth.

That Sunday I went to a Christian Science Sunday School and enrolled myself. I walked in barefoot from a weekend in the park, in a skirt that I'd bought at an antique store, pinned on the side. I was in my late teens, and it was the beginning of my journey to know God.

A week or two after I began studying Christian Science, I was healed of a problem I'd had for a few years. I came home from high school one day with menstrual cramps, something that had plagued me every month. I lay down, and I began to think calmly and logically about how God knew me, and about how this was therefore the only way I could know myself.

The good news that Christian Science brought me was that not only was God knowable Love and Life and Truth, but that I was the child of perfect Love and Life and Truth. And not just me—all were included. As I pondered this, the pain and discomfort left, and I was healed instantaneously. There was never again a recurrence of cramps.

As the prophet Jeremiah so beautifully wrote, “Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart” (29:13).

To read the entire article, which has been adapted to fit this page, go to [jsh.christianscience.com/on-a-quest-to-know-god](http://jsh.christianscience.com/on-a-quest-to-know-god).

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