



Bible Lens

NEW: Expanded edition

Bible Lens—July 13–19, 2020

Subject: **Life**

From the *Christian Science Sentinel* - July 13, 2020

The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

—[Psalms 118:14](#)

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

II Corinthians 3:5

Our sufficiency is of God.

Some Corinthian Christians deemed Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles inferior to the work of rival preachers—and they had gone so far as to request letters of commendation for Paul (see [v. 1](#)). His assertion is part of an entreaty that his readers accept his apostleship. Only God, he affirms, can qualify His children for service to Him.

Sufficiency (Greek, *hikanotēs*) signifies ability and competency. Using a related word, [Colossians 1:12](#) confirms this point: “The Father . . . hath made us meet [*hikanoō*] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

from the Responsive Reading

Isaiah 38:9, 19

The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: . . . The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day.

Hezekiah’s moving petition to God and subsequent healing are also narrated in [II Kings 20:1–7](#). His song of thanksgiving, however, only appears in Isaiah’s account. Where the earlier record places the king’s cure in the context of surrounding political events, the prophet—using language similar to many psalms—highlights Hezekiah’s change of thought from lament to praise.

from Section 1

Translation

1 | Psalms 142:5

O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

...

Lord, I cry out to you.

I say, "You are my place of safety.

You are everything I need in this life."

—New International Reader's Version

Translation

2 | Psalms 16:6, 9–11

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.... Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

...

How wonderful are your gifts to me;

how good they are!...

And so I am thankful and glad,

and I feel completely secure,

because you protect me from the power of death.

I have served you faithfully,

and you will not abandon me to the world of the dead.

You will show me the path that leads to life;

your presence fills me with joy

and brings me pleasure forever.

—Good News Translation

3 | Psalms 145:16

Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Like many other psalms, Psalm 145 celebrates God’s goodness and power. But it is distinguished by its emphasis on the allness of God, repeating the word *all* a dozen times. And with its placement right before the final hymns in the collection (146–150), this psalm can be seen as laying the groundwork for the refrain “Praise ye the Lord” in each of those poems.

from Section 2

5 | II Peter 3:8

Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

In this appeal, Second Peter alludes to Psalms 90:4, “A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.” The author is addressing doubters who have become impatient with the apparent delay of Christ’s second coming. He corrects their limited expectations with a reminder of the infinite scope of God’s presence and power.

6 | Isaiah 40:28

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?

Verse 27 records the people’s complaint against God, “My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God.” Now the writer reproves this protest with questions—reminders that God’s people have “known” and “heard” of His power and wisdom throughout their history.

“The ends of the earth” is a common scriptural phrase illustrating God’s far-reaching supremacy. Psalms 72:8 says, for instance, “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.”

Translation

6 | Isaiah 40:28, 31

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?... They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

...

Surely you know.

Surely you have heard.

The Lord is the God who lives forever,

who created all the world.

He does not become tired or need to rest...

...the people who trust the Lord will become strong again.

They will rise up as an eagle in the sky;

they will run and not need rest;

they will walk and not become tired.

—New Century Version

7 | Joshua 14:7, 10, 11

Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh–barnea to espy out the land;... and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me.

Caleb is describing the events leading up to the Israelites' entry into the Promised Land. Twelve tribal leaders assessed the strength of the inhabitants, but only Caleb and Joshua brought back an encouraging report (see [Numbers, chaps. 13, 14](#)).

Although some biblical characters are reported as living several hundred years, and Moses lived to a hundred and twenty (see [Genesis 5:5–32](#); [Deuteronomy 34:7](#)), the average life span at this time is believed to have been forty to sixty years. Caleb's undiminished strength at the age of eighty-five would have been considered remarkable by his peers.

Kadesh-barnea (also called simply Kadesh) figures prominently in the history of the Hebrew people. In addition to being the starting point referred to in these verses, it is where Moses' sister, Miriam, died and was buried, and where Moses struck the rock to find water (see [Numbers 20:1–11](#)). Modern excavations have revealed springs of water, indicating it became an oasis in the northern Sinai desert.

espy out: secretly gather information about

fourscore: eighty (four times one score, or twenty)

8 | II Corinthians 3:18

We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Here Paul contrasts an “open face” with Moses' face, which was veiled when he returned from Mount Sinai with the Commandments (see [Exodus 34:31–35](#)). As the Israelites were unable to look on Moses' radiant face, so nonbelievers are blind to the gospel of Christ. To receive the gospel is to remove the veil that obscures understanding.

“Beholding as in a glass” portrays the idea of reflection—an idea that, as a Bible authority writes, “was a source of fascination and debate in domestic, philosophical, and scientific circles of the ancient Mediterranean world.” *Reflection* alluded to a range of thought “from self-examination to spiritual transformation.” To the Christian, spiritual transformation—being “changed into the same image from glory to glory”—takes place as God’s glory is seen.

Metamorphoō, the Greek word rendered *changed* here, occurs elsewhere in Scripture only to describe Jesus’ transfiguration (see [Matthew 17:2](#); [Mark 9:2](#)) and in Paul’s charge to the Roman Christians “Be ye transformed [*metamorphoō*] by the renewing of your mind” ([Romans 12:2](#)).

Translation

... We all show the Lord's glory, and we are being changed to be like him. This change in us brings more and more glory. And it comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

—International Children’s Bible

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

7 | [246:10](#)

The measurement of life by solar years robs youth and gives ugliness to age. The radiant sun of virtue and truth coexists with being. Manhood is its eternal noon, undimmed by a declining sun. As the physical and material, the transient sense of beauty fades, the radiance of Spirit should dawn upon the enraptured sense with bright and imperishable glories.

solar year: the time the earth takes to go around the sun (about 365 days)

transient: lasting only a short time

imperishable: enduring forever

from Section 3

9 | [Isaiah 40:1, 5](#)

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.... And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

At the time of this prophecy, the Israelites are in exile in Babylon. Second Isaiah (chaps. 40–55) is written to reassure them that God will free His people. Centuries later, Luke echoes these words of Isaiah in introducing the ministry of John the Baptist: “All flesh shall see the salvation of God” ([Luke 3:6](#)).

Translation

9 | [Isaiah 40:4, 5](#)

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

• • •

Every valley will be filled in.

Every mountain and hill will be made level.

The rough ground will be smoothed out.

The rocky places will be made flat.

Then the glory of the Lord will appear.

And everyone will see it together.

The Lord has spoken.

—New International Reader's Version

Translation

11 | Psalms 93:4

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

• • •

Mightier than the thunder of the great waters,

mightier than the breakers of the sea—

the Lord on high is mighty.

—New International Version

Translation

13 | Psalms 36:9

For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

...

You are the source of all life,

and because of your light we see the light.

—Good News Translation

Definitions from *Science and Health*

8 | 596:23–25

Though the way is dark in mortal sense, divine Life and Love illumine it, destroy the unrest of mortal thought, the fear of death, and the supposed reality of error.

illumine: light up; brighten

unrest: restlessness; uneasiness

9 | 215:15

We are sometimes led to believe that darkness is as real as light; but Science affirms darkness to be only a mortal sense of the absence of light, at the coming of which darkness loses the appearance of reality. So sin and sorrow, disease and death, are the suppositional absence of Life, God, and flee as phantoms of error before truth and love.

affirms: states as a fact; declares

phantoms: ghosts; images that have no real existence

10 | 262:9

We cannot fathom the nature and quality of God's creation by diving into the shallows of mortal belief. We must reverse our feeble flutterings—our efforts to find life and truth in matter—and rise above the testimony of the material senses, above the mortal to the immortal idea of God. These clearer, higher views inspire the God-like man to reach the absolute centre and circumference of his being.

fathom: understand

feeble: weak

from Section 4

14 | Matthew 6:25

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.

“Take no thought” includes the Greek word *merimnaō*—the same term Jesus uses in his gentle rebuke to Martha about her focus on serving: “Thou art careful [*merimnaō*] and troubled about many things” (Luke 10:41). Paul later echoes Jesus’ counsel: “Be careful [*merimnaō*] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Philippians 4:6).

14 | Matthew 6:28

Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.

raiment: clothing

spin: twist wool into yarn or thread

Translation

14 | Matthew 6:25, 33

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?... But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

...

... I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing?... Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

—New Living Translation

Definitions from *Science and Health*

13 | 62:13–16, 22

Taking less “thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink”; less thought “for your body what ye shall put on,” will do much more for the health of the rising generation than you dream....

The divine Mind, which forms the bud and blossom, will care for the human body, even as it clothes the lily; but let no mortal interfere with God's government by thrusting in the laws of erring, human concepts.

rising generation: younger, maturing adults

interfere: cause damage or create an obstacle; meddle

from Section 5

16 | Luke 12:13

One of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

In this verse, the man in the crowd addresses Jesus as “Master” (Greek, *didaskalos*). Outsiders generally used this title for Jesus; the disciples usually called him “Lord” (*kyrios*). This man is asking Jesus to take on the role of a judge who could settle inheritance disputes in Jewish law by using the authority of Hebrew Bible examples. Jesus uses this complaint to emphasize the importance of spiritual treasure over material actions or goods (see [v. 15](#)).

16 | Luke 12:15

He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

take heed: pay attention; think carefully

covetousness: strong desire for something that belongs to someone else

consisteth: is made up of

Translation

He told the people, "Be careful to guard yourselves from every kind of greed. Life is not about having a lot of material possessions."

—GOD'S WORD Translation

17 | Mark 10:23, 26

Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!... And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

The disciples' amazement likely grew from Jewish assumption that the godly were blessed with riches (see examples in Job 1:10; 42:10; Psalms 128:2; Isaiah 3:10). Abundant material goods were seen as an indicator of piety—a viewpoint upended by Jesus' declaration. Yet the Master's response promises present blessings (see Mark 10:29, 30).

Jesus' words represented no mere figure of speech, according to one source: "Early Christians, whose conversions often involved a break with their natural families, experienced new familial bonds (Acts 4:32; I Cor 4:15; Rom 16:13–17). Hospitality and mutual acceptance gave them new homes, mothers, brothers, and sisters."

17 | Mark 10:29, 30

Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

hundredfold: one hundred times as much

Definitions from *Science and Health*

17 | 54:1

Through the magnitude of his human life, he demonstrated the divine Life. Out of the amplitude of his pure affection, he defined Love. With the affluence of Truth, he vanquished error. The world acknowledged not his righteousness, seeing it not; but earth received the harmony his glorified example introduced.

magnitude: greatness; significance; influence

amplitude: fullness; breadth or range

affluence: abundance; plentiful supply

from Section 6

18 | Acts 28:3–5

When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.

Barbarians and *barbarous people* (v. 2) were terms used to describe those who spoke “incomprehensible” languages—in this case, those who didn’t speak Greek. Today they might be called foreigners.

The word *barbarian* did sometimes refer to ignorance or crudeness. But the people of Melita (believed to be the modern island of Malta) were thoroughly civilized—and like many civilized people of the time, were superstitious and polytheistic. Locals’ conviction that Paul was doomed probably reflected the belief in a goddess of justice who exacted punishment from the guilty.

viper: poisonous snake

Definitions from *Science and Health*

21 | 216:3–5

Who shall say that man is alive to-day, but may be dead to-morrow? What has touched Life, God, to such strange issues?

issues: consequences; ends or ultimate results

22 | 390:12

When the first symptoms of disease appear, dispute the testimony of the material senses with divine Science. Let your higher sense of justice destroy the false process of mortal opinions which you name law, and then you will not be confined to a sick-room nor laid upon a bed of suffering in payment of the last farthing, the last penalty demanded by error. “Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him.” Suffer no claim of sin or of sickness to grow upon the thought. Dismiss it with an abiding conviction that it is illegitimate, because you know that God is no more the author of sickness than He is of sin. You have no law of His to support the necessity either of sin or sickness, but you have divine authority for denying that necessity and healing the sick.

symptoms: signs; indications

dispute: disagree with; work to prove false

abiding conviction: idea firmly and continuously held to be true

from Section 7

Translation

20 | II Corinthians 9:8

God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

...

... God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

—New Living Translation

21 | **Deuteronomy 30:20**

He is thy life, and the length of thy days.

Moses is addressing the children of Israel here before he parts from them. He reminds them of their covenant with God, and assures them that He is their very life. One commentary offers, “He gives life, preserves life, restores life, and prolongs it, by his power,... and by his presence.”

Definitions from *Science and Health*

24 | **203:13**

Spiritual perception brings out the possibilities of being, destroys reliance on aught but God, and so makes man the image of his Maker in deed and in truth.

reliance: dependence; trust

aught: anything

To learn more about the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lessons, go to <https://quarterly.christianscience.com>.

Resources quoted in this issue

Cit. 8: *Contexticon of New Testament Language*: Copyright © 2009 by Contexticon Learning and Research, Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. All rights reserved.

Cit. 17: Mays, James L., Joseph Blenkinsopp, et al., eds. *Harper’s Bible Commentary*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.

Cit. 21: Benson, Joseph. *Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*. New York: T. Carlton & J. Porter, 1857. Also available at biblehub.com/commentaries.

Related Healing Ideas

Our lifeblood

By Carolyn B. Swan

From the May 9, 1983, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

Figuratively, lifeblood means vitalizing force; and literally, God is the life-giving, life-sustaining power of all His creation. Mary Baker Eddy writes, “Man’s individual being must reflect the supreme individual Being, to be His image and likeness; and this individuality never originated in molecule, corpuscle, materiality, or mortality” (*No and Yes*, p. 26). The capacity to live fully and develop productively inheres in the true individuality of each of us.

Jesus’ entire healing ministry shows that divine Life—the same Life that impelled the Master’s unparalleled resurrection—powerfully supports our efforts to prove that man is the spiritual child of God. In every age, deific law supplies Christian disciples with renewal of the stamina and endurance essential to spiritual progress and divine service.

On the human scene today, Christ, Truth, which Jesus taught and practiced, is the vitalizer of purposeful, efficacious living.

The eternal Christ, Truth, reaches us here and now, awakening our faith. To be alive with spiritual faith is to be revitalized, to be whole in a sense deeper than the physical. Shouldn’t our faith unfold, then, from a more solid base than material transfusions, bed rest, drugs, and dietary supplements?

Throughout her girlhood and in her early twenties, a young woman had combated with material remedies a chronic condition of anemia. Whenever she would run out of pills or fail to get specified rest or food, her get-up-and-go would sag. After she began to study Christian Science, she took deep interest in gaining a better understanding of God as Life, the substance of all spiritual reality. She began to acquaint herself with all the vital properties that issue from what the Bible describes as “the fountain of life” (*Psalms 36:9*). It came to her that as a spiritual attribute of Life, vitality is immutably intact, never lacking in any way. She daily endeavored to draw into accord with this true vitality, enthusiastically putting her newfound understanding into practice.

Then one day she realized that it had been many months since she had taken the tablets or regimented her rest or diet. Yet she felt strong and energetic. She knew she had been healed. The spiritual rebirth that had turned her from reliance on matter had freed her from mental and physical lethargy.

Many years later, when she met some longtime friends who darkly remarked that they certainly didn’t feel as they did when they were teen-agers, she delighted in saying, “Neither do I. I feel *better*.”

Christ, Truth, revealed through faith and understanding, more than restores our health and vitality. It awakens our spiritual sense—restores our soul. In the continuing baptism of spiritual purification and refreshment that comes through active practice of Christian Science, we experience a renaissance of life. When we are aroused from the lethargic belief that we are dependent on matter for life and vigor, we are ready to prove that God, divine Life, cares for His children. He provides all we will ever need in order to enjoy irrepensible, eternal life. He is the source of our vitality.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to jsh.christianscience.com/our-lifeblood.

© 2020 The Christian Science Publishing Society. The design of the Cross and Crown is a trademark owned by the Christian Science Board of Directors and is used by permission. *Bible Lens* and *Christian Science Quarterly* are trademarks owned by The Christian Science Publishing Society. Unless otherwise indicated, all scriptural quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

