



## **Bible Lens**

# Bible Lens—October 12–18, 2020

Subject: **Doctrine of Atonement**

From the *Christian Science Sentinel* - October 12, 2020

**Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it.**

—[Isaiah 30:21](#)

## 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

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

#### **Psalms 69:32**

*Your heart shall live that seek God.*

According to one source, the heart that seeks God will “bubble over with the joy of life, because the Lord does hear the prayers of his people in need.”

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

#### **Psalms 34:6**

*This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.*

Psalm 34, like many others, has been attributed to David. Here he identifies himself in the third person as “this poor man,” likely during a time of flight from a Philistine king. But David’s focus is on God’s willingness and power to save him.

#### **Psalms 34:13**

*Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.*

**guile:** deceit; trickery

## **from Section 1**

### **2 | Psalms 139:7, 8**

*Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.*

#### **Translation**

### **2 | Psalms 139:1, 7–10**

*O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. . . . Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*

...

*Lord, you have examined me.*

*You know me. . . .*

*Where could I go to get away from your spirit?*

*Where could I go to escape your presence?*

*If I went up to heaven, you would be there.*

*If I went down to the grave, you would be there too!*

*If I could fly on the wings of dawn,*

*stopping to rest only on the far side of the ocean—*

*even there your hand would guide me;*

*even there your strong hand would hold me tight!*

—Common English Bible

In ancient civilizations, pagan gods were believed to wield control over distinct realms. It was thought that a person could take refuge in the realm of one god to be safe from another god who might wish him harm. The Psalmist declares the omnipresent God who governs His creation with an all-encompassing intelligence and love.

“Neither by patient travel nor by hasty flight can we withdraw from the all-surrounding Deity,” affirms a Bible authority.

#### **Translation**

### **3 | Micah 6:8**

*He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

...

*The Lord has told you what is good.*

*He has told you what he wants from you:*

*Do what is right to other people.*

*Love being kind to others.*

*And live humbly, trusting your God.*

—International Children’s Bible

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

4 | 322:26–29

*The sharp experiences of belief in the supposititious life of matter, as well as our disappointments and ceaseless woes, turn us like tired children to the arms of divine Love.*

**supposititious:** counterfeit; imaginary; not based on fact

**from Section 2**

**Translation**

**5 | Psalms 5:1, 3**

*Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. . . . My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.*

. . .

*Open your ears to my words, O Lord.*

*Consider my innermost thoughts. . . .*

*In the morning, O Lord, hear my voice.*

*In the morning I lay my needs in front of you, . . .*

—GOD’S WORD Translation

**6 | Psalms 40:1, 2**

*I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.*

**Translation**

## 6 | Psalms 40:1–3, 8

*I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: . . . I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*

• • •

*“I waited patiently for the Lord to help me,  
and he turned to me and heard my cry.  
He lifted me out of the pit of despair,  
out of the mud and the mire.  
He set my feet on solid ground  
and steadied me as I walked along.  
He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. . . .  
I take joy in doing your will, my God,  
for your instructions are written on my heart.”*

—New Living Translation

God’s salvation is portrayed vividly in the great contrast between *pit* and *rock*. Both horrible pit and miry clay are seen as images of the underworld. *Rock* represents a place of refuge and permanence, often alluding to God in Scripture (see examples in II Samuel 22:2, 3; Psalms 62:6, 7).

## ***from Section 3***

### 8 | II Samuel 12:1

*The Lord sent Nathan unto David.*

After David’s sinful acts toward Bathsheba and Uriah, the prophet Nathan presents the king with a story of injustice. As supreme judge in the realm, David strongly condemns the wrongdoer. Then the prophet reveals the story as a parable and David as the sinful man. Using the prophetic language “Thus saith the Lord,” Nathan reminds the king of God’s gracious acts toward him and defines his wrongs as “despising” God’s commandment (see vv. 7, 9).

Remorseful, David responds with the admission “I have sinned against the Lord” (v. 13). Although the first child of the king’s relationship with Bathsheba dies, their second son, Solomon, becomes David’s successor to the throne (see vv. 14, 24).

Nathan figures in two other scriptural accounts. First, in the record of David’s plans to build the Temple, it is Nathan who tells David that the honor of building this structure will not be his but his son’s (see 7:12, 13). And when David’s oldest living son, Adonijah, proclaims himself king at the end of David’s life, Nathan is instrumental in ensuring Solomon’s place as the next monarch (see I Kings 1:1–39).

## **Translation**

## 9 | Psalms 130:1, 3, 5, 7

*Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. . . . If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? . . . I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. . . . for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.*

...

*Out of the depths [of distress] I have cried to You, O Lord. . . .  
If You, Lord, should keep an account of our sins and treat us accordingly,  
O Lord, who could stand [before you in judgment and claim innocence]? . . .  
I wait [patiently] for the Lord, my soul [expectantly] waits,  
And in His word do I hope. . . .  
O Israel, hope in the Lord;  
For with the Lord there is lovingkindness,  
And with Him is abundant redemption.*

—Amplified® Bible

## 10 | Galatians 6:1

*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*

*Restore* is translated from the Greek verb *katartizō*, a word that describes both the humble task of mending nets and the spiritual work of perfecting lives (see examples in [Matthew 4:21](#); [Hebrews 13:20, 21](#)).

### Definitions from *Science and Health*

#### 13 | 327:29

*Reason is the most active human faculty. Let that inform the sentiments and awaken the man's dormant sense of moral obligation, and by degrees he will learn the nothingness of the pleasures of human sense and the grandeur and bliss of a spiritual sense, which silences the material or corporeal. Then he not only will be saved, but is saved.*

**sentiments:** thoughts; opinions

**dormant:** inactive; asleep

**moral obligation:** responsibility or commitment to doing right

## from Section 4

### 12 | Mark 1:11

*There came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

God's ringing endorsement of Christ Jesus at the time of his baptism coincides with the opening of the heavens (see [v. 10](#)). This opening is described with the Greek verb *skhizō*—the term used for the rending of the Temple veil during the crucifixion (see [15:37, 38](#)). Both events signal the dissolving of a perceived barrier between God and His creation.

## **12 | [Mark 1:40, 41](#)**

*There came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.*

*Wilt* and *will* (Greek, *thelō*) convey a sense of active intention and desire here. *Thelō* also appears in Jesus' poignant prayer at Gethsemane "Not what I will [*thelō*] . . ." ([14:36](#))—and in the familiar passage known as the Golden Rule, "As ye would [*thelō*] that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" ([Luke 6:31](#)).

## **Translation**

### **13 | [II Corinthians 3:4, 5](#)**

*Such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.*

...

*We are confident of all this because of our great trust in God through Christ. It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God.*

—New Living Translation

## **Definitions from *Science and Health***

16 | [18:3–5, 13–2](#)

*Jesus of Nazareth taught and demonstrated man's oneness with the Father, and for this we owe him endless homage. . . .*

*The atonement of Christ reconciles man to God, not God to man; for the divine Principle of Christ is God, and how can God propitiate Himself? Christ is Truth, which reaches no higher than itself. The fountain can rise no higher than its source.*

*Christ, Truth, could conciliate no nature above his own, derived from the eternal Love. It was therefore Christ's purpose to reconcile man to God, not God to man.*

**homage:** deep respect and honor

**propitiate:** make up for or right a wrong

**conciliate:** bring to agreement

18 | [258:31–1](#)

*Through spiritual sense you can discern the heart of divinity, and thus begin to comprehend in Science the generic term man.*

**generic:** relating to a group with common characteristics

## **from Section 5**

### **Translation**

#### **14 | I Chronicles 28:9**

*The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee.*

...

*... the Lord knows what is in everyone's mind. He understands everything you think. If you go to him for help, you will get an answer.*

—New Century Version

#### **15 | Isaiah 57:15**

*Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

### **Translation**

*... God lives forever and is holy. He is high and lifted up. He says, "I live in a high and holy place, but I also live with people who are sad and humble. I give new life to those who are humble and to those whose hearts are broken."*

—New Century Version

The Hebrew term rendered *contrite* (*dakkā'*) relates to being crushed (used as a noun, it alludes to dust). It occurs in a similar declaration by the Psalmist: "The Lord . . . saveth such as be of a contrite [*dakkā'*] spirit" (Psalms 34:18, Responsive Reading). A scholar explains, "Those who live in the sight of God inevitably become humble."

#### **16 | Luke 7:37, 38**

*A woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.*

In social gatherings of the time, guests were traditionally greeted with a kiss, ointment, and foot washing. At meals they reclined on pillows, their feet away from the tables or mats where slaves placed food—an arrangement that allowed this woman to reach Jesus' feet.

In verses 44–46, Jesus contrasts not only the honor and respect of the woman's act with his host's failure to provide this courtesy but also the fine quality of the ointment with more common oil. That she used the costlier substance for his feet, considered a lowly part of the body, was a striking sign of humility and affection.

**alabaster:** nearly transparent white stone

**ointment:** oily substance used to soften or treat skin

## Definitions from *Science and Health*

### 21 | 23:4–5, 7

*The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part. . . . The atonement is a hard problem in theology, but its scientific explanation is, that suffering is an error of sinful sense which Truth destroys, and that eventually both sin and suffering will fall at the feet of everlasting Love.*

**self-immolation:** self-sacrifice

**theology:** the study of God and His laws

### 22 | 367:3–9

*The tender word and Christian encouragement of an invalid, pitiful patience with his fears and the removal of them, are better than hecatombs of gushing theories, stereotyped borrowed speeches, and the doling of arguments, which are but so many parodies on legitimate Christian Science, aflame with divine Love.*

**invalid:** someone weakened or disabled by illness

## from Section 6

### 18 | Acts 2:14

*Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words.*

Peter is responding to skepticism and mockery on the day of Pentecost, after everyone there “out of every nation under heaven . . . heard them speak in his own language” (vv. 5, 6). His address is momentous for several reasons. It's the first time since Jesus' ascension that one of his disciples has borne witness of him publicly. The audience consists of pious Jews who have come to Jerusalem for the Pentecost festival. And it's the Holy Spirit poured out on Jesus' followers that day that enables Peter to speak with such authority, even after having denied knowing the Master and having been conspicuously absent at the cross.



A commentator writes: “The departure of Jesus has made witness to him necessary, while the Pentecostal baptism with the Spirit has made it possible. . . . Israel’s ignorance about their Messiah, which has provoked derision rather than confession, will be reversed only if they listen to the prophet’s message [see [vv. 16–21](#)].”

### **18 | [Acts 2:22, 23, 38](#)**

*Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. . . . Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

**foreknowledge:** knowledge of something before it happens

**remission:** forgiveness

### **18 | [Acts 2:41](#)**

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

In the period following Jesus’ ascension the church grew rapidly. Acts 1:15 mentions a meeting of about a hundred twenty believers. In this verse, three thousand more are recorded. Soon afterward, the number rose to about five thousand and continued to increase (see [4:4](#); [5:14](#); [6:1](#); [9:31](#); [21:20](#)). Christianity spread geographically as well (see examples in [8:5](#), [6](#), [12](#); [9:35](#), [42](#); [11:19–26](#)).

A scriptural authority notes, “With the increase in numbers and the geographical spread of the faith, the Christian communities also experienced growth in spiritual depth and vitality.” Throughout the book of Acts, this source continues, are recorded “earnest, united prayer in crises, generous sharing of possessions, courage during persecution, and boldness in witness.” [Acts 16:5](#) reports, “So were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.”

### **18 | [Acts 2:42](#)**

*They continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

Early Christian communities worshiped and studied together, shared meals and possessions, and cared for each other’s needs. As one scholar makes clear: “No intellectual snobbery here! No social superiority, no racial intolerance, no temperamental privileges here! They were all together, bound into a fellowship by the same ideas (the apostles’ teaching), by the same practices (the breaking of bread), by the same religious habits (prayers), and by the same economic rights and responsibility (and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need).”

## ***from Section 7***

### **Translation**

### **19 | [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.*

• • •

*I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love which Christ Jesus our Lord shows us. We can't be separated by death or life, by angels or rulers, by anything in the present or anything in the future, by forces or powers in the world above or in the world below, or by anything else in creation.*

—GOD'S WORD Translation

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

#### **Resources quoted in this issue**

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**Cit. 2:** Spurgeon, Charles H. *The Treasury of David*. 7 vols. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1882–86. Also available at [biblestudytools.com/commentaries](http://biblestudytools.com/commentaries).

**Cit. 15:** Buttrick, George Arthur, Harmon, Nolan B., et al., eds. *The Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 5, *Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1951–57.

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## Related healing ideas

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### Reconciled to God through Christ

By William E. Moody

From the July 30, 1984, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

Over the years I've met people who for one reason or another had come to feel as though they'd been cut off from everything good. Some of these people felt alienated by financial circumstances; some were seriously ill; some were in prison; some had committed sins that they thought were unforgivable. And some merely felt that their lives didn't count for very much—even if they had accomplished a degree of material success in their careers.

All of these people needed reconciliation to God. I know for certain that some found it. They turned to the Science of Christ, and they discovered something deeper than they'd recognized before of God's real nature as illimitable Love, ever-present Spirit, immutable Truth. They were touched by the redeeming action of God's dear Christ, His true idea voicing good. These people feel freer now than they ever believed possible.

There can be little question, though, that many people haven't yet found the release from despair that such Christ-impelled reconciliation brings. But it is available to everyone in need of love and comfort.

In common usage, reconciliation means the reestablishment of a close relationship. It often refers to the reuniting of friends or family relations. In the deepest spiritual sense, God can be thought of as our closest friend, our divine Parent. And in truth that special relationship never can be broken.

God never fails to love His child, the immortal spiritual manifestation of His own being. The Father Mind knows nothing less than the purity and goodness of His expression, and He includes all spiritual creation within the infinitude of divine consciousness. It is only the false and deceptive mentality of mortals that ever believes man can be forsaken by his Maker.

Thus it isn't God who needs to be reconciled to His own manifestation. Rather it is the faltering human consciousness, believing in man's vulnerability to separation, that needs the reconciliation—that needs to discern more of the truth of the real man's inseparability from God. And as the Christ, Truth, is welcomed into one's heart through prayer, the ever-present embrace of divine Love is felt in its radiant warmth and tenderness. This reconciliation through Christ makes one feel new and truly alive. The Bible assures us: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" ([II Corinthians 5:17, 18](#)).

So the very act of being reconciled to God through Christ brings us healing and redemption, for as we gain a truer sense of infinite, omnipotent Love, we find release from the bondage of disease and sin. Yet reconciliation does require something of the individual. It may require more earnest prayer, humility, a willingness to accept God's will. It may demand genuine repentance followed by actions that prove our sincerity, devotion, and integrity. But what joy there is in meeting these Christian demands!

As in Jesus' day when our Master preached God's Word, healed the sick, raised the dead, and cast out evils, so in our own day the Christ is active in every searching thought, every humble heart, that yearns to know man's unity with the Father.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to [jsh.christianscience.com/reconciled-to-god-through-christ](http://jsh.christianscience.com/reconciled-to-god-through-christ).

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