



My soul thirsteth for God,
for the living God.

—Psalms 42:2



Christian Science Sentinel
Bible Lens

Life

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from the Responsive Reading

I John 1:1

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.

...

We are writing to you about something which has always existed yet which we ourselves actually saw and heard: something which we had an opportunity to observe closely and even to hold in our hands, and yet, as we know now, was something of the very Word of life himself!

—*The New Testament in Modern English*,
J. B. Phillips

Here First John refutes the belief held by some that Christ Jesus existed only as a spirit, not in the flesh. *Handle* (Greek, *psēlaphō*) describes physical touch, as well as figurative searching. Jesus uses it after his resurrection when he invites his disciples to touch him—to reassure themselves that he is indeed risen (see Luke 24:39).

from Section 1

4 | Psalms 16:8

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Moved (Hebrew, *môt*) can refer to slipping or being shaken—as in the Psalmist’s declaration, “When I said, My foot slippeth [*môt*]; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up” (94:18).

from Section 2

7 | Hebrews 5:5, 6

Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Little is known about Melchisedec. He is designated both king of Salem and “priest of the most high God” in Genesis 14:18. And Abraham honored him with a tithe (see Hebrews 7:2, citation 8)—a unique dispensation commonly reserved for the priestly tribe of Levi and the Aaronite family of priests in later centuries.

A translation of Hebrews 7:3 relates, “There is no record of [Melchisedec’s] father or mother or any of his ancestors—no beginning or end to his life. He remains a priest forever, resembling the Son of God.”

Seen in this light, the writer is proclaiming Christ’s priesthood to be a gift of God for eternity—surpassing the status of any human priest.

from Section 3

11 | John 10:9, 27

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.... My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Christ Jesus uses familiar images to portray his tender care of his followers. Shepherds often protected their sheep in wil-

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

derness areas at night by sleeping at the entrance or “door” of the sheepfold. In towns, paid gatekeepers guarded multiple flocks. Though mingled with other sheep, each flock responded immediately to its own shepherd’s voice.

11 | John 10:30

I and my Father are one.

“One of the implications of John’s use of the oneness motif,” writes a scholar, “is that the Son’s being and nature is presented as the active expression of God.”

from Section 4

14 | Luke 16:19, 20, 22

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores.... And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom.

In this parable, Jesus is calling out the Pharisees for their love of money and neglect of the poor. If Jews are going to call themselves the sons of Abraham, then they must follow the Scriptural teachings about caring for the poor (see examples in Leviticus 25:25, 35).

“Abraham’s bosom” symbolized what was believed to be the heavenly place of the righteous—including the patriarch Abraham—after death. The image recalls the custom of honored guests leaning on their host during a meal (see example in John 13:23).

from Section 5

18 | Acts 9:36, 37

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died.

The designation *disciple* points to Tabitha’s standing as equivalent to that of respected male believers. Her value is also evidenced by the dispatching of two men to Peter with an urgent request for help.

Peter’s first healing (with John) was of the lame beggar at the gate of the Temple in Jerusalem (see Acts 3:1–10). The raising of Tabitha—the last of Peter’s healings mentioned in Scripture—is the first of such magnitude performed by one of Jesus’ disciples. Peter says simply, “Tabitha, arise,” speaking as Jesus did when he raised the dead (see Mark 5:41, Luke 7:14, and John 11:43).

The apostle’s work in Lydda and Joppa shows the spread of Christianity well beyond Jerusalem. His next charge, the visit to Cornelius in Caesarea, heralds the spread of the gospel to Gentiles (see Acts 9:32—10:48).

Resources quoted in this issue

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Cit. 11: Humble, Susan Elizabeth. *A Divine Round Trip: The Literary and Christological Function of the Descent/Ascent Leitmotif in the Gospel of John*. Leuven: Peeters, 2016.

Fill the tank!

By Curt Wahlberg

From the October 2011 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

I have relatives with some property and a cabin in a very remote area. One of the challenges there is to provide ourselves with some form of running water. Years ago, I helped them set up a system using a tank at the top of a rocky hill formation, which gathers water from a nearby lake. We set up hoses running to various faucets. Any time you open a faucet, water runs down the hill, and out it pours. You can imagine how gratifying it is to open the faucet and get water.

But first, you've got to fill the tank! And consider how significant that part is. Compared to opening the faucet, filling the tank is almost all of the work.

This has been a helpful illustration for me as I endeavor to experience well-being in my life and hope others experience it in their lives, too. I thought about how the tank could symbolize our consciousness and how the water could symbolize the awareness of God's good nature and all-presence. God, or the Holy Spirit, constitutes the very essence of our lives. And it so often seems that the momentum I would like to experience depends on gaining awareness of His presence. If we want progress or more well-being, we need to continue filling our spiritual tank so that when we open the faucet, the good in our consciousness is expressed and put forth into our world.

The Bible speaks of this in terms of "living water." In the Gospel of John, we read: "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive)" (7:37-39). The divine Spirit, which the master Christian fully expressed, has all

the living water that one could need. And this living water can be brought forth in the form of divine qualities such as holiness, honesty, and love. It brings us more in tune with divine living, replacing fear, stagnation, materialism, and disease.

Mary Baker Eddy wrote of finding and feeling the divine Spirit: "Whatever inspires with wisdom, Truth, or Love—be it song, sermon, or Science—blesses the human family with crumbs of comfort from Christ's table, feeding the hungry and giving living waters to the thirsty" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 234). I've certainly had times when I was thirsty for a better day or a better year. My family has had chapters in life when we felt something was missing, or weekends where people were not getting along. Often this has required us to discover more fully that life is defined and ordered by an infinite, living God.

For me, this spiritual work means time for daily prayer. Similarly, during weekends, our family tries to incorporate a "quiet time." And as that quotation suggests, we've found that some hymn singing, a church service, and inspirational reading are all helpful in finding together the living waters that move us along.

From the writings of Mary Baker Eddy

Warmed by the sunshine of Truth, watered by the heavenly dews of Love, the fruits of Christian Science spring upward, and away from the sordid soil of self and matter.

Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1896, p. 343