



My lips shall greatly
rejoice when I sing unto
thee; and my soul, which
thou hast redeemed.

—Psalms 71:23



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Bible Lens

Soul

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from the Golden Text

Psalms 35:9

My soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

Yešū'ā, the Hebrew word for *salvation*, carries deep and varied significance—embracing such concepts as welfare, safety, prosperity, deliverance, and victory.

According to one source, “Salvation is expressed not only in the release from captivity but also in the forgiveness of sin (Ps. 85), characterized not only by the manifestation of God’s loving-kindness and peace but also God’s righteousness (*ṣedeq*) and truth (*emet*).”

from Section 2

8 | Exodus 34:30

When Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone.

The radiance of Moses’ face is described with the Hebrew word *qaran*. Because this term sometimes refers to having horns—and perhaps because horns were an ancient symbol of divinity—artists such as Michelangelo portrayed Moses with horns on his head.

Whether the Hebrew leader is shown with rays of light or horns, his countenance was clearly transformed by his encounter with God on Mount Sinai. When speaking to the people, Moses wore a veil to counter their fear of this phenomenon—and removed it when he “went in before the Lord” (see vv. 31–35).

from Section 3

13 | Proverbs 31:10

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

Although a few verses in Proverbs portray women negatively (see examples in 21:9 and 27:15), this book contains some of the most favorable descriptions in the Hebrew Bible. Typically, the woman in Proverbs commands obedience and respect, overseeing her household with competence, industry, and wisdom.

“The term for this woman in Hebrew (*’ēšet ḥayil*) indicates a woman of power and valor or a woman who produces prosperity,” notes a scholar. “In the Bible, the term *wife* encodes a set of productive and managerial tasks that, along with a woman’s reproductive role, were essential to the existence of the Israelite household. There is no equivalent understanding of ‘wife’ as a social category in the modern West.... The often insulting idea of ‘just a wife and mother’ would have had no meaning in the biblical world.”

14 | I Samuel 25:2, 3

There was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings.

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

Because of Nabal’s offensive treatment, David is intent on violence. He is saved from his angry purpose by Abigail, who attributes this deliverance to God—as does David (see v. 32). Commentators agree that brutal retaliation, especially against a fellow Hebrew, would have stained David’s reputation and threatened his future claim to the kingship.

Abigail is one of only a handful of female protagonists in the Bible. Here, she is shown as a model of strength and wisdom, in stark contrast to her boorish husband. Although as a woman Abigail has no standing in dealings between men, she is thoughtful, diplomatic, and eloquent in speaking directly to David—and courageous and decisive in defusing the volatile situation brought about by her husband’s incivility.

The case Abigail makes is considered by some to be a preeminent example of well-developed argument in Scripture. And her declaration, “The Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house” (verse 28) has overtones of prophecy similar to Nathan’s later insight, “The Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house” (II Samuel 7:11). One scholar notes that Abigail bridges the gulf between the death of Samuel and the arrival of Nathan—the two prophets upon whom David relied.

The Hebrew word *nābāl*—meaning a foolish, churlish, or reckless character—probably replaced the man’s actual name. The term also occurs in a long description in Isaiah, and includes this warning: “The vile person [*nābāl*] will speak villainy, and his heart will work iniquity” (32:6).

from Section 5

21 | Mark 8:22

And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

Bethsaida was a small fishing village at the northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee. It was raised to the status of a city by the tetrarch Philip, a son of Herod the Great, likely in an attempt to demonstrate to Rome its prosperity under his rule. Bethsaida was the location of the feeding of the five thousand, and the hometown of Apostles Peter, Andrew, and Philip (see Luke 9:10–17, John 1:44, 12:21).

From the writings of Mary Baker Eddy

Transcending the evidence of the material senses, Science declares God to be the Soul of all being, the only Mind and intelligence in the universe. There is but one God, one Soul, or Mind, and that one is infinite, supplying all that is absolutely immutable and eternal,—Truth, Life, Love.

Unity of Good, p. 29

In the scientific relation of man to God, man is reflected not as human soul, but as the divine ideal, whose Soul is not in body, but is God,—the divine Principle of man.

Unity of Good, pp. 51–52

Resources quoted in this issue

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Accepting Soul's mastery

By Joseph Eller

From the August 2014 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

There is really nothing vague or mysterious about Soul. Soul is, in fact, quite understandable and quite lovable.

Soul is the name for God that is tied most closely to spiritual identity, which we each have eternally. Individual spiritual identity is how God, Soul, pours light and truth on all creation.

One way to understand Soul is to see its healing action and what it heals. From my own experience, Soul's mastery includes victories over depression and mental illness, as well as negative emotions such as habitual anger, self-pity, irritation, and self-righteousness.

It is important to understand the vital metaphysical point that there is one undivided Soul, which is God. Soul *is* God and cannot be divided into little souls, which are then installed within each of us. Soul, remaining always the whole of God, is reflected by you and me, and it is through this reflection that we have spiritual identity and individuality.

The Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, states succinctly, "Soul or Spirit means only one Mind, and cannot be rendered in the plural" (p. 466). And the author adds: "Science reveals Spirit, Soul, as not in the body, and God as not in man but as reflected by man" (p. 467).

Soul is one because there is one God. We reflect Soul, and so even the tiniest detail of what goes on in our hearts, feelings, affections, and emotions should not depart from the nature of God as Soul.

Soul is always at work, dividing the real from the unreal within us. But this is only practical in our lives as we give ourselves totally over to the divine control of Soul.

How can we give ourselves over to this mastery of Soul? Perhaps one answer lies in realizing the simple truth that Soul's mastery is already here; it is an established fact, as sure as the sun shining on the earth, even though from our vantage point there may be clouds blocking the sun (though, if we were to go up in the sky a mile or so, this would not be the case). So, to see more of Soul shining in our lives and firmly governing our innermost being, we can intelligently see through the clouds. We can yield to God, to the sunshine of Soul. This yielding is all we have to do.

One key to this yielding is love. We readily yield to things we love. Do we love God? Each one of us can find within ourselves a natural love of God as Soul. This is and must be more than a tepid love. It is in the spirit of the Psalmist's words, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psalms 119:97). As we foster within ourselves this kind of great, deep love for God, Soul, mastering our innermost desires, affections, and feelings, then we have accepted Soul's mastery.

Knowing God is never a privileged ability or possession. As reflections of God, every one of us can draw closer to God in our affections and actions, and so possess a more perfect understanding of God and God's fullness as All-in-all.

This divine sense of selfhood silences the small, squeaky human ego that tends to see itself in the place of Soul. And this universal, impartially given understanding enables us to enter into the mastery of Soul.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to jsh.christianscience.com/accepting-soul-s-mastery.