



The earth shall be filled
with the knowledge of the
glory of the Lord, as the
waters cover the sea.

—Habakkuk 2:14



Christian Science Sentinel
Bible Lens

**Is the Universe,
Including Man,
Evolved by
Atomic Force?**

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from the Golden Text

Acts 4:24

Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.

Part of an outpouring of praise, this affirmation follows the release of Peter and John after detention by Temple leaders. A standoff occurs when Peter heals the lame man at the Temple gate and speaks about Jesus' resurrection to the gathered crowd of several thousand men. The Jewish authorities are incensed by this teaching. But with the healed man standing there, the leaders can't deny his healing or punish the disciples. Peter and John are freed from detention, and bring the good news to their friends (see 3:1—4:23).

The believers' spontaneous gratitude to God brings the descent of the Holy Ghost, and despite previous charges to be silent, "they spake the word of God with boldness" (4:31).

from Section 1

1 | Jeremiah 10:10

The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king.

Throughout the Bible, the term "living God" distinguishes the God of Israel from lifeless idols. In another example, King Darius asks Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" (Daniel 6:20).

The living God both constitutes and gives life. As a commentary notes, He is "life itself, and the author and fountain of life and understanding; and all creatures that live, live in and by him."

from Section 3

12 | Luke 5:12

It came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

To fall on one's face was to be in a position of total reverence and humility. It was often a spontaneous posture in moments of absolute respect and devotion—recorded in accounts of Old Testament characters Abraham, Moses, Ruth, David, and many others. In Jesus' ministry, the disciples who witnessed the transfiguration "fell on their face" (Matthew 17:6). And Jesus' utter submission to God in the garden of Gethsemane is described with this phrase (see Matthew 26:39).

from Section 4

15 | Matthew 8:26

[Jesus] saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

Faith was central to Christ Jesus' healing works. He commended it in many—including the centurion seeking healing for

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his servant, the woman who touched his hem, two blind men, a Canaanite woman, and the palsied man’s friends (see Matthew 8:10; 9:22, 29; 15:28; Luke 5:20). Jesus also cared for the disciples’ faith, answering their plea for increased faith with the parable of the mustard seed and praying that Peter’s faith “fail not” (Luke 17:5, 6; 22:32).

Now he rebukes the disciples’ lack of faith. And later he concludes a parable with the poignant rhetorical question “When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).

Some scriptural authorities find instruction about Christian discipleship in this story. Storms will be encountered, yet Christ is present to rebuke the waves and restore faith.

from Section 5

18 | Revelation 9:1

The fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

Revelation tells of a series of seven angels blowing trumpets to announce judgment on those who work against God (see chapters 8, 9, 11). Mention of a bottomless pit recurs several times in the book (see examples in 9:11; 11:7; 17:8), and it is identified as the prison in which Satan is confined (see 20:1–3).

Bottomless pit is translated from the Greek noun *abyssos*, the source of the English word *abyss*. The term also appears in the account of the Gadarene, who implores Jesus not to send the demons “into the deep [*abyssos*]” (Luke 8:31)—and in Romans 10:7: “Who

shall descend into the deep [*abyssos*]?” (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)”

19 | Zephaniah 3:1, 2

Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city! She ... trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God.

Jerusalem, an image for God’s unrepentant people in these verses, is severely censured here. “Judgment, however, is not God’s final word,” suggests one source. “There is a faithful remnant that has spread out into the world (see 2:7, 9). From that remnant God will make ... a new faithful people who will serve him.”

21 | Psalms 121:6

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

People of the ancient Near East believed not only that the intense rays of the desert sun were harmful, but also that the moon exerted dangerous influences. People thought to be under this influence were deemed “lunatic”—from the Latin word *luna*, meaning moon (see example in Matthew 17:15).

Mention of day and night to represent all time is a *merism*—a figure of speech that uses contrasts to define a larger idea. Other biblical examples are “heaven and earth” to indicate all creation (Psalms 69:34) and “my downsitting and mine uprising” to convey all of one’s actions (139:2).

Resources quoted in this issue

Cit. 1: Benson, Joseph. *Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*. New York: T. Carlton & J. Porter, 1857. Also available at biblehub.com/commentaries.

Cit. 19: Mays, James L., Joseph Blenkinsopp, et al., eds. *Harper’s Bible Commentary*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.

Related healing ideas

Omnipresence

God fills the universe. There is no place
Where Love will neither hear nor heed our call;
No height nor depth, no vast uncharted space
For those who know that God is All-in-all.

Beyond the clouds and mists of sense we rise
Until at last our thoughts become imbued
With Truth's bright promise, and we realize
In part the wonder of infinitude.

By Gwen M. Castle
From the July 2, 1960, issue of the
Christian Science Sentinel

A universe is fashioned

On the looms of Spirit
Life's multicolored threads
are weaving one pattern of completeness
without seam or rent
beginning or ending
ever unfolding beautiful images
of thought-form and color,
of symmetry and grace
from measureless Mind.

On the looms of Spirit
in the woof and warp of eternal substance
perfection is patterned.

By Elsie Hill Ainsworth
From the May 26, 1956, issue of the
Christian Science Sentinel

Friendly universe

Since the one Mind
Created the universe,
None can ever find
Any part hostile or perverse.
All integrate
Within Love's atmosphere;
Having one origin, relate,
Each holding other dear.
Bird, beast, and flower,
Water, wind, and sky,
Owning the one power.
And you, and you, and I,
Summit and culmination of
creation,
Walk friendly in the compass of
Soul's plan,
With all in harmony and sweet
relation—
His treasure, His beloved—Spir-
it's man.

By Rosemary Cobham
From the April 8, 1972, issue of the
Christian Science Sentinel