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Be still, and know  
that I am God.

—Psalms 46:10



Christian Science Sentinel  
**Bible Lens**

**Ancient and Modern  
Necromancy, alias  
Mesmerism and  
Hypnotism, Denounced**

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# Ancient and Modern Necromancy, alias Mesmerism and Hypnotism, Denounced

## from the Responsive Reading

### **Psalms 46:1, 2**

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.*

In an ancient view of the universe, mountains anchored the land while holding up the sky. People feared a doomsday scenario—earth threatened by water below and a falling sky above. The Psalmist affirms that God protects His creation in every circumstance.

### **Psalms 46:10**

*Be still, and know that I am God.*

Some scholars believe this psalm alludes to Assyrian king Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem in 701 BC. Assyria had put down rebellions in Babylon and many cities in Palestine, but Jerusalem under King Hezekiah was spared, as God had promised (see II Kings 19:32–36; II Chronicles 32:21, 22).

Bible authorities note that in this context, “Be still” is more than a command for quietness. It is a call to throw down weapons—to end conflict—with an understanding of God as the real source of security.

## from Section 1

### **1 | Psalms 93:3, 4**

*The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than*

*the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.*

Multiple mentions of floods and waves in these verses emphatically depict nature's waters as threats. Yet the writer celebrates God's power over them all. A commentary paraphrases, “Rivers at flood tide, oceans rising in the face of storms, thundering waters, and raging storms cannot shake the everlasting throne.”

## from Section 2

### **6 | Psalms 27:5**

*In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.*

*Pavilion* (Hebrew, *sōk*) and *tabernacle* (*ōhel*) together portray a range of refuges, from an animal's lair or shepherd's tent to a sacred space of worship. “In short,” one source asserts, “what the psalmist singlemindedly seeks is the experience of God's presence.”

### **9 | I Peter 5:6, 7**

*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

Recipients of this letter are Christians whose lives have changed dramatically since their conversion. Previously embraced in the social and cultural activities of their communities, now they are mistreated by Roman authorities as members of an unwelcome sectarian movement. The

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“... a lesson on which the prosperity of Christian Science largely depends.” —Mary Baker Eddy

writer urges humility, assuring his readers that their persecutions, like those of Christ Jesus, will be rewarded (see 1:9; 4:13).

## from Section 3

### 10 | Psalms 10:4, 8

*The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. . . . He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages.*

Comparing the wicked to robbers, the author vividly pictures places of ambush—likely outside the security of walled cities or settlements. According to verse 11, these attackers arrogantly assume they are beyond the sight of God (see other instances of this attitude in Psalms 94:3–7; Isaiah 29:15; Ezekiel 8:12).

### 11 | II Samuel 15:2

*Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou?*

Absalom was King David’s third son. Scriptural accounts portray him as repeatedly deceitful and treacherous. After his older half-brother Amnon rapes their sister Tamar, he arranges to kill Amnon by tricking his father (see 13:23–29). He is banished for three years, but eventually manages a reconciliation with the king (see 13:33–38; 14:25–33).

It is at this time that Absalom stands at the city gate, scheming to win the people’s loyalty. Then, obtaining David’s permission to travel to Hebron, he organizes a revolt against the king. David and his household

are forced to flee Jerusalem, and Absalom brings an army against his father in the wilderness of Gilead.

In spite of his son’s betrayal, David commands his soldiers to “deal gently with the young man for my sake” during battle. When Absalom is killed and the rebellion ends, David mourns his son deeply (see 15:7–18; 17:26; 18:1–18, 33).

## from Section 5

### 19 | Luke 21:9

*When ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified.*

Luke’s detailed and stirring catalog of catastrophic events occupies much of chapter 21. Similar depictions appear in Matthew 24 and Mark 13, giving the three chapters the name Synoptic Apocalypse. Though the prophecies are grim, Jesus concludes with the promise of redemption and “the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” (v. 27).

One scriptural authority comments, “You aren’t without God, ever. You aren’t cut off from him, ever. The simplest act of faith puts you in relationship with him. So don’t be terrified, for not a hair of your head will perish.”

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#### Resources quoted in this issue

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**Cit. 19:** Peterson, Eugene H. *Conversations: The Message with Its Translator*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress Publishing Group, 2007.

# “Blessed are the peacemakers”

By Harriet Schupp

From the September 2006 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

A little five-year-old friend told me how he had helped the kids on the playground stop fighting. I told him he was being a peacemaker and that Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9). He looked up at me with such earnestness, “But I already am a child of God.” I had to think a minute, and then I said, “And now you are acting like one.”

Jesus showed how each of us can live as a peacemaker. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave us what are called the Beatitudes, a list of pronouncements about how to live a life of perfect happiness, perfect “blessedness.” In these beloved verses, he included a blessing on peacemakers, and then he explained how to live a life of peace: refuse to be angry; agree with your adversary quickly; turn the other cheek when you are attacked; concede freely; love your enemies (see Matthew, chap. 5).

In a world where evil seems as real and sometimes even more powerful than good, we might wonder how practical Jesus’ instructions are to our everyday life. But far from making us vulnerable to hatred, revenge, and other destructive emotions, keeping Jesus’ commandments brings us into the presence of the love of God.

Mahatma Gandhi, the great peacemaker, said: “There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.” This statement of active, participatory peacemaking beautifully illustrates Jesus’ instructions to his followers in his Sermon on the Mount. Because to really be a peacemaker, we have to not only talk about peace, we must *live* peace.

Peace comes from God, and because peace is an essential aspect of His character, we, too, as His image, have inherited

peace in our own nature. And so we can feel confident in working out from peace—accepting it as already intact and part of our and everyone’s character—and not feel we have to work up to peace. Peace becomes our starting point rather than our goal.

In my own life, when peace has seemed far away and healing much needed, I have found spiritual power in knowing that peace, far from being relative, is a fact of God’s creation and thus universally present. As *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* explains, “Harmony is produced by its Principle, is controlled by it and abides with it” (Mary Baker Eddy, p. 304). This Principle governing the universe is divine Love. Therefore, Love actually is the only motivator and governor of the universe.

Praying for peace and at the same time thinking that it’s just unrealistic wishful thinking is like the man Jesus referred to in his Sermon on the Mount—the man who foolishly builds his house on the sand, not on a firm foundation. But when we start from the spiritual standpoint that peace is the rule, the absolute fact, eternally established by the Principle of the universe, divine Love—then we are establishing our lives on an unshakable, firm foundation.

No government edict can really enforce true peace. As children of God, when we know that peace exists as a universal law, we will not feel tentative in our work to see peace manifested. And we can feel confident that this law of Love operates in every human heart and circumstance.

To read the entire article, which has been adapted to fit this page, go to [jsh.christianscience.com/blessed-are-the-peacemakers](https://www.jsh.christianscience.com/blessed-are-the-peacemakers).