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The heavens declare the glory  
of God; and the firmament  
sheweth his handiwork.

—Psalms 19:1



Christian Science Sentinel  
**Bible Lens**

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

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

## from the Responsive Reading

### Psalms 33:6

*By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.*

People of ancient times lived close to nature, and many worshiped it in the form of individual gods and goddesses. Biblical writers, however, saw natural phenomena as God's handiwork. One scholar observes, "For them, nature was always 'creation.' The word nature does not itself deify the world, but it still implies that the world has its own sense of being, its own power, and its own dynamic. On the other hand, the word creation is a term of faith."

## from Section 1

### 2 | Psalms 19:1–4

*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*

Using images of the sky, the Psalmist poetically evokes God's supreme power and glory. Paradoxically, though heavenly elements are silent, their message goes out "through all the earth." (The Hebrew word *qav*, translated *line* in the King James Version, also means voice or message.) The Apostle Paul cites this verse in a letter about the spreading of the gospel (see Romans 10:18).

### 4 | Psalms 8:3–5

*When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.*

Psalms 8 is considered the first hymn of praise in the entire collection, beginning and ending with the phrase, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

"The response to the rhetorical questions of v. 4 is stunning," writes one source. "Man, as male and female, stands at the summit of God's creation." Another notes: "Mesopotamian myth relegated humanity to a servile status beneath the divine beings. Ps 8 places human dignity nearly equal to the council of the heavenly realm."

## Word Study

**cherubim** (citation 12, Isaiah 37:16) Plural form of *cherub* (though sometimes used with an *s*). Cherubim were believed to be winged heavenly beings that attended or represented God's presence. They are described numerous times in the Old Testament—for instance, as guarding the gates of Eden and bearing the throne of God (see Genesis 3:24 and Ezekiel, chap. 10). Their images were also prominently depicted throughout the inner sanctuary of the Temple, including on the cover of the ark of the covenant and in the Temple veil (see Exodus 25:18–20, 26:1, and I Kings 6:23–27).

# 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

## from Section 3

### 14 | Luke 1:11

*There appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.*

The angel Gabriel’s name—identified in verse 19 and meaning “mighty one of God”—would have been familiar to Zacharias from the Old Testament account of Daniel (see Daniel 8:16 and 9:21). This spiritual messenger also announced the Messiah’s birth to Mary (see citation 15, Luke 1:26).

## from Section 4

### 15 | Luke 1:26, 27

*And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.*

Of the four Gospel writers, Luke is the only one to describe Jesus’ mother in detail, highlighting her humility, obedience, and devotion. Luke later names Mary as one of the faithful at the gathering after Jesus’ ascension (see Acts 1:14).

### 16 | Matthew 2:1, 2

*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.*

Located a few miles south of Jerusalem, Bethlehem was the hometown of David and

the site of his anointing as king of Judah. According to John 7:42, the long-awaited Messiah was expected to come from this village.

The identities of the wise men have been the subject of study and speculation for centuries. Some sources assume them to have been learned men from Persia or southern Arabia—most likely priests, rather than kings, who were accomplished in reading astrological signs and interpreting dreams. Others point out that their presumed Gentile status foreshadowed the reach of Christ Jesus’ mission beyond its Jewish roots.

## from Section 5

### 20 | Mark 1:9–11

*Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

The opening of the heavens is described with the Greek verb *skhizō*, meaning to tear or split open. It is the word used for the rending of the Temple veil at Jesus’ death on the cross (see Mark 15:37, 38). Both events signaled the dissolving of a perceived barrier between God and man.

#### Resources quoted in this issue

**RR and Cit. 4:** Radmacher, Earl D., Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House. *The NKJV Study Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007.

**Cit. 4:** Keener, Craig S., John H. Walton, eds. *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016.



# Related healing ideas

## Hallowed morn

At last the child. At last for Mary  
The sweet fulfillment of those waiting  
months.

Now thought flung high must leap  
still higher,

Beyond conception, beyond bringing forth,  
For this was not an end but a beginning.

The mother must have known,  
Having that pure perception to conceive  
The Saviour of the world—she must  
Have known she could not cradle him  
too long,  
Could not withhold him, even as he grew.

(That three-day searching, and the finding  
Among the learned, later would confirm  
The inescapable demand  
To loose the son and heir.) Thus Christ  
revealed  
Had to be given to a waiting world.

The light at Bethlehem threw shadow  
Of cross to come; incredible affection,  
Capacity for sacrifice,  
Blessing all centuries to follow after.  
Hail challenge of that hallowed  
Christmas morn!

By Pearl Strachan Hurd  
From the December 1961 issue of  
*The Christian Science Journal*

## Christmas comes

If we have made our hearts a manger  
to receive the Christ-idea,

stretching out our hands  
to welcome healing in,

lifting up our thoughts  
to know God knows,

then, *where we are*, the season's glory  
pours. And Christmas comes.

By Carol Chapin Lindsey  
From the December 22, 1980, issue of  
*the Christian Science Sentinel*

## It would still be Christmas

If no tree,  
but the evergreen promise.

If no snow,  
yet the purity of the coming.

If no presents,  
still that one glorious gift,  
eternally given:

*the Christ.*

By Heidi J. Snow  
From the December 1984 issue of  
*The Christian Science Journal*