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now it shall spring forth.

—Isaiah 43:19



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from the **Golden Text**

Isaiah 43:19

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth.

Behold is an attention-getting word, much like our contemporary exclamations, “Look!” or “Listen to this!” Greek and Hebrew words translated *behold* or *lo* in the King James Version appear hundreds of times—at such pivotal moments as God’s crowning statement about creation in Genesis 1:31; throughout accounts about the patriarchs; in words of praise and warning in Psalms and the prophets; and in New Testament stories of Christ Jesus and his followers. The demand for humanity to pay attention to God’s activity is imperative and continuing.

from the **Responsive Reading**

Isaiah 52:10

The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations.

In preparation for battle, warriors threw back their overgarments and “bared” their arms. The book of Isaiah refers to the arm of the Lord repeatedly to symbolize God’s saving strength and power.

from **Section 1**

1 | Isaiah 9:6

Unto us a child is born, ... and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Scholars identify the titles listed here as ancient throne names given to royal children or monarchs. When applied to the Messiah, these titles portray the stature and godliness embodied by Christ Jesus.

from **Section 2**

4 | Luke 2:4

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:).

Roman taxation normally happened at citizens’ places of residence. This procedure may have been altered to take into account Jewish tribal affiliations, sending Israelites to the sites of their “house and lineage.”

Joseph’s relation to David—and his status from a legal standpoint as Jesus’ parent—provided additional evidence of Jesus’ Messiahship, fulfilling the tradition that the people’s Savior would descend from the house of David (see II Samuel 7:12–17).

4 | Luke 2:8, 10

There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.... And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

At this time, shepherds were generally thought to be rough, unclean, and dishonest—yet respected Hebrew leaders Moses and David had been shepherds. Luke’s account of this angelic revelation (the only literal

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

reference to shepherds in the New Testament) is seen as a reminder that the Messiah was predicted to be a descendent of David—and that he would bring salvation to all people, including those considered to be sinners and outcasts.

from Section 4

8 | John 14:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

...

I assure you and most solemnly say to you, anyone who believes in Me [as Savior] will also do the things that I do; and he will do even greater things than these [in extent and outreach], because I am going to the Father.

—Amplified® Bible

As part of his comforting farewell discourse, Christ Jesus assures his disciples that healing works would continue beyond his personal presence—and in even greater ways. “In my name” (verse 13) affirms the divine authority given to his followers.

from Section 5

10 | John 14:16, 17

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.

Paraklētos, the Greek term for *Comforter*, means advocate or intercessor. In some translations it is rendered *Helper*—one who aids, counsels, or defends.

Jesus’ promise is for spiritual advocacy and enlightenment through all time. Later, First John affirms, “If any man sin, we have an advocate [*paraklētos*] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (2:1).

10 | John 14:18

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Most translations render *comfortless* (Greek, *orphanos*) as *orphaned* or *fatherless*, alluding especially to being bereft of a teacher or guide. This reassurance to his disciples is a tender reminder of one of Jesus’ central teachings—that God is our loving, ever-present Father.

from Section 6

13 | II Corinthians 1:3, 4

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

In the original Greek, *comfort* includes the ideas of instruction, consolation, encouragement, and entreaty. Writing to the church in Corinth after having personally gone through much tribulation (see vv. 8–10), Paul expresses gratitude for the divine comfort he has received, and charges church members to extend the same encouragement and instruction they have been given to others.

Resources quoted in this issue

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An eternal Christmas

By Michelle Nanouche

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

I don't think my home was ever as beautiful. With fragrant candles burning and a warm fire crackling, I cuddled up in an armchair in front of our Christmas tree and drank in the scene.

I was grateful for the peace and calm, but I wasn't feeling comfortable or settled. Far from it. The parents of a sick young boy had called that evening to ask for Christian Science treatment for him. I had been searching all evening in my prayers for that sweet assurance that comes when one knows all is well, but hadn't yet felt it.

As I sat alone by the tree, the material trappings of the holiday began to recede from thought as I considered the true meaning of Christmas articulated by Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer of Christian Science, in the following statement: "An eternal Christmas would make matter an alien save as phenomenon, and matter would reverentially withdraw itself before Mind. The despotism of material sense or the flesh would flee before such reality, to make room for substance, and the shadow of frivolity and the inaccuracy of material sense would disappear.

"In Christian Science, Christmas stands for the real, the absolute and eternal,—for the things of Spirit, not of matter" (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 260).

While surrounded by all the material beauty one could ask for, I realized that there was only one thing that could truly commemorate this Christmas—for the child to be quickly and completely healed.

Christ Jesus showed the world how to heal, overcoming every condition of the flesh and ending matter's "despotism" through an understanding of Mind, God, and of our real, inseparable relation to God.

More than the experience of a "storybook" Christmas, I wanted to feel the presence of the Christ. And I began to yield to something most essential to Christian healing—an unselfed love that is willing to sacrifice the material and temporary, to make room for what is real and spiritual and permanent.

It was then I saw that divine Love, which is God, was the creator of this young boy and that Love didn't—wouldn't, couldn't—add a destructible material element to His perfect creation. My prayer went beyond words to actually feeling the presence of this all-powerful Love.

The child was healed that night. According to his mother, he joyously announced his healing to the family the next morning.

Needless to say, that Christmas was a precious and memorable one—a sweet reminder that the holiday commemorates so much more than the baby Jesus' birth, however unique and special that birth was.

Mrs. Eddy explains in her *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*: "In different ages the divine idea assumes different forms, according to humanity's needs. In this age it assumes, more intelligently than ever before, the form of Christian healing. This is the babe we are to cherish. This is the babe that twines its loving arms about the neck of omnipotence, and calls forth infinite care from His loving heart" (p. 370).

As we ourselves truly cherish this "babe" by demonstrating Christ, Truth, in healing the sick, we are celebrating an eternal Christmas, full of genuine substance, and joy, and delight.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to jsh.christianscience.com/an-eternal-christmas.