

God is light, and in him  
is no darkness at all.

—I John 1:5



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 27:1, 3

*The Lord is my light and my salvation;...  
Though an host should encamp against me, my  
heart shall not fear: though war should rise  
against me, in this will I be confident.*

...

*You, Lord, are the light that keeps me safe....  
Armies may surround me, but I won't be afraid;  
war may break out, but I will trust you.*

—Contemporary English Version

## from Section 1

### 2 | II Thessalonians 2:1, 2

*Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming  
of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering  
together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken  
in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor  
by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the  
day of Christ is at hand.*

Many of Jesus' followers believed that he would reappear in their lifetime. Apparently, some false teachers preached that the second coming had already happened, a possibility that greatly troubled the church in Thessalonica. The writer assures believers that they have not missed the eagerly awaited Parousia.

*Shaken*, translated from the Greek word *saleuō*, portrays extreme agitation. Often used to describe ships that have lost their mooring, it appears in the story of the violent earthquake that freed Paul and Silas from prison (see Acts 16:26). It also occurs in Jesus' predictions of world disruption—

as does a similar charge not to be troubled (see Matthew 24:6, 29).

References to spirit, word, and letter here are probably allusions to prophecy, false logic, and communications from bogus sources. Readers are being warned that information about their Savior needs to be vetted!

### 2 | II Thessalonians 2:3

*Let no man deceive you by any means: for [the  
day of Christ] shall not come, except there  
come a falling away first, and that man of sin  
be revealed, the son of perdition.*

"Falling away" is translated from the Greek noun *apostasia*, the source of the English word *apostasy*. Here it refers to a defection from Christ that will signal the imminent destruction of evil. Though "man of sin" is not identified, "son of perdition" also appears in a description of Judas Iscariot (see John 17:12).

### 2 | II Thessalonians 2:7, 8

*The mystery of iniquity doth already work: only  
he who now letteth will let, until he be taken  
out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be  
revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with  
the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with  
the brightness of his coming.*

"He who now letteth" is commonly believed to signify a restraining force (perhaps the rule of law) exercised over evil—"that Wicked" or "the man of sin"—until Christ's appearing.

# 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 2

### 7 | Ezra 1:1, 2

*The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.*

Cyrus the Great was king of Persia circa 559–530 BC. He founded both the Persian Empire and a dynasty that lasted over two hundred years—until the time of Alexander the Great. Although a pagan, Cyrus is specified as Israel’s deliverer in the book of Isaiah (see Isaiah 45:1).

The Hebrew people embraced this view, as shown in the phrase “The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus.” To them, this foreign king was called and empowered by God to free them from exile in Babylon.

After his conquest of the Babylonian Empire, Cyrus issued an unprecedented decree that officially ended the Hebrew captivity, allowed worship of Yahweh, returned sacred Hebrew artifacts, and provided funds for the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem.

### 8 | Ezra 4:4

*Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building.*

Despite royal backing for Temple rebuilding when they returned from captivity, the Jewish exiles encountered opposition from several sources.

Chief among these “people of the land” were Samaritans, a mixed population that worshiped both Yahweh and pagan gods. Although these people offered to help with the Temple work, they were rebuffed by the returning Judeans, who felt that they alone were commissioned by Cyrus to rebuild the Temple (see v. 3). Their rejection led to hostile attempts to halt the construction.

These and other enemy actions—together with the discouragement of the Jews—delayed work on the Temple for over 15 years. During this time, prophets Haggai and Zechariah exhorted the people to rouse themselves and resume the construction. Work was finally completed circa 515 BC.

## from Section 5

### 20 | I Corinthians 14:33

*God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

...

*When we worship the right way, God doesn’t stir us up into confusion; he brings us into harmony. This goes for all the churches—no exceptions.*

—The Message

To learn more about the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lessons, go to [biblelesson.com](http://biblelesson.com).

#### Resources quoted in this issue

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# The rock of my salvation

By Margaret Pinkham

From the May 2012 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

**M**om was a Christian Scientist—sort of. Dad was an atheist—sort of. I was brought up in Christian Science—sort of.

By the time I was in college, I had left Christian Science, smoked a lot, drank occasionally, and was utterly miserable. “Why don’t you give Christian Science another try?” asked my mother and friends of the family who were Christian Scientists.

“No thanks. I don’t want any of that ‘God is Love’ stuff,” said I.

Finally, one of them said, “What have you got to lose?”

At that point, there was nothing. I was at the bottom of the pit. So I visited a Christian Science practitioner, and he reiterated the same thing. Give it a try. I didn’t have to believe him, or anyone else, for that matter. If it worked, I’d be healed. If it didn’t, what *did* I have to lose? According to him, all I had to do was to change my way of thinking, and learn who my Father, Mother, really was, and who the real “me” actually was. It worked, of course, and I became a dedicated Christian Scientist from then on.

But I needed solidity to my demonstration—a home base to operate from and rely on—and so I joined The Mother Church. It was the second best thing I had ever done. (Accepting Christian Science was the first!) Membership in The Mother Church became my foundation. It was my rock.

Let me tell you, briefly, how that understanding of rock and foundation developed in my thought.

First, at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke of the wise man who built his house upon a rock, and because it was built upon a rock, that house was protected from all the destructive forces the elements could hurl against it (see Matthew 7:24–27).

Next, Mary Baker Eddy writes: “Built on the rock, our church will stand the storms of ages: ...” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 140), literally and figuratively, because the spiritual idea will live on eternally.

Also, in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, in her definition of *Church*, she speaks of Church being “the structure of Truth and Love,” i.e., God (p. 583).

And, finally, in Deuteronomy, came the command to “ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock” (32:3, 4).

With these as my building blocks, I built my mental church home thus.

To begin with, God, good, is the Rock, the foundation or basis of all that exists. That certainly was solid, and I knew I could rely and build on Him forever.

Next, if our Church is the structure of Truth and Love, and Truth and Love are synonyms of God, then our Church is structured on God, the Rock, and will be as infinite and eternal as God Himself. How could there be anything more solid and enduring than that?

What better support could I have, or wish for, than to be able to rely on this worldwide Church and its membership to protect my rights, my chosen religion, and to provide innumerable ways in which I might serve my/our God.

Could membership in The Mother Church mean more?

Not to me!

To read the entire article, which has been adapted to fit this page, go to **[jsh.christianscience.com/the-rock-of-my-salvation](http://jsh.christianscience.com/the-rock-of-my-salvation)**.