



Thine ears shall hear a word
behind thee, saying, This
is the way, walk ye in it.

—Isaiah 30:21



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Bible Lens

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from the Responsive Reading

Isaiah 30:29

Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel.

“Holy solemnity” refers to a Jewish festival, probably Passover or the Feast of the Tabernacles—great celebrations that called for pilgrimages to Jerusalem. The music of pipes and other instruments accompanied these processions. “Mountain of the Lord” commonly alluded to the Temple at Jerusalem or to the holy city itself.

Psalms 46:2–4

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

Descriptions of the extremes of danger give emphasis to the promise “Therefore will not we fear.” This psalm inspired Martin Luther’s hymn “A mighty fortress is our God.”

As there is no river in Jerusalem, mention of a river in this verse is symbolic. A commentary calls it “a metaphor for the continual outpouring of the sustaining and refreshing blessings of God.”

from Section 1

3 | II Corinthians 3:5, 6

Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

Letter (Greek, *gramma*) describes anything written, but Paul uses the word disparagingly in this instance. It is his term for the strict observance of Judaic rites and ceremonies, distinct from the inspiration of the gospel of Christ Jesus. His Epistle to the Romans urges this spiritual animus for every believer: “We should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter” (7:6).

The Greek word *diakonos*, here rendered *ministers*, also means servants—in this verse, servants of Christ, who are made divinely “sufficient” to follow his teachings and example.

from Section 2

6 | John 14:17

... the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

...

The Spirit will show you what is true. The people of this world cannot accept the Spirit, because they don’t see or know him. But you know the Spirit, who is with you and will keep on living in you.

—Contemporary English Version

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

8 | Luke 8:46

Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

Dynamis, the Greek word translated *virtue* here, is most commonly rendered *power*. The Master’s words signify that healing power emanated from him, not that it left him or diminished his ability to heal, as his advancing ministry shows.

This account is one of three consecutive instances in which Jesus challenges Jewish taboos about uncleanness. Just prior to this, he heals the possessed man who lives in caves near a herd of swine (see vv. 26–35). Now he comes in contact with a woman considered impure. And immediately after this, he touches the dead body of Jairus’s daughter (see vv. 49–55).

from Section 4

11 | Matthew 13:33

The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Three measures of meal equaled about fifty pounds or twenty-four kilograms of flour, enough to yield bread for well over a hundred people.

One of several “parables of the kingdom” (see vv. 24–52), this story is sometimes paired with the parable of the mustard seed. A scholar writes, “Both proclaim that God’s action in the world, while almost imperceptible (the mustard seed was proverbial as the smallest thing that an eye could see) or hidden (as leaven in dough), is nonetheless

real and will in God’s own time come to full fruition.”

From the writings of Mary Baker Eddy

Like the leaven that a certain woman hid in three measures of meal, the Science of God and the spiritual idea, named in this century Christian Science, is leavening the lump of human thought, until the whole shall be leavened and all materialism disappear.

Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896, p. 166

from Section 5

13 | Habakkuk 2:2

The Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

The charge to “make it plain upon tables” alludes to the practice of engraving messages on tablets of clay, wood, or stone and hanging them in public places—for Jews, most likely the Temple. The Hebrew word for *tables* (*luah*) is also used for the tablets upon which Moses transcribed the Commandments (see Exodus 24:12).

“That he may run that readeth it” is less clear. Some sources interpret it as a call for plain, legible writing that readers can run through easily—or that even someone running can read. Others see it as an allusion to a herald running to deliver a message.

Resources quoted in this issue

RR: Barker, Kenneth, et al., eds. *The NIV Study Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.

Cit. 6: Contemporary English Version Copyright © 1991, 1992, 1995 by American Bible Society, Used by Permission.

Cit. 11: Mays, James Luther, et al., eds. *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. Vol. 27, Matthew. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1982–.

Our Comforter is here

By Edmonde L. St. John

From the May 16, 1994, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

The electrical storm was loud and long that evening. Lightning appeared everywhere, and thunder rumbled loudly after every flash. My small grandson began to look at me in fear. Then he picked up his favorite blanket and, climbing up on my lap, settled in as close as he could, with his blanket and me for reassurance.

My first thought was that he just wanted the comfort of a hug. But quite soon I realized he wanted more than human comfort.

We stayed together until the storm was over, affirming God's presence everywhere and His love for every one of His children. We both felt the peace and power and comfort of those moments. Although he may not have fully understood what was taking place, I saw that he was courageously overcoming his fear of the storm. Some time later he fell asleep, and I carried him to bed, where he slept peacefully through the night.

As I thought about this experience later, I realized that the teachings of Christian Science give each one of us reassurance to face our fears as courageously as this little fellow did. These teachings furnish a basis from which to discern and prove the supremacy of God's law and the universal nature of His love.

Christian Science is consonant with Bible revelation and helps us understand God as our Father-Mother, tenderly caring for His spiritual offspring. Spiritually reasoning from the basis of God's perfect care for man, we can face our fears and watch them withdraw. We can feel the healing presence of the Comforter.

Humanity's Comforter is divine Science, revealing the truth of God and man demonstrated by Christ Jesus. Christian Sci-

ence shows us, through healing disease and sin, that the Comforter Jesus promised is here. This Science helps us see that health, harmony, and freedom characterize God's creation, and that His creation is totally spiritual. If a diseased body or an inharmonious relationship seems to contradict the spiritual facts of being, our Comforter is at hand to give us strength and understanding to face and defeat the reverberations of inharmony, whatever their form.

Sometimes when the rumblings of fear are insistent and loud, as in my grandson's experience, the comforting truths we hold on to may be very simple—God's love for man, His ever-presence and omnipotence. As we pull these truths close to us, so to speak, feeling their natural power, our thought gradually becomes quiet. Then we are ready for more inspiration that the Comforter reveals. These mental communings bring us peace and healing of the body and promote genuine spiritual growth.

Gathering courage to overcome fear does demand discipline of thought and action. There are no shortcuts to spiritual discipleship; but the willingness to do battle with whatever appears to oppose God's law, coupled with childlike trust, brings the support of the Comforter right into the fabric of daily life. Then we find we can take the next step, and the next, with more assurance, because we know that God, good, is sustaining and forwarding our progress.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to **jsh.christianscience.com/our-comforter-is-here**.