



Fear not, O land;
be glad and rejoice: for the
Lord will do great things.

—Joel 2:21



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Bible Lens

Spirit

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from the Responsive Reading

Joel 2:28

I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

Before this time, the divine Spirit was believed to be confined to select individuals—judges, priests, kings, and prophets. From now on, the prophet promises, it will be bestowed on *all* of God’s people, irrespective of age, gender, or class.

Centuries later, Peter quotes from this chapter of Joel to explain the marvelous events of the Day of Pentecost (see Acts 2:16–18). “In the light of New Testament fulfillment,” observes a commentator, “Joel’s prediction of spiritual illumination for all God’s people is perhaps his most important religious contribution.”

from Section 1

3 | Galatians 3:3

Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Paul’s letters to believers in Galatia represent a critical point in early Christian theology. Some church members argued that Gentile converts should be required to adhere to the Judaic tradition of circumcision to indicate their commitment to Christianity. Paul’s response is clear: The practice of circumcision is a step backward to the old order with its focus on the flesh. Christian-

ity is the new understanding of Spirit that overcomes the flesh.

Epitelō, the Greek word translated *made perfect* here, alludes to accomplishment and completion. Spiritual maturity comes to Christians only as they remain true to their “beginnings”—to the spirit of Christ Jesus’ life and teachings.

4 | Acts 17:28

In him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

Paul is speaking to a group of intellectual Athenians after seeing their altar to “the unknown God.” Parts of his declaration have been attributed to two Greek philosophers, Epimenides and Aratus. By citing these thinkers, the apostle connects with his listeners and builds a bridge to his explanation of the new doctrine of Christianity.

From the writings of Mary Baker Eddy

We need the spirit of St. Paul, when he stood on Mars’ hill at Athens, bringing Christianity for the first time into Europe. The Spirit bestows spiritual gifts, God’s presence and providence.

Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896,
pp. 344–345

Resources quoted in this issue

RR: Buttrick, George Arthur, Nolan B. Harmon, et al., eds. *The Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 6, *Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Twelve Prophets*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1951–57.

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

5 | Psalms 143:1

Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplications: in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.

While the date of Psalm 143 is unknown, its message typifies the postexilic belief that the Babylonian captivity was divine punishment for sin. Like other penitential psalms, it presents a heartfelt plea for forgiveness based on trust in God’s steadfast love.

9 | Isaiah 59:21

My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed,... from henceforth and for ever.

God’s words here are familiar, used elsewhere both to commission prophets and to establish His covenant with Israel. Jeremiah’s call to prophecy is recorded, “The Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth” (Jeremiah 1:9). And God promises Abraham, “I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee” (Genesis 17:7).

from Section 4

17 | Mark 5:2, 3

When he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs.

In Jesus’ day, caves provided burial places for the dead. But it was not unusual for these tombs to serve a dual purpose, also supplying shelter for social outcasts and the poor. The impurity of this man’s mental state was compounded by his living in the unclean dwellings of the dead.

from Section 5

20 | Ephesians 4:4

There is one body, and one Spirit ... even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

Given the great diversity within the Christian community at Ephesus, this letter urges unity by likening the church to “one body.” The head of the church body is Christ, binding the faithful in brotherhood that will enable the young church to grow.

from Section 6

21 | Luke 1:46, 47

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Known as Mary’s Hymn of Praise, verses 46–55 of Luke 1 express Mary’s thanksgiving to God for choosing her to be the mother of the promised Messiah. Some researchers compare it to Hannah’s joyful praise for the birth of Samuel (see I Samuel 2:1–10).

This prayer has been set to music by many composers under the Latin name *Magnificat*, from its opening words about magnifying God. (Another translation of verse 47 appears in the Golden Text.)

Out of the dark—into the light

By Carol Rounds

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

Are you a tomb dweller? I was. My thought was impoverished, and I had a bleak outlook on life. I went from one challenge to another—and expected it.

One day while I was reading the account of the Gadarene (see Mark 5:1–19) in the Christian Science Bible Lesson found in the *Christian Science Quarterly*, it occurred to me that I had a lot in common with this biblical character. I began working to understand the story to find my way out of the tomb mentality.

As I thought of myself, I realized that like this man, I dwelt among the “tombs”—my thoughts were gloomy and depressed. I had lost several close relatives, and I kept thinking that I needed to understand more about death, rather than pursue a better understanding of Life, God.

In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy writes, “We know no more of man as the true divine image and likeness, than we know of God” (p. 258). Thus, to pursue a knowledge of death is really to pursue error, not Truth. Such thinking is matter-bound and, like a bird with a broken wing, attempts to fly but can’t get off the ground.

I began to see that matter-bound thinking is totally contrary to the understanding that there is only one infinite Mind, and that it is always looking for cause and effect in matter. Though this thinking may turn to God in times of trouble, it doesn’t really trust God’s goodness on any consistent basis.

Thought that dwells in tombs, or a mortal sense of existence, resists the Christ because the Christ seems so foreign to it. Fortunately, mortal resistance is nothing before God’s allness and ever-presence. I found that the hardness and resistance to

good that might sometimes claim to be part of our thinking cannot stand up to the Christ, Truth. God is constantly communicating thoughts of peace and well-being to His reflection, man.

As I prayed to see that I could not dwell in tomb-like thinking because such thoughts did not come from God, I found my freedom from oppressive thinking. I began to see myself as “the full representation of Mind” (*Science and Health*, p. 591), and realized that limited, dark thinking was no part of my true nature.

About a year ago, I realized that I was once again drifting into Gadarene-like thinking. Over a period of a few weeks, I experienced one physical problem after another. In fact, at one point I complained to myself that I never wanted to go through anything like that again. This statement brought me back to the biblical account. When the devils that inhabited the Gadarene talked with Jesus, it was revealed to Jesus that their name was “Legion,” for they were many.

It was then that it became clear to me that I was not dealing with several problems, but different claims that evil has power and can control me. Once I decided that however it took form I would not accept anything unlike God as part of me, the problems ceased and I was restored to normal health and sound thinking.

I no longer relate to the Gadarene, but I am so grateful for the lessons learned from studying the account in Mark and learning more of the Christ, Truth. I have left the tombs and will never go back.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to jsh.christianscience.com/out-of-the-dark-into-the-light.