



Thou wilt keep him
in perfect peace, whose
mind is stayed on thee.

—Isaiah 26:3



Christian Science Sentinel
Bible Lens

**Are Sin,
Disease, and
Death Real?**

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Are Sin, Disease, and Death Real?

from the Golden Text

Isaiah 25:8

The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth.

“The rebuke of his people” describes mockery the Israelites have experienced (referred to, for example, in II Chronicles 36:16; Job 12:4; Psalms 79:10). Now prophecy promises the cessation not only of sadness but of censure and contempt.

from Section 1

3 | Psalms 90:1, 2

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

Dwelling place is translated from the Hebrew *mā'ôn*, which can also be rendered refuge and protector. In this psalm, the only one attributed to Moses, its mention captures the spiritual significance of home for a people who had no fixed habitation for over forty years.

from Section 2

6 | Daniel 4:3

How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

King Nebuchadnezzar speaks these words of praise for “the high God” (v. 2) after Daniel interprets one of his dreams (see 2:36–45). When Daniel foretells Nebuchadnezzar’s downfall and seven-year banishment, however, the king reveals his egotism and pride: “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built ... by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?”

Daniel’s prediction comes true. Once reinstated on his throne, the king repeats his acknowledgment of God’s power and sovereignty (see 4:24–37).

from Section 3

9 | Psalms 51:2, 6

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Inner or hidden parts is interpreted variously as heart, soul, or mind. One source explains, “If truth is what God desires in the inward being, i.e., the essence of the soul, original sin is not according to his will.”

10 | Luke 19:9, 10

Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Jesus’ mention of Zacchaeus’ house anticipates a later Christian theme—that salvation of an individual encompasses his entire household (see examples in Acts 11:14;

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16:31). Individual houses were meeting places in early church communities, often involving entire families. And Paul uses this image in referring to believers as “the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10).

Lost in verse 10 is translated from the Greek verb *apollymi*, meaning destroy or render useless. But some scholars suggest the simpler sense of “being out of place.” Other instances where Jesus uses this term—for example, in the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son (see Luke 15:4–32)—conclude with restoration to rightful status or place.

from Section 4

14 | Luke 8:30

Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

A Roman legion consisted of several thousand soldiers. By naming the demon “Legion,” the outcast reveals the extensive and forceful nature of this possession. In demanding to know the man’s name, Jesus asserts his authority over the demon.

14 | Luke 8:35

Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind.

Sitting at Jesus’ feet in a disciple’s position, the former demoniac shows his willingness to follow the Master. Jesus instructs him to instead return to his own community to declare God’s power—to be an active witness among them (see v. 39).

from Section 6

17 | I Thessalonians 5:16–18

Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

In concluding his letter to the Christians at Thessalonica, Paul uses what one Bible authority calls a “shotgun” approach, firing “one round of imperatives after another.” His list summarizes the Christian life—its joy, prayerfulness, thanksgiving, and other qualities outlined in verses 19–22. A paraphrase offers, “This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live.”

17 | I Thessalonians 5:21

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Prove alludes to testing, as a metal is tried to determine its purity. The faithful are to test every thought and action against the Christly standard of goodness. Paul’s charge is echoed in I John 4:1, “Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.”

Holding to good, writes a commentator, is natural: “A man who has applied the proper tests, and has found out what is truth, is bound to embrace it and to hold it fast.”

Resources quoted in this issue

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Andrew's other garden



By Evelyn M. L. Livesey

From the July 3, 1978, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

Andrew is an English boy. He is six years old and already a gardener. At the back of the house where Andrew lives there is a lot of green grass and in the grass a small round flower bed that is his own. Here he can work hard at digging, pulling up weeds, and planting seeds. In springtime there are primroses and violets in Andrew's garden, and in summer it is bright with marigolds and candytuft.

Andrew has another garden, a very special garden. It is a thought-garden. In this garden there are quiet, gentle thoughts like primroses and thoughts as bright and upright as marigolds. But sometimes weeds start to grow, such as disobedience or sickness. If these appear, Andrew has learned to pull them up by knowing that all real thoughts come from God and are good. Mary Baker Eddy tells us, "God's thoughts are perfect and eternal, are substance and Life" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 286).

On Sunday mornings Andrew and his sister go to the Christian Science Sunday School. Here they learn about Christ Jesus' teachings and the other truths given to us in the Bible. These are explained in Mrs. Eddy's book *Science and Health*. Every Sunday Andrew gets good ideas from these books to plant in his thought-garden. One of the best things he has learned is that "God is love" (I John 4:8). And because God is Love, Andrew knows that Love is always taking care of all of us. This thought is especially helpful when something seems to go wrong, as happened one Sunday afternoon.

It was a nice, sunny day, and all the family had gone out to work in the garden. Andrew took a big gardening fork with four sharp prongs and began to dig in his flower

bed. Suddenly his mother heard his cry and ran to see what had happened. Andrew had pushed one of the sharp prongs of the fork through his rubber boot and his foot.

At once his mother carried Andrew into the house. He was crying, and she was frightened. So, after washing the foot and covering it, she went to the phone and told Andrew's Sunday School teacher what had happened. The teacher immediately replied, "We know God is Love. Tell Andrew that Love looks after him all the time and would never let him be hurt. He is all right now." Then she added, "I will pray for him and come over later and see him."

Because Andrew had learned in Sunday School that God is Love and he is Love's perfect child, he knew that what his teacher said on the telephone was true. So he could pull up the weed called fear, and when fear disappears, pain disappears too, and healing comes. So Andrew was healed.

Later on the teacher drove over to Andrew's house and when she arrived, he was running happily about the drive waiting for her. All the pain was gone, and he went back to work in his flower garden again. For a few days Andrew had a sticking plaster [bandage] on his foot, but he enjoyed doing everything, including swimming. By the following week the wound was entirely healed.

We don't all have flower beds to dig in, but we all have thought-gardens. It is fun to learn new, strong, and happy ideas, plant them in our gardens, and watch them grow.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to

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