



Shall the clay say  
to him that fashioneth it,  
What makest thou?

—Isaiah 45:9



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**Bible Lens**

**Matter**

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## from the Golden Text

### I John 5:6

*The Spirit is the One who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.*

—Holman Christian Standard Bible®

Instruction about witnessing or testifying (Greek, *martyreō*) appears throughout the New Testament, especially in the Fourth Gospel and the letters of John. Bearing testimony to the Master's life, teachings, and healings was central to early Christian experience. But it is the testimony of the divine Spirit that provides absolute witness to Christ, as Jesus himself asserts: "The Father that sent me beareth witness of me" (John 8:18).

## from Section 1

### 4 | Exodus 20:1–3

*God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

These verses mark the transition from a comprehensive account of God's guidance and protection of His people (see chaps. 1–19) to the record of His requirements of them (see chaps. 20–40). They also serve as the introduction to God's covenant.

*Words* here points to covenant requirements. In this chapter these provisions are the Ten Commandments—also called the Decalogue, from a Greek word meaning "ten words" or "ten statements."

The Mosaic covenant is patterned after a suzerain treaty—an agreement between a powerful party and a subordinate, common to the ancient Near East. A king, for instance, granted protection to his vassals in exchange for loyalty and obedience. Suzerain treaties began with a preamble, followed by historical reasons for the agreement. Verse 2 follows this model, declaring God's name and reminding the people of His claim on them—that He brought them "out of the house of bondage."

## from Section 3

### 10 | Exodus 3:7, 10

*And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters;... Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.*

With the single command "Come now therefore," God moves from explanation to mandate—from telling His intention to save His people to appointing Moses as His agent. Moses understandably feels unequal to this charge (see vv. 11, 13, for example). But a commentary describes the divine action that will be at work: "God will endow with authority and harness to his purpose the natural audacity, courage, and sense of justice, so strong in this man."

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

# 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

## 11 | Exodus 4:4

*The Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take [the serpent] by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand.*

Experts explain that picking up a snake by the tail is a dangerous move—the snake can thrash and bite the person holding it. Moses’ courage and trust in God are being tested, and his obedience proves both qualities.

from **Section 4**

## 12 | Psalms 42:5

*Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.*

Some sources see an echo of this lament in Jesus’ words in the garden of Gethsemane: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful.... Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt” (Mark 14:34, 36). Though centuries apart, both cries recognize God’s supremacy even in the depths of sorrow.

## 13 | Mark 5:22, 23

*Behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, and besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.*

Unlike the Temple at Jerusalem, which was overseen by priests descended from the

tribe of Levi, synagogues were governed by lay elders. Jairus is one of these leaders. To be charged with conducting worship services, interpreting the Torah, and exercising some degree of judicial power, he would have been a prominent, well-educated Jew. His trust in Jesus’ healing power, however, sets him dramatically apart from the majority of Jewish officials. As one writer puts it, “He had to cast aside his rank, his prestige, in falling at the feet of an unauthorized, itinerant teacher.”

from **Section 5**

## 15 | John 8:13, 14

*The Pharisees ... said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true.*

According to Hebrew law, a man’s testimony on his own behalf was not considered valid. Jesus earlier referred to this fact: “If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true” (5:31). But now he affirms an exception.

A scholar notes, “Jesus’ knowledge of his origin and his destination (v. 14) validates his self-witness, because it derives from his relationship to God.... Because his opponents do not share Jesus’ knowledge ... they cannot recognize the validity of his witness.” Judging solely by human standards, they can’t perceive the Master’s divine origin.

### Resources quoted in this issue

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**Cits. 10 and 13:** Buttrick, George Arthur, Nolan B. Harmon, et al., eds. *The Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 1, *General and Old Testament Articles, Genesis, Exodus*; Vol. 7, *New Testament Articles, Matthew, Mark*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1951–57.

**Cit. 15:** Keck, Leander E., et al., eds. *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary in Ten Volumes*. Vol. 8, *Luke, John*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2015.



# Deny the existence of matter?

By Beverly Bemis Hawks DeWindt

From the April 1995 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

In 1955 a renowned physicist, Dr. Donald H. Andrew of Johns Hopkins University, wrote, “If I could put your body in an imaginary atomic press and squeeze all those atom holes out of it, just as the holes are squeezed out of a sponge, you would get smaller and smaller until, finally, when the last hole was gone, your body would be smaller than the smallest speck of dust.” He said further, “Your hands look solid, and feel solid, but they are more full of holes than a wire fence ... if, materially, you don’t amount to much, what are you?” (“Main Currents in Modern Thought,” May 1955, quoted in Norman Beasley, *Mary Baker Eddy*, p. 54).

To answer the question “What are you?” posed by the highly respected physicist, we can look to the Bible. “God created man in his own image,” the book of Genesis tells us, “in the image of God created he him” (1:27). The Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, the permanent pastor of the Church of Christ, Scientist, show us that God is Spirit and that man is His image, therefore spiritual, not corporeal.

Denying the existence of matter requires affirming the existence of Spirit and the actual, spiritual nature of creation. In healing, we need to begin not with a mortal sense of ourselves but with the immortal—with the truth of what God is and therefore what man is. Then we’re able to prove our God-derived dominion over the body.

We do find in *Science and Health*, however, instances in which the author doesn’t start with an affirmation of what substance and being really are, but starts rather with a denial of the existence of matter. One of these instances is in the first sentence of “the scientific statement of being”: “There

is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter” (p. 468). Immediately following, she writes of the allness of God and His creation, of divine Mind and its manifestation.

So to deny the existence of matter in a meaningful way, it is essential to realize what actually does exist *instead* of matter—the indestructible substance of Spirit.

The image and likeness of Spirit, being spiritual, is always healthy, sinless, and wonderful. The likeness of Spirit does not include matter. Consequently, in order to work out the Science of our being, we need actively, consciously, to deny the existence of matter.

An important aspect of this work is to deny the existence of material conception. Then, what have we always been? Where have we always been? The “what” is that we have always been a spiritual idea reflecting the character and nature of divine Mind. The “where” is that we have always coexisted with Mind, have always been in divine Mind, inseparable from it and unfolding from it.

In reality, we have never had a connection with matter. Through our own experiences, our demonstrations of healing, we understand better the benefits of denying the existence of matter.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to **[jsh.christianscience.com/deny-the-existence-of-matter](http://jsh.christianscience.com/deny-the-existence-of-matter)**.