



Fear ye not, stand still,  
and see the salvation  
of the Lord.

—Exodus 14:13



Christian Science Sentinel  
**Bible Lens**

**Sacrament**

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# Sacrament

from the **Responsive Reading**

## Exodus 12:21, 25

*Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the pass-over.... And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.*

Moses' instructions come at the time of Israel's imminent departure from Egypt. Pharaoh's stubborn resistance to freeing the enslaved Hebrew people has brought nine plagues on the Egyptians (see chaps. 7–10). The tenth, in which the firstborn of every family and even of cattle has died, finally persuades Pharaoh to release the Israelites (see 12:30, 31).

The term *passover* (from the Hebrew noun *pesaḥ*) describes God's exemption of the Israelites from the tenth plague. Following divine direction to place lamb's blood on their doorposts, they save their firstborn children from death (see vv. 21–23). After this event, its annual observance—called *Passover* in memory of God's "passing over" their homes—becomes central to Jewish tradition (see vv. 24–27). Isaiah 31:5 uses the related word *pāsaḥ* to depict God as a protection and defense, saying of Jerusalem, "He will deliver it; and passing over [*pāsaḥ*] he will preserve it."

"Kill the passover" refers to killing the sacrificial animal for the commemorative meal. One source notes that sacrificing a newborn lamb was already practiced annu-

ally to ensure protection of the entire flock. So Moses' mandate would likely have been familiar to his people.

Centuries later, Christ Jesus celebrates *Passover* with his disciples during the last supper, and makes reference to his coming sacrifice (see Luke 22:14–20). John the Baptist had identified Jesus as the "Lamb of God" (John 1:29) at the outset of the Master's career. And First Peter writes of humanity's redemption by "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1:19).

from **Section 3**

## 6 | Matthew 3:13–15, 17

*Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.... And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

God's declaration echoes two Hebrew Bible statements viewed as Messianic prophecy. Psalms 2:7 has, "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. And Isaiah 42:1 says, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth"—according to the Gospel of Matthew, an oracle fulfilled by Christ Jesus (see 12:17, 18).

Although Jews used water for self-purification purposes in keeping with Mosaic law,



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“...a lesson on which the prosperity of Christian Science largely depends.” —Mary Baker Eddy

they would not have ordinarily undergone baptism by another person. This rite was meant to absolve Gentiles of their sins in preparation for entering the Jewish faith. Yet “Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan” (3:5) come to be baptized by John. A Bible authority sees in this “a unique national movement of penitence and of search for God.”

from **Section 4**

## 9 | Matthew 19:1, 2

*It came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan; and great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.*

Located in northern Palestine, the tiny territory of Galilee—about fifty miles (eighty km) in length from north to south—played only a minor role in the early history of the Hebrew people. Since New Testament times, however, it has been celebrated as the site of most of Jesus’ ministry. It is where he grew up, was baptized by John, called his disciples, accomplished many of his healing works—and, as recorded in Matthew 28:16–20, gave final instructions to his closest followers.

Lower Galilee was on the trade route around the Sea of Galilee, and had Jewish, Roman, and Greek residents. But the region was considered mostly rural, populated by farmers, herders, fishermen, and potters. Some who heard of the Master’s works asked, “Shall Christ come out of Galilee?” (John 7:41). And scoffers asserted, “Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet” (v. 52). Ironically, the prophet Jonah came from Galilee.

## 10 | I Corinthians 10:1–4

*Brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.*

Paul’s allusions to the Exodus saga are pointed. He is reminding the Corinthian Christians that they are part of a larger story of spiritual deliverance. He is cautioning them not to wander in a wilderness of false doctrine. And he is assuring them that they are sustained spiritually. “For Paul,” offers a commentator, “each redemptive event in Israel’s history foreshadows the final victory of God’s righteousness now manifested in Jesus Christ.”

That the Rock “followed” the people, scholars explain, indicates a continuing source of water provided for them in the desert. Though Hebrew legend depicted a rock actually moving with the people through the wilderness, Paul’s message is undoubtedly symbolic: Christ remains an ever-present influence in the lives of the faithful.

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### Resources quoted in this issue

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# Alone with God

By Susan Booth Mack Snipes

From the January 19, 1987, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

**A**lone. How does that word make you feel? Isolated, lonely, as if you need to find a friend?

Facing the enigma of mortal life, with its disappointments and trials, usually seems more bearable with the support of those we love. But what if our loved ones can't be with us or are unable to help us? What can we count on to give us a solid sense of serenity and satisfaction? Eventually we will all have to turn to something beyond people in order to find our strength and our happiness.

Consider what Christ Jesus did in the garden of Gethsemane on the night before his crucifixion. When he most yearned for the support of his friends, they slept. He asked, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" (Matthew 26:40). "There was no response to that human yearning," states *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, "and so Jesus turned forever away from earth to heaven, from sense to Soul" (p. 48).

It was Jesus' very relinquishment of any mortal attachment and his understanding of spiritual oneness with God, Soul, that enabled him to accomplish the resurrection. Had Jesus not relied solely on God, he would have been unready for resurrection.

Love will bring all of us to the point of growth and development where we will turn from dependence on mortals to a growing understanding of God as our support, our reason for being, and in fact our only real Life.

I found myself at this point of growth when I was left to raise my two preschool children on my own. My husband had passed on, and while I had family and friends nearby, I still felt a deep need to

gain a dependable sense of peace. One day the word *alone* pounded in my thinking until I decided to face it head-on and gain a more spiritual view of aloneness.

I remembered a passage from Mrs. Eddy's *Message to The Mother Church for 1901*: "The Christian Scientist is alone with his own being and with the reality of things" (p. 20). It seemed to me that this kind of aloneness couldn't be painful or bad.

Also I looked up the word *alone* in *Roget's Thesaurus*. I found it interesting that one of the references to "alone" was included in the section titled "Unity." In reading through that section, I noticed such terms as *oneness*, *individuality*, *solidarity*. Everything I was looking for! Then I realized that it was my unity with God that sustained me and that I could never be separated from God, good, or from any needed manifestation of love. To me this unity of God and man had to be "the reality of things."

Within a year I was married, and while I was most grateful for the love, companionship, and support my husband brought to the entire family, I felt that my dependence had truly changed from people to God.

Just another happy ending for someone else? No. If you are feeling alone right now, you can be sure that Love is tenderly bringing you also to a sense of joy and comfort that is entirely separate from any tenuous human source.

How should we feel when we hear the word *alone*? Safe, secure, comforted, grateful, and blessed, because it reminds us that we are at one with God, forever.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to [jsh.christianscience.com/alone-with-god](http://jsh.christianscience.com/alone-with-god).