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I will sing a new song  
unto thee, O God.

—Psalms 144:9



Christian Science Sentinel  
**Bible Lens**

**God**

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## from the Golden Text

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### **Psalms 144:15**

*Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.*

While happiness and blessing are distinct concepts in Hebrew, the word translated *happy* in this verse (*osher*) is often rendered *blessed* in the King James Version—as in this parallel passage: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Psalms 33:12).

## from the Responsive Reading

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### **Exodus 3:1**

*Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian.*

Jethro was the father of Moses’ wife Ziporah. Not much is known about his role as priest of the Midianites, but he was an important figure in Moses’ life. He supported Moses’ mission to return to his people in Egypt, and Moses accepted his counsel and guidance (see Exodus 4:18 and 18:24). Although Midianites were generally considered idolatrous, Jethro recognized the supremacy of the God of Israel (see Exodus 18:10–12).

### **Exodus 3:7**

*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.*

The term translated *taskmasters* is a form of the Hebrew verb *nagas*, meaning to oppress. This is a reference to the harsh treatment divinely predicted to Abram and

carried out by the Egyptians (see Genesis 15:13 and Exodus 1:8–14).

### **Exodus 3:14**

*God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.*

God’s communication to Moses was held so sacred in the Jewish faith that a ban on speaking the divine name aloud later arose—a tradition still practiced by many Jews today. The four letters *YHWH* or *JHVH* represented it in Scripture. Scribes later added vowels from the word meaning *Lord* (*Adonay*) to the letters *JHVH*, in part to remind readers to substitute that for *Yahweh*. This led to the combined form *Jehovah*.

## from Section 1

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### **3 | Jeremiah 29:11**

*I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

“An expected end” is a translation of the Hebrew terms *tiqvah*, most often rendered *hope* in the King James Bible, and *’achariyth*, used to signify “future time.” Several translators have “a future and a hope” or “a future filled with hope.”

## from Section 2

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### **9 | Luke 18:42, 43**

*Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he*

# 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

*received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God.*

Prior to this healing, the disciples had failed to understand Jesus’ words about his death and resurrection (see vv. 31–34). Scholars contrast their mental blindness with the blind man’s perception of Jesus as the “son of David” (v. 38).

Nearly identical accounts appear in the books of Matthew, where two blind men are healed, and Mark, where the blind man is called Bartimaeus (see Matthew 20:30–34 and Mark 10:46–52). In spite of the differences in details, all three accounts place this event just before Jesus’ final entry into Jerusalem, making the healing one of the last of his ministry.

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## from Section 4

### 17 | I Corinthians 2:1, 4

*I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.... And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.*

“Persuasion is man’s means of moving his fellow man,” writes one commentator. “God’s means is demonstration, leaving no doubt, and inspiring implicit faith.” Paul relies on the potency of Spirit, not polished rhetoric, to communicate his message.

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## from Section 5

### 21 | John 14:8, 9

*Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him,*

*Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?*

In the Synoptic Gospels, Philip is mentioned only in lists of Jesus’ disciples. In John’s Gospel, Philip becomes better known to readers. After being called by Jesus, he recruits Nathanael (see 1:43, 45). Jesus speaks to Philip about providing bread for the multitude, and Philip helps some Greeks who want to meet Jesus (see 6:5–7 and 12:20–22).

Here Philip reveals an immature understanding of the Master’s spiritual identity as God’s Son—not unlike Thomas’s inability to believe in Jesus’ resurrection (see John 20:24, 25).

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## from Section 6

### 26 | Revelation 21:1

*I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

In ancient Near Eastern creation myths, the sea represented chaos and unrest. As Israel was not a seagoing nation, the Hebrew Bible reflects this belief—and celebrates God’s dominion over the sea (see example in Job 26:12).

Christ Jesus exercised this divine authority, walking over the waters and calming the stormy sea (see John 6:19 and Mark 4:39). The Revelator describes similar power in his vision of an angel who “set his right foot upon the sea” (10:2).

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#### Resources quoted in this issue

**Cit. 17:** Jamieson, Robert, Andrew Robert Fausset, and David Brown. *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. 2 vols. Hartford, CT: S. S. Scranton, 1871. Also available at [biblestudytools.com/commentaries](http://biblestudytools.com/commentaries).

# Post-Christmas inventory

By Judith Hardy Olson

From the December 26, 2005, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

January 2 it was, and I was putting the Christmas decorations away. That job can seem like a downer, so while I was doing it, I was mentally taking a post-Christmas inventory.

By that I mean remembering and appreciating each instance that had made this Christmas meaningful to me. Not just events and gatherings, but details—little signs of caring I'd noticed in those around me. News items that showed the Christmas spirit. And most of all, my own inspired thoughts all during the season, especially ones from my “manger moments,” quiet, contemplative times when I'd cherished the Christ.

I think of the Christ as the truth of God that Jesus lived, taught, and proved. Mary Baker Eddy wrote, “[The] Christ, or divinity of the man Jesus, was his divine nature, the godliness which animated him” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 26). As I thought about how I'd been living with these spiritual insights—hugging the world in them, too—my inventory was full of sweet, special “manger moments.”

Then I sat down to read Mrs. Eddy's January 2, 1898, address to members of her church, which begins: “Beloved brethren, another Christmas has come and gone. Has it enabled us to know more of the healing Christ that saves from sickness and sin?” (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 122). I asked myself, “Can I honestly say that because of this Christmas I know more of the healing Christ than I knew a month ago?” *As much as, yes.* But I couldn't honestly say *more*.

It was then that I vowed to enter the next holiday season with this focus and goal: Each day I would strive to know more of the healing Christ, which saves the world from sickness and sin.

Right then, in January, I began to grow in understanding the Christ, Truth. My love for God and commitment to Him includes daily prayer to receive—accept and understand—more of His ever-present love. All year I worked to keep my thought open, uncluttered, watchful, loving, ready to welcome more of the power, laws, majesty, love, and spirit of the Christ.

When the next December came, I remembered the commitment I'd made the previous January. From then on, all during that holiday season, I began each day by contemplating healings—the many performed by Jesus and recorded in the Bible; others, too, from this magazine, from the chapter titled “Fruitage” in *Science and Health*, and from my own life. I searched to see what these healings said to me. Each, I found, spoke specifically of some facet of the healing Christ, such as its simplicity, certainty, consistency, constancy, irreversibility, or universality.

By the time Christmas came that year, I had listed well over a hundred facets of the Christ. How alive it was to me now! Not only had I attained a higher view of my fellow man, but I was also seeing more good everywhere.

When the time came for my second annual post-Christmas inventory, I remembered those myriad facets of the Christ made clear through healings and insights. And my New Year's resolution was to keep my consciousness abiding with the Christ every day.

To read the entire article, which has been adapted to fit this page, go to [jsh.christianscience.com/post-christmas-inventory](http://jsh.christianscience.com/post-christmas-inventory).