

Bible Characters for Your Weekly Bible Study

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For week of July 26 – August 1, 2010

SUBJECT: LOVE

DeLong, Mrs. Al-freddie (CS), “**Love**,” Christian Science Journal, Vol.9 (November 1891), p. 321.

--The first principle of Christian Science teaches that God is Love; also that "*man is His image and likeness*," —the expression of divine Love.

- But how many of us are truly expressing this Love in the fullness of our understanding?

---And yet, each Scientist is aiming to bring to his own consciousness — and that of the world — God's spiritual idea.

• But this is never accomplished by simply declaring that God is Love, and man his perfect idea; but, rather, through living it.

---Do we really understand how to hold to this ideal?

• Is it simply by declaring it, and standing forever there? Surely declaration leads to demonstration; but if the demonstration does not follow in our individual experience, of what use is the declaration alone?

SECTION I: (Jer 31: 3,7; Hos 14: 4 [to :]; II Sam 11: 2-4 [to 1st :]; 5, 14, 15, 17, 26, 27; 12: 1 [to 1st :], 13 [to 1st :]; Ps 51: 0 [Intro] *A Psalm*, 1 [to :], 2, 3 [to :], 6, 10)

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Eliam			Commander Joab
Bath-sheba	=	Uriah	Prophet Nathan
	=	David	

Eliam

[□ If'uhm]

Eliam is the father of Bath-sheba. He is also called Ammiel in I Chronicles.

Bath-sheba

[Bath she'bu] (daughter of oath)

Bath-sheba was the daughter of Eliam, and wife of Uriah the Hittite, one of David's "mighty men." "The name 'Sheba' ('Shua' in 1 Chron. 3:5) probably refers to a foreign god, which may indicate the family of Bathsheba was of non-Israelite origin." (HarperCollins Bible Dictionary)

"One of the best-known tales in the Old Testament is that of David and Bathsheba." (All the People in the Bible) "With his passion aroused, David committed adultery with Bathsheba." (Who Was Who in the Bible) The child born in adultery died. David sent Uriah to the fiercest point of battle

hoping that he would be slain, and his affair with Bathsheba would not come to light. Uriah was slain, and she was married to David, and became the mother of Solomon.

“Solomon’s successful bid for the throne is attributed in part to the efforts of Bathsheba, who apparently had risen to the status of queen mother.” (Oxford Guide to People & Places)

“The New Testament mentions Bathsheba indirectly in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt 1:6). Bathsheba is also called Bathshua (1 Chr.3:5)" (Who Was Who in the Bible)

Uriah

[Yoo rī’uh] (Heb. “God is light (or fire)”)

Uriah was "a Hittite, the husband of Bathsheba, whom David first seduced, and then after Uriah's death married. He was one of the band of David's 'mighty men.'" (Easton Dictionary)

“Judging the usual interpretation of his name and good conduct, Uriah was a worshipper of God.” (Who Was Who in the Bible) “He was a convert to Judaism, and, like many converts, he took his adopted faith very seriously.” (All the People of the Bible)

"Uriah was serving in the army besieging Rabbah, the Ammonite capital, when David sent for him. The king wanted it to appear that Uriah was the father of the child that was to be born to Bathsheba." (Anchor Dictionary) Uriah "professes solidarity with his fellow soldiers, whose engagement in holy war requires sexual abstinence (2 Sam.11:10-11; cf. 1 Sam.21:5." (Eerdmans Dictionary) Failing to use Uriah as a shield to cover his sin with Bathsheba, David ordered this valiant soldier to the front line of battle, where he was killed. The sad story of the cruel wrongs inflicted upon him by David and of his mournful death are simply told in the sacred record of II Samuel.

King David

[Dā’vid] (“beloved”)

(Abbreviated)

David exhibited many roles during his lifetime: warrior, fugitive hero, King of Judah, King of Israel, musician, and ancestor of Jesus. He was the second king of Israel, who enlarged the kingdom, moved the capital to Jerusalem, and strengthened the armed forces. In later times, David was looked on as the ideal ruler who would return, or it was believed that a descendant of his would arise, to restore the kingdom of Israel. His life may be divided into three portions: His youth before his introduction to the court of Saul; his relations with Saul; his reign....

Although David was a righteous king, he was subject to sin. “Although he had over twelve wives, he was noted as a lascivious man.” (All the People in the Bible) “David’s affair with Bathsheba (II Sam 11:1-12:25), one of the best known incidents in his life, occurred during the last phase of the Ammonite campaign.” (Interpreter’s Commentary) On one occasion when his army went to battle, David stayed home. While Uriah, the Hitite, Bath-sheba’s husband, was away in battle, David committed adultery with her. Then in an effort to cover his sin, he finally had Uriah killed in battle.

"It would be wrong to consider the outcome of the meeting and liaison between David and Bathsheba—the culmination of a love story which overcomes the barriers between high and low in society—as a happy ending. It is in fact exactly the opposite, and the prophet Nathan is charged to open the king's eyes to this reality." (Great Couples of the Bible) Faced with his sin, David repented and asked for God’s forgiveness (See Psalms 51)....

Commander **Joab**
[Jō'ab] (“the Lord is father”)

(Abbreviated)

Joab is the name of three men in the Old Testament. The one referred to this week is one of the three sons of Zeruah, David's half-sister, and "captain of the host" during the whole of David's reign. “He seems already to have held this position at the time of the struggle for power between David and Saul’s son, Ishbaal (cf. II Sam 2:13), but according to I Chron 11:6 he was awarded his command in consequence of his valor and leadership during David’s conquest of Jerusalem.” (HarperCollins Dictionary)....

"Joab...carried out David's cover-up of his affair with Uriah's wife (II Sam 11:14-25) and interceded with David on behalf of Absalom (who had avenged the rape of his sister Tamar by slaying his brother Amnon—II Sam 14:1-24)." (Anchor Bible Dictionary) His character is deeply stained by the part he willingly took in the murder of Uriah. Later, he acted apparently from a sense of duty in putting Absalom to death (II Sam 18:1-14).....

The Prophet **Nathan**
[Nay'thun] (“he gave”)

“In ancient times all courts had resident prophets or, in pagan courts, court seers and magicians.” (All the People in the Bible) "Nathan was a prophet in the reigns of David and Solomon (2 Chron 9:29)." (Easton Dictionary) “Nathan told David that he would not be the one to build the temple (I Chron 17:1-15).” (Who Was Who in the Bible) "He next appears as the reprover of David on account of his sin with Bathsheba." (Easton Dictionary)

“In I Kings 1, readers are afforded a rare behind-the-scenes view of the machinations of royal succession. Here, Nathan, without hint of divine instruction, is the king-maker, setting the stage and directing dialogue (vv.13-14).” (HarperCollins Dictionary)

He was charged with the education of Solomon, at whose inauguration to the throne he took a prominent part. His two sons, Zabad and Azariah occupied places of honor at the king's court. He last appears in assisting David in reorganizing the public worship. He seems to have written a life of David, and also a life of Solomon.

Jer 31: 3,7: **Jeremiah’s vision of a restored Israel community returning to Zion**

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Dictated by Jeremiah to the scribe, Baruch, c. 600 BC.

“Chapter 31 continues the general theme of the glorious hope of a restored Israel and the establishment of a new covenant with them.” (King James Bible Commentary)

Gwaller, Miss L. Ivimy (CSB, Associate Editor, and Director), “**Love: ‘What a word!’**,” Christian Science Journal, Vol. 74 (April 1956), p. 169.

--In her “Miscellaneous Writings,” under the caption “Love,” Mary Baker Eddy says (pp. 249,250):
“What a word! I am in awe before it. Over what worlds on worlds it hath range and is sovereign! The underived, the incomparable, the infinite All of good, the *alone* God, is Love.”

--To human sense, Love is a miracle.

--Christian Science demonstrates Love as divine, universal Principle.

- The theme of the Old Testament is the justice and equity of God, interspersed with such verses as, “*I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee*” (Jer. 31:3).

---Yet in the Old Testament God was a God of penalty.

- The New Testament, replete with the life of the Master, reveals God as Love.

---And the Apostle James describes God as One who is without variableness or shadow of turning, hence, as Principle.

Aller, Catherine, “**Thus saith the Lord,**” POEM, Christian Science Journal, Vol. 38 (October 1920), p. 364.

BLIND led the blind, we slumbered unawares,
And while men slept the enemy sowed tares.
The old familiar guides we knew are gone,
And broken are the reeds we leaned upon.
Rude the awakening. Oh, send out Thy word!
How may Thy people know "Thus saith the Lord"?

Never in multitudes can safety lie.
Jacob, *alone*, smote error to the thigh;
And he who is our Way-shower to God,
In prayer, *alone*, the long brave pathway trod.
Follow his way, and this be the reward—
Within thine heart to know "Thus saith the Lord."

Hos 14: 4 [to :] **Hosea explains God's love for Israel**

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Prov 14: 14

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by Hosea, the first of the twelve Minor Prophets, between 755-710 BC.

“This term [*backsliding*], so often used by the prophets, is used here in such a way as to clarify who is a backslider. He belongs in the category of a fool, the wicked, the disobedient and he is contrasted with the godly wise. It is a word that the prophets used of apostate unbelievers.” (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Denny, Ethel Adele, “**The Imperishable Substance,**” Christian Science Journal, Vol. 38 (December 1920), p. 477.

--...mortal mind, with characteristic inconsistency, always testifies to certain experiences indelibly stamped on its memory, on which points it expects no relapse—perhaps a Mother Goose rhyme, a street scene, or certain dates and names.

--On analysis, one sees that this relapse is a falling back, a return to an old condition, or an old belief.

- It is premised on the supposition that man and his works are made of that which is capable of decay. When one forgets, then, there would be a lapse from knowledge to ignorance.

---This backsliding is a species of indecision, of uncertainty.

- It carries with it the suggestion that the improved condition was after all itself only a belief, and that no real progress was made because of the tenacious hold of the earlier state.

McCracken, Prof. William D. (CSB, 1st Reader, and Associate Editor), “**God’s Reviving Love,**” Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 22 (3 January 1920), p. 350.

--We read in The Acts of the Apostles that John preached "*the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.*"

- Mrs. Eddy says (The People's Idea of God, p. 9), "*Christian Science has one faith, one Lord, one baptism; and this faith builds on Spirit, not matter; and this baptism is the purification of mind,—not an ablation of the body, but tears of repentance, an overflowing love, washing away the motives for sin; yea, it is love leaving self for God.*"

---This repentance means not loss, disadvantage, humiliation, but rather advantage, blessing, gladness, for to greet the repentant one there is God's promise given through Hosea, "*I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely...I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.*"

--The everlasting mercy of God is at this hour calling the whole world to repentance with just this fact of healing, saying, "*I will heal their backsliding.*"

- The scribe indicting these lines knows this to be true for him as well as for every one on earth to-day.

---One more year of earth's history now closes, but hope and faith are expecting that which Mrs. Eddy once described (Retrospection and Introspection, p. 44) as "*a great revival of mutual love, prosperity, and spiritual power.*"

II Sam 11: 2-4 [to 1st]; 5, 14, 15, 17, 26, 27: **David’s Sin with Bath-sheba, and the murder of Uriah**

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Ps 51

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Jewish tradition ascribed the writing of *Samuel* to Samuel himself; however, Samuel could not be the writer because his death is described in I Sam 25:1. The book was written anonymously between 931-722 BC.

Gilliland, Gail (Managing Editor), “**What about Bathsheba?**” Christian Science Journal, Vol. 120 (June 2002), p. 27.

--The story of David and Bathsheba in the Bible has been presented in just about every form possible, including racy paperback novels and Hollywood screenplays.

--But what about Bathsheba herself? Did *she* ever find happiness? Did *she* ever feel fulfilled?

--...civilization’s progress has to mean eventual progress for *everyone*, including all the Bathshebas of the world.

--The Bible does not record Bathsheba’s thoughts and prayers.

- No one, male or female, has ever really been alone at any moment in the world’s history.

---Many of the world’s occupants accept the Ten Commandments as the foundation of moral law, and as the premise of civilization.

- They are based on the divine law that is available to anyone at any time, despite any circumstances.

II Sam 12: 1 [to 1st], 13 [to 1st .]: **The confrontation with Nathan**

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Jewish tradition ascribed the writing of *Samuel* to Samuel himself; however, Samuel could not be the writer because his death is described in I Sam 25:1. The book was written anonymously between 931-722 BC.

Leishman, Thomas L., “David the King,” THE CONTINUITY OF THE BIBLE, Christian Science Journal, Vol. 85 (September 1967), p. 476.

--David's success in the wars he waged in furthering the advancement of his kingdom is unquestioned, but his personal and domestic affairs were sometimes less fortunate or praiseworthy.

- In his desire to make Bath-sheba his queen, David arranged that her husband, Uriah, should be left unsupported while leading an assault against an Ammonite stronghold.

---When Uriah was slain, as David had anticipated, Bath-sheba “*became his wife, and bare him a son.*”

--Nathan the prophet rebuked David with a parable.

- He told the story of “*one little ewe lamb,*” cherished by a poor man but wantonly killed by his wealthy neighbor to provide food for an unexpected guest.

---Incensed at the injustice, David cried that such a man should surely die, only to hear Nathan's stern response, “*Thou art the man*” (II Sam 12: 7).

Knobelsdorff, Kerry M., “Oh, for more Nathans!,” POEM, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 91 (3 April 1989), p. 15.

Whose moral courage risks retaliation,
while uncovering error
that we may be healed.

There are many “Davids” —
proud, adored,
used to having their own way.
And few “Nathans” —
well honed by much praying.

Clear-eyed and far-seeing,
who make the incision
to heal.
To cut away *that*
which would consume
our beloved Davids.

O let us strengthen *our own* Nathans,
then our own Davids
will *listen*...and repent.

Ps 51: 0 [Intro] *A Psalm*, 1 [to :], 2, 3 [to :], 6, 10): **David confesses his sin, and asks for forgiveness and mercy**

RELATED SCRIPTURE: II Sam 11; Ps 32

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by David c. 1000 BC.

"Psalm 51 records David's words of repentance after being confronted by Nathan over his sin with Bathsheba (cf. Ps 32, where David expresses his agony after Nathan's confrontation)." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"In the very midst of the distress caused by his sin the worshipper stretches out his hands towards God and implores him to have mercy on him." (The Psalms)

“Even though he had sinned horribly, David knew that forgiveness was available, based on God’s covenant love [*lovingkindness*, v.1].” (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Sinclair, Duncan (CSB, Associate Editor, President, Normal Class Teacher, and Editor), “**Thy lovingkindness, O God!**,” EDITORIAL, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 28 (15 May 1926), p. 731.

--No theme can be greater than that of the loving-kindness of God.

- But how feebly is this loving-kindness appreciated, even after all these centuries since first man began to recognize the divine fact that God is Love!

--Christ Jesus taught God’s love for men.

--The truth that God is Love needs to be pondered deeply by all.

--As soon as the truth that God is Love and that His loving-kindness is unlimited, dawns on one, life begins to assume an entirely different aspect for him.

--The loving-kindness of God!

- How one lingers in thought upon the fact of its inexhaustible nature, its nearness, its ever-availability!

Watson, Mrs. Margaret, “**Pebbles that shine**,” Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 109 (18 June 2007), p. 20.

--As I was walking along the beach one day, I noticed how clean and shiny some pebbles were in comparison with others.

- I was intrigued, so I stopped and watched the water lapping over them again and again.

- I picked up one of the pebbles, wondering why I had never noticed them before.

---...the Psalmist sang, “*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin*” (51:2).

- God is gently moving us forward, cleansing us with the pure waters of understanding.

- What a wonderful feeling it is to know that God is always caring for us, that He loves us all and is molding us as we move in His love.

- No one is too old or too young, no heart is so hard that it cannot be melted by the gentle touch of Love.

SECTIONS II and III (Ps 119: 169 [to :], 176; Ezek 34: 1, 6 [to :], 11 Behold, 16 [to :], 23; Matt 9: 35, 36; Luke 15: 3-6; Ps 23: 1 [to :], 4 [to :], 6 *and I*)

Shepherd

"Shepherding was one of man's earliest occupations." (Anchor Bible Dictionary) "From the relationship of shepherd and sheep have come some of the most effective metaphors and touching expressions of the Bible." (Harper's Encyclopedia) "Shepherd" is a word naturally of frequent occurrence in Scripture. Sometimes the word "pastor" is used instead (Jer 2:8; 3:15; 10:21; 12:10; 17:16). This word is used figuratively to represent the relation of rulers to their subjects and of God to his people (Ps 23:1; 80:1; Isa 40:11; 44:28; Jer 25:34,35; Nahum 3:18; John 10:11,14; Heb 13:20; I Peter 2:25; 5:4).

“Sheep and goats were the most important domestic animals in the biblical world, and the Bible contains numerous literal and figurative references to these animals—and to those who cared for them. The earliest biblical shepherd was Abel, 'a keeper of sheep' (Gen. 4:2).” (Eerdmans Dictionary)

The duties of a shepherd in an unenclosed country like Palestine were very onerous. In early morning he led forth the flock from the fold, marching at its head to the spot where they were to be pastured. Here he watched them all day, taking care that none of the sheep strayed, and if any for a time eluded his watch and wandered away from the rest, he looked diligently until he found it and brought it back. In those lands sheep require to be supplied regularly with water, and the shepherd for this purpose has to guide them either to some running stream or to wells dug in the wilderness and furnished with troughs. At night he brought the flock home to the fold, counting them as they passed under the rod at the door to assure himself that none were missing. Nor did his labors always end with sunset. Often he had to guard the fold through the dark hours from the attack of wild beasts, or the wily attempts of the prowling thief (see I Sam 17:34)

“The two most extended biblical allegories of the shepherd are in Ezek. 34; John 10.” (Interpreters Dictionary) “The New Testament mentions shepherds 16 times.” (Holman Bible Dictionary). “Since the people of God were like sheep without a shepherd, God provided a shepherd in the person of [His son].” (Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels)

Sheep

“Along with goats, [sheep are] the most common domesticated animals during biblical times, evidenced linguistically in biblical and extrabiblical sources and supported by zooarchaeological finds at many sites. “ (Eerdmans Dictionary)

"Throughout the NT the sheep is used in a figurative sense for human beings. Jesus compared Israel to sheep lost (Matt 10:6; cf. Isa 53:6) and without a shepherd (Matt 9:36)." (HarperCollins Bible Dictionary)

Ps 119: 169 [to :], 176: **David confesses to being a “lost sheep” and pays homage to the commandments**

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Rom 7: 15-25

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: "This psalm, the most comprehensive of all the psalms, is a particularly artificial product of religious poetry." (The Psalms) It was probably written by David in the 7th century BC.

“In spite of all that he has affirmed regarding Scripture’s power in his life, the psalmist confesses that sin has not yet been eliminated from his life [*I have gone astray*, v.176] (cf. Rom. 7:15-25). (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Willis, John Buckley (CSB, Bible Lesson Committee, President, and Associate Editor), “**The Cry of the Human**,” Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 9 (3 August 1907), p. 931.

--"WHAT shall I do?"

- The voice came from the shadows of a great affliction.

---It was an hour in which thoughts of past failure and present need seemed to join hands against her, and she could realize only this, that in her heart there was the consciousness of inexpressible loneliness and want, and in her hands simply "*the cup of trembling*."

--...our bondage to ever-shifting feelings is broken the moment we honestly set ourselves to right doing.

- Continuous right doing may not be immediately achieved, but escape from the strife of impulse may be immediately won.

---He who is loyal to the truth he knows, and who keeps himself busied in the endeavor of right doing, speedily finds relief from sorrow and vain regrets, and his sky is ever brightening, for *"the center of consciousness has become his constant will to work with the will divine,"* and the cup of spiritual joy is already presented to his lips.

Marlatt, Gloria Elaine, "[About lost sheep](#)," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 84 (22 November 1982), p. 2001.

--God's idea is never lost.

- The child of God is eternally at one with his Father.
 - He cannot be torn or plucked from his Father's care.
- If the human picture presents another view, that does not make the human view correct.
 - The unredeemed human view is ever the illusion.
- Instead of becoming overwhelmed by the illusion of error that testifies to *"lost sheep,"* we can steadfastly maintain in thought the eternal integrity of the relationship of God and man, Principle and idea.

---Steadfast prayer, which asserts and maintains the fact of the absolute allness of God and the consequent nothingness of any opposing power, negates error.

Ezek 34: 1, 6 [to :], 11 Behold, 16 [to :], 23: [The promise of the true shepherd](#)

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by Ezekiel between 590-570 BC while he was a captive in Babylon where he was both a prophet and a priest.

"God, the true Shepherd, would search out [*I...will both search*, v.11] and find His sheep in order to restore Israel to their land for the kingdom which the Messiah leads (vv.12-14)." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"The neglect and abuse of Israel's rulers had victimized the people and exposed them as prey for invading nations. To right this wrong, Ezekiel announces that God, the Good Shepherd, will now personally tend the people, bringing them into their own land, caring for their interests, giving the flock's weakest members special attention (34:11-16)." (Theological Bible Commentary)

"[Leadership](#)," Christian Science Monitor (27 October 1992), p. 17.

--A stirring chapter in the Old Testament recently stood out to me as relevant to the issue of leadership, which is getting a lot of attention these days.

- Ezekiel describes the failure of the appointed *"shepherds"* to lead the people of Israel honestly.
 - "*Ye eat the fat...but ye feed not the flock,*" he says. He then promises that God will Himself provide leadership: *"Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out...I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which sick."*

--Couldn't we benefit by recognizing God's presence and power in our lives today?

- Government, business, civic and church organizations, family—all need strong leadership now as much as ever.

--When we adopt Christliness into our hearts and allow it to govern our thought and actions, we are accepting the leadership of Christ.

Rowe, Eva B., “**The Shepherd**,” POEM, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 26 (23 August 1924), p. 1029.

The Shepherd of the flock is Love!
 We rest refreshed, secure,
By living waters, calm, serene;
 No distant fields allure.

E’en through depression, dark with doubt,
 We walk with Him to guide.
No lurking evil will we fear;
 He doth our needs provide.

His gentleness shall make us glad,
 His staff of Love uphold;
His rod of truth shall gather us,
 His loving arms enfold.

His mercy never ceaseth more,
 His strength is ever bold;
Nought shall make void this promise sure—
 “One shepherd and one fold”!

Matt 9: 35, 36: **Jesus heals all manner of sickness and disease, and has compassion on the scattered sheep**

TIME LINE: At the beginning of the Year of Opposition, the 3rd year of Jesus’ ministry, and his 3rd tour of Galilee, 29 AD.

Matthew 9 closes with a picture of the crowds who came to hear the Lord’s teaching and their joy as they personally experienced his power to heal body and soul and to transform their circumstances (Matthew 9:35).

“Here the humanity of [Jesus] allows expression of [his] attitude toward sinners in human terms [*he was moved with compassion*, v.36]...The people’s spiritual needs were even more desperate than the need for physical healing [*they fainted, and were scattered*, v.36].” (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Pickens, Israel, “Scientific Teaching, Preaching, and Practice,” Christian Science Journal, Vol. 75 (September 1957), p. 453.

--When the blessed Master, Christ Jesus, taught by the wayside and proclaimed to his followers (Matt 4:17), “*The kingdom of heaven is at hand*,” he did not leave his listeners without hope of attaining an awareness of this kingdom and its fulfillment in their lives.

• He did not leave them in helpless states of disease and disability, of poverty and lack, of sin and vice.

---Upon these multitudes who had been lost in the mazes of confusion as to life and its meaning, there dawned a new hope as they listened to this transcendent message from the lips of the new prophet who had appeared in the their midst.

--Christ Jesus knew that there was a perfect co-ordination between his teaching of the truths concerning God and the demonstration or practical application of those truths.

Dicksee, E. Violet J., "**Becoming a Practitioner**," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 24 (19 August 1922), p. 914.

--PROBABLY nearly [everyone] who begins to study Christian Science, and who has experienced its healing power, has the hope that one day he will be the means of helping others.

• Perhaps some of us have a feeling that the day when this will happen may be a little remote; that we still have much to learn before we shall be fitted to become what is known as a practitioner.

--In "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p. 37), Mrs. Eddy says, "*It is possible,—yea, it is the duty and privilege of every child, man, and woman,—to follow in some degree the example of the Master by the demonstration of Truth and Life, of health and holiness.*"

--We read in Matthew that when Jesus "*saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd;*" and, then, burning with that love and compassion for humanity, he turned to his disciples and said, "*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*"

• And we can be laborers here and now, not at some future day only. Whatever our lot in life, wherever we are placed, we can do His work.

Luke 15: 3-6: **Parable of the lost sheep**

PARALLEL GOSPEL: Matt 18: 12-14

TIME LINE: Last Months, 30 AD.

"Compared with Matthew's version of the parable of the lost sheep (Mt 18:12-14), Luke emphasizes the shepherd's responsibility for the loss..., the unconditional nature of the search, and the fact that the joy was brought about by the sinner's repentance." (Oxford Bible Commentary)

"That Jesus is 'friend of sinners' (7:34) who '[eateth] with them' [v.2] has eucharistic overtones throughout Luke-Acts." (People's NT Commentary)

"The rabbis taught that God would receive sinners who sought His forgiveness earnestly enough, but here [v.4] God is the One seeking the sinner." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"The poor sheep was probably exhausted from wandering, exposure, and hunger. The shepherd did not mind the extra burden [*layeth it on his shoulders*, v.5] or journey because he rejoiced." (King James Bible Commentary)

"The friends and neighbors were summoned [v.6] because of the shepherd's great joy and because they may have aided in the search." (Ibid)

Peterson, Esther M. Scheck, "**One sheep lost—and found**," POEM, Christian Science Journal, Vol. 100 (February 1982), p. 70.

Once upon a day,
in my youthful naiveté,
I followed a flock of sheep—
and lost my way.
I didn't realize then
that sheep without a shepherd
are apt to go astray
and thus become the lion's prey.

But God be praised—dear Shepherd—
who rescued me from the lion's cruel jaws
and brought me back on track.

It was then I made a vow—
which incidentally I still keep—
to follow the *Shepherd*,
and not the sheep!

Woodward, Rosanna, “**The Hundredth Sheep**,” POEM, Christian Science Journal, Vol. 66 (May 1948), p. 217.

Love, let me, like the hundredth sheep, come back.
Pride's towering mountains loom so grim and black.
I stumbled on the stones of stubbornness,
Refused Thy guiding staff, Thy rod's caress.
But here the chasms yawn before me deep.
Wolves howl. Thorns tear my flesh. The rocks are steep.
I am so weary with the road I roam—
Love, seek me out and bring me safely home
 To be Thy hundredth sheep.

The shepherd, when he counted up his own,
Was not content with ninety-nine alone.
(So innocent, so inoffensive, free
From taint of error or inequity,
His sheep dwell safe and warm within his fold—
They never wander in the dark and cold.)
But always, when he counted, he could see
He had a *hundred* sheep, and counted me
 Among the faithful sheep....

Ps 23: 1 [to ;], 4 [to ;], 6 *and I*): **The Lord is my shepherd**
TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: A psalm of David written c. 1000 BC.

“This psalm is probably the best known passage of the OT. It is a testimony by David to the Lord's faithfulness throughout his life.” (MacArthur Commentary) “The happy confidence of this psalm, coupled with the comfort that it has given to those in ‘the valley of the shadow of death’ (v.4, AV), have made it the best known and best loved of all the psalms.” (Oxford Bible Commentary)

"Two pictures are presented in this [psalm]: the Shepherd caring for his sheep (1-4) and the Host supplying the needs of his guest (5f.)." (Peake's Commentary) “The first words of the first strophe, ‘The Lord is my shepherd,’ are in essence a summary of the contents of the psalm.” (Eerdmans Commentary)

Woods, Bertha H., “**The Lord is my shepherd**,” POEM, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol. 30 (18 August 1928), p. 1009.

Within thy care, O Love, I shall not want—
Not want the things of earth, with envy rife;

I shall not long, where runs the ceaseless crowd,
 To join them in the laughter and the strife;
I shall be calm and happy and content,
 Nor feel the lust of eye or pride of life.

Inclosed in city walls, hot sultry air,
 Incessant clamor rising from the street,
I shall not long for wild and windy hills;
 Thy radiant presence maketh all things sweet—
Maketh the desert “blossom as the rose;”
 Thy love spreads tender grass beneath my feet.

O gentle Shepherd, where Thy love enfolds,
 Stilled is the cry of loneliness and fear!....

Dunbar, Rosalie E., Ph.D. (Bible Historian, Senior Staff Editor, News & Special Projects Editor, and Managing Editor), “**God and transformed health**,” THE EDITOR’S PAGES, Christian Science Journal, Vol. 122 (February 2004), p. 61.

--In the years since my conversations with [a certain] clergyman, I’ve learned a lot about what it is to live in relation to the Divine.

- This way of life is not without demands—including the demand to think in more spiritual terms, to yield less to personal opinions, predilections, and prejudices.

--I’ve also faced several dark nights where life hung in the balance and the journey through “*the valley of the shadow of death*” [Ps 23:4] seemed like a long one.

- For me, the simple experiences of God’s power were a preparation for those dark nights when the only choice is to throw oneself into the arms of the Divine and trust that Life will prevail.

---Those arms are everlasting, omnipotent arms. They are the arms of unending Love.

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