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## Thanks for National Bible Week

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.B.

During the dark days of World War II, a group of businessmen decided to promote reading the Bible “in the belief that it [would] arouse a positive spiritual force in a world plagued with problems.” Just hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, NBC broadcast its prerecorded radio program announcing the first annual National Bible Week. I can only imagine the profound feelings this program generated among the vast listening audience. Certainly, many listeners quietly and urgently turned to their Bibles in that hour of great need.

The need is no less compelling now. Today, National Bible Week coincides with Thanksgiving. I find the timing rather comforting. This encourages me to focus on Bible stories of grace and gratitude, rather than stories of revenge, war, and wrath. It turns me to the inspired sense of the Scriptures and contemplation of powerful themes of gratitude and thanksgiving.

Jesus certainly emphasized gratitude in his ministry. He often gave thanks before a remarkable spiritual demonstration of divine power. Jesus thanked God first and then fed the multitudes (see Matthew 14:14-21). Jesus thanked God first and then resurrected Lazarus from the dead (see John 11). He didn't wait until the marvel had happened and then give gratitude for God's grace. Jesus thanked God first, expressing his certainty of the healing power of God.

At the last supper, Jesus gave thanks and then shared his cup with the disciples (see Matthew 26:27). He warned them of his imminent betrayal and crucifixion, yet his unshakable understanding of God's power still enabled him to give thanks. The eternal victory over the grave came when Jesus was resurrected three days after his death.

Christ Jesus proved that Life is eternal. Good is victorious. Love overcomes hate.

Looking for instances of gratitude, thanksgiving, healing, and spiritual victory in the Bible compels us to discover the higher, spiritual meaning of the Scriptures and their application to our lives. We are led to realize that the profound spiritual message, the Christ message, is still present to heal and save.

Mary Baker Eddy discovered and demonstrated God's healing and saving power, as recorded in the Bible. The spiritual sense she found in the Bible, she shared with others in her book "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures." She writes, "The central fact of the Bible is the superiority of spiritual over physical power" (Science and Health, p. 131). Emphasizing the vital importance of discerning the spiritual significance of the Scriptures rather than just the historic details, she adds: "The Bible teaches transformation of the body by the renewal of Spirit. Take away the spiritual signification of Scripture, and that compilation can do no more for mortals than can moonbeams to melt a river of ice" (p. 241).

Mrs. Eddy also saw the importance of giving gratitude. In the opening chapter of her book she says, "Are we really grateful for the good already received? Then we shall avail ourselves of the blessings we have, and thus be fitted to receive more" (p. 3).

As we rededicate ourselves to seeking inspiration from the Bible, we can give thanks in advance for the comfort, safety, inspiration, and healing that we will receive through the spiritually-inspired study of God's holy Word.