



Bible Lens

Bible Lens—Thanksgiving 2020

Subject: **Thanksgiving**

From the *Christian Science Sentinel* - November 23, 2020

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good.

—[Psalms 136:1](#)

Exploring Bible Verses

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

from the Responsive Reading

I Chronicles 16:8

Oh, give thanks to the Lord!

Call upon His name;

Make known His deeds among the peoples!

—New King James Version

At this pivotal moment in Israel’s history, the ark of the covenant—the sacred chest holding the Ten Commandments—is at last brought to Jerusalem. Its past has involved years of movement from place to place, as well as its grave loss to the Philistines and eventual recovery (see [I Samuel, chaps. 4–6](#)). The ark’s arrival in the holy city symbolizes a promise of permanence that will culminate in the building of the Temple. Understandably, this event inspires great thanksgiving and praise to God.

David’s outpouring of thanks in First Chronicles 16 is composed of elements of [Psalms 105, 96, and 106](#). This verse is identical to [Psalms 105:1](#).

I Chronicles 16:29

Give to the Lord the glory due His name;

Bring an offering, and come before Him.

Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!

—New King James Version

A scriptural authority suggests, “The idea of men coming ‘before him’ took on fresh reality with the arrival of the ark, over which the cloud of God’s presence rested.” Another source interprets the charge to worship God, “Worship the Lord for the majesty of [his] holiness.”

About the Chronicles

First and Second Chronicles are believed by some to have been part of one larger work that included the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Compiled after the Israelites’ return from the Babylonian exile, the Chronicles were apparently intended to unify and clarify the identity of the nation of Israel. In addition to detailed genealogies (see [I Chronicles, chaps. 1–9](#)), the books focus on Temple worship and the reigns of David and Solomon as central to the nation’s heritage.

The Chronicles frequently refer to existing material in the Hebrew canon, such as the books of Samuel, Kings, and Psalms. For example, [Second Chronicles 1:6–12](#) is a nearly verbatim retelling of Solomon’s entreaty for divine wisdom in [First Kings 3:4–15](#).

Scholars note that the Chronicler sometimes edited or modified historical accounts to serve his purpose. After the division of the kingdom, for instance, Chronicles omits almost all mention of the northern kingdom of Israel in favor of the southern kingdom of Judah. For this reason, these books are valued as an interpretation rather than as an entirely accurate record of events.

Psalms 100:1

Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands!

—New King James Version

Psalm 100 is associated with a well-loved hymn melody, named Old Hundredth for its link to the psalm. Some believe the hymn originated in very early folk songs before it appeared in the Genevan Psalter, a hymn collection of the Protestant Reformation. Commonly paired with the words to the Doxology, the melody has been called “the most durable of all hymn tunes in the English-language repertory.”

In the *Christian Science Hymnal*, three hymns are sung to Old Hundredth, including the Communion Doxology ([No. 1](#)).

from Section 1

2 | Psalms 145:10–12

All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

Translation

*All you have made will thank you, Lord;
the faithful will bless you.*

They will speak of the glory of your kingdom

*and will declare your might,
informing all people of your mighty acts
and of the glorious splendor of your kingdom.*

—Christian Standard Bible

“Psalm 145 invites us to live in the world of God’s reign,” suggests a commentary, “the world where the fundamental reality and pervasive power is the gracious, compassionate, faithful love of God.” Those who know this reality and power will freely spread the news.

3 | Psalms 69:30

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

magnify: praise

4 | Psalms 136:1

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Translation

4 | Psalms 136:1, 25

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. . . . Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever.

. . .

Give thanks to the Lord because he is good.

God’s faithful love lasts forever! . . .

God is the one who provides food for all living things—

God’s faithful love lasts forever!

—Common English Bible

These words of thanks to God for His goodness and mercy are of ancient origin—used, for instance, in celebrating the building of Solomon’s Temple circa 950 bc and the Second Temple circa 515 bc (see [II Chronicles 5:13](#); [Ezra 3:11](#)). Psalm 136 expands the time-honored prayer into a call-and-response hymn. All 26 verses conclude with the same answer, “For his mercy endureth for ever.”

5 | Deuteronomy 11:1

Love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always.

Translation

5 | Deuteronomy 11:1, 7

Love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, alway. . . . Your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did.

...

Love the Lord your God, and do what he wants you to do. Always obey his laws, rules, and commands. . . . You saw with your own eyes all these spectacular things that the Lord did.

—GOD’S WORD Translation

Moses repeatedly exhorts his people to love and obey Yahweh. His reminders address the rebelliousness they have sometimes expressed (outlined in Deuteronomy 9:7–24) and help offset pagan influences around them. The Hebrew leader follows this admonition with a summary of God’s “great acts” on their behalf and His promises for their future (see 11:2–15).

Definitions from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*
by Mary Baker Eddy

6 | 192:23–24

The good you do and embody gives you the only power obtainable.

embody: express

obtainable: able to be gained or possessed

from Section 2

Definition from *Science and Health*

7 | 3:25

Gratitude is much more than a verbal expression of thanks. Action expresses more gratitude than speech.

verbal: relating to words; spoken

from Section 3

7 | Psalms 147:5

Translation

Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.

...

Great is our [majestic and mighty] Lord and abundant in strength;

His understanding is inexhaustible [infinite, boundless].

—Amplified® Bible

8 | I Kings 4:1, 24

Solomon was king over all Israel. . . . And he had peace on all sides round about him.

Translation

8 | I Kings 4:29

God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.

...

God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore.

—New International Version

Solomon was the son of King David and Bathsheba. Although David had older sons in line for the throne, he had promised Bathsheba that Solomon would rule. Solomon inherited a considerable empire from his father, extending from the Euphrates River in the north to Egypt in the south.

Though Solomon was known for his wisdom, his writings, and his wealth, sources agree that his crowning achievement was the building of the Temple in Jerusalem.

9 | I Kings 5:2, 5

Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, . . . Behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God.

Translation

9 | I Kings 5:4

The Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent.

...

. . . the Lord my God has given me peace on all sides of my country. I have no enemies now, and no danger threatens my people.

Years earlier, when David became king, he received materials from King Hiram of the Phoenician city of Tyre to build a palace (see [II Samuel 5:11](#)). After David's death, Hiram and Solomon establish a relationship that enables the building of the Temple. As part of their agreement, Hiram provides Solomon with craftsmen and building supplies (including prized cedar from Lebanon), and Solomon gives Hiram wheat and olive oil (see [I Kings 5:7–12](#)).

12 | I Kings 9:3

The Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

hallowed: made holy

13 | II Chronicles 9:29

Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

Nathan is the prophet who brought King David the news that he would not be allowed to build a temple to God—and who rebuked David after the king's sin with Bathsheba (see [II Samuel 7:1–17](#); [12:1–14](#)). Little is known about the seers Ahijah and Iddo, and no writings by these three men have been found.

14 | Colossians 3:15

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Translation

Let the peace that Christ gives control your thinking, because you were all called together in one body to have peace. Always be thankful.

Scholars point out that the Greek word rendered *rule* here (*brabeuō*) can mean an umpire's action. God's peace settles conflicts of the heart and rules its thoughts and actions.

Definitions from *Science and Health*

13 | [519:25–26](#)

God rests in action. Imparting has not impoverished, can never impoverish, the divine Mind.

impoverished: made poor or weak

14 | [264:24](#)

Spiritual living existence and blessedness are the only evidences, by which we can recognize true existence and feel the unspeakable peace which comes from an all-absorbing spiritual love.

all-absorbing: taking one's full attention; deeply interesting

from Section 4

15 | Psalms 150:1

Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

Psalm 150 crowns the scriptural book that is most focused on praise of God. The word *praise* occurs over a dozen times in its six verses. Like the previous four chapters, this psalm begins and ends with the call “Praise ye the Lord” or *Hallelujah*—the Hebrew word still widely used to honor God. *Hallelujah* is made up of the elements *hālal* (meaning praise) and *yāh* (signifying Lord).

sanctuary: holy or sacred place

firmament: heaven

17 | Matthew 15:32

Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

Because this account of feeding four thousand people is so similar to Jesus' feeding of five thousand (see [14:15–21](#)), some sources assume that they are versions of the same event. In [Mark 8:19, 20](#), however, the Master refers to the two records as separate. And the two stories differ in such details as the number of loaves and baskets.

fasting: going without food

18 | John 21:25

There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.

Concluding his Gospel, the author states unequivocally that only a fraction of Jesus' works are recorded in Scripture. A commentator notes: “Human categories are powerless to describe Christ, and human books are inadequate to hold him. And so [the writing] ends with the innumerable triumphs, the inexhaustible power, and the limitless grace of Jesus Christ.”

Translation

19 | Revelation 7:12

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever.

...

Blessing and glory and majesty and splendor and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and might [be ascribed] to our God to the ages and ages (forever and ever, throughout the eternities of the eternities)!

Definitions from *Science and Health*

20 | 454:17–21

Love for God and man is the true incentive in both healing and teaching. Love inspires, illumines, designates, and leads the way. Right motives give pinions to thought, and strength and freedom to speech and action.

incentive: something that encourages a person to take action; motivation

designates: points out

from Section 5

Translations

20 | Psalms 145:3, 4

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

...

Great is the Lord! He is most worthy of praise!

No one can measure his greatness.

Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts;

let them proclaim your power.

—New Living Translation

21 | Psalms 116:7

Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

...

Be at peace again, my soul, because the Lord has been good to you.

—GOD’S WORD Translation

22 | Acts 3:2, 6

A certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; . . . Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

At the times established for prayer, beggars gathered outside to ask for money from Jews entering the Temple. Here “the hour of prayer” (v. 1) alludes to the prayer held in mid-to-late afternoon.

Since many followers of Christ lived communally and shared their possessions (see [2:44, 45](#) and [4:32–35](#)), the disciples had no coins to give. But their response to the lame man provides much more—the gifts of health and welcome into the community of believers.

from his mother’s womb: since birth

Translation

24 | [II Corinthians 9:15](#)

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

...

Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words

—New Living Translation

Definitions from *Science and Health*

28 | [283:4–6](#)

Mind is the source of all movement, and there is no inertia to retard or check its perpetual and harmonious action.

inertia: inactivity; inability or unwillingness to move

retard: delay; hold back

check: stop or slow down

30 | [37:22–25](#)

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.

privilege: special right

To learn more about the *Christian Science Quarterly* Bible Lessons, go to <https://quarterly.christianscience.com>.

Resources quoted in this issue

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Related healing ideas

Thanksgiving

Father, may I rise to know
that higher praise
beyond self-centered gratitude
for mercies given or expected;
that praise which is Your glory
reflected in pure adoration,
in realization of heaven here.

Lord, may my consciousness
be where Your glory touches
and transfigures thought,
teaching a way of life transformed
by grace—
itself a song of praise.

By Nancy L. Holder

From the November 1977 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

Thank God

They will not lift, whatever you do,
Those clouds that overshadow you?
Thank God that evil is not true.

Thank God that Love cannot create
Resentment, anger, fear, or hate.
These have no presence, power, or weight.

Thank God that all He makes is good,
And this authentic gratitude
Shall prove Love's father-motherhood.

Thus Truth brings harmony to view
And gently renders all things new.
Thank God that good alone is true.

By Edgar Isaac Newgass

From the June 26, 1948, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*

Songs of praise

For progress made, for fears allayed,
We offer songs of praise;
For love, and peace, and plenitude
Throughout the Truth-filled days,
For inspiration gained through prayer
When mortal sense is still;
Accept, O God, our thanks for this
The harvest of Thy will.

By Florence Mayer Houghton

From the November 1945 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

Gratitude

I think my Father heard me say
I had no time in one short day
To show my thanks sufficiently
For all the good He gives to me,
Because He answered, "You will see,
My child, you have eternity."

By A. Martha Davis

From the September 1944 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

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