



God said, Let there be
light: and there was light.

—Genesis 1:3



Christian Science Sentinel
Bible Lens

**Adam and
Fallen Man**

**November
5–11, 2018**

Adam and Fallen Man

from the Responsive Reading

Genesis 1:27

God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.

Poetry comprises a significant part of the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, with estimates as high as 75 percent. This verse, deemed by some the Bible's first poem, states one idea in two ways—a common pattern in Hebrew poetry known as synonymous parallelism.

Most Old Testament poetry is found in the wisdom literature of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. But poetic elements also appear in the prophets and even some historical accounts, especially where the language may have been intended to be sung (see instances throughout the book of Isaiah, as well as in Exodus 15:1–19, 21 and Judges 5:1–31).

from Section 1

1 | John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

At the time the Gospel of John was written, the Greek term *logos* was familiar to both Greeks and Jews, although with different meanings. To Greeks, it signified a controlling but abstract principle of the world. To Jews, it described the creative force that brings things into being, indicated in the Genesis 1 creation account by the repeated phrase “and God said.”

The writer draws a clear parallel to Genesis—echoing the opening words “in the beginning” (see Genesis 1:1, Responsive Reading)—and presents the revelation that the eternal Word has been revealed to humanity through Christ (see John 1:14).

2 | Psalms 16:5, 6

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

In ancient times, cords or lines were used to measure and divide land. Afterward, plots were distributed by lot—the process by which Canaan was divided among the Israelites after the Exodus (see Numbers 26:55). The Psalmist is affirming that spiritual inheritance is not a question of chance or competition—it is secure in God.

from Section 2

5 | Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

Modern commentaries point out the word-play between *subtil* (Hebrew, *'arum*) and *naked* in verse 2:25 (Hebrew, *'arom*). Succumbing to subtlety or craftiness leads not to the power and prestige promised by the snake, but to the vulnerability of nakedness. A researcher notes, “What the man and woman discover is not that they are gods but that they are naked—weak, vul-

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

nerable, and helpless, having rejected their dependence upon God.”

The serpent’s question, observes another source, raises doubt about the Lord’s authority in the same way Satan tries to tempt Christ Jesus to question his divine status: “*If thou be the Son of God*” (Luke 4:3, italics added).

7 | Isaiah 52:1, 2

Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; ... Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

In this message, the writer encourages the Israelites to embrace the God-given freedom represented by a return to their homeland. He depicts Zion (a name that symbolized Jerusalem) as a woman empowered to rise in glory. Her neck loosed from the collar of oppression, she is urged to conduct herself as a queen—to shake off the dust of slavery and assume a place of dignity.

This stirring portrayal contrasts powerfully with the writer’s earlier depiction of the “daughter of Babylon,” who is to sit in dust and to experience evil and desolation (see Isaiah, chap. 47).

from Section 3

7 | I Corinthians 15:22

As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Here the Apostle Paul addresses doubts about Jesus’ resurrection. Without the Master’s overcoming of death, he argues, believers have no hope of resurrection (see

vv. 12–19). These words, writes one commentary, show “the design of Paul ... to prove that the effects of the work of Christ were more than sufficient to meet all the evils introduced by the sin of Adam.”

from Section 4

13 | John 9:4

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day.

In the most reliable Greek manuscripts, the subject of this statement (*hēmas*) is plural—signifying *we* rather than the singular *I*. One translation has, “We must carry on the work of him who sent me”—including not only Jesus but also his followers as those who are to perform healing works.

The Master often used light and darkness as metaphors, later saying, “Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you” (12:35). And he spoke of himself as the “light of the world” (8:12). A scholar explains, “In view of Jesus’ promise of his continued presence with the disciples after his death (chaps. 14–16), vv. 4–5 can hardly mean that the period of his saving or healing power is limited by his historical presence.” Christly service to God is to be continual, eager, and without delay.

Resources quoted in this issue

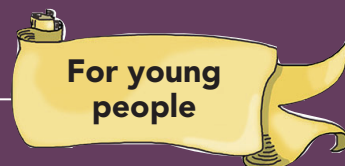
Cit. 5: Mays, James L., Joseph Blenkinsopp, et al., eds. *Harper’s Bible Commentary*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988; Perowne, John J. S., Alexander F. Kirkpatrick, Frederic H. Chase, Reginald St. John Parry, and Alexander Nairne, eds. *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*. Vol. 2, Genesis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882–1922. Also available at biblehub.com/commentaries.

Cit. 7: Barnes, Albert. *Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Whole Bible*. New York, 1834–85. Also available at biblehub.com/commentaries.

Cit. 13: *The New Testament in Modern English* by J. B. Phillips copyright © 1960, 1972 J. B. Phillips. Reprinted in North America by permission of Touchstone, a Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. All other rights administered by The Archbishops’ Council of the Church of England. Used by permission; Mays, James L., Joseph Blenkinsopp, et al., eds. *Harper’s Bible Commentary*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.

Silencing the trash-talker!

From the April 11, 1994, issue of the *Christian Science Sentinel*
Originally published in *The Christian Science Monitor*



What's trash-talking? If you're a sports nut, as I am, you know what it is. Athletes sometimes try to scare each other by making aggressive or threatening remarks while they are competing. That's trash-talking.

Whether you play sports or not, there is another kind of trash-talker that can try to scare us. Sometimes it can sound like a voice in our thinking, saying horrible things. Sometimes it can be more a feeling than a voice. And sometimes the actions or words of others bother us or frighten us.

To me it's like the serpent the Bible tells us about in Genesis—the one that tricked Adam and Eve into disobeying God. Mary Baker Eddy talks about this snake in her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. She says: “Whence comes a talking, lying serpent to tempt the children of divine Love? The serpent enters into the metaphor only as evil. We have nothing in the animal kingdom which represents the species described,—a talking serpent,—and should rejoice that evil, by whatever figure presented, contradicts itself and has neither origin nor support in Truth and good. Seeing this, we should have faith to fight all claims of evil, because we know that they are worthless and unreal” (p. 529).

And that's how this evil talker can be stopped—by seeing that its claims are “worthless and unreal” because God, divine Love, doesn't make or support them! The Bible, and especially Christ Jesus' life, shows us how we do this.

God sent Jesus to show us all who God is and what man in God's image is like. But Jesus didn't have an easy time—far from it! Although the people who came to him need-

ing healing in their bodies and hearts didn't give him a hard time, there were plenty of others who wanted to stop Jesus from teaching and healing. These were the trash-talkers, when it came to Jesus and his work. Instead of welcoming with great joy all that Jesus did in God's name, Luke's Gospel tells us, these antagonists said things about Jesus like “He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils” (11:15). Or they said he broke the rules by healing on the Sabbath day.

But Jesus didn't allow their talk to bother him or to stop him. He knew that God had sent him and that God would help him complete his work. What's more, he left us with some sure steppingstones that can help us face down trash-talking and trash-thinking in our lives. We can find them in the Bible in what's called the Sermon on the Mount (see Matthew, chaps. 5–7).

Here Jesus speaks of love, of forgiveness, mercy, meekness, and humility, as well as many other Godlike qualities of thought. As we learn to think thoughts like this—and this is something we'll keep learning to do better all the time—angry or scary thoughts will not harm us. When trashy, angry talking happens, we can think instead about what Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount. Remembering “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (5:5), for example, is a prayer that can fill us with strength and love because the loving power of God is behind the words.

And God's love shining in our hearts and lives can stop the trash-talker, no matter who is doing the talking.