



Shining a light on the weekly Bible Lessons published in the *Christian Science Quarterly*®

# Thanksgiving

2022

## from the **Golden Text**

### [Psalms 23:5](#)

... *my cup overflows.*

—New International Version

Figurative uses of the word *cup* in Scripture have varied meanings. In the Hebrew Bible, it sometimes denotes God's provisions for His people. The "cup of salvation" ([Psalms 116:13](#)), for instance, is a metaphor for God's deliverance or rescue. In [Psalm 23](#) (see citation 5) *cup* portrays God's abundant blessings. In the early Christian Church, it became a symbol of the persecution Christ Jesus suffered.

## from the **Responsive Reading**

### [Malachi 3:10](#)

*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

The book of Malachi is the last of the 12 Old Testament Minor Prophets. Its title signifies "my messenger" or "my angel," though its author isn't known. Verses 8 and 9 in this chapter convey God's displeasure at the people's failure to pay Temple tithes—payments that represented a tenth of everything an individual produced and that were used to support the priesthood as well as those in need (see [Deuteronomy 14:22–29](#); [26:12, 13](#); [Nehemiah 13:10–14](#)). Now the author announces God's purpose to richly reward wholehearted obedience to Him.

"In these verses," a scholar notes, "the writer compares Yahweh's never changing faithfulness with the perpetual apostasy of Israel. But even after this history of ingratitude and sin, the age-old invitation is extended once again: 'Return to me, and I will return to you.'"

## from **Section 1**

### 3 | [Psalms 75:1](#)

*Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.*

In this psalm of thanksgiving, one source sees a response to crises mentioned in Psalm 74—especially the destruction of “the dwelling place of thy name” ([74:7](#)). That God’s name—depicting His nature, character, and existence—is near means that He is not abstract or impersonal, but present and understandable.

## from **Section 2**

### 4 | [II Corinthians 4:15](#)

*All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.*

“All things” may describe the many trials Paul experienced, outlined in [verses 8 and 9](#): “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.” The apostle assures his fellow believers that these hardships have worked to their good—and to God’s glory.

*Perisseuō*, the Greek verb rendered *redound*, signifies to superabound in quality or quantity—further evidence that Paul anticipates a flood of grace and thanksgiving in honor of God.

### 5 | [Psalms 23:5, 6](#)

*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

At this time, someone fleeing an enemy could claim refuge by simply touching the tent of a protector. The shift in the Psalmist’s imagery of God from guiding shepherd to generous host includes this protection, along with the bountiful supply of food, drink, and ointment (providing refreshment and respect to guests). The meal pictured in this passage could represent as well the food shared after a covenant agreement, a tradition intended to seal the bond of commitment or friendship (see example in [Genesis 31:51–54](#)).

Hebrew Scripture repeatedly celebrates God’s goodness and mercy, often pairing the terms *tôb* and *hesed* (see other examples in [I Chronicles 16:34](#); [Ezra 3:11](#); [Psalms 107:1](#), citation 11).

*Follow* (Hebrew, *rādap*) suggests strong and determined pursuit, as in the account of the Egyptians riding after the children of Israel (see [Exodus 14:9](#), for instance). And some translations render *surely* as *only*. One has, “Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life.”

### 6 | [Psalms 68:6, 19](#)

*God setteth the solitary in families: . . . Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation.*

Hebrew kings were expected to guarantee the welfare of their needy. Here the Psalmist declares God’s kingly oversight of the isolated and lonely. A commentary reflects, “Nothing more clearly marks the benignity and the wisdom of God than the arrangement by which people, instead of being solitary wanderers on the face of the earth, with nothing to bind them in sympathy, in love, and in interest to each other, are grouped together in families.” Some scholars view this biblical assertion as a pledge to place the solitary in communities of faith or settle nomadic Jews in permanent homes.

## from Section 4

### 13 | I Corinthians 1:4–6

*I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.*

Paul’s grateful heart is palpable in his letters (see also [Romans 1:8; 7:25](#); [Philippians 1:3](#); [I Thessalonians 2:13](#); [Philemon 1:4](#)). It’s clear that he deeply values every Christian community and yearns for the spiritual well-being of each adherent. At the same time, he decisively credits God’s grace in Christ as the source of every benefit.

## from Section 5

### 14 | II Corinthians 2:14

*Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.*

*Triumph* in this context carries the image of a military leader’s victory procession. *In Christ* emphasizes that it is by his power and in his name that we prevail in adversity. *Savour*, an allusion to the incense used in a conqueror’s victorious return from war, continues the military metaphor.

“In every place,” according to a Bible authority, refers to the remarkable spread of the Christly good news: “Even at that early period, not twenty-five years after the Crucifixion,” he explains, “the gospel had been very widely preached in Asia and Europe. . . .”

### 15 | Luke 6:38

*Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*

Here a common market scene illustrates the divine bounty that flows to the generous and kind. Measuring grain or other dry goods required pressing and shaking them to ensure a full or overflowing amount—“good measure.”

Modern-style pockets were unknown in ancient clothing. Robes were bound with girdles, forming a wide pouch above the waist in which to carry things. In the story of Ruth, for instance, Boaz measures barley into her garment, described as a veil or mantle (see [Ruth 3:15](#)).

---

Read a related kids' article, "[Snowflakes and gratitude](https://jsh.christianscience.com/snowflakes-and-gratitude)" by Aletha Spero, at [jsh.christianscience.com/snowflakes-and-gratitude](https://jsh.christianscience.com/snowflakes-and-gratitude).

---

## Resources quoted in this issue

**GT:** HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

**RR:** Mays, James L., Joseph Blenkinsopp, et al., eds. *The HarperCollins Bible Commentary*. Rev. ed. New York: HarperCollins, 2000.

**Cit. 3:** Carson, D. A. *NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible*: Previously published as *NIV Zondervan Study Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018.

**Cit. 5:** Holman Christian Standard Bible®, copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2009 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission.

**Cit. 6:** Barnes, Albert. *Albert Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible*. New York, 1834–85. Also available at [biblehub.com/commentaries](https://biblehub.com/commentaries).

**Cit. 14:** Spence-Jones, Henry Donald Maurice, Joseph S. Exell, and Edward Mark Deems, eds. *The Pulpit Commentary*. London, 1880–1909. Also available at [biblehub.com/commentaries](https://biblehub.com/commentaries).

## COPYRIGHT

Scriptural quotations marked New Living Translation are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scriptural quotations marked GOD'S WORD Translation are taken from GOD'S WORD®. © 1995, 2003, 2013, 2014, 2019, 2020 by God's Word to the Nations Mission Society. Used by permission.

Scriptural quotations marked New Revised Standard Version Bible are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scriptural quotations marked New International Reader's Version are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Reader's Version™, Nlrv™. Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc. Used with permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scriptural quotations marked Good News Translation are taken from the Good News Translation in Today's English Version—Second Edition, copyright © 1992 by American Bible Society. Used by permission.

---

© 2022 The Christian Science Publishing Society. The design of the Cross and Crown is a trademark owned by the Christian Science Board of Directors and is used by permission. Bible Lens and Christian Science Quarterly are trademarks owned by The Christian Science Publishing Society. Unless otherwise indicated, all scriptural quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.