



BIBLE LENS

MAY 20, 2024 ISSUE

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

Soul and Body

May 20–26, 2024

from the **Golden Text**

II Corinthians 3:18

We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Being “changed into the same image” is a theme Paul touches on in his message to the Romans as well, using the phrase “conformed to the image of his Son” (Romans 8:29). And the apostle refers to Christly transformation again in Romans 12:2, I Corinthians 15:49–53, and Philippians 3:21. Now he points to contemplation of God’s glory as the way to spiritual transformation. A scholar writes, “Those who turn to the Lord have . . . a new hope, a new freedom and a new boldness.”

from the **Responsive Reading**

I Corinthians 15:51–53

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Sleep is a familiar metaphor for death (see Psalms 13:3; John 11:11–14), one that Paul employs here to teach about resurrection. Jews, including followers of Christ, accepted such a possibility as an end-time event for those who had already died. Martha, for instance, affirms this conviction about her brother Lazarus: “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (John 11:24). More puzzling to believers, however, was resurrection for those still living at that “last day.” Paul assures them of a change for both the living and the dead—the replacement of mortality with immortal life.

The “last trump” likely alludes to Jesus’ apocalyptic prediction “[The Son of man] shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet” (Matthew 24:31). Over the centuries, trumpets had called people to temple worship and into battle and had become a symbol of “the day of the Lord” (see also Joel 2:1; Zephaniah 1:14–16).

from **Section 1**

3 | Isaiah 2:22

Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

Translation

*Turn away from mortals,
who have only breath in their nostrils,
for of what account are they?*

—New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

In Isaiah’s strong admonition, *cease* is translated from the Hebrew verb *hādal*, implying total withdrawal or rejection. The man whose breath is “in his nostrils” appears in descriptions of Adam—and of all destroyed in the flood (see Genesis 2:7; 7:22). It is this mortal that is not “to be accounted of”—not to be esteemed or regarded.

5 | Acts 17:24, 25, 28

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; . . . for in him we live, and move, and have our being.

Translation

“He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn’t live in man-made temples, and human hands can’t serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. . . . For in him we live and move and exist. . . .”

—New Living Translation

from **Section 2**

8 | Joshua 14:6–11, 13

The children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh–barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh–barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it

was in mine heart. . . . I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses swore on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God. And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: . . . And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.

At this time the Israelites have conquered Canaan, and God has charged Joshua with taking the lead in dividing it among them. Now Caleb claims the portion promised to him (see [Numbers 14:24](#); [Deuteronomy 1:35, 36](#)). “The land whereon thy feet have trodden” depicts an ancient practice of asserting legal possession of land by walking through it.

Although some biblical characters are reported as living hundreds of years—and Moses lived to a hundred and twenty (see [Genesis 5:5–32](#); [Deuteronomy 34:7](#))—the average life span at this period is believed to have been fifty to sixty years. Caleb’s undiminished strength at age eighty-five would have been considered remarkable by his peers.

Hebron, located about twenty miles (32 kilometers) south of Jerusalem, was at various points a residence of Abram, Isaac, Jacob, and David (see [Genesis 13:18](#); [35:27](#); [37:13, 14](#); [II Samuel 5:1–5](#)). It is deemed one of the holiest of cities in both Jewish and Islamic tradition.

9 | Psalms 71:16–18

I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.

Translation

LORD and King, I will come and announce your mighty acts.

I will announce all the good things that you alone do.

God, ever since I was young you have taught me.

To this very day I tell about your wonderful acts.

God, don’t leave me

even when I’m old and have gray hair.

Let me live to tell my children about your power.

Let me tell all of them about your mighty acts.

—New International Reader’s Version™

10 | I Corinthians 6:19, 20

Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? . . . Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Translation

. . . know that your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit who is in you. You have received the Holy Spirit from God. So you do not belong to yourselves. . . . honor God with your bodies.

—New Century Version®

Mentions of the body occur over forty times in this epistle. To Paul it signifies the whole self. A commentary explains that “glorifying God ‘in your body’ will at once mean (1) that individuals exercise stewardship of their own bodies, their very selves, and (2) that collectively the believers live lovingly . . . with each other as members of the one body that is Christ’s.”

11 | II Corinthians 6:16

Ye are the temple of the living God.

From early Jewish history, even before the building of the Temple in Jerusalem, *temple* referred to the habitation of the one God. Here Paul defines Christ’s adherents as a spiritual temple consecrated to God. The Greek noun rendered *temple* in this text (*naos*) means the inner sanctuary—the most sacred space of the Temple complex. One source observes, “The Spirit of God no longer can be localized in a sacred building; it is to be found in the gathered community of God’s elect people in Christ.”

from Section 4

13 | Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

“Fear not” is a well-loved assurance in Scripture. God speaks these words to specific individuals (Abram, Hagar, Isaac, Jacob, Joshua, Gideon, and Daniel) as well as more widely through His prophets. In the New Testament, Joseph and Mary are urged not to be afraid in the months leading up to Jesus’ birth, and the Savior himself conveys this message repeatedly during his ministry. Last of all, John of Patmos hears “one like unto the Son of man” say, “Fear not; I am the first and the last” (Revelation 1:13, 17).

14 | Isaiah 42:1

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth

judgment to the Gentiles.

Translation

“Look at my servant, whom I strengthen.

He is my chosen one, who pleases me.

I have put my Spirit upon him.

He will bring justice to the nations.”

—New Living Translation

In the Bible, *servant* often signifies an enslaved person rather than a hired laborer or trusted representative. But figuratively the term is used to portray humility. Soldiers, for example, referred to themselves as their king’s servants.

Jews considered themselves the “chosen” of Yahweh, bound to Him in an unparalleled servant-master relationship—and service to God called for orienting one’s entire life to Him. Christians later interpreted this divine election as Messianic prophecy, in which the servant was viewed as Christ Jesus.

15 | Matthew 9:35

Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

At the beginning of this chapter, Jesus has returned from the Gentile territory of Gergesa to “his own city” (v. 1). Though he was raised in Nazareth, by now his center of activity is Capernaum. From there he travels to many of the small towns scattered throughout Galilee. (The only large cities in this mostly rural area—Sepphoris and Tiberias—aren’t named in Scripture as places the Master visited, but he almost certainly passed through them.)

Nearly identical to the summary of Jesus’ works in 4:23, this narrative introduces his instructions to the disciples before he sends them out to teach and preach.

17 | Galatians 5:1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Translation

Christ has set us free to enjoy our freedom. So remain strong in the faith. Don't let the chains of slavery hold you again.

—New International Reader's Version™

from Section 5

18 | Psalms 90:1, 16, 17

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. . . . Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.

Translation

O Lord, you have always been our home.

.

Let us, your servants, see your mighty deeds;

let our descendants see your glorious might.

Lord our God, may your blessings be with us.

—Good News Translation

Nō'am, the Hebrew term rendered *beauty*, implies kindness, pleasantness, and grace instead of physical loveliness. It describes wisdom in Proverbs 3:17: “Her ways are ways of pleasantness [*nō'am*], and all her paths are peace.”

20 | Matthew 6:25, 27–31, 33

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? . . . Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you

God's all-knowing nature is shown here to be the source of divine provision. To seek the kingdom of God is to desire His

goodness and righteousness; to seek it *first* is to place it above everything else, not just in chronology but also in priority and honor.

Though a cubit was a linear measure (about 18 inches or 45 centimeters), many translations see the Master's statement as an allusion to length of life. One has, for example, "Who among you by worrying can add a single moment to your life?"

from **Section 6**

21 | Psalms 17:6, 15

I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: . . . As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Translation

I have called on you because you answer me, O God.

.

I will see your face when I am declared innocent.

When I wake up, I will be satisfied with seeing you.

—GOD'S WORD® Translation

22 | II Corinthians 5:1

We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens

Translation

We know that if the life we live here on earth is ever taken down like a tent, we still have a building from God. It is an eternal house in heaven that isn't made by human hands.

—GOD'S WORD® Translation

23 | I John 2:24, 25

Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even

eternal life.

Translation

Keep thinking about the message you first heard, and you will always be one in your heart with the Son and with the Father. The Son has promised us eternal life.

—Contemporary English Version

Jesus' words about everlasting life appear throughout the Gospel of John (see 3:16, 36; 4:14; 5:24; 6:27, 40, 47). And First John emphasizes eternal life six times in its five chapters (see also 1:2; 3:15; 5:11, 13, 20). This life, suggests a commentator, "is not of infinite duration in some utopian future. It is, instead, life possessing a radically indestructible quality that even now transcends this world's evanescence."

24 | I Thessalonians 5:23

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Translation

Now, may the God of peace himself cause you to be completely dedicated to him; and may your spirit, soul, and body be kept intact and blameless at our Lord Jesus Christ's coming.

—Common English Bible

Read a related article, "[What about this body?](https://csjournal.com/what-about-this-body)" by Corinne Jane Teeter, at csjournal.com/what-about-this-body.

Resources cited in this issue

GT: Mays, James Luther, et al., eds. *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. Vol. 34, *Second Corinthians*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1982–.

Cit. 10: Keck, Leander E., et al., eds. *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*. Vol. 9, *Acts, Introduction to Epistolary Literature, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians*. Nashville:

Abingdon, 2015.

Cit. 11: Mays, James Luther, et al., eds. *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. Vol. 33, *First Corinthians*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1982–.

Cit. 20: Common English Bible, copyright © 2011 by Common English Bible.

Cit. 23: Keck, Leander E., et al., eds. *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*. Vol. 10, *Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, Jude, Revelation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2015.

COPYRIGHT

Scriptural quotations marked New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

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

Scriptural quotations marked New Century Version® are taken from the New Century Version®. Copyright © 2005 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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.

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 Contemporary English Version are taken from the Contemporary English Version, copyright © 1991, 1992, 1995 by American Bible Society. Used by permission.

Scriptural quotations marked Common English Bible are taken from the Common

© 2024 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.