



Thanksgiving

2024

from the **Golden Text**

Psalms 30:4

Sing praise to the Lord, all you who belong to Him. Give thanks to His holy name.

—New Life Version

Praise for God's protection and deliverance, scholars note, needs to be more than an individual prayer. It is to be shared widely, not only in order to spread the good news but also to spur others—"all you who belong to Him"—to testify to His goodness.

from the **Responsive Reading**

Psalms 118:1, 14, 16, 21–24, 27, 28

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever. . . . The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. . . . The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. . . . I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. . . . God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: . . . Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.

Like other psalms, this one extols God's help and guidance. Early Christians enlarged its sense to include His work in the advent and ministry of Christ Jesus. Today, "the day which the Lord hath made" signifies to many God's activity through all time.

"The stone which the builders refused" initially celebrated respect for Israel in the eyes of nations that had previously disdained it. Here the reference is to the most basic structural element, the cornerstone—an image of stability and dependability. Its first biblical mention appears in God's challenge to Job about the origins of the earth: "Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof?" (Job 38:6). Isaiah prophesies, "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation" (Isaiah 28:16).

Jesus quotes verse 22 of Psalm 118 to admonish the Pharisees and priests for rejecting him (see [Matthew 21:42–44](#)). Ironically, verse 26 of this psalm had just been sung by crowds honoring the Savior as he entered Jerusalem (see [Matthew 21:9](#)). First Peter 2:5–8 cites the psalm as well in describing the household of believers.

I Chronicles 29:11–13

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

First Chronicles 29 recounts King David’s provision for the Temple, which his son Solomon will build. He invites the people to contribute, and they respond generously (see [vv. 2–9](#)). A commentary remarks that “not only the ability to give, but the willingness to give, is a gift of God. . . .”

The commitment to exalt the name of the one God reverberates throughout Hebrew Scripture (see, for instance, [II Samuel 22:50](#); [Nehemiah 9:5](#); [Joel 2:26](#); multiple texts in Psalms). Jews were forbidden to speak the names of pagan deities (see [Exodus 23:13](#); [Joshua 23:7](#)).

from **Section 1**

2 | [James 1:17](#)

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

One source offers this interpretation: “God is the source of good, and of good only. Every good gift and every perfect boon . . . comes from Him, who is the creator of the sun, moon, and stars. But, while they change and vary, and, as they revolve, are sometimes in shadow, He is always the same.”

from **Section 2**

4 | [Isaiah 43:1, 2, 4, 6, 21](#)

Now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: . . . Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: . . . I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; . . . This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

Translation

Now this is what the Lord says.

He created you, people of Jacob.

He formed you, people of Israel.
He says, “Don’t be afraid, because I have saved you.
I have called you by name, and you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.
When you cross rivers, you will not drown.

You are precious to me.
I give you honor, and I love you.

I will tell the north: Give my people to me.
I will tell the south: Don’t keep my people in prison.
Bring my sons from far away.
Bring my daughters from faraway places.

These are the people I made.
And they will sing songs to praise me.

—International Children’s Bible®

Confidence in God’s presence was central to Jewish doctrine and tradition. Joseph’s father, Israel (formerly Jacob), comforts him with the words, “God shall be with you” ([Genesis 48:21](#)), and God pledges to Moses, “My presence shall go with thee” ([Exodus 33:14](#)). Later, the psalmist sings about the divine presence—and like Isaiah, other oracles affirm it as well (see examples in [Psalms 139:7–10](#); [Jeremiah 42:11](#); [Haggai 1:13](#)).

Though mention of passage through waters and rivers is viewed as an allusion to God’s parting of the Red Sea and the Jordan River (see [Exodus 14:21–29](#); [Joshua 3:9–17](#)), it can also represent His protection in trouble of any kind. “Keep not back” is generally thought to mean “Do not keep or hold my sons and daughters.”

5 | [Psalms 18:1, 2, 6, 19, 32](#)

I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; . . . In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears. . . . He delivered me, because he delighted in me. . . . It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

Attributed to David, [Psalm 18](#) is a victory song to God. At this point in his life, a scriptural authority surmises, the Hebrew warrior-king has overcome many trials—including flight from the murderous King Saul and wars with enemy nations. David’s proclamation of God’s saving power (repeated nearly word for word in [II Samuel 22](#)) is seen as a larger promise of salvation for the entire nation—and by extension, for everyone facing adversity.

from Section 3

8 | Mark 1:9–11

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

In Matthew’s recounting of this event (see [Matthew 3:13–17](#)) the heavenly voice says, “This is my beloved Son.” Here the declaration is addressed directly to Jesus. At this decisive moment, a scholar suggests, the Master is identified, approved, and equipped for his ministry.

Hebrew Bible texts are alluded to in this passage. [Isaiah 64:1](#) records the prophet’s petition to God “that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence.” And God’s pronouncement is considered a blending of [Isaiah 42:1](#), “Behold my servant, . . . in whom my soul delighteth,” and [Psalms 2:7](#), “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”

Skhizō, the Greek verb depicting the opening of the heavens, signifies tear or split open. It portrays the rending of the Temple veil at Jesus’ crucifixion as well (see [Mark 15:37, 38](#)). Both acts signal the dissolving of a perceived barrier between God and His children.

8 | Mark 1:16–18

Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

Jesus’ invitations to these fishermen elicit a response that is immediate and unhesitating, without apparent concern for their livelihood or family demands. The poet John Greenleaf Whittier captures the spirit of the disciples’ action:

In simple trust, like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow thee.
(*Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 49)

9 | I Corinthians 1:3, 4

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ.

Translation

Grace (favor and spiritual blessing) be to you and [heart] peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God at all times for you because of the grace (the favor and spiritual blessing) of God which was bestowed on you in Christ Jesus. . . .

—Amplified® Bible (AMPC)

11 | Colossians 3:17

Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Translation

. . . whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

—New Living Translation

from Section 4

12 | I John 4:7

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

Translation

Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.

—New Living Translation

13 | II Corinthians 9:6–11, 15

He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (as it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits

of your righteousness;) being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. . . . Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

Translation

Remember that the person who plants few seeds will have a small crop; the one who plants many seeds will have a large crop. You should each give, then, as you have decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly. And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause. As the scripture says,

*“He gives generously to the needy;
his kindness lasts forever.”*

And God, who supplies seed for the sower and bread to eat, will also supply you with all the seed you need and will make it grow and produce a rich harvest from your generosity. He will always make you rich enough to be generous at all times, so that many will thank God for your gifts which they receive from us. . . . Let us thank God for his priceless gift!

—Good News Translation

Desiring to spur donations from the Corinthian church for needy fellow believers in Jerusalem, Paul employs an agricultural analogy. Readers would readily understand that a stinting approach to sowing seed would yield a scanty harvest—and that ample sowing would bring great bounty. Because God is the primal and eternal Giver, he assures them, those faithful to Him will never lack an ability to give.

Paul’s reference to a cheerful giver expands on a Hebrew Bible concept (in, for example, [Proverbs 22:9](#)). And other Hebrew Scripture texts urge a giving heart (see [Exodus 25:2](#); [35:5](#), for instance). Now the apostle undergirds his plea by citing [Psalms 112:9](#). Christ Jesus similarly counsels: “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” ([Luke 6:38](#)).

14 | Revelation 7:12

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

This outpouring of praise announces seven ways of honoring God—one of many biblical examples of seven as a sacred number. Speaking of the acclamations in verses 10 and 12—and despite the calamities Revelation describes—a commentary reflects: “These outbursts of song are characteristic of the book of Revelation. Indeed, . . . it may be said to be one of the very happiest books ever written. The music of eternity sends its triumphant joy back into the life of time.”

Read a related editorial, “[God loves cheerful giving](https://csjournal.com/cheerful-giving)” by Russ Gerber, at csjournal.com/cheerful-giving.

Resources cited in this issue

GT: New Life Version, copyright © 1969 and 2003. Used by permission of Barbour Publishing, Inc., Uhrichsville, OH. All rights reserved.

RR: Radmacher, Earl D., Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House. *The NKJV Study Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007.

Cit. 2: Dummelow, John Roberts, ed. *A Commentary on the Holy Bible by Various Writers*. New York: MacMillan, 1936.

Cit. 5: 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*. 58 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882–1922. Also available at biblehub.com/commentaries.

Cit. 8: Barclay, William. *The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of Mark*. Edinburgh: Saint Andrew, 1955. Revised and updated by Saint Andrew, 2001. Reprinted as *The New Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of Mark*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001–04; John Greenleaf Whittier, *Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 49.

Cit. 14: Buttrick, George Arthur, Nolan B. Harmon, et al., eds. *The Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 12, *James, Peter, John, Jude, Revelation, General Articles, Indexes*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1951–57.

COPYRIGHT

Scriptural quotations marked International Children’s Bible® are taken from the International Children’s Bible®. Copyright © 1986, 1988, 1999 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scriptural quotations marked Amplified® Bible (AMPC) are taken from the Amplified® Bible (AMPC), Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. lockman.org

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 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.

© 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.