



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

Adam and Fallen Man

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From the **Golden Text**

Proverbs 10:22

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Wisdom literature teaches that true riches come from God, the source of all good, not from human effort (see also Psalms 104:24).

Sorrow is translated from the Hebrew term *‘eseb*, referring more to pain, hardship, and labor than to sadness. In [Proverbs 5:10](#) and [14:23](#), it is rendered *labours* or *labour*; in [Genesis 3:16](#), it describes the toil of childbirth.

From the **Responsive Reading**

Genesis 1:26–28, 31

God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. . . . And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.

Scholars understand the Hebrew word rendered *dominion* (*radâ*) to mean stewardship and caregiving here. (Psalms 8:4–6, citation 2, expresses a similar idea.) This model represents the ideal of royal government, in which the ruler guarantees the welfare of his subjects (see [Psalms 72:1–17](#), for instance).

About the phrase “male and female,” a commentary explains, “Alike they bear the image of God, and together they share in the divine benediction that follows.”

Proverbs 26:2

The curse causeless shall not come.

Curses were thought to take on power when spoken. This proverb debunks that assumption with the assurance that a curse aimed at an innocent person cannot be harmful. Examples of ineffective attempts to curse someone appear in stories of Balaam and David (see Numbers 23:5–8; Deuteronomy 23:5; II Samuel 16:8, 11–14).

From Section 1

1 | Psalms 89:15

Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

Translation

Blessed are those who have learned to shout praise to you.

LORD , they live in the light of your kindness.

—New International Reader’s Version TM

3 | I John 1:1–5

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Translation

The Word of life existed from the beginning. We have heard it. We have seen it. We observed and touched it. This life was revealed to us. We have seen it, and we testify about it. We are reporting to you about this eternal life that was in the presence of the Father and was revealed to us. This is the life we have seen and heard. We are reporting about it to you also so that you, too, can have a relationship with us. Our relationship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing this so that we can be completely filled with joy. This is the message we heard from Christ and are reporting to you: God is light, and there isn’t any darkness in him.

—GOD’S WORD[®] Translation

Witness of the resurrected Savior is unequivocally verified in this report of hearing, sight, and touch. The Christian message, one source suggests, is “corroborated and tested by reference to the abiding, collective witness of the Christian fellowship through the centuries. . . . All who believe may possess the testimony of those who have gone before.”

Christ Jesus speaks of joy several times in his farewell address to the disciples—promising, for instance, full and permanent happiness (see [John 16:22](#)). And early Christians did indeed find joy in their work and in fellow believers, mentioning it often: “We . . . joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ”; “My joy is the joy of you all”; “Rejoice with joy unspeakable” ([Romans 5:11](#); [II Corinthians 2:3](#); [I Peter 1:8](#)).

4 | [Romans 8:16](#)

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

That anyone could be an heir of God was a radical assertion. Jewish law allowed for only certain inheritances: Firstborn sons were accorded a double portion; other male children shared the remainder equally; and female children eventually drew a portion solely if there were no male children (see [Deuteronomy 21:17](#); [Numbers 27:8](#)). But most of the population—the enslaved, servants, and nonlandowners—received nothing.

Now Paul announces a new standard, defining inheritance spiritually instead of legally. Everyone is recognized as endowed with God’s favor and grace, a concept hinted at by another New Testament writer’s phrase “general assembly and church of the firstborn” ([Hebrews 12:23](#)).

From **Section 2**

7 | [Genesis 2:6–8, 21, 22](#)

There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. . . . And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

“Lord God” occurs as a name for God hundreds of times in the King James Bible. Although traditionally considered a tribal deity, the Lord God (known as Yahweh and later Jehovah) was seen as the creator of all.

The word *’ādām* is commonly rendered *man* in Hebrew Scripture. While used as a name in this allegory, *’ādām* is not a proper noun—nor does it indicate solely a male. In many texts it refers to mankind in general (see examples in [Isaiah 45:12](#); [Micah 6:8](#)).

9 | **Romans 9:8**

They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God.

Translation

... it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children. ...

—Christian Standard Bible®

From **Section 3**

10 | **Jeremiah 17:5, 7**

Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. . . . Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

Translation

*“I will condemn those
 who turn away from me
and put their trust in human beings,
 in the strength of mortals.*

.

*But I will bless the person
 who puts his trust in me.”*

—Good News Translation

11 | **Genesis 3:1–6, 13–17, 19, 23**

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? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in

the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. . . . And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; . . . Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. . . . Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

In this chapter, curses, anguish, and pain contrast strongly with the harmony and dominion of Genesis 1. Here trickery and weakness characterize creation. The decree to till the ground sentences man to hard labor in soil that yields thorns and thistles (see vv. 18, 19)—and separation from God is presented as inevitable. Yet Scripture offers compelling promises of God’s nearness and humanity’s ability to overcome evil (see examples in Psalms 34:18; 144:10; Luke 10:19; I Peter 5:8–10). And in Revelation, “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan” is decisively cast out (12:7–10).

From Section 4

12 | Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Translation

So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty.

—New Century Version®

14 | Matthew 9:20–22

Behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: for she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

Jewish men wore fringes or tassels on the corners of their outer garments as a continuing reminder of God’s

commandments (see [Numbers 15:37–41](#); [Deuteronomy 22:12](#)). It was one of the tassels on Jesus’ robe that this woman touched. (Other seekers of healing were also made whole simply by touching the border of Jesus’ clothing; see [Matthew 14:34–36](#).)

The deep desire for closeness to God was at the root of the complex Hebrew system governing ritual cleanliness spelled out in the book of Leviticus. This guidance culminates with the declaration, “I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy” ([11:44](#)).

In this account, the typically expected result of the contact is reversed. Rather than the Savior becoming unclean by the woman’s touch, her faith-driven outreach brings her purity and healing.

15 | [Revelation 22:3](#)

There shall be no more curse.

Embedded in a detailed depiction of New Jerusalem (see chap. 21 as well), this guarantee is viewed as including not only the curse of [Genesis 3:14, 17](#) (citation 11) but also any accursed thing or person.

16 | [Proverbs 10:22](#)

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Translation

The LORD’s blessing enriches,
and he adds no painful effort to it.

—Christian Standard Bible®

From **Section 5**

17 | [Ephesians 1:3, 4](#)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Translation

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Through Christ, God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing that heaven has to offer. Before the creation of the world, he chose us through Christ to be holy and perfect in his presence.

—GOD’S WORD[®] Translation

In the Hebrew Bible, “Blessed be” is a customary way to open or close expressions of praise to God. Many of these prayers call Him “the Lord” or “the Lord God of Israel.” Here, though, New Testament understanding specifies God as Christ Jesus’ Father—wording that also appears in [II Corinthians 1:3](#) and [I Peter 1:3](#).

The Jewish practice of refraining from speaking God’s name aloud gave rise to other titles of respect and homage, such as “the Blessed.” Prior to the Master’s crucifixion, the high priest asks him, “Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” ([Mark 14:61](#)).

In this text, *blessed* and *blessings* are translated from a form of the Greek term *eulogeō*, origin of the English word *eulogy*, a statement of praise.

18 | [Jude 1:24, 25](#)

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.

Translation

Give praise to the God who is able to keep you from falling into sin. He will bring you into his heavenly glory without any fault. He will bring you there with great joy. Give praise to the only God our Savior. Glory, majesty, power and authority belong to him. Give praise to him through Jesus Christ our Lord. His praise was before all time, continues now, and will last forever.

—New International Reader’s Version[™]

Read a related article “[“The curse causeless”](#)” by Helen Wood Bauman.

Resources cited in this issue

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Cit. 3: 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.

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