

The Voice

Compiled each week by Linda Worley for CSDirectory.com

Golden Text: Lev 26: ¹² I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be My people. ¹³ ... I have shattered the yokes *that broke your backs* and helped you walk *straight and upright*.

Res. Reading: Isaiah 60: ² God will rise *and shine* on you;

the Eternal's bright glory will shine on you, *a light for all to see*.

³ Nations *north and south, peoples east and west*, will be drawn to your light,

will find purpose and direction by your light.

In the radiance of your rising, you will enlighten the leaders of nations.

Ps. 33:1 Release your heart's joy *in sweet music* to the Eternal.

When the upright passionately sing glory-filled songs *to Him*, everything is in its right place.

³ Sing to Him a new song;

⁴ For the word of the Eternal is perfect and true;
His actions are always faithful *and right*.

⁵ He loves virtue and equity;

the Eternal's love fills the whole earth.

⁶ The *unfathomable* cosmos came into being at the word of the Eternal's *imagination, a solitary voice in endless darkness*.

The breath of His mouth whispered the sea of stars into existence.

⁹ For He spoke, and all things came into being.

A single command from His lips, and all creation *obeyed and stood its ground*.

¹¹ The Eternal's purposes will last to the end of time;
the thoughts of His heart *will awaken and stir* all generations.

¹³ The Eternal peers down from heaven
and watches all of humanity;

¹⁵ He has formed every human heart, *breathing life into every human spirit*;

He knows the deeds of each person, *inside and out*.

Psalms 37:³⁷ Keep your eye on the innocent. Model your life after the blameless.

Everyone who loves peace has a future.

Section 1

1. Ps. 37:¹⁷ ... the Eternal will hold His righteous children high.

¹⁸ All their days are *measured and known* by the Eternal;

their inheritance is kept safe forever.

2. Gen. 1: **God:** ²⁶ Now let Us conceive *a new creation—humanity—made* in Our image, *fashioned* according to Our likeness.

²⁷ So God did *just that*. He created humanity in His image, created them male and female.

³¹ Then God surveyed everything He had made, savoring *its beauty and appreciating* its goodness.

Section 2

3. Gen. 2:1 *So now* you see how the Creator swept into being the *spangled* heavens, the earth, and all their hosts.

⁶ In those days, a mist rose up from the ground to *blanket the earth, and its vapors* irrigated the land.

⁷ One day the Eternal God scooped dirt out of the ground, sculpted it into *the shape we call* human, breathed the breath that gives life into the nostrils of the human, and the human became a living soul. ⁸ The Eternal God planted a garden in the east in Eden—*a place of utter delight*—and placed the man whom He had sculpted there. ¹⁶ He made certain demands of the man *regarding life in the garden*.

God: Eat freely from any *and all* trees in the garden; ¹⁷ I only require that you abstain from eating the fruit of

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one tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. *Beware:* the day you eat the fruit of this tree, you will certainly die.

¹⁸ It is not good for the man to be alone, so I will create a companion for him, a perfectly suited partner. ²¹ So the Eternal God put him into a deep sleep, removed a rib *from his side*, and closed the flesh around the opening. ²² He formed a woman from the rib taken out of the man and presented her to him.

Section 3

4. Gen. 3:1 Of all the wild creatures the Eternal God had created, the serpent was the craftiest.

Serpent (*to the woman*): Is it true that God has forbidden you to eat *fruits* from the trees of the garden?

Eve: ² *No, serpent. God said we are free to eat the fruit from the trees in the garden.* ³ *We are granted access to any variety and all amounts of fruit with one exception: the fruit from the tree found in the center of the garden. God instructed us not to eat or touch the fruit of that tree or we would die.*

Serpent: ⁴ *Die? No, you'll not die. God is playing games with you.* ⁵ *The truth is that God knows the day you eat the fruit from that tree you will awaken something powerful in you and become like Him: possessing knowledge of both good and evil.*

⁶ The woman *approached the tree*, eyed its fruit, and coveted its *mouth-watering, wisdom-granting* beauty. She plucked a fruit from the tree and ate. She then offered *the fruit* to her husband who was close by, and he ate as well.

⁸ Then they heard the sound of the Eternal God walking in the cool *misting* shadows of the garden. The man and his wife took cover among the trees and hid from the Eternal God.

God (*calling to Adam*): ⁹ Where are you?

¹¹ Have you eaten from the tree *in the center of the garden*, the very one I commanded you not to eat from?

Adam (*pointing at the woman*): ¹² *It was she!* The woman You gave me as a companion put the fruit in my hands, and I ate it.

[Bible note: Since Adam and Eve, people have been blaming others for their mistakes. Adam has the audacity to blame God for his.]

God (*to the woman*): ¹³ What have you done?

Eve: It was the serpent! He tricked me, and I ate.

¹⁷ [**God:**] (to the man) Because you followed your wife's advice

instead of My command and ate of the tree
From which I had forbidden you to eat, cursed is the ground.

For the rest of your life,
You will fight for every crumb of food
from the *crusty clump of clay I made you from*.

Section 4

5. Ps. 146: ⁸ He makes the blind see.
He lifts up those whose backs are bent *in labor*;
He cherishes those who do what is right.

6. Ps 30: ⁴ Sing, all you who remain faithful!
Pour out your hearts to the Eternal with praise and melodies;
let grateful music *fill the air and* bless His name.

⁹ No songs will rise up from the dust *of my bones*.
From dust comes no proclamation of Your faithfulness.

¹² *You have restored my honor*. My heart is ready to explode, erupt in new songs!
It's impossible to keep quiet!
Eternal One, my God, *my Life-Giver*, I will thank You forever.

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7. John 9:1 While walking along the road, Jesus saw a man who was blind since his birth.

Disciples: ² Teacher, who sinned? *Who is responsible for this man's blindness?* Did he commit sins that merited this punishment? If not his sins, is it the sins of his parents?

Jesus: ³ Neither. His blindness cannot be *explained or* traced to any particular person's sins. He is blind so the deeds of God may be put on display.

⁶ After He said these things, He spat on the ground and mixed saliva and dirt to form mud, which He smeared across the blind man's eyes.

Jesus (to the blind man): ⁷ Go, wash yourself in the pool of Siloam.

Siloam means "sent," and its name reminded us that his healing was sent by God. The man went, washed, and returned to Jesus, his eyes now alive with sight.

⁸ Then neighbors and others who knew him were confused to see a man so closely resembling the blind beggar running about.

Townspople: Isn't this the man we see *every day* sitting and begging *in the streets*?

¹⁰ How have your *lifeless* eyes been opened?

¹⁵ The Pharisees began questioning him, looking for some explanation for how he could now see.

Formerly Blind Man: He smeared mud on my eyes, and I washed; now I see.

³² No one has ever heard of someone opening the eyes of any person blind from birth.

Section 5

8. 1 Cor. 15: ¹² Now if we have told you about the Anointed One (how He has risen from the dead *and appeared to us fully alive*), then how can you *stand there and say* there is no such thing as resurrection from death?

²⁰ But the Anointed One was raised from death's slumber and is the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep *in death*.

²² *Look at it this way:* through Adam all of us die, but through the Anointed One all of us can live again.

9. Acts 20:⁷⁻⁸ The Sunday night before our Monday departure, we gathered to celebrate the breaking of bread. *Imagine you are celebrating with them:*

We are in an upstairs room, with *the gentle light and shadows cast by several lamps*. Paul is carrying on an extended dialogue with the believers, taking advantage of every moment since we plan to leave at first light. The conversation stretches on until midnight.

⁹ A young fellow named Eutychus, *seeking some fresh air*, moves to an open window. Paul keeps on talking. Eutychus perches in the open window itself. *Paul keeps talking*. Eutychus drifts off to sleep. *Paul continues talking* until Eutychus, now overcome by deep sleep, drops out of the window and falls three stories to the ground, where he is found dead. ¹⁰ Paul joins us downstairs, bends over, and takes Eutychus in his arms.

Paul: It's OK. He's alive again.

¹¹ Then Paul goes back upstairs, celebrates the breaking of bread, and—*just as you might guess*—keeps on conversing until first light. Then he leaves. ¹² (I should add that Eutychus had been taken home *long before*, his friends more than a little relieved that the boy was alive!)

10. Rom. 8: ² because when you live in the Anointed One, Jesus, *a new law takes effect*. The law of the Spirit of life *breathes into you and liberates you* from the law of sin and death.

Section 6

11. Isa 60:1 Arise, shine, for your light has broken through!

The Eternal One's brilliance has dawned upon you.

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⁴ ... lift up your eyes and look around.

12. Ps 20:8 ...we will rise and stand firm.

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