# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/4/25

# Is This True of Me?



None of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself… —[Acts 20:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Acts+20%3A24)

It is easier to serve or work for God without a vision and without a call, because then you are not bothered by what He requires. Common sense, covered with a layer of Christian emotion, becomes your guide. You may be more prosperous and successful from the world’s perspective, and will have more leisure time, if you never acknowledge the call of God. But once you receive a commission from Jesus Christ, the memory of what God asks of you will always be there to prod you on to do His will. You will no longer be able to work for Him on the basis of common sense.

What do I count in my life as “dear to myself”? If I have not been seized by Jesus Christ and have not surrendered myself to Him, I will consider the time I decide to give God and my own ideas of service as dear. I will also consider my own life as “dear to myself.” But Paul said he considered his life dear so that he might fulfill the ministry he had received, and he refused to use his energy on anything else. This verse shows an almost noble annoyance by Paul at being asked to consider himself. He was absolutely indifferent to any consideration other than that of fulfilling the ministry he had received. Our ordinary and reasonable service to God may actually compete against our total surrender to Him. Our reasonable work is based on the following argument which we say to ourselves, “Remember how useful you are here, and think how much value you would be in that particular type of work.” That attitude chooses our own judgment, instead of Jesus Christ, to be our guide as to where we should go and where we could be used the most. Never consider whether or not you are of use— but always consider that “you are not your own” ([1 Corinthians 6:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6:19)). You are His.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We are not to preach the doing of good things; good deeds are not to be preached, they are to be performed. So Send I You, 1330 L

# CCEL – 3/4/25

**Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**—[COL. 3:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.3.html#Col.3.2)

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.—Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

We walk by faith, not by sight.—We faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.—An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

[I John 2:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html" \l "iJohn.2.15). -[Matt. 6:19-21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html#Matt.6.19).[II Cor. 5:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html#iiCor.5.7). -[II Cor. 4:16-18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.4.html#iiCor.4.16). -[I Pet. 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html#iPet.1.4).

“My grace is sufficient for thee.” [2 Corinthians 12:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.12.html" \l "iiCor.12.9)

If none of God’s saints were poor and tried, we should not know half so well the consolations of divine grace. When we find the wanderer who has not where to lay his head, who yet can say, “Still will I trust in the Lord;” when we see the pauper starving on bread and water, who still glories in Jesus; when we see the bereaved widow overwhelmed in affliction, and yet having faith in Christ, oh! what honour it reflects on the gospel. God’s grace is illustrated and magnified in the poverty and trials of believers. Saints bear up under every discouragement, believing that all things work together for their good, and that out of apparent evils a real blessing shall ultimately spring—that their God will either work a deliverance for them speedily, or most assuredly support them in the trouble, as long as he is pleased to keep them in it. This patience of the saints proves the power of divine grace. There is a lighthouse out at sea: it is a calm night—I cannot tell whether the edifice is firm; the tempest must rage about it, and then I shall know whether it will stand. So with the Spirit’s work: if it were not on many occasions surrounded with tempestuous waters, we should not know that it was true and strong; if the winds did not blow upon it, we should not know how firm and secure it was. The master-works of God are those men who stand in the midst of difficulties, stedfast, unmoveable, —

“Calm mid the bewildering cry, Confident of victory.”

He who would glorify his God must set his account upon meeting with many trials. No man can be illustrious before the Lord unless his conflicts be many. If then, yours be a much-tried path, rejoice in it, because you will the better show forth the all-sufficient grace of God. As for his failing you, never dream of it—hate the thought. The God who has been sufficient until now, should be trusted to the end.

# Word Live – 3/4/25

# <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/>

# Scripture Union – 3/4/25

[**https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/**](https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/)

# Today in the Word – 3/4/25

# The World Is Watching

**Read Deuteronomy 4:1-40**

**Obedience Commanded**

**4**Now, Israel, hear the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. **2**Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.

**3**You saw with your own eyes what the Lord did at Baal Peor. The Lord your God destroyed from among you everyone who followed the Baal of Peor, **4**but all of you who held fast to the Lord your God are still alive today.

**5**See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the Lord my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. **6**Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” **7**What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him? **8**And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

**9**Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. **10**Remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when he said to me, “Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children.” **11**You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain while it blazed with fire to the very heavens, with black clouds and deep darkness. **12**Then the Lord spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice. **13**He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets. **14**And the Lord directed me at that time to teach you the decrees and laws you are to follow in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess.

**Idolatry Forbidden**

**15**You saw no form of any kind the day the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire. Therefore watch yourselves very carefully, **16**so that you do not become corrupt and make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape, whether formed like a man or a woman, **17**or like any animal on earth or any bird that flies in the air, **18**or like any creature that moves along the ground or any fish in the waters below. **19**And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars—all the heavenly array—do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshiping things the Lord your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven. **20**But as for you, the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to be the people of his inheritance, as you now are.

**21**The Lord was angry with me because of you, and he solemnly swore that I would not cross the Jordan and enter the good land the Lord your God is giving you as your inheritance. **22**I will die in this land; I will not cross the Jordan; but you are about to cross over and take possession of that good land. **23**Be careful not to forget the covenant of the Lord your God that he made with you; do not make for yourselves an idol in the form of anything the Lord your God has forbidden. **24**For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

**25**After you have had children and grandchildren and have lived in the land a long time—if you then become corrupt and make any kind of idol, doing evil in the eyes of the Lord your God and arousing his anger, **26**I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you this day that you will quickly perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess. You will not live there long but will certainly be destroyed. **27**The Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and only a few of you will survive among the nations to which the Lord will drive you. **28**There you will worship man-made gods of wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or eat or smell. **29**But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul. **30**When you are in distress and all these things have happened to you, then in later days you will return to the Lord your God and obey him. **31**For the Lord your God is a merciful God; he will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant with your ancestors, which he confirmed to them by oath.

**The Lord Is God**

**32**Ask now about the former days, long before your time, from the day God created human beings on the earth; ask from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything so great as this ever happened, or has anything like it ever been heard of? **33**Has any other people heard the voice of God[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%204%3A1-40&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5038a)] speaking out of fire, as you have, and lived? **34**Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by testings, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

**35**You were shown these things so that you might know that the Lord is God; besides him there is no other. **36**From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. On earth he showed you his great fire, and you heard his words from out of the fire. **37**Because he loved your ancestors and chose their descendants after them, he brought you out of Egypt by his Presence and his great strength, **38**to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you into their land to give it to you for your inheritance, as it is today.

**39**Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other. **40**Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the Lord your God gives you for all time.

**Footnotes**

1. [Deuteronomy 4:33](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%204%3A1-40&version=NIV#en-NIV-5038) Or *of a god*

What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him?- Deuteronomy 4:7

In our house, we have a fireproof lockbox in which we keep important documents. Some documents are important legally (e.g., birth certificates, marriage license, will ). Others are important relationally (e.g., love letters, family pictures).

At Mount Sinai (called “Horeb" in this passage), God revealed His covenant with Israel, including the laws and decrees. The foundation of this covenant was the Ten Commandments (v. 13). These laws and decrees were important to Israel both legally and relationally. Israel's most important and precious privilege was their relationship with God. Their faithfulness to

God would be their source of success and flourishing in the land of Canaan. They would not take possession of the land because of their military might or skill, but because of their humble

obedience to the Lord (v. 1).

When they faithfully obeyed the covenant, they would be different. Other nations would sit up and take notice: "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people" (v. 6). Their relationship with the Lord would be a witness to the world. The Law of God was a gift that set them apart. That is why it was vital for Israel to remember, obey, and pass on their knowledge of God from generation to generation. They were to "teach them to your children and to their children after them" (v. 9).

As followers of Jesus today, we also should be different. Not because of our own wisdom or intelligence, but because of our relationship with God. The apostle Peter reminded the church, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood ... that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9). That is why we should " live such good lives among the pagans that . . . they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us" (1 Peter 2:12).

**Go Deeper**

How can our relationship with God be used to accomplish His mission to the world?

You revealed Your covenant to Israel and led them out of slavery in Egypt.

**Pray with Us**

We praise You today, Lord, for Your covenant of love and grace with us through Your Son-"out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9).

# Our Daily Bread – 3/4/25

READING, WRITING, AND JESUS

A statue of a person with a beard

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Read: ACTS 3:15-24**

**15**You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. **16**By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

**17**“Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. **18**But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. **19**Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, **20**and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. **21**Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. **22**For Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. **23**Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.’[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS%203%3A15-24&version=NIV#fen-NIV-27020a)]

**24**“Indeed, beginning with Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days.

**Footnotes**

1. [Acts 3:23](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS%203%3A15-24&version=NIV#en-NIV-27020)  Deut. 18:15,18,19

You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. ACTS 3:15

Moses with horns? That's the way he's depicted in Michelangelo's masterpiece sculpture completed in 1515. Two horns protrude from Moses' hair just above his forehead.

Michelangelo wasn't alone-many Renaissance and medieval depict Moses that way. Why? It has to do with the Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible available at the time, which described Moses’ radiant face after being in God's presence (SEE EXODUS 34:29). The original language uses a word related to “horns" to describe “beams" of light shining from Moses' face, and the Latin Vulgate translated it literally. Moses was "misread."

Have you ever misread someone? After a man unable to walk birth was healed by Peter in Jesus' name (ACTS 3:1-l0), the apostle told his fellow Israelites that they had misread Jesus. "You killed the author of life," he said pointedly, "but God raised him from the dead” (v. 15). He continued, "This is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer (v. 18). Peter even said Moses had pointed to Christ (V. 22).

It was "by faith in the name of Jesus," a "faith that comes through him,” that the man's life was transformed (V.16). No matter how we've misunderstood Him or what our past contains, Christ welcomes us when we turn to Him. The author of life stands ready to write new beginnings for us!

**JAMES BANKS**

**Reflect and Pray**

How have you misread Jesus? What will help you understand Him even better today?

Thank You, Jesus, for always understanding and loving me.

For further study, read The Point of It All-Why We Might Miss Jesus

at DiscoverODB.org.

**INSIGHT**

In Acts 3:12-25, Peter preached the gospel to a crowd after healing a lame beggar. Regarding the people's part in Jesus' death, he said: "This is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer" (V. 18). These prophets included David (PSALM 69:4, 21), Isaiah (ISAIAH 50:6; 53:4-11), and Zechariah (ZECHARIAH 12:10; 13:7). In Psalm 22, David expresses words that Christ cries aloud from the cross (v. 1: SEE MATTHEW 27:46), His mistreatment (PSALM 22:6-8; SEE MATTHEW 27:27-31, 41-44), and the dividing of His garments (PSALM 22:18; SEE MATTHEW 27:35). Peter's words in Acts 3:17-18 are reminiscent of Joseph's words to his brothers: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (GENESIS 50:20).

**ALYSON KIEDA**

# God Calling – 3/4/25

# Key to Holiness

Draw near to Me, my children. Contact with Me is the panacea for all ills.

Remember that Truth is many-sided. Have much tender Love and Patience for all who do not see as you do.

The elimination of self is the key to holiness and happiness, and can only be accomplished with My help. Study My life more. Live in My Presence. Worship Me.

I said in Gethsemane, "If it be possible let this cup pass." I did NOT say that there was no cup of sorrow to drink. I was scourged and spat upon and nailed to the Cross, and I said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

I did NOT say that they did not do it. When My disciple, Peter, urged Me to escape the Cross, I said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan."

When My disciples failed to help the epileptic boy, I said, "This kind cometh not out but by Prayer and Fasting." I did NOT say, "You imagined that he was ill. Nothing is wrong."

When the Bible says, "God has purer eyes than to behold evil," it means to impute evil to His people. He always sees the good in people, but remember that I "beheld the city, and wept over it."

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." - Luke 9:23

**My Utmost for His Highest – 3/5/25**

**Is He Really My Lord?**



…so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus… —[Acts 20:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Acts+20%3A24)

Joy comes from seeing the complete fulfillment of the specific purpose for which I was created and born again, not from successfully doing something of my own choosing. The joy our Lord experienced came from doing what the Father sent Him to do. And He says to us, “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” ([John 20:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20:21)). Have you received a ministry from the Lord? If so, you must be faithful to it— to consider your life valuable only for the purpose of fulfilling that ministry. Knowing that you have done what Jesus sent you to do, think how satisfying it will be to hear Him say to you, “Well done, good and faithful servant” ([Matthew 25:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+25:21)). We each have to find a niche in life, and spiritually we find it when we receive a ministry from the Lord. To do this we must have close fellowship with Jesus and must know Him as more than our personal Savior. And we must be willing to experience the full impact of [Acts 9:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+9:16) — “I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

“Do you love Me?” Then, “Feed My sheep” ([John 21:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+21:17)). He is not offering us a choice of how we can serve Him; He is asking for absolute loyalty to His commission, a faithfulness to what we discern when we are in the closest possible fellowship with God. If you have received a ministry from the Lord Jesus, you will know that the need is not the same as the call— the need is the opportunity to exercise the call. The call is to be faithful to the ministry you received when you were in true fellowship with Him. This does not imply that there is a whole series of differing ministries marked out for you. It does mean that you must be sensitive to what God has called you to do, and this may sometimes require ignoring demands for service in other areas.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

To live a life alone with God does not mean that we live it apart from everyone else. The connection between godly men and women and those associated with them is continually revealed in the Bible, e.g., 1 Timothy 4:10.  Not Knowing Whither, 867 L

**CCEL – 3/5/25**

**O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.**—[ISA. 38:14.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.38.html#Isa.38.14)

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God.—Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings.—Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storms.

Christ . . . suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

[Psa. 123:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.123.html" \l "Ps.123.1). -[Psa. 61:1-4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.61.html#Ps.61.1). -[Isa. 25:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.25.html#Isa.25.4).[I Pet. 2:21-23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html#iPet.2.21).

“Let us not sleep, as do others.” [1 Thessalonians 5:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.5.html" \l "iThess.5.6)

There are many ways of promoting Christian wakefulness. Among the rest, let me strongly advise Christians to converse together concerning the ways of the Lord. Christian and Hopeful, as they journeyed towards the Celestial City, said to themselves, “To prevent drowsiness in this place, let us fall into good discourse.” Christian enquired, “Brother, where shall we begin?” And Hopeful answered, “Where God began with us.” Then Christian sang this song —

“When saints do sleepy grow, let them come hither,

And hear how these two pilgrims talk together;

Yea, let them learn of them, in any wise,

Thus to keep open their drowsy slumb'ring eyes.

Saints’ fellowship, if it be managed well,

Keeps them awake, and that in spite of hell.”

Christians who isolate themselves and walk alone, are very liable to grow drowsy. Hold Christian company, and you will be kept wakeful by it, and refreshed and encouraged to make quicker progress in the road to heaven. But as you thus take “sweet counsel” with others in the ways of God, take care that the theme of your converse is the Lord Jesus. Let the eye of faith be constantly looking unto him; let your heart be full of him; let your lips speak of his worth. Friend, live near to the cross, and thou wilt not sleep. Labour to impress thyself with a deep sense of the value of the place to which thou art going. If thou rememberest that thou art going to heaven, thou wilt not sleep on the road. If thou thinkest that hell is behind thee, and the devil pursuing thee, thou wilt not loiter. Would the manslayer sleep with the avenger of blood behind him, and the city of refuge before him? Christian, wilt thou sleep whilst the pearly gates are open—the songs of angels waiting for thee to join them—a crown of gold ready for thy brow? Ah! no; in holy fellowship continue to watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.

**Word Live – 3/5/25**

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**Scripture Union – 3/5/25**

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# Today in the Word – 3/5/25

# Law and Grace

**Read Deuteronomy 5:1-33**

**The Ten Commandments**

**5**Moses summoned all Israel and said:

Hear, Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. **2**The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. **3**It was not with our ancestors[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%205%3A1-33&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5057a)] that the Lord made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today. **4**The Lord spoke to you face to face out of the fire on the mountain. **5**(At that time I stood between the Lord and you to declare to you the word of the Lord, because you were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain.) And he said:

**6**“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

**7**“You shall have no other gods before[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%205%3A1-33&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5061b)] me.

**8**“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. **9**You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, **10**but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

**11**“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

**12**“Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you. **13**Six days you shall labor and do all your work, **14**but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do. **15**Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

**16**“Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

**17**“You shall not murder.

**18**“You shall not commit adultery.

**19**“You shall not steal.

**20**“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

**21**“You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife. You shall not set your desire on your neighbor’s house or land, his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

**22**These are the commandments the Lord proclaimed in a loud voice to your whole assembly there on the mountain from out of the fire, the cloud and the deep darkness; and he added nothing more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

**23**When you heard the voice out of the darkness, while the mountain was ablaze with fire, all the leaders of your tribes and your elders came to me. **24**And you said, “The Lord our God has shown us his glory and his majesty, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that a person can live even if God speaks with them. **25**But now, why should we die? This great fire will consume us, and we will die if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any longer. **26**For what mortal has ever heard the voice of the living God speaking out of fire, as we have, and survived? **27**Go near and listen to all that the Lord our God says. Then tell us whatever the Lord our God tells you. We will listen and obey.”

**28**The Lord heard you when you spoke to me, and the Lord said to me, “I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good. **29**Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!

**30**“Go, tell them to return to their tents. **31**But you stay here with me so that I may give you all the commands, decrees and laws you are to teach them to follow in the land I am giving them to possess.”

**32**So be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left. **33**Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.

**Footnotes**

1. [Deuteronomy 5:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%205%3A1-33&version=NIV#en-NIV-5057) Or *not only with our parents*
2. [Deuteronomy 5:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%205%3A1-33&version=NIV#en-NIV-5061) Or *besides*

Be careful to do what the LORD your God has commanded you. - Deuteronomy 5:32

On our wedding day, my wife and I recited traditional vows to one another. We promised “to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us part. This is my solemn vow." Marriage is a covenant relationship. While it is deeply personal, it also comes with standards

and expectations for the husband and wife to be faithful to one another.

Deuteronomy 5 includes one of the most famous passages in Scripture, the Ten Commandments. For some, this is an example of the legalistic nature of the Old Testament. But the example of marriage can help us better understand how these commands work (v. 2).

The commandments are not about trying to earn God's favor any more than a husband trying to earn his wife's favor by keeping his wedding vows. Instead, the commands outline the expectations and responsibilities of this covenant relationship. The truly stunning fact about the Ten Commandments is that God voluntarily entered a covenant with His people at all. As the Supreme Being, He did not have to. Israel's history recounts how they would fail to keep their covenant commitments to the lord. The prophets regularly pictured Israel as a wayward wife who had abandoned her husband (Jer. 2:1-37; Hos. 1:2). But the reality is that no one can perfectly keep the covenant (Ps. 14:1; Rom. 3:23). It is for this reason that Jesus came, to “save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

The Ten Commandments highlight how much we need a Savior. The apostle Paul instructs us, “For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering" (Rom. 8:3).

**Go Deeper**

How do the Ten Commandments reflect what is important to God? Why does keeping these commands reflect on our relationship with Him?

**Pray with Us**

Dear God, we confess we are sinners, and like Israel, we often fail to stay faithful to You. Lord Jesus, we are so grateful for Your sacrifice that brought us forgiveness and freedom from sin.

# Our Daily Bread – 3/5/25

# UNFATHOMABLE GOD

A bright light in the dark

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**Read: ISAIAH 40:25-31**

**25**“To whom will you compare me?  
    Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One.  
**26**Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens:  
    Who created all these?  
He who brings out the starry host one by one  
    and calls forth each of them by name.  
Because of his great power and mighty strength,  
    not one of them is missing.

**27**Why do you complain, Jacob?  
    Why do you say, Israel,  
“My way is hidden from the Lord;  
    my cause is disregarded by my God”?  
**28**Do you not know?  
    Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
    the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He will not grow tired or weary,  
    and his understanding no one can fathom.  
**29**He gives strength to the weary  
    and increases the power of the weak.  
**30**Even youths grow tired and weary,  
    and young men stumble and fall;  
**31**but those who hope in the Lord  
    will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
    they will run and not grow weary,  
    they will walk and not be faint.

His understanding no one can fathom. ISAIAH 40:28

In February 2023, the James Webb Space Telescope made another remarkable discovery. Beyond where humankind had previously been able to peer into the universe, it discovered six new galaxies. This discovery upended much of what we know about space. One astronomer remarked, "It turns out we found something so unexpected it actually creates problems for science.” An astrophysicist said almost apologetically, "There is nothing wrong with not knowing,”

It seems that God continues to surprise us all. The prophet Isaiah, long before the advent of space telescopes, seems to be talking directly to the scientists of today: "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is ... the Creator of the ends of the earth" (ISAIAH 40:28). He goes on, predating that astrophysicist's words "[God's] understanding no one can fathom" (V. 28).'

But if we stop there, we miss the beauty of this passage. He who is unfathomable is not impersonal. He who created those six galaxies, and all the others (v. 26), is the same God who "gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak” (v. 29). The God of the universe is also the personal God who helps those who hope in Him to "soar on wings like eagles" (V. 31). Rest assured, the unfathomable God is the one we do know-the one who speaks into our lives with power and strength.

**KENNETH PETERSEN**

**Reflect and Pray**

What does it mean to you to think of God as unfathomable yet personal? How is He personal to you?

God of the universe, thank You for being my heavenly Father. I place my hope in You ta provide me wisdom and strength.

**INSIGHT**

The context of Isaiah 40's description of God's power as creator (VV. 12; 22-26) is one of bringing comfort to His people: "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem” (vv. 1-2). After their experience of suffering in exile, God's people needed reassurance that He was still willing and able to care for them. God through Isaiah asked, " 'To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?, .. . Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these?" (vv. 25·26). The question of who created the heavens likely directly challenged the commonly held belief in Babylonian and Canaanite religion that stars in the heavens represented gods. Isaiah's question not only dismisses the idea that any gods could be compared with the true God but went further by arguing that what were believed to be gods were merely His creations.

**MONICA LA ROSE**

**God Calling – 3/5/25**

**Fear Is Evil**

Have no fear. Fear is evil and "perfect Love casts out fear." There is no room for fear in the heart in which I dwell. Fear destroys Hope. It cannot exist where Love is, or where Faith is.

Fear is the curse of the world. Man is afraid - afraid of poverty, afraid of loneliness, afraid of unemployment, afraid of sickness.

Many, many are man's fears. Nation is afraid of nation. Fear, fear, fear, everywhere. Fight fear as you would a plague. Turn it out of your lives and home. Fight it singly. Fight it together. Never inspire fear. It is an evil ally. Fear of punishment, fear of blame.

No work that employs this enemy of Mine is work for Me. Banish it. There must be another and better way.

Ask Me and I will show it you.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." - 2 Timothy 1:7

**My Utmost for His Highest – 3/6/25**

**Taking the Next Step**



…in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses. —[2 Corinthians 6:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+6%3A4)

When you have no vision from God, no enthusiasm left in your life, and no one watching and encouraging you, it requires the grace of Almighty God to take the next step in your devotion to Him, in the reading and studying of His Word, in your family life, or in your duty to Him. It takes much more of the grace of God, and a much greater awareness of drawing upon Him, to take that next step, than it does to preach the gospel.

Every Christian must experience the essence of the incarnation by bringing the next step down into flesh-and-blood reality and by working it out with his hands. We lose interest and give up when we have no vision, no encouragement, and no improvement, but only experience our everyday life with its trivial tasks. The thing that really testifies for God and for the people of God in the long run is steady perseverance, even when the work cannot be seen by others. And the only way to live an undefeated life is to live looking to God. Ask God to keep the eyes of your spirit open to the risen Christ, and it will be impossible for drudgery to discourage you. Never allow yourself to think that some tasks are beneath your dignity or too insignificant for you to do, and remind yourself of the example of Christ in[John 13:1-17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+13:1-17).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The great point of Abraham’s faith in God was that he was prepared to do anything for God. Not Knowing Whither

**CCEL – 3/6/25**

**He preserveth the way of his saints.**—[PROV. 2:8.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.2.html#Prov.2.8)

The Lord your God . . . went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.—As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him.—The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.—Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.—For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish.—We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.—With us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles.

The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy.

[Deut. 1:32,33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.1.html" \l "Deut.1.32). -[Deut. 32:11,12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.32.html#Deut.32.11). -[Psa. 37:23,24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html#Ps.37.23). -[Psa. 34:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html#Ps.34.19). -[Psa. 1:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.1.html#Ps.1.6). -[Rom. 8:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html#Rom.8.28). -[II Chr. 32:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiChr.32.html#iiChr.32.8).[Zeph. 3:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Zeph.3.html#Zeph.3.17).

“Ye must be born again.” [John 3:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html" \l "John.3.7)

Regeneration is a subject which lies at the very basis of salvation, and we should be very diligent to take heed that we really are “born again,” for there are many who fancy they are, who are not. Be assured that the name of a Christian is not the nature of a Christian; and that being born in a Christian land, and being recognized as professing the Christian religion is of no avail whatever, unless there be something more added to it—the being “born again,” is a matter so mysterious, that human words cannot describe it. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” Nevertheless, it is a change which is known and felt: known by works of holiness, and felt by a gracious experience. This great work is supernatural. It is not an operation which a man performs for himself: a new principle is infused, which works in the heart, renews the soul, and affects the entire man. It is not a change of my name, but a renewal of my nature, so that I am not the man I used to be, but a new man in Christ Jesus. To wash and dress a corpse is a far different thing from making it alive: man can do the one, God alone can do the other. If you have then, been “born again,” your acknowledgment will be, “O Lord Jesus, the everlasting Father, thou art my spiritual Parent; unless thy Spirit had breathed into me the breath of a new, holy, and spiritual life, I had been to this day ‘dead in trespasses and sins.’ My heavenly life is wholly derived from thee, to thee I ascribe it. ‘My life is hid with Christ in God.’ It is no longer I who live, but Christ who liveth in me.” May the Lord enable us to be well assured on this vital point, for to be unregenerate is to be unsaved, unpardoned, without God, and without hope.

**Word Live – 3/6/25**

[**https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/**](https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/wordlive/)

**Scripture Union – 3/6/25**

[**https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/**](https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/)

# Today in the Word – 3/6/25

# First Love

**Read Deuteronomy 6:1-26**

**Love the Lord Your God**

**6**These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, **2**so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. **3**Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, promised you.

**4**Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%206%3A1-26&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5091a)] **5**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. **6**These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. **7**Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **8**Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. **9**Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

**10**When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you—a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, **11**houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant—then when you eat and are satisfied, **12**be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

**13**Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. **14**Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; **15**for the Lord your God, who is among you, is a jealous God and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land. **16**Do not put the Lord your God to the test as you did at Massah. **17**Be sure to keep the commands of the Lord your God and the stipulations and decrees he has given you. **18**Do what is right and good in the Lord’s sight, so that it may go well with you and you may go in and take over the good land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors, **19**thrusting out all your enemies before you, as the Lord said.

**20**In the future, when your son asks you, “What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the Lord our God has commanded you?” **21**tell him: “We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. **22**Before our eyes the Lord sent signs and wonders—great and terrible—on Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household. **23**But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land he promised on oath to our ancestors. **24**The Lord commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the Lord our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today. **25**And if we are careful to obey all this law before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness.”

**Footnotes**

1. [Deuteronomy 6:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%206%3A1-26&version=NIV#en-NIV-5091)  Or The Lord our God is one Lord; or The Lord is our God, the Lord is one; or The Lord is our God, the Lord alone

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. -Deuteronomy 6:6

There are 613 commandments in the Pentateuch. One teacher of the law asked Jesus, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" (Mark 12:28). Jesus' answer came from the passage in today's reading.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is called the Shema, the Hebrew pronunciation of the first word of verse 4: “Hear!" These verses affirm the uniqueness of the God of Israel (v. 4). They also voice the implications of this belief. We are to "love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (v. 5). This means to love God wholly and completely.

"Heart” in Hebrew does not refer only to your emotions, but to your thinking and reasoning. It is a call to love God with your whole inner being. “Soul” in Hebrew does not refer to an immaterial part of you. Rather, “soul" means your whole self, including your body. “Strength" is an unusual word in Hebrew. It is normally translated as “very" and used to modify other words. For example, after Creation when God stepped back to reflect on His work, he declared that it was "very good" (Gen. 1:31 ). The word “very" is the word translated “strength” here. One helpful way to think about this word is to translate it as “resources." We should love God with all our capacities, including physical strength, relationships, and material possessions.

As one commentator put it, this verse is a call to love God from the inside out. Love God with our thoughts and feelings, with our bodies, and with all our resources. Our relationship with God is not simply about believing certain truths about God, although it includes that. Rather, it is about showing our love and devotion to Him with our whole self. We can show this kind of love because in Christ, “we love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

**Go Deeper**

What does it mean for us to love God wholly and completely? Which part of loving God in that way challenges you?

**Pray with Us**

Teach us to love You, according to today's Scripture, wholly and completely. Grant us by Your Spirit the ability to love God with our whole being. Jesus, our hearts belong to You!

# Our Daily Bread – 3/6/25

# NOT EASILY OFFENDED

A person holding a sign

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Read: PROVERBS 19:8-13**

**8**The one who gets wisdom loves life;  
    the one who cherishes understanding will soon prosper.

**9**A false witness will not go unpunished,  
    and whoever pours out lies will perish.

**10**It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury—  
    how much worse for a slave to rule over princes!

**11**A person’s wisdom yields patience;  
    it is to one’s glory to overlook an offense.

**12**A king’s rage is like the roar of a lion,  
    but his favor is like dew on the grass.

**13**A foolish child is a father’s ruin,  
    and a quarrelsome wife is like  
    the constant dripping of a leaky roof.

Sensible people earn respect by overlooking wrongs. PROVERBS 19:11 NLT

When I entered my church after several months of quarantine, I was excited to see members I hadn't seen in a while. I realized that some members, especially older ones, just wouldn't be back-some due to safety reasons and others, unfortunately, because they'd passed from this life. So I was quite excited when I spotted an older couple coming into the sanctuary and taking their normal seat behind me. I waved at them both. The man returned my greeting, while his wife stared at me without even smiling. I was hurt and wondered why. It was a few Sundays later that I observed the same woman (who hadn't returned my greeting) being helped by a friend who was showing her when to stand or sit-acting as her caregiver. My old church friend was apparently very sick and hadn't recognized me. I'm glad I didn't approach her or even get upset when she didn't return my enthusiastic greeting.

Proverbs offers a lot of advice for living wisely, and not being easily offended is one of its gems. In fact, it says "sensible people ... earn respect by overlooking wrongs" (19:11 NLT). Choosing not to get offended and learning to "control [our] temper" (v. 11 NLT) can bring us honor. It may require patience and "wisdom" (v. 8), but the rewards also are well worth getting over ourselves and choosing to love others.

**KATARA PATTON**

**Reflect and Pray**

When were you offended by someone's actions? When is it the right thing to overlook an offense?

God of mercy, thank You for overlooking the times I've offended You. Please give me the wisdom to do the same for others.

**INSIGHT**

God told Solomon, "I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be" (1 KINGS 3:12). Over time, Solomon authored many of the proverbs. His divine wisdom, however, didn't prevent him from great acts of foolishness. In Deuteronomy 17:16-17, God warned that when Israel had a king, he wasn't to multiply horses (a symbol of military security) or foreign wives (political alliances for security of the throne). The clear implication was that the king was to find his security in God-the one true king of Israel. Solomon foolishly ignored those warnings, acquiring so many horses that he needed to build cities for their keeping and care (1 KINGS 10:26). In addition, he accumulated seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines (11:3). These women turned Solomon's heart away from God (V.4). Due to Solomon's foolishness, God dealt with him in judgment (vv. 9-13).

**BILL CROWDER**

**God Calling – 3/6/25**

**Love and Laugh**

Work for Me, with Me, through Me. All work to last must be done in My Spirit. How silently My Spirit works. How gently and gradually souls are led into My Kingdom.

Love and Laughter form the plough that prepares the ground for the seed. Remember this. If the ground is hard, seed will not grow there.

Prepare the ground, and prepare it as I say.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." - Zechariah 4:6

**My Utmost for His Highest – 3/7/25**

**The Source of Abundant Joy**



In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. —[Romans 8:37](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+8%3A37)

Paul was speaking here of the things that might seem likely to separate a saint from the love of God. But the remarkable thing is that nothing can come between the love of God and a saint. The things Paul mentioned in this passage can and do disrupt the close fellowship of our soul with God and separate our natural life from Him. But none of them is able to come between the love of God and the soul of a saint on the spiritual level. The underlying foundation of the Christian faith is the undeserved, limitless miracle of the love of God that was exhibited on the Cross of Calvary; a love that is not earned and can never be. Paul said this is the reason that “in all these things we are more than conquerors.” We are super-victors with a joy that comes from experiencing the very things which look as if they are going to overwhelm us.

Huge waves that would frighten an ordinary swimmer produce a tremendous thrill for the surfer who has ridden them. Let’s apply that to our own circumstances. The things we try to avoid and fight against— tribulation, suffering, and persecution— are the very things that produce abundant joy in us. “We are more than conquerors through Him” “in all these things”; not in spite of them, but in the midst of them. A saint doesn’t know the joy of the Lord in spite of tribulation, but because of it. Paul said, “I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation” ([2 Corinthians 7:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+7:4)).

The undiminished radiance, which is the result of abundant joy, is not built on anything passing, but on the love of God that nothing can change. And the experiences of life, whether they are everyday events or terrifying ones, are powerless to “separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” ([Romans 8:39](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8:39)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Jesus Christ is always unyielding to my claim to my right to myself. The one essential element in all our Lord’s teaching about discipleship is abandon, no calculation, no trace of self-interest. Disciples Indeed, 395 L

**CCEL – 3/7/25**

Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name.—[ISA. 54:5.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.54.html#Isa.54.5)

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken . . . but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, . . . for the Lord delighteth in thee. And as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.—He hath sent me . . . to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness and in mercies.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

[Eph. 5:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.5.html" \l "Eph.5.32).[Isa. 62:4,5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.62.html#Isa.62.4). -[Isa. 61:1-3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.61.html#Isa.61.1).[Isa. 61:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.61.html#Isa.61.10).[Hos. 2:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hos.2.html#Hos.2.19).[Rom. 8:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html#Rom.8.35).

“Have faith in God.” [Mark 11:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.11.html" \l "Mark.11.22)

Faith is the foot of the soul by which it can march along the road of the commandments. Love can make the feet move more swiftly; but faith is the foot which carries the soul. Faith is the oil enabling the wheels of holy devotion and of earnest piety to move well; and without faith the wheels are taken from the chariot, and we drag heavily. With faith I can do all things; without faith I shall neither have the inclination nor the power to do anything in the service of God. If you would find the men who serve God the best, you must look for the men of the most faith. Little faith will save a man, but little faith cannot do great things for God. Poor Little-faith could not have fought “Apollyon;” it needed “Christian” to do that. Poor Little-faith could not have slain “Giant Despair;” it required “Great-heart's” arm to knock that monster down. Little faith will go to heaven most certainly, but it often has to hide itself in a nut-shell, and it frequently loses all but its jewels. Little-faith says, “It is a rough road, beset with sharp thorns, and full of dangers; I am afraid to go;” but Great-faith remembers the promise, “Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; as thy days, so shall thy strength be:” and so she boldly ventures. Little-faith stands desponding, mingling her tears with the flood; but Great-faith sings, “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee:” and she fords the stream at once. Would you be comfortable and happy? Would you enjoy religion? Would you have the religion of cheerfulness and not that of gloom? Then “have faith in God.” If you love darkness, and are satisfied to dwell in gloom and misery, then be content with little faith; but if you love the sunshine, and would sing songs of rejoicing, covet earnestly this best gift, “great faith.”

**Word Live – 3/7/25**

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# Today in the Word – 3/7/25

# No Place for Pride

**Read Deuteronomy 7:1-26**

**Driving Out the Nations**

**7**When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you— **2**and when the Lord your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%207%3A1-26&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5114a)] Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy. **3**Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, **4**for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods, and the Lord’s anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you. **5**This is what you are to do to them: Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%207%3A1-26&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5117b)] and burn their idols in the fire. **6**For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

**7**The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. **8**But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. **9**Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments. **10**But those who hate him he will repay to their face by destruction;  
    he will not be slow to repay to their face those who hate him.

**11**Therefore, take care to follow the commands, decrees and laws I give you today.

**12**If you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, then the Lord your God will keep his covenant of love with you, as he swore to your ancestors. **13**He will love you and bless you and increase your numbers. He will bless the fruit of your womb, the crops of your land—your grain, new wine and olive oil—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks in the land he swore to your ancestors to give you. **14**You will be blessed more than any other people; none of your men or women will be childless, nor will any of your livestock be without young. **15**The Lord will keep you free from every disease. He will not inflict on you the horrible diseases you knew in Egypt, but he will inflict them on all who hate you. **16**You must destroy all the peoples the Lord your God gives over to you. Do not look on them with pity and do not serve their gods, for that will be a snare to you.

**17**You may say to yourselves, “These nations are stronger than we are. How can we drive them out?” **18**But do not be afraid of them; remember well what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt. **19**You saw with your own eyes the great trials, the signs and wonders, the mighty hand and outstretched arm, with which the Lord your God brought you out. The Lord your God will do the same to all the peoples you now fear. **20**Moreover, the Lord your God will send the hornet among them until even the survivors who hide from you have perished. **21**Do not be terrified by them, for the Lord your God, who is among you, is a great and awesome God. **22**The Lord your God will drive out those nations before you, little by little. You will not be allowed to eliminate them all at once, or the wild animals will multiply around you. **23**But the Lord your God will deliver them over to you, throwing them into great confusion until they are destroyed. **24**He will give their kings into your hand, and you will wipe out their names from under heaven. No one will be able to stand up against you; you will destroy them. **25**The images of their gods you are to burn in the fire. Do not covet the silver and gold on them, and do not take it for yourselves, or you will be ensnared by it, for it is detestable to the Lord your God. **26**Do not bring a detestable thing into your house or you, like it, will be set apart for destruction. Regard it as vile and utterly detest it, for it is set apart for destruction.

**Footnotes**

1. [Deuteronomy 7:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%207%3A1-26&version=NIV#en-NIV-5114) The Hebrew term refers to the irrevocable giving over of things or persons to the Lord, often by totally destroying them; also in verse 26.
2. [Deuteronomy 7:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%207%3A1-26&version=NIV#en-NIV-5117) That is, wooden symbols of the goddess Asherah; here and elsewhere in Deuteronomy

He is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments. - Deuteronomy 7:9

When I was newly married, I worked as a Christian school teacher and finances were tight. One day at church, I shared some car trouble that we were dealing with simply as a way of

making conversation. After church, a friend offered to help us pay for our car repair. I was touched by the offer, but also a little humbled. It can be difficult to be on the receiving end of charity.

In Deuteronomy 7, God reminds Israel of an important truth, "The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples" (v. 7). God did not choose Israel because they had the best military, or because they were smarter, or more deserving. Rather, it was out of His sheer grace. Grace is difficult to understand rationally precisely because it is undeserved.

This truth should have helped keep Israel humble and encourage them. Their ability to defeat the Canaanites and take their inheritance did not depend upon them, but upon God. "But do not be afraid of them; remember well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt" (v. 18).

The apostle Paul reminds us of this truth, “Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong" (1 Cor. 1 :26-27). For followers of Christ there is no room for pride. God delights to use the weak, foolish, and insignificant to accomplish His mission to the world. So, if we want to boast, we should only "boast in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1:31).

**Go Deeper**

Can you think of other times God used weak or insignificant things (or people) for His glory? How should this encourage us?

**Pray with Us**

Father, again and again we see in the book of Deuteronomy how You taught Your people to walk in obedience before You. You require the same from us today. May we put aside our pride and surrender everything to You.

**Our Daily Bread – 3/7/25**

GIVE YOUR WORRIES TO JESUS,

A person with her arms out

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**Read: MATTHEW 6:25-27**

**Do Not Worry**

**25**“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? **26**Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? **27**Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=MATTHEW%206%3A25-27&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23310a)]?

**Footnotes**

1. [Matthew 6:27](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=MATTHEW%206%3A25-27&version=NIV#en-NIV-23310) Or *single cubit to your height*

Do not worry about your life. MATTHEW 6:25

Nancy feared the future, seeing only trouble. Her husband Tom had fainted three times during a hiking trip in rural Maine. But doctors at a small nearby hospital found nothing wrong. At a larger medical center, where doctors conducted additional tests, they also found no problem. "I was very afraid,'" Nancy stated. As her husband was released, she questioned the cardiologist one last time, asking, "What do we do now?" He gave her words of wisdom that forever changed her outlook. "Go live your life," he said. "It wasn't in a flippant way," Nancy recalls. “It was his advice to us."

Such guidance captures Jesus' instruction in the Sermon on the Mount. He said, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?" (MATTHEW 6:25). Such guidance doesn't say to ignore medical or other problems or symptoms. Instead, Christ simply said, "Do not worry" (V. 25). He then asked, "Can anyone of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" (V. 27).

The prophet Isaiah offered similar wisdom. "Say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, do not fear; your God will come’” (ISAIAH 35:4). For Nancy and Tom, they're inspired now to walk more than five miles a day. No longer walking with worry, they step out with joy.

**PATRICIA RAYBON**

**Reflect and Pray**

What's your greatest fear? How can giving your worry to Christ enhance your life?

If I'm feeling worried today, dear Jesus, please grant me confidence to give my fear to You as I live out Your peace.

**INSIGHT**

In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus promises to provide for our needs. One of the most dramatic examples of God's comprehensive care took place in the desert as the Israelites journeyed to the promised land. They were totally dependent on the divine Shepherd during their forty-year trek. And, just as God provides for the birds (MATTHEW 6:26) and clothes the flowers (vv. 28-29), He provided food for His people and clothing that didn't wear out (DEUTERONOMY 8:3·4)! Moses explained the purpose of the wilderness classroom: "He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna . . . to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD" (v. 3). Our physical cravings are meant to reveal a deeper, spiritual dependence on God whose words sustain us. We can spend our energy focused on His interests, knowing He'll take care of all our needs (MATTHEW 6:33).

**TIM LANIAK**

**God Calling – 3/7/25**

**Surprises**

Many there are who think that I test and train and bend to My Will. I, who bade the disciples take up the cross, I loved to prepare a feast for them by the lakeside - a little glad surprise, not a necessity, as the feeding of the multitude may have seemed. I loved to give the wine-gift at the marriage feast.

As you love to plan surprises for those who understand, and joy in them, so with Me. I love to plan them for those who see My Love and tender Joy in them.

Dear to the heart of My Father are those who see not only My tears, the tears of a Savior, but the smile, the joy-smile of a friend.

"Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant." - Psalm 35:27

**My Utmost for His Highest – 3/8/25**

**The Surrendered Life**



I have been crucified with Christ… —[Galatians 2:20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Galatians+2%3A20)

To become one with Jesus Christ, a person must be willing not only to give up sin, but also to surrender his whole way of looking at things. Being born again by the Spirit of God means that we must first be willing to let go before we can grasp something else. The first thing we must surrender is all of our pretense or deceit. What our Lord wants us to present to Him is not our goodness, honesty, or our efforts to do better, but real solid sin. Actually, that is all He can take from us. And what He gives us in exchange for our sin is real solid righteousness. But we must surrender all pretense that we are anything, and give up all our claims of even being worthy of God’s consideration.

Once we have done that, the Spirit of God will show us what we need to surrender next. Along each step of this process, we will have to give up our claims to our rights to ourselves. Are we willing to surrender our grasp on all that we possess, our desires, and everything else in our lives? Are we ready to be identified with the death of Jesus Christ?

We will suffer a sharp painful disillusionment before we fully surrender. When people really see themselves as the Lord sees them, it is not the terribly offensive sins of the flesh that shock them, but the awful nature of the pride of their own hearts opposing Jesus Christ. When they see themselves in the light of the Lord, the shame, horror, and desperate conviction hit home for them.

If you are faced with the question of whether or not to surrender, make a determination to go on through the crisis, surrendering all that you have and all that you are to Him. And God will then equip you to do all that He requires of you.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We all have the trick of saying—If only I were not where I am!—If only I had not got the kind of people I have to live with! If our faith or our religion does not help us in the conditions we are in, we have either a further struggle to go through, or we had better abandon that faith and religion.  The Shadow of an Agony, 1178 L

**CCEL – 3/8/25**

Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.—[ISA. 38:17.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.38.html" \l "Isa.38.17)

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.—I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.—The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

[Mic. 7:18,19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mic.7.html" \l "Mic.7.18).[Isa. 54:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.54.html" \l "Isa.54.7). -[Jer. 31:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.31.html" \l "Jer.31.34).[Psa. 32:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.32.html" \l "Ps.32.1). -[I John 1:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.1.html" \l "iJohn.1.7).

“We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” [Acts 14:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.14.html" \l "Acts.14.22)

God’s people have their trials. It was never designed by God, when he chose his people, that they should be an untried people. They were chosen in the furnace of affliction; they were never chosen to worldly peace and earthly joy. Freedom from sickness and the pains of mortality was never promised them; but when their Lord drew up the charter of privileges, he included chastisements amongst the things to which they should inevitably be heirs. Trials are a part of our lot; they were predestinated for us in Christ’s last legacy. So surely as the stars are fashioned by his hands, and their orbits fixed by him, so surely are our trials allotted to us: he has ordained their season and their place, their intensity and the effect they shall have upon us. Good men must never expect to escape troubles; if they do, they will be disappointed, for none of their predecessors have been without them. Mark the patience of Job; remember Abraham, for he had his trials, and by his faith under them, he became the “Father of the faithful.” Note well the biographies of all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and you shall discover none of those whom God made vessels of mercy, who were not made to pass through the fire of affliction. It is ordained of old that the cross of trouble should be engraved on every vessel of mercy, as the royal mark whereby the King’s vessels of honour are distinguished. But although tribulation is thus the path of God’s children, they have the comfort of knowing that their Master has traversed it before them; they have his presence and sympathy to cheer them, his grace to support them, and his example to teach them how to endure; and when they reach “the kingdom,” it will more than make amends for the “much tribulation” through which they passed to enter it.

**Word Live – 3/8/25**

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# Today in the Word – 3/8/25

# The Test of Success

**Read Deuteronomy 8:1-20**

**Do Not Forget the Lord**

**8**Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors. **2**Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. **3**He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. **4**Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years. **5**Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you.

**6**Observe the commands of the Lord your God, walking in obedience to him and revering him. **7**For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills; **8**a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; **9**a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills.

**10**When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. **11**Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. **12**Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, **13**and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, **14**then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. **15**He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. **16**He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you. **17**You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” **18**But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

**19**If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. **20**Like the nations the Lord destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the Lord your God.

Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.-Deuteronomy 8:3

After a rich young man walked away, Jesus reflected, "Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:23). There are many reasons for this. The wealthy may feel like they deserve what they have because of their hard work, intelligence, and wisdom. They may feel like they don't have many needs. There is a temptation of pride and self-sufficiency that comes with wealth.

As Israel was poised to enter the land of Canaan, Moses foresaw some temptations they would face. He warned Israel to remain thankful and dependent upon the lord, otherwise, “when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God" (vv. 12-14). Their wealth might give them amnesia and they would be tempted to think, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me" (v. 17).

The remedy was to remember. They needed to remember how the Lord provided for their every need in the wilderness. The Lord fed them with manna, sustained their provisions, and guided them (vv. 2-5). Their salvation from Egypt, survival in the desert, and victories over the Canaanites were due to the grace of God.

We can be tempted to allow the gifts that the Lord has provided for us-a job, family, or financial stability-to lead us to a sense of pride or entitlement. like Israel, we need to remember what the Lord has done. He achieved our salvation and redeemed us from our sin (Rom. 6:23). He sustains our very breath. Remember what He has done, rejoice in thanksgiving, and remain humbly dependent upon Him.

**Go Deeper**

Why can wealth or success become a stumbling block for us in our relationship with God? How can we prevent this?

**Pray with Us**

Lord, we marvel at Your miraculous provision for Israel's needs in the wilderness. It's humbling for us to realize that the same grace is available for us as well. We praise You and rejoice in Your salvation!

**Our Daily Bread – 3/8/25**

THE LIST IS LIFE

SATURDAY I MARCH 8

A person sitting at a desk

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**Read: NUMBERS 26:1-4**

**The Second Census**

**26**After the plague the Lord said to Moses and Eleazar son of Aaron, the priest, **2**“Take a census of the whole Israelite community by families—all those twenty years old or more who are able to serve in the army of Israel.” **3**So on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho, Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them and said, **4**“Take a census of the men twenty years old or more, as the Lord commanded Moses.”

**Read: NUMBERS 26:20-22**

These were the Israelites who came out of Egypt:

**20**The descendants of Judah by their clans were:

through Shelah, the Shelanite clan;

through Perez, the Perezite clan;

through Zerah, the Zerahite clan.

**21**The descendants of Perez were:

through Hezron, the Hezronite clan;

through Hamul, the Hamulite clan.

**22**These were the clans of Judah; those numbered were 76,500.

These were the Israelites who came out of Egypt. NUMBERS 26:4

Hunched over a manual typewriter, Itzhak Stern worked through the night, tapping out names-1,098 in all. The names comprised a list of Jewish workers protected from the Nazis by factory owner Oskar Schindler. Clutching the document, Stern declared, "The list is an absolute good. The list is life." Those named on its pages would survive the Holocaust. In 2012, it was estimated that the descendants of the survivors numbered 8,500.

The Bible contains its share of lists. We tend to skip them. Too many names; too much repetition. We might even say today's reading is', .. boring. "The descendants of Judah by their clans were: through Shelah, the Shelanite clan; through Perez, the Perezite clan." (NUMBERS 26:20). Who cares?

God cares! "These were the Israelites who came out of Egypt," says the historical record (v. 4). Soon the people would inhabit the land promised to them. And one day, Messiah would come from this very clan of Judah. The list is life, not only for the Jewish people but for all who trust in Jesus.

We know of Oskar Schindler's list from the powerful film Schindler's List and historical records. We know of God's great salvation from the story recorded for us in the Bible. As we read the Scriptures, may His Spirit show us the worth of even the lists. They have something to say to us too.

**TIM GUSTAFSON**

**Reflect and Pray**

What portions of the Bible are the most boring to you? How might you read even these sections with new eyes?

Dear God, please help me read the Bible carefully. May Your Spirit guide me to see the value in each verse.

Visit ODBU.org/SFl06 to gain the tools necessary to study the Bible.

**INSIGHT**

The Bible contains a variety of lists, including several genealogies. But rather than being boring data, they provide relevant information. Jewish genealogies typically don't include women, but five are included in Jesus' genealogy in Matthew 1: Mary, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Uriah's wife (Bathsheba). In addition, all except Mary were most likely gentiles. Some had histories that could have made them unmentionable in such a list. For example, Tamar slept with her father-in-law, Judah (GENESIS 38), and Rahab was a prostitute (JOSHUA 2:1). Yet by their inclusion, we see that God used imperfect, sinful people to fulfill His purposes. It's not surprising that we learn much from such lists, for 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

**ALYSON KIEDA**

**God Calling – 3/8/25**

**Heaven-Life**

The Joy of the Spring shall be yours in full measure. Revel in the earth's joy. Do not you think that Nature is weary, too, of her long months of travail? There will come back a wonderful joy, if you share in her joy now.

Nature is the embodied Spirit of My Thoughts of beauty for this world. Treat her as such - as truly My servant and messenger, as any saint who has ever lived. To realize this will bring to you both new life-joy. Share her joys and travails, and great blessings will be yours.

This is all-important, because it is not only believing certain things about Me that helps and heals, but knowing Me, sensing My Presence in a flower, My message in its beauty and perfume.

You can truly live a life not of earth - a heaven-life here and now. Joy - Joy – Joy

“The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle  is heard in our land.” – Song of Solomon 2:12

**My Utmost for His Highest – 3/9/25**

**Turning Back or Walking with Jesus?**



Do you also want to go away? —[John 6:67](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+6%3A67)

What a penetrating question! Our Lord’s words often hit home for us when He speaks in the simplest way. In spite of the fact that we know who Jesus is, He asks, “Do you also want to go away?” We must continually maintain an adventurous attitude toward Him, despite any potential personal risk.

“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more” ([John 6:66](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6:66)). They turned back from walking with Jesus; not into sin, but away from Him. Many people today are pouring their lives out and working for Jesus Christ, but are not really walking with Him. One thing God constantly requires of us is a oneness with Jesus Christ. After being set apart through sanctification, we should discipline our lives spiritually to maintain this intimate oneness. When God gives you a clear determination of His will for you, all your striving to maintain that relationship by some particular method is completely unnecessary. All that is required is to live a natural life of absolute dependence on Jesus Christ. Never try to live your life with God in any other way than His way. And His way means absolute devotion to Him. Showing no concern for the uncertainties that lie ahead is the secret of walking with Jesus.

Peter saw in Jesus only someone who could minister salvation to him and to the world. But our Lord wants us to be fellow laborers with Him.

In [John 6:70](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6:70) Jesus lovingly reminded Peter that he was chosen to go with Him. And each of us must answer this question for ourselves and no one else: “Do you also want to go away?”

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

God engineers circumstances to see what we will do. Will we be the children of our Father in heaven, or will we go back again to the meaner, common-sense attitude? Will we stake all and stand true to Him? “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” The crown of life means I shall see that my Lord has got the victory after all, even in me.  The Highest Good—The Pilgrim’s Song Book, 530 L

**CCEL – 3/9/25**

The living God giveth us richly all things to enjoy.—[I TIM. 6:17.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.6.html" \l "iTim.6.17)

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; . . . then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God: . . . for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.

Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.—They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them—There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

[Deut. 8:11,12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.8.html" \l "Deut.8.11),[14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.8.html" \l "Deut.8.14),[18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.8.html" \l "Deut.8.18).[Psa. 127:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.127.html" \l "Ps.127.1). -[Psa. 44:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.44.html" \l "Ps.44.3). -[Psa. 4:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.4.html" \l "Ps.4.6).

“Yea, he is altogether lovely.” [Song of Solomon 5:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html" \l "Song.5.16)

The superlative beauty of Jesus is all-attracting; it is not so much to be admired as to be loved. He is more than pleasant and fair, he is lovely. Surely the people of God can fully justify the use of this golden word, for he is the object of their warmest love, a love founded on the intrinsic excellence of his person, the complete perfection of his charms. Look, O disciples of Jesus, to your Master’s lips, and say, “Are they not most sweet?” Do not his words cause your hearts to burn within you as he talks with you by the way? Ye worshippers of Immanuel, look up to his head of much fine gold, and tell me, are not his thoughts precious unto you? Is not your adoration sweetened with affection as ye humbly bow before that countenance which is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars? Is there not a charm in his every feature, and is not his whole person fragrant with such a savour of his good ointments, that therefore the virgins love him? Is there one member of his glorious body which is not attractive?—one portion of his person which is not a fresh lodestone to our souls?—one office which is not a strong cord to bind your heart? Our love is not as a seal set upon his heart of love alone; it is fastened upon his arm of power also; nor is there a single part of him upon which it does not fix itself. We anoint his whole person with the sweet spikenard of our fervent love. His whole life we would imitate; his whole character we would transcribe. In all other beings we see some lack, in him there is all perfection. The best even of his favoured saints have had blots upon their garments and wrinkles upon their brows; he is nothing but loveliness. All earthly suns have their spots: the fair world itself hath its wilderness; we cannot love the whole of the most lovely thing; but Christ Jesus is gold without alloy-light without darkness—glory without cloud—“Yea, he is altogether lovely.”

**Word Live – 3/9/25**

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# Today in the Word – 3/9/25

# You Don't Deserve It .

**Read Deuteronomy 9:1-29**

**Not Because of Israel’s Righteousness**

**9**Hear, Israel: You are now about to cross the Jordan to go in and dispossess nations greater and stronger than you, with large cities that have walls up to the sky. **2**The people are strong and tall—Anakites! You know about them and have heard it said: “Who can stand up against the Anakites?” **3**But be assured today that the Lord your God is the one who goes across ahead of you like a devouring fire. He will destroy them; he will subdue them before you. And you will drive them out and annihilate them quickly, as the Lord has promised you.

**4**After the Lord your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, “The Lord has brought me here to take possession of this land because of my righteousness.” No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is going to drive them out before you. **5**It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the Lord your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **6**Understand, then, that it is not because of your righteousness that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people.

**The Golden Calf**

**7**Remember this and never forget how you aroused the anger of the Lord your God in the wilderness. From the day you left Egypt until you arrived here, you have been rebellious against the Lord. **8**At Horeb you aroused the Lord’s wrath so that he was angry enough to destroy you. **9**When I went up on the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that the Lord had made with you, I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights; I ate no bread and drank no water. **10**The Lord gave me two stone tablets inscribed by the finger of God. On them were all the commandments the Lord proclaimed to you on the mountain out of the fire, on the day of the assembly.

**11**At the end of the forty days and forty nights, the Lord gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant. **12**Then the Lord told me, “Go down from here at once, because your people whom you brought out of Egypt have become corrupt. They have turned away quickly from what I commanded them and have made an idol for themselves.”

**13**And the Lord said to me, “I have seen this people, and they are a stiff-necked people indeed! **14**Let me alone, so that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven. And I will make you into a nation stronger and more numerous than they.”

**15**So I turned and went down from the mountain while it was ablaze with fire. And the two tablets of the covenant were in my hands. **16**When I looked, I saw that you had sinned against the Lord your God; you had made for yourselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. You had turned aside quickly from the way that the Lord had commanded you. **17**So I took the two tablets and threw them out of my hands, breaking them to pieces before your eyes.

**18**Then once again I fell prostrate before the Lord for forty days and forty nights; I ate no bread and drank no water, because of all the sin you had committed, doing what was evil in the Lord’s sight and so arousing his anger. **19**I feared the anger and wrath of the Lord, for he was angry enough with you to destroy you. But again the Lord listened to me. **20**And the Lord was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him, but at that time I prayed for Aaron too. **21**Also I took that sinful thing of yours, the calf you had made, and burned it in the fire. Then I crushed it and ground it to powder as fine as dust and threw the dust into a stream that flowed down the mountain.

**22**You also made the Lord angry at Taberah, at Massah and at Kibroth Hattaavah.

**23**And when the Lord sent you out from Kadesh Barnea, he said, “Go up and take possession of the land I have given you.” But you rebelled against the command of the Lord your God. You did not trust him or obey him. **24**You have been rebellious against the Lord ever since I have known you.

**25**I lay prostrate before the Lord those forty days and forty nights because the Lord had said he would destroy you. **26**I prayed to the Lord and said, “Sovereign Lord, do not destroy your people, your own inheritance that you redeemed by your great power and brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. **27**Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Overlook the stubbornness of this people, their wickedness and their sin. **28**Otherwise, the country from which you brought us will say, ‘Because the Lord was not able to take them into the land he had promised them, and because he hated them, he brought them out to put them to death in the wilderness.’ **29**But they are your people, your inheritance that you brought out by your great power and your outstretched arm.”

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. -Ephesians 2:8-9

In an April 1963 magazine, a travel company ran an advertisement with this tagline: "Sit back. Relax. You deserve it." It was one of the first advertisements to try to sell its product by appealing to a sense of entitlement. Today this kind of language is ubiquitous. Our culture

has taught us to believe that our worth and value takes top priority.

In Deuteronomy 9, Moses had a very different message for the children of Israel. As they were poised to enter the Promised Land, he knew the people would be tempted to interpret their success wrongly. In chapter 8, Moses confronted the idea that they would be successful because of their own power and wisdom (8:17). Today, Moses confronts the temptation to think that God would give them the land because they were morally superior and deserved it.

Three times, Moses reminded the people, "It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going to take possession of the land" (9:5). Instead, they should remember how rebellious they had been toward God. Moses reminds them of their betrayal with the Golden Calf (vv. 7-21) and of their murmuring and unbelief in the wilderness (vv. 22-24). He concludes, "You have been rebellious against the LORD ever since I have known you" (v. 24)!

We too are the recipients of God's grace. We could not save ourselves from slavery to sin. We could not reconcile ourselves to God. But God made a way for us through the work of Jesus. As Paul reminded Titus, "'At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived, and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures . . . but when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy" (Titus 3:3-5).

**Go Deeper**

Are you ever tempted to think you deserve all that you have been given! Take time today to thank God for all He has done on your behalf.

**Pray with Us**

Almighty God, today's reading reminds us that all we are and all we have come from You. Help us cast aside any pride, sense of entitlement, or thinking too highly of ourselves. Thank You for Your mercy and grace!

# Our Daily Bread – 3/9/25

# RESTING IN CHRIST

A poster of a sleeping schedule

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Read: LUKE 10:38-41**

**At the Home of Martha and Mary**

**38**As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. **39**She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. **40**But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

**41**“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things,

“Martha, Martha," the lord answered, ·you are worried and upset about many things." LUKE 10:41

Several years ago, a study analyzed the link between teenage depression and the amount of sleep teens received each night. After reading the study. a young woman commented on the results: "I never seem to know when to stop-I push myself so hard that I end up making myself sick from lack of sleep and stress." Then she said she wanted to know what it really meant to manage her time to honor God. What was the difference between busyness and fruitfulness?

Being busy is no guarantee for being productive. faithful, or fruitful. Yet we might think that being busy is what's most important. In Luke 10:41, Jesus gently reminded Martha that she was “worried and upset about many things" and that her sister Mary's choice of sitting "at the Lord's feet" (V. 39)-a posture of discipleship-was the better choice.

In our desire to serve Christ, are we doing too much, thinking that He'll notice us more if we do more? Colossians 3:17 says "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the lord Jesus." However, it doesn't say to burn ourselves out in His name. In Psalm 46:10, we hear this reminder: "Be still, and know that I am God."

Let's take some time to slow down and spend time with Christ rather than focusing solely on our to-do list. Only then can we find true "rest for (our} souls" (MATTHEW 11:29).

**BRENT HACKETT**

**Reflect and Pray**

When have you been too busy to be faithful and fruitful? How can you find rest in Jesus to accomplish what He wants you to do?

Dear Jesus, please help me replace busyness with being still so I can know that You're God and my life can be fruitful.

**INSIGHT**

Luke 10:38-42 isn't the only place we read of Jesus interacting with Mary and Martha. In John 11, Christ once again found His way to Bethany-but not for dinner. Lazarus was sick, and his sisters sent word to Jesus (VV.1-3). In Luke, the setting was domestic (10:40); in John, the situation involved distress and death (l1:3,17). However, certain dynamics were present in both situations. In Luke 10:38-40, Martha is distracted with serving. In John 11:20-22, she's distressed with grief. But in both cases, Christ put things into perspective (LUKE 10:41-42); JOHN 11:23-26). As for Mary, in Luke 10, she's sitting at Jesus' feet "listening to what he said" (v. 39). In John 11, she's at His feet again but this time in desperate grief (V. 32). Christ provides the ultimate hope in our grief: "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die and whoever lives by believing in me will never die" (vv.25-26).

**ARTHUR JACKSON**

**God Calling – 3/9/25**

**Nothing Is Small**

Nothing is small to God. In His sight a sparrow is of greater value than a palace, one kindly word of more importance than a statesman's speech.

It is the Life in all that has value, and the quality of the life that determines the value. I came to give Eternal Life.

"And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed…they took up  of the broken meat that was left seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand." - Mark 8:7-9

**My Utmost for His Highest – 3/10/25**

**Being an Example of His Message**



Preach the word! —[2 Timothy 4:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Timothy+4%3A2)

We are not saved only to be instruments for God, but to be His sons and daughters. He does not turn us into spiritual agents but into spiritual messengers, and the message must be a part of us. The Son of God was His own message— “The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life” ([John 6:63](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6:63)). As His disciples, our lives must be a holy example of the reality of our message. Even the natural heart of the unsaved will serve if called upon to do so, but it takes a heart broken by conviction of sin, baptized by the Holy Spirit, and crushed into submission to God’s purpose to make a person’s life a holy example of God’s message.

There is a difference between giving a testimony and preaching. A preacher is someone who has received the call of God and is determined to use all his energy to proclaim God’s truth. God takes us beyond our own aspirations and ideas for our lives, and molds and shapes us for His purpose, just as He worked in the disciples’ lives after Pentecost. The purpose of Pentecost was not to teach the disciples something, but to make them the incarnation of what they preached so that they would literally become God’s message in the flesh. “…you shall be witnesses to Me…” ([Acts 1:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+1:8)).

Allow God to have complete liberty in your life when you speak. Before God’s message can liberate other people, His liberation must first be real in you. Gather your material carefully, and then allow God to “set your words on fire” for His glory.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

When a man’s heart is right with God the mysterious utterances of the Bible are spirit and life to him. Spiritual truth is discernible only to a pure heart, not to a keen intellect. It is not a question of profundity of intellect, but of purity of heart. Bringing Sons Unto Glory, 231 L

**CCEL – 3/10/25**

The Lord will provide.—[GEN. 22:14.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.22.html" \l "Gen.22.14)

God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear.—There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.—Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death.

My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.—He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.—The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusteth in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth: and with my song will I praise him.

[Gen. 22:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.22.html" \l "Gen.22.8).[Isa. 59:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.59.html" \l "Isa.59.1). -[Rom. 11:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.11.html" \l "Rom.11.26).[Psa. 146:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.146.html" \l "Ps.146.5). -[Psa. 33:18,19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.33.html" \l "Ps.33.18).[Phi. 4:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.19). -[Heb. 13:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.5). -[Psa. 28:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.28.html" \l "Ps.28.7).

“In my prosperity I said I shall never be moved.” [Psalm 30:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.30.html" \l "Ps.30.6)

“Moab settled on his lees, he hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel.” Give a man wealth; let his ships bring home continually rich freights; let the winds and waves appear to be his servants to bear his vessels across the bosom of the mighty deep; let his lands yield abundantly: let the weather be propitious to his crops; let uninterrupted success attend him; let him stand among men as a successful merchant; let him enjoy continued health; allow him with braced nerve and brilliant eye to march through the world, and live happily; give him the buoyant spirit; let him have the song perpetually on his lips; let his eye be ever sparkling with joy—and the natural consequence of such an easy state to any man, let him be the best Christian who ever breathed, will be presumption; even David said, “I shall never be moved;” and we are not better than David, nor half so good. Brother, beware of the smooth places of the way; if you are treading them, or if the way be rough, thank God for it. If God should always rock us in the cradle of prosperity; if we were always dandled on the knees of fortune; if we had not some stain on the alabaster pillar; if there were not a few clouds in the sky; if we had not some bitter drops in the wine of this life, we should become intoxicated with pleasure, we should dream “we stand;” and stand we should, but it would be upon a pinnacle; like the man asleep upon the mast, each moment we should be in jeopardy.

We bless God, then, for our afflictions; we thank him for our changes; we extol his name for losses of property; for we feel that had he not chastened us thus, we might have become too secure. Continued worldly prosperity is a fiery trial.

“Afflictions, though they seem severe, In mercy oft are sent.”

**Word Live – 3/10/25**

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# Today in the Word – 3/10/25

# Transformed by Grace

**Read Deuteronomy 10:1-22**

**Tablets Like the First Ones**

**10**At that time the Lord said to me, “Chisel out two stone tablets like the first ones and come up to me on the mountain. Also make a wooden ark.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%2010%3A1-22&version=NIV#fen-NIV-5188a)] **2**I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. Then you are to put them in the ark.”

**3**So I made the ark out of acacia wood and chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones, and I went up on the mountain with the two tablets in my hands. **4**The Lord wrote on these tablets what he had written before, the Ten Commandments he had proclaimed to you on the mountain, out of the fire, on the day of the assembly. And the Lord gave them to me. **5**Then I came back down the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I had made, as the Lord commanded me, and they are there now.

**6**(The Israelites traveled from the wells of Bene Jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died and was buried, and Eleazar his son succeeded him as priest. **7**From there they traveled to Gudgodah and on to Jotbathah, a land with streams of water. **8**At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and to pronounce blessings in his name, as they still do today. **9**That is why the Levites have no share or inheritance among their fellow Israelites; the Lord is their inheritance, as the Lord your God told them.)

**10**Now I had stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights, as I did the first time, and the Lord listened to me at this time also. It was not his will to destroy you. **11**“Go,” the Lord said to me, “and lead the people on their way, so that they may enter and possess the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.”

**Fear the Lord**

**12**And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, **13**and to observe the Lord’s commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

**14**To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. **15**Yet the Lord set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations—as it is today. **16**Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. **17**For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. **18**He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. **19**And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt. **20**Fear the Lord your God and serve him. Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name. **21**He is the one you praise; he is your God, who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes. **22**Your ancestors who went down into Egypt were seventy in all, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky.

**Footnotes**

1. [Deuteronomy 10:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy%2010%3A1-22&version=NIV#en-NIV-5188) That is, a chest

For the LORD your God is God of gods . .. mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. - Deuteronomy 10:17

Have you ever been given a second chance? At a church I pastored, a man came to faith in Christ later in life. Afterward, he reconnected with his ex-wife. After seeing the change in

her husband's life, she agreed to get remarried, and they have enjoyed many more years together.

As Deuteronomy 10 opens, Moses is carving two new tablets, taking them up the mountain, where God would rewrite the Ten Commandments on them (VV. 1-5). God was giving Israel a second chance. He was not giving up on them after they worshiped the Golden Calf. Instead, He renewed His covenant commitment with them.

Forgiveness like this is stunning and required a response. Moses reminded Israel that “to the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. Yet the LORD set his affection on your ancestors . .. do not be stiff-necked any longer" (vv. 14-16). The grace they had been given should transform them.

One way to show this transformation was to model their character after God's. They were -called to be like the Lord. They should defend the orphan, widow, and resident foreigner, because that is what the Lord had done (v. 18). Israel should help foreigners, because "'you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt" (vv. 16-19). Their faith in God would be demonstrated by how they treated the vulnerable. As they had experienced God's grace, they should extend grace to others.

We, too, have experienced God's grace and forgiveness. God's grace should work a change in us. Paul reminded the church in Corinth, “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory" (2 Cor. 3:18).

**Go Deeper**

What was stunning about the second chance that God gave His people? How does His grace transform our lives today?

**Pray with Us**

Loving Lord, may we heed the words of Moses in today's passage and strive to “not be stiff-necked any longer" (Deut. 10:16). May we come closer to You in our struggles, flaws, and weaknesses.

**Our Daily Bread – 3/10/25**

WORKING TOGETHER FOR JESUS

A white building with a cross on top

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**Read: NEHEMIAH 4:1-9**

**Opposition to the Rebuilding**

**4**[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=NEHEMIAH%204%3A1-9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-12361a)]When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, **2**and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, “What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?”

**3**Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, “What they are building—even a fox climbing up on it would break down their wall of stones!”

**4**Hear us, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insults back on their own heads. Give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. **5**Do not cover up their guilt or blot out their sins from your sight, for they have thrown insults in the face of[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=NEHEMIAH%204%3A1-9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-12365b)] the builders.

**6**So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

**7**But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem’s walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry. **8**They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. **9**But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

**Footnotes**

1. [Nehemiah 4:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=NEHEMIAH%204%3A1-9&version=NIV#en-NIV-12361) In Hebrew texts 4:1-6 is numbered 3:33-38, and 4:7-23 is numbered 4:1-17.
2. [Nehemiah 4:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=NEHEMIAH%204%3A1-9&version=NIV#en-NIV-12365) Or *have aroused your anger before*

We rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart. NEHEMIAH 4:6

During a trip to Brazil with a short-term missions team, we helped construct a church building in the Amazon jungle. On the foundation, already laid, we assembled the various parts of the church like a giant LEGO set: supporting columns, concrete walls, windows, steel beams for the roof, and tiles on the roof. Then we painted the walls.

Some people were concerned because they wondered if we could build the church in time during monsoon season. But by God's grace, the intense rain held off. With help from a few locals and despite various obstacles, we got the job done in record time.

When Nehemiah and the Israelites returned from exile to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, they faced many obstacles. When their enemies found out what they were doing, they were furious and insulted them (NEHEMIAH 4:1-3). But Nehemiah prayed and the people persevered together: "We rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart" (V. 6). When their foes threatened to attack, the Israelites prayed and kept guard as they worked (vv. 7-23). They rebuilt the wall in fifty-two days.

Sometimes we're faced with a daunting task. Obstacles appear in our way, and we and our brothers and sisters in Christ can lose hope. But times like this can be a triumphant moment with God's help. Trust Him to hold off the rainstorms and look to Him to overcome.

**NANCY GAVILANES**

**Reflect and Pray**

Why is it hard to live in unity? How can you work together with others?

Dear God, please help me to seek unity with other believers in Jesus.

For further study. read Missing the Mission: Disciples in an Age of Abundance at DiscoverODB.org.

**INSIGHT**

Nehemiah is a gripping account of inspiring leadership during intense opposition. The Bible introduces us to other heroic figures during this time of exile and restoration. Daniel was betrayed by rival advisors but survived a den of lions (DANIEL 6). His three Jewish friends were also betrayed yet endured a burning furnace (3:8·25). Esther stood up to a genocide planned by Haman, "the most powerful official in the empire" (ESTHER 3:1 NLT; SEE CHS. 4-8). In a period when Israel wondered if they'd ever have security in their dispersion or in their homeland, God provided hope. He inspired courageous leaders and supernaturally protected His people by turning the tables on their enemies.

**TIM LANIAK**

**God Calling – 3/10/25**

**Fruit of Joy**

You have to hush the heart and bid all your senses be still before you can be attuned to receive Heaven's music.

Your five senses are your means of communication with the material world, the links between your real Spirit-Life and the material manifestations around you, but you must sever all connection with them, when you wish to hold Spirit-communication. They will hinder, not help.

See the good in everybody. Love the good in them. See your unworthiness compared with their worth. Love, laugh, make the world, your little world, happy.

As the ripples caused by a flung stone stir the surface of a whole pond, so your joy-making shall spread in ever-widening circles, beyond all your knowledge, all anticipation. Joy in Me. Such Joy is eternal.

Centuries after, it is still bearing Joy's precious fruit.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." - John 15:11