# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/29/22

# Our Lord’s Surprise Visits



You also be ready… —[Luke 12:40](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+12%3A40)

A Christian worker’s greatest need is a readiness to face Jesus Christ at any and every turn. This is not easy, no matter what our experience has been. This battle is not against sin, difficulties, or circumstances, but against being so absorbed in our service to Jesus Christ that we are not ready to face Jesus Himself at every turn. The greatest need is not facing our beliefs or doctrines, or even facing the question of whether or not we are of any use to Him, but the need is to face Him.

Jesus rarely comes where we expect Him; He appears where we least expect Him, and always in the most illogical situations. The only way a servant can remain true to God is to be ready for the Lord’s surprise visits. This readiness will not be brought about by service, but through intense spiritual reality, expecting Jesus Christ at every turn. This sense of expectation will give our life the attitude of childlike wonder He wants it to have. If we are going to be ready for Jesus Christ, we have to stop being religious. In other words, we must stop using religion as if it were some kind of a lofty lifestyle— we must be spiritually real.

If you are avoiding the call of the religious thinking of today’s world, and instead are “looking unto Jesus” ([Hebrews 12:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12:2)), setting your heart on what He wants, and thinking His thoughts, you will be considered impractical and a daydreamer. But when He suddenly appears in the work of the heat of the day, you will be the only one who is ready. You should trust no one, and even ignore the finest saint on earth if he blocks your sight of Jesus Christ.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

A fanatic is one who entrenches himself in invincible ignorance. Baffled to Fight Better, 59 R

# CCEL – 3/29/22

**Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.**—[MATT. 25:34.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.25.html" \l "Matt.25.34)

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.—Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?—Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me.—God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.—There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.—He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

[Luke 12:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.12.html" \l "Luke.12.32). -[Jas. 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.2.html" \l "Jas.2.5). -[Rom. 8:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.17).[John 16:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html" \l "John.16.27). -[Heb. 11:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.11.html" \l "Heb.11.16).[Rev. 21:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.21.html" \l "Rev.21.7)-[II Tim. 4:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.4.html" \l "iiTim.4.8). -[Phi. 1:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.1.html" \l "Phil.1.6).

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” [Hebrews 5:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.5.html" \l "Heb.5.8)

We are told that the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering, therefore we who are sinful, and who are far from being perfect, must not wonder if we are called to pass through suffering too. Shall the head be crowned with thorns, and shall the other members of the body be rocked upon the dainty lap of ease? Must Christ pass through seas of his own blood to win the crown, and are we to walk to heaven dryshod in silver slippers? No, our Master’s experience teaches us that suffering is necessary, and the true-born child of God must not, would not, escape it if he might. But there is one very comforting thought in the fact of Christ’s “being made perfect through suffering”—it is, that he can have complete sympathy with us. “He is not an high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” In this sympathy of Christ we find a sustaining power. One of the early martyrs said, “I can bear it all, for Jesus suffered, and he suffers in me now; he sympathizes with me, and this makes me strong.” Believer, lay hold of this thought in all times of agony. Let the thought of Jesus strengthen you as you follow in his steps. Find a sweet support in his sympathy; and remember that, to suffer is an honourable thing—to suffer for Christ is glory. The apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to do this. Just so far as the Lord shall give us grace to suffer for Christ, to suffer with Christ, just so far does he honour us. The jewels of a Christian are his afflictions. The regalia of the kings whom God hath anointed are their troubles, their sorrows, and their griefs. Let us not, therefore, shun being honoured. Let us not turn aside from being exalted. Griefs exalt us, and troubles lift us up. “If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.”

# Word Live – 3/29/22

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

# Scripture Union – 3/29/22

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# Today in the Word – 3/29/22

# Huldah: Revival Comes!

**Read:** [**2 Chronicles 34:1–33**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3a1%e2%80%9333)

### **Josiah’s Reforms**

34 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. 2He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and followed the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.

3In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David. In his twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of high places, Asherah poles and idols. 4Under his direction the altars of the Baals were torn down; he cut to pieces the incense altars that were above them, and smashed the Asherah poles and the idols. These he broke to pieces and scattered over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. 5He burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and so he purged Judah and Jerusalem. 6In the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim and Simeon, as far as Naphtali, and in the ruins around them, 7he tore down the altars and the Asherah poles and crushed the idols to powder and cut to pieces all the incense altars throughout Israel. Then he went back to Jerusalem.

8In the eighteenth year of Josiah’s reign, to purify the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah and Maaseiah the ruler of the city, with Joah son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the temple of the Lord his God.

9They went to Hilkiah the high priest and gave him the money that had been brought into the temple of God, which the Levites who were the gatekeepers had collected from the people of Manasseh, Ephraim and the entire remnant of Israel and from all the people of Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10Then they entrusted it to the men appointed to supervise the work on the Lord’s temple. These men paid the workers who repaired and restored the temple. 11They also gave money to the carpenters and builders to purchase dressed stone, and timber for joists and beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah had allowed to fall into ruin.

12The workers labored faithfully. Over them to direct them were Jahath and Obadiah, Levites descended from Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, descended from Kohath. The Levites—all who were skilled in playing musical instruments— 13had charge of the laborers and supervised all the workers from job to job. Some of the Levites were secretaries, scribes and gatekeepers.

### **The Book of the Law Found**

14While they were bringing out the money that had been taken into the temple of the Lord, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the Lord that had been given through Moses. 15Hilkiah said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the Book of the Law in the temple of the Lord.” He gave it to Shaphan.

16Then Shaphan took the book to the king and reported to him: “Your officials are doing everything that has been committed to them. 17They have paid out the money that was in the temple of the Lord and have entrusted it to the supervisors and workers.” 18Then Shaphan the secretary informed the king, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.

19When the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his robes. 20He gave these orders to Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-11954a)] Shaphan the secretary and Asaiah the king’s attendant: 21“Go and inquire of the Lord for me and for the remnant in Israel and Judah about what is written in this book that has been found. Great is the Lord’s anger that is poured out on us because those who have gone before us have not kept the word of the Lord; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written in this book.”

22Hilkiah and those the king had sent with him[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-11956b)] went to speak to the prophet Huldah, who was the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-11956c)] the son of Hasrah,[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-11956d)] keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem, in the New Quarter.

23She said to them, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Tell the man who sent you to me, 24‘This is what the Lord says: I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people—all the curses written in the book that has been read in the presence of the king of Judah. 25Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods and aroused my anger by all that their hands have made,[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-11959e)] my anger will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched.’ 26Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says concerning the words you heard: 27Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard what he spoke against this place and its people, and because you humbled yourself before me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the Lord. 28Now I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place and on those who live here.’”

So they took her answer back to the king.

29Then the king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 30He went up to the temple of the Lord with the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the Levites—all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the Lord. 31The king stood by his pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the Lord—to follow the Lord and keep his commands, statutes and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, and to obey the words of the covenant written in this book.

32Then he had everyone in Jerusalem and Benjamin pledge themselves to it; the people of Jerusalem did this in accordance with the covenant of God, the God of their ancestors.

33Josiah removed all the detestable idols from all the territory belonging to the Israelites, and he had all who were present in Israel serve the Lord their God. As long as he lived, they did not fail to follow the Lord, the God of their ancestors.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [2 Chronicles 34:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#en-NIV-11954) Also called Akbor son of Micaiah
2. [2 Chronicles 34:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#en-NIV-11956) One Hebrew manuscript, Vulgate and Syriac; most Hebrew manuscripts do not have had sent with him.
3. [2 Chronicles 34:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#en-NIV-11956) Also called Tikvah
4. [2 Chronicles 34:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#en-NIV-11956) Also called Harhas
5. [2 Chronicles 34:25](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+34%3A1%E2%80%9333+&version=NIV#en-NIV-11959) Or by everything they have done

Imagine how it must have felt to experience the Great Awakening, a series of 18th-century revivals that spread through the American colonies under the preaching of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. Entire cities were trans- formed by the gospel!

Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?Psalm 85:6

Today’s passage describes the reign of Josiah, the eight-year-old king of Judah. Josiah ruled for 31 years and “did what was right in the eyes of the LORD” (v. 2). As a young king, he purged Judah of idols, tearing down the altars of Baal and smashing the Asherah poles. He even burned the bones of the false priests.

Then, in his eighteenth year, he set out to repair the temple of the Lord. Workers were hired. Joists, beams, and stone were acquired. They weren’t long into the project, though, when Hilkiah made a remarkable discovery—the Book of the Law of the Lord (likely Deuteronomy). Hilkiah gave it to Shaphan the secretary, who took it to the king.

When Shaphan read the law out loud, the king tore his robes. He was in great distress over the sin of the people and sent a delegation to find out what the Lord required. Hilkiah and his men went to Huldah the prophetess, who shared an immediate and ominous word from the Lord. Disaster would come on the place and its people. Because of their idolatry, the Lord’s anger would be poured out.

However, Huldah had more to say. Because Josiah’s heart was humble, God would spare him from the judgment by calling him home. Josiah gathered all the people at the temple and read the Book of the Law to them. The king renewed the people’s covenant with the Lord. Judah followed the Lord as long as Josiah was alive.

**Apply the Word**

Today’s devotional is a reminder that we should be praying for revival— in our church, our community, our country . . . even in our homes. Don’t just make this the prayer for one day but make it a repeating plea to God in the days and months ahead.

### **Pray with Us**

God, we pray for revival in Your church. Stir leaders and laymen with deep, enduring passion for Your Word. Use our fervent faith to impact our communities and our country with the truth. Bring many to salvation!

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/29/22

# Past the Boundaries of Knowing

 **Read:** [**2 Corinthians 4:7–18**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%204.7%E2%80%9318)

7But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. 12So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

13It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+4%3A7%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28873a)] Since we have that same spirit of[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+4%3A7%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28873b)] faith, we also believe and therefore speak, 14because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. 15All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

16Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [2 Corinthians 4:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+4%3A7%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#en-NIV-28873) Psalm 116:10 (see Septuagint)
2. [2 Corinthians 4:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+4%3A7%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#en-NIV-28873) Or Spirit-given

We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. [2 Corinthians 4:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%204.18)

It was a hard day when my husband found out that, like so many others, he too would soon be furloughed from employment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We believed that God would meet our basic needs, but the uncertainty of how that would happen was still terrifying.

As I processed my jumbled emotions, I found myself revisiting a favorite poem by sixteenth-century reformer John of the Cross. Entitled “I Went In, I Knew Not Where,” the poem depicts the wonder to be found in a journey of surrender, when, going “past the boundaries of knowing,” we learn to “discern the Divine in all its guises.” And so that’s what my husband and I tried to do during this season: to turn our focus from what we could control and understand to the unexpected, mysterious, and beautiful ways God can be found all around us.

The apostle Paul invited believers to a journey from the seen to the unseen, from outward to inward realities, and from temporary struggles to the “eternal glory that far outweighs them all” ([2 Corinthians 4:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%204.17)).

Paul didn’t urge this because he lacked compassion for their struggles. He knew it would be through letting go of what they could understand that they could experience the comfort, joy, and hope they so desperately needed (vv. 10, 15–16). They could know the wonder of Christ’s life making all things new.

By:  [Monica La Rose](https://odb.org/author/monicalarose/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When have you experienced God’s glory in ways you couldn’t understand? In what areas of your life might you experience God beyond the “boundaries of knowing”?

Loving God, there’s so much heartbreak and uncertainty in our world. Help me to learn to follow You past what I can understand to the wonder of Your life breathing new life all around me.

#### **Insight**

In fulfilling his call to preach the gospel, Paul endured great dangers, persecutions, and hardships ([1 Corinthians 4:9–13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%204.9%E2%80%9313); [2 Corinthians 1:8–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%201.8%E2%80%939); [6:4–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Corinthians%206.4%E2%80%9310); [11:23–29](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Corinthians%2011.23%E2%80%9329)). He chose to see these as “light and momentary troubles” achieving “an eternal glory” ([2 Corinthians 4:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%204.17)). Paul persevered, energized by God’s mercy (v. 1), the greatness of the gospel (vv. 2–6), and the power of Christ’s resurrected life (vv. 7–14). His confident refrain is, “We do not lose heart” (vv. 1, 16). Such confidence isn’t rooted in himself, but in God’s “all-surpassing power” (v. 7) and all-sufficient grace (12:9).

By: [**K. T. Sim**](https://odb.org/author/ktsim/)

# God Calling – 3/29/22

# A Life Apart

I reward your seeking with My Presence. Rejoice and be glad. I am your God. Courage and joy will conquer all troubles. First things first.

Seek Me, love Me, joy in Me. I am your Guide. No perils can affright you, no discipline exhaust you. Persevere. Can you hold on in My strength? I need you more than you need Me. Struggle through this time for My sake. Initiation precedes all real work and success for Me.

Are you ready to live a life apart? Apart with Me? In the world and yet apart with Me? Going forth from your secret times of communion to rescue and save?

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. - Jeremiah 29:13

# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/30/22

# Holiness or Hardness Toward God?



He…wondered that there was no intercessor… —[Isaiah 59:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Isaiah+59%3A16)

The reason many of us stop praying and become hard toward God is that we only have an emotional interest in prayer. It sounds good to say that we pray, and we read books on prayer which tell us that prayer is beneficial— that our minds are quieted and our souls are uplifted when we pray. But Isaiah implied in this verse that God is amazed at such thoughts about prayer.

Worship and intercession must go together; one is impossible without the other. Intercession means raising ourselves up to the point of getting the mind of Christ regarding the person for whom we are praying (see [Philippians 2:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+2:5)). Instead of worshiping God, we recite speeches to God about how prayer is supposed to work. Are we worshiping God or disputing Him when we say, “But God, I just don’t see how you are going to do this”? This is a sure sign that we are not worshiping. When we lose sight of God, we become hard and dogmatic. We throw our petitions at His throne and dictate to Him what we want Him to do. We don’t worship God, nor do we seek to conform our minds to the mind of Christ. And if we are hard toward God, we will become hard toward other people.

Are we worshiping God in a way that will raise us up to where we can take hold of Him, having such intimate contact with Him that we know His mind about the ones for whom we pray? Are we living in a holy relationship with God, or have we become hard and dogmatic?

Do you find yourself thinking that there is no one interceding properly? Then be that person yourself. Be a person who worships God and lives in a holy relationship with Him. Get involved in the real work of intercession, remembering that it truly is work— work that demands all your energy, but work which has no hidden pitfalls. Preaching the gospel has its share of pitfalls, but intercessory prayer has none whatsoever.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Wherever the providence of God may dump us down, in a slum, in a shop, in the desert, we have to labour along the line of His direction. Never allow this thought—“I am of no use where I am,” because you certainly can be of no use where you are not! Wherever He has engineered your circumstances, pray. So Send I You, 1325 L

# CCEL – 3/30/22

**Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide.**—[GEN. 24:63.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.24.html" \l "Gen.24.63)

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?—The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.—This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.—My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

[Psa. 19:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.19.html" \l "Ps.19.14).[Psa. 8:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.8.html" \l "Ps.8.3). -[Psa. 111:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.111.html" \l "Ps.111.2).[Psa. 1:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.1.html" \l "Ps.1.1). -[Josh. 1:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Josh.1.html" \l "Josh.1.8). -[Psa. 63:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.63.html" \l "Ps.63.5).

“He was numbered with the transgressors.” [Isaiah 53:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.12)

Why did Jesus suffer himself to be enrolled amongst sinners? This wonderful condescension was justified by many powerful reasons. In such a character he could the better become their advocate. In some trials there is an identification of the counsellor with the client, nor can they be looked upon in the eye of the law as apart from one another. Now, when the sinner is brought to the bar, Jesus appears there himself. He stands to answer the accusation. He points to his side, his hands, his feet, and challenges Justice to bring anything against the sinners whom he represents; he pleads his blood, and pleads so triumphantly, being numbered with them and having a part with them, that the Judge proclaims, “Let them go their way; deliver them from going down into the pit, for he hath found a ransom.” Our Lord Jesus was numbered with the transgressors in order that they might feel their hearts drawn towards him. Who can be afraid of one who is written in the same list with us? Surely we may come boldly to him, and confess our guilt. He who is numbered with us cannot condemn us. Was he not put down in the transgressor’s list that we might be written in the red roll of the saints? He was holy, and written among the holy; we were guilty, and numbered among the guilty; he transfers his name from yonder list to this black indictment, and our names are taken from the indictment and written in the roll of acceptance, for there is a complete transfer made between Jesus and his people. All our estate of misery and sin Jesus has taken; and all that Jesus has comes to us. His righteousness, his blood, and everything that he hath he gives us as our dowry. Rejoice, believer, in your union to him who was numbered among the transgressors; and prove that you are truly saved by being manifestly numbered with those who are new creatures in him.

# Word Live – 3/30/22

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# Scripture Union – 3/30/22

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# Today in the Word – 3/30/22

# Job's Wife: The Path Through Pain

**Read:** [**Job 2:1–13**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+2%3a1%e2%80%9313)

2 On another day the angels[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+2%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-12893a)] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him. 2And the Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?”

Satan answered the Lord, “From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.”

3Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.”

4“Skin for skin!” Satan replied. “A man will give all he has for his own life. 5But now stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face.”

6The Lord said to Satan, “Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.”

7So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. 8Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes.

9His wife said to him, “Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!”

10He replied, “You are talking like a foolish[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+2%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-12902b)] woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?”

In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

11When Job’s three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him. 12When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. 13Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Job 2:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+2%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#en-NIV-12893) Hebrew the sons of God
2. [Job 2:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+2%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#en-NIV-12902) The Hebrew word rendered foolish denotes moral deficiency.

There are many different ways we can think about our spiritual growth. We can focus on the disciplines needed to deepen our understanding of and connection to God. We can consider the journey by stages and describe each step with clear characteristics. But any discussion on spiritual growth involves the subject of pain.

Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble? Job 2:10

Pain is a universal human reality and a key component of our spiritual development. Scripture tells us that God allows pain in our lives for many different reasons: as discipline (Heb. 12); to unify the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:26); to build empathy (2 Cor. 1:3–8); to drive us to dependency (Ps. 34:18); to give voice to the gospel and glory to God (1 Peter 4). Jesus’ suffering was unique, serving as the only sacrifice that God accepts as payment for sin (Heb. 9:26). But we may be called to follow His example and suffer for Jesus’ sake. In such cases, suffering is not a sacrifice for sin but an expression of love for God and a demonstration of our faith (Phil. 1:29).

By chapter 2, Job and his wife have already endured unspeakable pain (see Job 1). They had no time to recover from the traumatic loss, when Satan asked God for another opportunity to test Job—by striking his bones and flesh. God agreed, and Job’s body was afflicted with painful sores. He sat, scraping the blisters with broken pottery.

This was too much for Job’s wife. Rather than supporting Job, she added to his problems. She chided him about his faithfulness to the Lord and challenged him to curse God and die. Job called her suggestion foolish and held to his faith (v. 10).

**Apply the Word**

It’s possible to come through pain stronger and wiser and more compassionate, loving God and others more deeply than we did before. If you are moving through pain, seek the support you need to navigate with grace. Ask God for the wisdom to come alongside those in your life who are facing pain.

### **Pray with Us**

Commune with us in our pain, Lord God; let us hear Your still, small voice reassuring us that You are good. Give us something to hold onto when pain overwhelms us. Our hope is in Your love, purpose, and promises.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/30/22

# God Cleans the Stains

 **Read:** [**Isaiah 1:10–18**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%201.10%E2%80%9318)

10Hear the word of the Lord,  
    you rulers of Sodom;  
listen to the instruction of our God,  
    you people of Gomorrah!  
11“The multitude of your sacrifices—  
    what are they to me?” says the Lord.  
“I have more than enough of burnt offerings,  
    of rams and the fat of fattened animals;  
I have no pleasure  
    in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.  
12When you come to appear before me,  
    who has asked this of you,  
    this trampling of my courts?  
13Stop bringing meaningless offerings!  
    Your incense is detestable to me.  
New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—  
    I cannot bear your worthless assemblies.  
14Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals  
    I hate with all my being.  
They have become a burden to me;  
    I am weary of bearing them.  
15When you spread out your hands in prayer,  
    I hide my eyes from you;  
even when you offer many prayers,  
    I am not listening.

Your hands are full of blood!

16Wash and make yourselves clean.  
    Take your evil deeds out of my sight;  
    stop doing wrong.  
17Learn to do right; seek justice.  
    Defend the oppressed.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+1%3A10%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#fen-NIV-17672a)]  
Take up the cause of the fatherless;  
    plead the case of the widow.

18“Come now, let us settle the matter,”  
    says the Lord.  
“Though your sins are like scarlet,  
    they shall be as white as snow;  
though they are red as crimson,  
    they shall be like wool.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Isaiah 1:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+1%3A10%E2%80%9318&version=NIV#en-NIV-17672) Or justice. / Correct the oppressor

Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. [Isaiah 1:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%201.18)

What if our clothes were more functional, having the ability to clean themselves after we dropped ketchup or mustard or spilled a drink on them? Well, according to the BBC, engineers in China have developed a special “coating which causes cotton to clean itself of stains and odors when exposed to ultraviolet lights.” Can you imagine the implications of having self-cleaning clothes?

A self-cleaning coating might work for stained clothes, but only God can clean a stained soul. In ancient Judah, God was angry with His people because they had “turned their backs on” Him, given themselves to corruption and evil, and were worshiping false gods ([Isaiah 1:2–4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%201.2%E2%80%934)). But to make matters worse, they tried to clean themselves by offering sacrifices, burning incense, saying many prayers, and gathering together in solemn assemblies. Yet their hypocritical and sinful hearts remained (vv. 12–13). The remedy was for them to come to their senses and with a repentant heart bring the stains on their souls to a holy and loving God. His grace would cleanse them and make them spiritually “white as snow” (v. 18).

When we sin, there’s no self-cleaning solution. With a humble and repentant heart, we must acknowledge our sins and place them under the cleansing light of God’s holiness. We must turn from them and return to Him. And He, the only One who cleans the stains of the soul, will offer us complete forgiveness and renewed fellowship.

By:  [Marvin Williams](https://odb.org/author/marvinwilliams/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When the Holy Spirit reveals your sins to you, what’s your response? How does John describe the process of bringing your sin to God and repenting of it (see [1 John 1:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%201.9))?

Father, forgive me for ignoring or trying to get rid of my own sin. I know only You can clean the stains of my soul. I acknowledge and repent of my self-sufficiency and turn to You.

#### **Insight**

The book of Isaiah is a vision the prophet received from God addressed to Israel, a people in rebellion (1:1–2). God was incensed at their wickedness and sin (v. 4). As commentator Barry Webb writes: Their “worship had been divorced from justice, and the fatherless and the widow had become the chief victims” (see v. 17). Their sacrifices were merely a means to an end. The prophet Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, states what God requires: “To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” ([Micah 6:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Micah%206.8)). Yet despite His righteous anger, God extended this loving invitation: “Turn to me and be saved” ([Isaiah 45:22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2045.22)).

By: [**Alyson Kieda**](https://odb.org/author/akieda/)

# God Calling – 3/30/22

# Deliverance

Be calm, be true, be quiet. I watch over you.

Rest in My Love. Joy in the very Beauty of Holiness. You are Mine. Deliverance is here for you, but Thankfulness and Joy open the gates.

Try in all things to be very glad, very happy, very thankful. It is not to quiet resignation I give My blessings, but to joyful acceptance and anticipation.

Laughter is the outward expression of joy. That is why I urge upon you Love and Laughter.

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations." - 2 Peter 2:9

# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/31/22

# Heedfulness or Hypocrisy in Ourselves?

# Heedfulness or Hypocrisy in Ourselves?

If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. —[1 John 5:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+John+5%3A16)

If we are not heedful and pay no attention to the way the Spirit of God works in us, we will become spiritual hypocrites. We see where other people are failing, and then we take our discernment and turn it into comments of ridicule and criticism, instead of turning it into intercession on their behalf. God reveals this truth about others to us not through the sharpness of our minds but through the direct penetration of His Spirit. If we are not attentive, we will be completely unaware of the source of the discernment God has given us, becoming critical of others and forgetting that God says, “…he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death.” Be careful that you don’t become a hypocrite by spending all your time trying to get others right with God before you worship Him yourself.

One of the most subtle and illusive burdens God ever places on us as saints is this burden of discernment concerning others. He gives us discernment so that we may accept the responsibility for those souls before Him and form the mind of Christ about them (see [Philippians 2:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+2:5)). We should intercede in accordance with what God says He will give us, namely, “life for those who commit sin not leading to death.” It is not that we are able to bring God into contact with our minds, but that we awaken ourselves to the point where God is able to convey His mind to us regarding the people for whom we intercede.

Can Jesus Christ see the agony of His soul in us? He can’t unless we are so closely identified with Him that we have His view concerning the people for whom we pray. May we learn to intercede so wholeheartedly that Jesus Christ will be completely and overwhelmingly satisfied with us as intercessors.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Am I becoming more and more in love with God as a holy God, or with the conception of an amiable Being who says, “Oh well, sin doesn’t matter much”?  Disciples Indeed, 389 L

# CCEL – 3/31/22

**My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**—[PHIL. 4:19.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.19)

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all … things shall be added unto you.—He that spared not his Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?

All things are yours: whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.—As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.—The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly.—The living God, … giveth us richly all things to enjoy.—God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

[Matt. 6:33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.33). -[Rom. 8:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html#Rom.8.32). -[I Cor. 3:21-23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.3.html" \l "iCor.3.21). -[II Cor. 6:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.6.html#iiCor.6.10).[Psa. 23:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.23.html" \l "Ps.23.1). -[Psa. 84:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.84.html" \l "Ps.84.11). -[I Tim. 6:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.6.html" \l "iTim.6.17). -[II Cor. 9:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.9.html#iiCor.9.8).

“With his stripes we are healed.” **[Isaiah 53:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.5)**

Pilate delivered our Lord to the lictors to be scourged. The Roman scourge was a most dreadful instrument of torture. It was made of the sinews of oxen, and sharp bones were inter-twisted every here and there among the sinews; so that every time the lash came down these pieces of bone inflicted fearful laceration, and tore off the flesh from the bone. The Saviour was, no doubt, bound to the column, and thus beaten. He had been beaten before; but this of the Roman lictors was probably the most severe of his flagellations. My soul, stand here and weep over his poor stricken body.

Believer in Jesus, can you gaze upon him without tears, as he stands before you the mirror of agonizing love? He is at once fair as the lily for innocence, and red as the rose with the crimson of his own blood. As we feel the sure and blessed healing which his stripes have wrought in us, does not our heart melt at once with love and grief? If ever we have loved our Lord Jesus, surely we must feel that affection glowing now within our bosoms.

“See how the patient Jesus stands,

Insulted in his lowest case!

Sinners have bound the Almighty’s hands,

And spit in their Creator’s face.

With thorns his temples gor'd and gash'd

Send streams of blood from every part;

His back’s with knotted scourges lash'd.

But sharper scourges tear his heart.”

We would fain go to our chambers and weep; but since our business calls us away, we will first pray our Beloved to print the image of his bleeding self upon the tablets of our hearts all the day, and at nightfall we will return to commune with him, and sorrow that our sin should have cost him so dear.

# Word Live – 3/31/22

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

# Scripture Union – 3/31/22

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

# Today in the Word – 3/31/22

# A Worthy Woman

**Read:** [**Proverbs 31:10–31**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+31%3a10%e2%80%9331)

### **Epilogue: The Wife of Noble Character**

10 [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+31%3A10%E2%80%9331+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-17295a)]A wife of noble character who can find?  
    She is worth far more than rubies.  
11Her husband has full confidence in her  
    and lacks nothing of value.  
12She brings him good, not harm,  
    all the days of her life.  
13She selects wool and flax  
    and works with eager hands.  
14She is like the merchant ships,  
    bringing her food from afar.  
15She gets up while it is still night;  
    she provides food for her family  
    and portions for her female servants.  
16She considers a field and buys it;  
    out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.  
17She sets about her work vigorously;  
    her arms are strong for her tasks.  
18She sees that her trading is profitable,  
    and her lamp does not go out at night.  
19In her hand she holds the distaff  
    and grasps the spindle with her fingers.  
20She opens her arms to the poor  
    and extends her hands to the needy.  
21When it snows, she has no fear for her household;  
    for all of them are clothed in scarlet.  
22She makes coverings for her bed;  
    she is clothed in fine linen and purple.  
23Her husband is respected at the city gate,  
    where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.  
24She makes linen garments and sells them,  
    and supplies the merchants with sashes.  
25She is clothed with strength and dignity;  
    she can laugh at the days to come.  
26She speaks with wisdom,  
    and faithful instruction is on her tongue.  
27She watches over the affairs of her household  
    and does not eat the bread of idleness.  
28Her children arise and call her blessed;  
    her husband also, and he praises her:  
29“Many women do noble things,  
    but you surpass them all.”  
30Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;  
    but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.  
31Honor her for all that her hands have done,  
    and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Proverbs 31:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+31%3A10%E2%80%9331+&version=NIV#en-NIV-17295) Verses 10-31 are an acrostic poem, the verses of which begin with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

What a wide variety of women we have studied this month! These Old Testament women have made courageous decisions by faith, stepped up to lead, struggled with bitterness, loved with kindness, worshiped idols, spoke with wisdom, and prophesied truth. Each had different goals, obstacles, victories, flaws, and failures.

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Proverbs 31:30

We finish our journey with a look at the ideal woman, the “wife of noble character,” described in Proverbs 31. Modern readers may not realize that this chapter is actually a skillfully crafted poem. In the Hebrew, it reads as an acrostic, each verse beginning with another letter of the alphabet. In addition, the poem is written with extended chiastic structure, meaning that opposite lines are parallel. The first line is parallel to the last line. The second line is parallel to the second-to-last line. Using both techniques in one poem is remarkable!

The author describes the sort of woman a young man should look for in a wife: someone with a noble character, someone in whom he can place his confidence. She should have a strong work ethic and manage money well. She should care for the needy and maintain her household.

Verse 23 says her husband is respected as a leader in the city, and this, significantly, is the center of the poem, the main point. It follows, then, that this woman was not only savvy in business but also strong and dignified, full of peace and joy for the future. She was a wise and capable teacher. Her children and her husband would speak her praise. The poem concludes with an important point. While charm and beauty are not bad qualities to possess, they are not the most important foundation. “A woman who fears the LORD is to be praised” (v. 30)!

**Apply the Word**

While the qualities developed in this poem describe a wife, they are characteristics we can all emulate and pursue. Consider which women in this study have made an impact on your life. What lesson will you take forward from their lives?

### **Pray with Us**

Sanctify us, Lord. May we be known as men and women who fear You and whose characters are shaped by You. Cultivate biblical virtues in us, bless our families, and grant us godly wisdom. We are blessed to be Your servants.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/31/22

# God’s Embassy

 **Read:** [**Luke 14:7–14**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2014.7%E2%80%9314)

7When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: 8“When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. 9If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. 10But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. 11For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

12Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. 13But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. [Luke 14:13–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2014.13%E2%80%9314)

Ludmilla, a widow aged eighty-two, has declared her home in the Czech Republic an “Embassy of the Kingdom of Heaven,” saying, “My home is an extension of Christ’s kingdom.” She welcomes strangers and friends who are hurting and in need with loving hospitality, sometimes providing food and a place to sleep—always with a compassionate and prayerful spirit. Relying on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to help her care for her visitors, she delights in the ways God answers their prayers.

Ludmilla serves Jesus through opening her home and heart, in contrast to the prominent religious leader at whose home Jesus ate one Sabbath. Jesus told this teacher of the law that he should welcome “the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind” to his home—and not those who could repay him ([Luke 14:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2014.13)). While Jesus’ remarks imply that the Pharisee hosted Jesus out of pride (v. 12), Ludmilla, so many years later, invites people to her home so she can be “an instrument of God’s love and His wisdom.”

Serving others with humility is one way we can be “representatives of the kingdom of heaven,” as Ludmilla says. Whether or not we can provide a bed for strangers, we can put the needs of others before our own in different and creative ways. How will we extend God’s kingdom in our part of the world today?

By:  [Amy Boucher Pye](https://odb.org/author/amyboucherpye/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How do you think the Pharisee reacted when Jesus told him to act differently? How do you like to make people feel welcome?

Jesus, thank You for looking out for those in need. Help me to be more like You, that I would care for others, showing them Your love.

#### **Insight**

In his gospel, Luke often highlights the event behind Jesus’ telling of a parable (see [Luke 12:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2012.13); [15:1–2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2015.1%E2%80%932); [18:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2018.9); [19:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2019.11)). In chapter 14, we read that “[Jesus] noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table” (v. 7). Ancient dining protocol dictated that the two places of highest honor were on the right and left of the host ([Matthew 20:21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2020.21)). This parable teaches us that it’s better to humble oneself than to be humiliated by others, which is Jesus’ constant warning ([Matthew 23:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2023.12); [Luke 18:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2018.14)). Pointing to Christ as our model, Paul teaches us to “have the same mindset as Christ Jesus” ([Philippians 2:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%202.5)) who—though He was God—became a human servant.

By: [**K. T. Sim**](https://odb.org/author/ktsim/)

# God Calling – 3/31/22

# Love's Offering

I am your Lord, gracious and loving. Rest in My Love, walk in My ways. Each week is a week of progress, steady progress upward. You may not see it, but I do.

I judge not by outward appearances, I judge the heart, and I see in both your hearts one single desire, to do My Will. The simplest offering by a child brought or done with the one desire to give you pleasure, or to show you love, is it not more loved by you than the offerings of those who love you not?

So, though you may feel that your work has been spoiled and tarnished, I see it only as Love's offering. Courage, My children.

When climbing a steep hill, a man is often more conscious of the weakness of his stumbling feet than of the view, the grandeur, or even of his upward progress.

Persevere, persevere. Love and laugh. Rejoice.

"The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." - 1 Samuel 16:7

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/1/22

# Helpful or Heartless Toward Others?



It is Christ…who also makes intercession for us….the Spirit…makes intercession for the saints… —[Romans 8:34, 27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+8%3A34%2C+27)

Do we need any more arguments than these to become intercessors– that Christ “always lives to make intercession” ([Hebrews 7:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+7:25)), and that the Holy Spirit “makes intercession for the saints”? Are we living in such a relationship with others that we do the work of intercession as a result of being the children of God who are taught by His Spirit? We should take a look at our current circumstances. Do crises which affect us or others in our home, business, country, or elsewhere, seem to be crushing in on us? Are we being pushed out of the presence of God and left with no time for worship? If so, we must put a stop to such distractions and get into such a living relationship with God that our relationship with others is maintained through the work of intercession, where God works His miracles.

Beware of getting ahead of God by your very desire to do His will. We run ahead of Him in a thousand and one activities, becoming so burdened with people and problems that we don’t worship God, and we fail to intercede. If a burden and its resulting pressure come upon us while we are not in an attitude of worship, it will only produce a hardness toward God and despair in our own souls. God continually introduces us to people in whom we have no interest, and unless we are worshiping God the natural tendency is to be heartless toward them. We give them a quick verse of Scripture, like jabbing them with a spear, or leave them with a hurried, uncaring word of counsel before we go. A heartless Christian must be a terrible grief to our Lord.

Are our lives in the proper place so that we may participate in the intercession of our Lord and the Holy Spirit?

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Beware of isolation; beware of the idea that you have to develop a holy life alone. It is impossible to develop a holy life alone; you will develop into an oddity and a peculiarism, into something utterly unlike what God wants you to be. The only way to develop spiritually is to go into the society of God’s own children, and you will soon find how God alters your set. God does not contradict our social instincts; He alters them.  Biblical Psychology, 189 L

# CCEL – 4/1/22

**The fruit of the Spirit is joy.**—[GAL. 5:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.22)

Joy in the Holy Ghost.—Unspeakable and full of glory.

Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; . . . exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.—We glory in tribulations.

Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; . . . for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.—These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be fuIl.—As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.—The joy of the Lord is your strength.

In thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.—For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

[Rom. 14:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.14.html" \l "Rom.14.17). -[I Pet. 1:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html#iPet.1.8).[II Cor. 6:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.6.html#iiCor.6.10);[7:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.7.html#iiCor.7.4). -[Rom. 5:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.3).[Heb. 12:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.2). -[John 15:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html" \l "John.15.11). -[II Cor. 1:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.1.html" \l "iiCor.1.5).[Phi. 4:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html" \l "Phil.4.4). -[Neh. 8:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Neh.8.html" \l "Neh.8.10).[Psa. 16:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.16.html" \l "Ps.16.11). -[Rev. 7:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.7.html" \l "Rev.7.17).

“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.” **[Song of Solomon 1:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.1.html" \l "Song.1.2)**

For several days we have been dwelling upon the Saviour’s passion, and for some little time to come we shall linger there. In beginning a new month, let us seek the same desires after our Lord as those which glowed in the heart of the elect spouse. See how she leaps at once to him; there are no prefatory words; she does not even mention his name; she is in the heart of her theme at once, for she speaks of him who was the only him in the world to her. How bold is her love! It was much condescension which permitted the weeping penitent to anoint his feet with spikenard—it was rich love which allowed the gentle Mary to sit at his feet and learn of him—but here, love, strong, fervent love, aspires to higher tokens of regard, and closer signs of fellowship. Esther trembled in the presence of Ahasuerus, but the spouse in joyful liberty of perfect love knows no fear. If we have received the same free spirit, we also may ask the like. By kisses we suppose to be intended those varied manifestations of affection by which the believer is made to enjoy the love of Jesus. The kiss of reconciliation we enjoyed at our conversion, and it was sweet as honey dropping from the comb. The kiss of acceptance is still warm on our brow, as we know that he hath accepted our persons and our works through rich grace. The kiss of daily, present communion is that which we pant after to be repeated day after day, till it is changed into the kiss of reception, which removes the soul from earth, and the kiss of consummation which fills it with the joy of heaven. Faith is our walk, but fellowship sensibly felt is our rest. Faith is the road, but communion with Jesus is the well from which the pilgrim drinks. O lover of our souls, be not strange to us; let the lips of thy blessing meet the lips of our asking; let the lips of thy fulness touch the lips of our need, and straightway the kiss will be effected.

# Word Live – 4/1/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/1/22

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

# Today in the Word – 4/1/22

# Daily Devotional | Meet JeremiahMeet Jeremiah

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 1:1–3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3a1%e2%80%933)

1 The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. 2The word of the Lord came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah, 3and through the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, down to the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem went into exile.

Jeremiah has been called “the weeping prophet.” Why? Because he brought mostly bad news. It grieved him even more that God’s people did not respond with repentance. They continued to sin, and judgment inevitably arrived. No wonder he wept!

What was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled. Matthew 2:17

As we begin the study of this Old Testament prophet, it is helpful to understand the time when Jeremiah’s ministry took place. It lasted more than 40 years, from about halfway through the reign of King Josiah in 626 B.C. to sometime after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (vv. 2–3). During this time, Babylon defeated Egypt and Assyria. A new superpower was rising in the ancient Near East, looming large in Jeremiah’s prophecies.

Jeremiah was a member of the priestly household of Hilkiah (v. 1). Hilkiah was probably descended from Abiathar, a deposed priest from the line of Eli exiled by Solomon (1 Kings 2:26– 27). So the prophet’s family heritage was...complicated. Because of the times he lived in, God commanded him not to marry (Jer. 16:2).

Jeremiah is the longest book in the Bible, both the word count in Hebrew and the number of verses in English (1,364). The content is not in chronological order, but most chapters include a reference date or historical clues. The book features both poetry and prose, including narrative, sermons, object lessons or parables, laments, and a letter. Key themes include God’s judgment, justice, sovereignty, righteousness, faithfulness, sin and the need for repentance. The [Moody Bible Commentary](https://www.moodypublishers.com/the-moody-bible-commentary/) summarizes the character of this important prophet: “Jeremiah was a man of outstanding courage, who boldly and unwaveringly proclaimed the Lord’s message.”

**Apply the Word**

Since this is a lengthy book, you have two choices: You can read the shorter focus passages for each day. Or, starting on April 3rd, you can read longer passages noted in the application. The longer passages will enable you to read the entire book of Jeremiah.

### **Pray with Us**

Prophetic books can be difficult to read because of their themes of sin and judgement. Father, prepare us for the study of Jeremiah this month. Teach us to treasure each word of Scripture, for You are the source of it all.

## BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/1/22

# Witness Marks

 **Read:** [**Romans 15:1–6**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2015.1%E2%80%936)

15 We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. 2Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. 3For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+15%3A1%E2%80%936&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28307a)] 4For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

5May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, 6so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Romans 15:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+15%3A1%E2%80%936&version=NIV#en-NIV-28307) Psalm 69:9

Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. [Romans 15:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2015.2)

“See that?” The clock repairman pointed his flashlight beam on a small, fine mark roughly engraved inside the old grandfather clock he was working on in our home. “Another repairman could have put that there almost a century ago,” he said. “It’s called a ‘witness mark,’ and it helps me know how to set the mechanism.”

Before the age of technical bulletins and repair manuals, “witness marks” were used to help the person making a future repair align moving parts with precision. They were more than just time-saving reminders; they were often left as a simple kindness to the next person doing the work.

The Bible encourages us to leave our own “witness marks” as we work for God by serving others in our broken world. The apostle Paul wrote to the church in Rome: “Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up” ([Romans 15:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2015.2)). This is the example of our God, “who gives endurance and encouragement” (v. 5). It’s about being a good citizen of both earth and heaven.

Our “witness marks” may seem like small things, but they can make a vital difference in someone’s life. An uplifting word, a financial gift to someone in need, and a listening ear—all are kindnesses that can have a lasting impact. May God help you make a mark for Him in someone’s life today!

By:  [James Banks](https://odb.org/author/jamesbanks/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What “witness marks” have others left in your life to encourage you? What simple kindness can you do for another believer today?

Almighty Father, thank You for the loving-kindness You’ve shown me through Your Son, Jesus. Please help me to reflect Your love in even the smallest things I do today.

#### **Insight**

In the midst of its rich theological teaching and solid practical application, one of the sometimes-overlooked themes in the letter to the Romans is hope. The word hope appears multiple times, including five times in chapter 15. These references remind us that hope comes from endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures (v. 4) and that even the gentiles have been included in this hope (v. 12). Paul goes on to remind the Romans—and us—that God is the God of hope who longs for us to experience it as the Spirit works in us (v. 13). In fact, verse 13 reminds us that this hope is directly connected to the joy and peace we have from God as we trust Him.

By: [**Bill Crowder**](https://odb.org/author/billcrowder/)

# God Calling – 4/1/22

# Shut Out From God

Do you not see, My children, that you have not yet learned all? Soon, very soon, you will have mastered your lesson, and then you will truly be able to do all things through Me and My Strength. Did you not see it with My Disciples? Timid, faithless followers, and then, so soon, themselves leaders, healers, conquerors, through Me.

All knowledge was Mine, given Me of My Father, and Mine in manhood's years on earth. You understand this, My children, I know you do.

Thousands of My servants have gone to their betrayal and death, and others, who knew Me not, with no agony before it.

Had I not been Son of God, bearing man's weight of sin, voluntarily bearing it until of My own free will -- for that moment's horror, I was shut out from His sight with man, the sinner, for one short space -- had I not been God, had not this been My suffering -- then I was but a craven mortal.

"He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." John 14:12

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/2/22

# The Glory That’s Unsurpassed



…the Lord Jesus…has sent me that you may receive your sight… —[Acts 9:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Acts+9%3A17)

When Paul received his sight, he also received spiritual insight into the Person of Jesus Christ. His entire life and preaching from that point on were totally consumed with nothing but Jesus Christ— “For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” ([1 Corinthians 2:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+2:2)). Paul never again allowed anything to attract and hold the attention of his mind and soul except the face of Jesus Christ.

We must learn to maintain a strong degree of character in our lives, even to the level that has been revealed in our vision of Jesus Christ.

The lasting characteristic of a spiritual man is the ability to understand correctly the meaning of the Lord Jesus Christ in his life, and the ability to explain the purposes of God to others. The overruling passion of his life is Jesus Christ. Whenever you see this quality in a person, you get the feeling that he is truly a man after God’s own heart (see [Acts 13:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+13:22)).

Never allow anything to divert you from your insight into Jesus Christ. It is the true test of whether you are spiritual or not. To be unspiritual means that other things have a growing fascination for you.

Since mine eyes have looked on Jesus,  
I’ve lost sight of all beside,  
So enchained my spirit’s vision,  
Gazing on the Crucified.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Our danger is to water down God’s word to suit ourselves. God never fits His word to suit me; He fits me to suit His word. Not Knowing Whither, 901 R

# CCEL – 4/2/22

**If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only.**—[I SAM. 7:3.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iSam.7.html" \l "iSam.7.3)

Little children, keep yourselves from idols.—Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.—Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

Thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.—Serve him with a perfect heart with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.

Behold, thou desireth truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.—Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.—Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

[I John 5:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.5.html" \l "iJohn.5.21). -[II Cor. 6:17,18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.6.html" \l "iiCor.6.17). -[Matt. 6:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.24).[Exo. 34:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.34.html" \l "Exod.34.14). -[I Chr. 28:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iChr.28.html" \l "iChr.28.9).[Psa. 51:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html" \l "Ps.51.6). -[I Sam. 16:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iSam.16.html" \l "iSam.16.7). -[I John 3:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.21).

“He answered him to never a word.” **[Matthew 27:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.27.html" \l "Matt.27.14)**

He had never been slow of speech when he could bless the sons of men, but he would not say a single word for himself. “Never man spake like this man,” and never man was silent like him. Was this singular silence the index of his perfect self-sacrifice? Did it show that he would not utter a word to stay the slaughter of his sacred person, which he had dedicated as an offering for us? Had he so entirely surrendered himself that he would not interfere in his own behalf, even in the minutest degree, but be bound and slain an unstruggling, uncomplaining victim? Was this silence a type of the defencelessness of sin? Nothing can be said in palliation or excuse of human guilt; and, therefore, he who bore its whole weight stood speechless before his judge. Is not patient silence the best reply to a gainsaying world? Calm endurance answers some questions infinitely more conclusively than the loftiest eloquence. The best apologists for Christianity in the early days were its martyrs. The anvil breaks a host of hammers by quietly bearing their blows. Did not the silent Lamb of God furnish us with a grand example of wisdom? Where every word was occasion for new blasphemy, it was the line of duty to afford no fuel for the flame of sin. The ambiguous and the false, the unworthy and mean, will ere long overthrow and confute themselves, and therefore the true can afford to be quiet, and finds silence to be its wisdom. Evidently our Lord, by his silence, furnished a remarkable fulfilment of prophecy. A long defence of himself would have been contrary to Isaiah’s prediction: “He is led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” By his quiet he conclusively proved himself to be the true Lamb of God. As such we salute him this morning. Be with us, Jesus, and in the silence of our heart, let us hear the voice of thy love.

# Word Live – 4/2/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/2/22

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

# Today in the Word – 4/2/22

# The Calling of a Prophet

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 1:4–19**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3a4%e2%80%9319)

### **The Call of Jeremiah**

4The word of the Lord came to me, saying,

5“Before I formed you in the womb I knew[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3A4%E2%80%9319+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18952a)] you,  
    before you were born I set you apart;  
    I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

6“Alas, Sovereign Lord,” I said, “I do not know how to speak; I am too young.”

7But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. 8Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord.

9Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I have put my words in your mouth. 10See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.”

11The word of the Lord came to me: “What do you see, Jeremiah?”

“I see the branch of an almond tree,” I replied.

12The Lord said to me, “You have seen correctly, for I am watching[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3A4%E2%80%9319+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18959b)] to see that my word is fulfilled.”

13The word of the Lord came to me again: “What do you see?”

“I see a pot that is boiling,” I answered. “It is tilting toward us from the north.”

14The Lord said to me, “From the north disaster will be poured out on all who live in the land. 15I am about to summon all the peoples of the northern kingdoms,” declares the Lord.

“Their kings will come and set up their thrones  
    in the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem;  
they will come against all her surrounding walls  
    and against all the towns of Judah.  
16I will pronounce my judgments on my people  
    because of their wickedness in forsaking me,  
in burning incense to other gods  
    and in worshiping what their hands have made.

17“Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them. 18Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole land—against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. 19They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Jeremiah 1:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3A4%E2%80%9319+&version=NIV#en-NIV-18952) Or chose
2. [Jeremiah 1:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3A4%E2%80%9319+&version=NIV#en-NIV-18959) The Hebrew for watching sounds like the Hebrew for almond tree.

How were Old Testament prophets appointed? When Isaiah was called, he “saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne.” Angels called to one another, “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isa. 6:1–3). Similarly, when Ezekiel was called (Ezek. 1:1), “the heavens were opened and [he] saw visions of God.”

I have put my words in your mouth. Jeremiah 1:9

Jeremiah’s call was not as dramatic, but no less authentic (Jer. 1:4–10). He was a young man, probably under 25 years old (see also 1 Tim. 4:12). God had in fact appointed or chosen him before he’d even been conceived (v. 5). Jeremiah felt unworthy, which was a wise response (v. 6). If it was an excuse, God rejected it, commanded his obedience (v. 7), and promised His presence and protection (v. 8). He then formalized Jeremiah’s call by touching his mouth, indicating that the young man would no longer speak for himself, but for God: “I have put my words in your mouth” (vv. 9–10).

The prophet’s calling gives us a preview of the message he would bring (vv. 11–16). God showed him two images: First, he saw an almond branch (vv. 11–12). Almond trees were the first trees to bloom in spring and symbolize wakefulness (new life) and watchfulness (looking for it). Second, he saw a boiling pot (vv. 13–16). This represented the political situation of his day, with Judah constantly under threat.

There was no doubt that Jeremiah’s ministry would be difficult—he should be ready for that (vv. 17–19). To help, God reminded the prophet of His strength. We see images of a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall. How would he speak harsh truth to those in power and survive! God would be with him!

**Apply the Word**

God knows each of us in the same way He knew Jeremiah—before we were even conceived! Reflect on this comforting and challenging truth by reading Psalm 139 as part of your devotions today.

### **Pray with Us**

“If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast” (Ps. 139:9 10).

## BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/2/22

# Built Together to Serve

 **Read:** [**1 Corinthians 12:18–30**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2012.18%E2%80%9330)

18But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

21The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” 22On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

27Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 28And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. 29Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12%3A18%E2%80%9330&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28665a)]? Do all interpret?

#### **Footnotes**

1. [1 Corinthians 12:30](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12%3A18%E2%80%9330&version=NIV#en-NIV-28665) Or other languages

He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. [Ephesians 4:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.16)

In rural Amish culture, the building of a barn is a social event. It would take months for a single farmer and his family to construct a barn, but the Amish, doing it together, make quick work of it. Lumber is stocked ahead of time; tools are prepped. On the designated day, the entire Amish community gathers early, divvies up tasks, and together pitches in to raise a barn—sometimes in a single day.

This is a good picture of God’s vision for the church and our role in it. The Bible says, “All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it” ([1 Corinthians 12:27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2012.27) nlt). God has equipped each of us differently and divvied up tasks in which we each do our “own special work” as part of a body “fit together perfectly” ([Ephesians 4:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.16) nlt).  In community, we’re encouraged to “carry each other’s burdens” ([Galatians 6:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%206.2)).

Yet too often we go it alone. We keep our needs to ourselves, wanting control of our circumstance. Or we fail to reach out and help shoulder the weight of someone else’s need. But God longs for us to connect with others. He knows beautiful things happen when we ask for others’ help and pray for others’ needs.

Only by depending on one another can we experience what God has for us and accomplish His amazing plan for our lives—like building a barn in a day.

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What keeps you from sharing your needs with others? What can you do today to reach out to someone else and help shoulder their burden?

Loving God, I know I’m sometimes so private that I shut others out of my life. Help me to reach out and invite them in.

#### **Insight**

Part of Paul’s purpose in [1 Corinthians 12–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2012%E2%80%9314) seems to be to address the belief among some believers in Jesus that those with the ability to speak in tongues have a higher spiritual status than those without that gift. What it means to “speak in the tongues . . . of angels” (13:1) is greatly debated, but what’s clear from [1 Corinthians 12–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2012%E2%80%9314) is that the contributions of all believers are equally important. What matters most is that we value and serve each other in the “most excellent way” (12:31) of love.

By: [**Monica La Rose**](https://odb.org/author/monicalarose/)

# God Calling – 4/2/22

# The Priceless Blessing

I am here. Here is truly as I was with My Disciples of old. Here to help and bless you. Here to company with you. Do you know, even yet, My children, that this is the priceless blessing of your lives? I forgive you, as you have prayed Me to, for all neglects of My commands, but start anew from today.

Study My words and carry them out unflinchingly, unflinching. As you do this, you will find that you are miracle-workers, workers together with Me -- for Me. Remember this, not what you do, but what you are -- that is the miracle-working power.

Changed by My Spirit, shedding one garment of Spirit for a better; in time throwing that aside for a yet finer one, and so on from character to character, gradually transformed into My likeness.

Joy, Joy, Joy.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." John 14:21

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/3/22

# “If You Had Known!”



If you had known…in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. —[Luke 19:42](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+19%3A42)

Jesus entered Jerusalem triumphantly and the city was stirred to its very foundations, but a strange god was there– the pride of the Pharisees. It was a god that seemed religious and upright, but Jesus compared it to “whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness” ([Matthew 23:27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+23:27)).

What is it that blinds you to the peace of God “in this your day”? Do you have a strange god– not a disgusting monster but perhaps an unholy nature that controls your life? More than once God has brought me face to face with a strange god in my life, and I knew that I should have given it up, but I didn’t do it. I got through the crisis “by the skin of my teeth,” only to find myself still under the control of that strange god. I am blind to the very things that make for my own peace. It is a shocking thing that we can be in the exact place where the Spirit of God should be having His completely unhindered way with us, and yet we only make matters worse, increasing our blame in God’s eyes.

“If you had known….” God’s words here cut directly to the heart, with the tears of Jesus behind them. These words imply responsibility for our own faults. God holds us accountable for what we refuse to see or are unable to see because of our sin. And “now they are hidden from your eyes” because you have never completely yielded your nature to Him. Oh, the deep, unending sadness for what might have been! God never again opens the doors that have been closed. He opens other doors, but He reminds us that there are doors which we have shut– doors which had no need to be shut. Never be afraid when God brings back your past. Let your memory have its way with you. It is a minister of God bringing its rebuke and sorrow to you. God will turn what might have been into a wonderful lesson of growth for the future.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The fiery furnaces are there by God’s direct permission. It is misleading to imagine that we are developed in spite of our circumstances; we are developed because of them. It is mastery in circumstances that is needed, not mastery over them. The Love of God—The Message of Invincible Consolation, 674 R

# CCEL – 4/3/22

**Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness.**—[II PET. 3:8,9.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.3.html" \l "iiPet.3.8)

My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, . . . so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall acomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

[Isa. 55:8-11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.55.html#Isa.55.8).[Rom. 11:32,33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.11.html" \l "Rom.11.32).

“They took Jesus, and led him away.” **[John 19:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.19.html" \l "John.19.16)**

He had been all night in agony, he had spent the early morning at the hall of Caiaphas, he had been hurried from Caiaphas to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod, and from Herod back again to Pilate; he had, therefore, but little strength left, and yet neither refreshment nor rest were permitted him. They were eager for his blood, and therefore led him out to die, loaded with the cross. O dolorous procession! Well may Salem’s daughters weep. My soul, do thou weep also.

What learn we here as we see our blessed Lord led forth? Do we not perceive that truth which was set forth in shadow by the scapegoat? Did not the high-priest bring the scapegoat, and put both his hands upon its head, confessing the sins of the people, that thus those sins might be laid upon the goat, and cease from the people? Then the goat was led away by a fit man into the wilderness, and it carried away the sins of the people, so that if they were sought for they could not be found. Now we see Jesus brought before the priests and rulers, who pronounce him guilty; God himself imputes our sins to him, “the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;” “He was made sin for us;” and, as the substitute for our guilt, bearing our sin upon his shoulders, represented by the cross; we see the great Scapegoat led away by the appointed officers of justice. Beloved, can you feel assured that he carried your sin? As you look at the cross upon his shoulders, does it represent your sin? There is one way by which you can tell whether he carried your sin or not. Have you laid your hand upon his head, confessed your sin, and trusted in him? Then your sin lies not on you; it has all been transferred by blessed imputation to Christ, and he bears it on his shoulder as a load heavier than the cross.

Let not the picture vanish till you have rejoiced in your own deliverance, and adored the loving Redeemer upon whom your iniquities were laid.

# Word Live – 4/3/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/3/22

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# Today in the Word – 4/3/22

# Forsaking the Lord

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 2:1–13**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+2%3a1%e2%80%9313)

### **Israel Forsakes God**

2 The word of the Lord came to me: 2“Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem:

“This is what the Lord says:

“‘I remember the devotion of your youth,  
    how as a bride you loved me  
and followed me through the wilderness,  
    through a land not sown.  
3Israel was holy to the Lord,  
    the firstfruits of his harvest;  
all who devoured her were held guilty,  
    and disaster overtook them,’”  
declares the Lord.

4Hear the word of the Lord, you descendants of Jacob,  
    all you clans of Israel.

5This is what the Lord says:

“What fault did your ancestors find in me,  
    that they strayed so far from me?  
They followed worthless idols  
    and became worthless themselves.  
6They did not ask, ‘Where is the Lord,  
    who brought us up out of Egypt  
and led us through the barren wilderness,  
    through a land of deserts and ravines,  
a land of drought and utter darkness,  
    a land where no one travels and no one lives?’  
7I brought you into a fertile land  
    to eat its fruit and rich produce.  
But you came and defiled my land  
    and made my inheritance detestable.  
8The priests did not ask,  
    ‘Where is the Lord?’  
Those who deal with the law did not know me;  
    the leaders rebelled against me.  
The prophets prophesied by Baal,  
    following worthless idols.

9“Therefore I bring charges against you again,”  
declares the Lord.  
    “And I will bring charges against your children’s children.  
10Cross over to the coasts of Cyprus and look,  
    send to Kedar[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+2%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18976a)] and observe closely;  
    see if there has ever been anything like this:  
11Has a nation ever changed its gods?  
    (Yet they are not gods at all.)  
But my people have exchanged their glorious God  
    for worthless idols.  
12Be appalled at this, you heavens,  
    and shudder with great horror,”  
declares the Lord.  
13“My people have committed two sins:  
They have forsaken me,  
    the spring of living water,  
and have dug their own cisterns,  
    broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Jeremiah 2:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+2%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#en-NIV-18976) In the Syro-Arabian desert

Although 70 percent of Americans claim to be Christians, many do not attend any church. Denominational numbers are declining, as are church donations. Every year, about 6,000 to 10,000 local churches close their doors permanently.

They have forsaken me, the spring of living water. Jeremiah 2:13

Faith in the one true God was also decreasing in Judah in Jeremiah’s day. Tragically, idolatry was on the increase! Jeremiah had the challenge of delivering mostly bad news to Judah, not only about what would happen to them (conquest and exile), but also the reason for it.

The people of Judah had forsaken the Lord like a wife who’d abandoned her husband (vv. 1–3). Within God’s plan for the world, they were to be the “firstfruits of his harvest” (v. 2). He’d chosen them and had made a covenant with them, but now they had rejected Him. They’d been set apart as His special people (Ex. 19:5–6). Now they were dishonoring that call through disobedience and idolatry.

Next, God strengthened His charge against Judah from history (vv. 4–8). He’d liberated them from bondage in Egypt. In response, tragically, they “followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves” (v. 5).

Finally, the verdict was stated directly (vv. 9–13). God’s people had made the worst bargain of all time. They had exchanged “their glorious God for worthless idols” (v. 11). They’d traded real for fake, glorious for worthless, and God’s love and power for nothing. They’d forsaken God, the “spring of living water,” the Source of life and salvation (v. 13; see also John 4:10–14). They were so self-deceived that they were trying to replace Him by digging their own cisterns (or wells), that is, they were trying to achieve life and salvation on their own. Of course, they failed miserably.

**Apply the Word**

Do you have a church home? It is easier to stay true to God when we are encouraged by our brothers and sisters in Christ. Fellowship with believers is an essential part of following Him (Heb. 10:24–25).

[Extended reading: Jeremiah 2–4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+2-4&version=NIV)

### **Pray with Us**

Those of us who are connected to a local church thank You for blessing us with this community. Those of us who are searching ask You to guide us to a local body where “we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Heb. 10:24).

## BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/3/22

# God’s Great Love

 **Read:** [**Lamentations 3:19–26**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203.19%E2%80%9326)

19I remember my affliction and my wandering,  
    the bitterness and the gall.  
20I well remember them,  
    and my soul is downcast within me.  
21Yet this I call to mind  
    and therefore I have hope:

22Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed,  
    for his compassions never fail.  
23They are new every morning;  
    great is your faithfulness.  
24I say to myself, “The Lord is my portion;  
    therefore I will wait for him.”

25The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,  
    to the one who seeks him;  
26it is good to wait quietly  
    for the salvation of the Lord.

Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. [Lamentations 3:22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203.22)

When a friend asked me to speak with teenage girls at a workshop promoting purity, I declined. As a teenage runaway, I struggled and had decades of scars caused by my immorality. After getting married and losing our first child to a miscarriage, I thought God was punishing me for my past sins. When I finally surrendered my life to Christ at the age of thirty, I confessed my sins and repented . . . repeatedly. Still, guilt and shame consumed me. How could I share about God’s grace when I couldn’t even bring myself to fully receive the gift of His great love for me? Thankfully, over time, God has abolished the lies that chained me to who I was before I confessed my sins. By His grace, I’ve finally received the forgiveness God had been offering me all along.

God understands our laments over our afflictions and the consequences of our past sins. However, He empowers His people to overcome despair, turn from our sins, and arise with hope in His great “love,” “compassion,” and “faithfulness” ([Lamentations 3:19–23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203.19%E2%80%9323)). Scripture says that God Himself is our “portion”—our hope and salvation—and we can learn to trust His goodness (vv. 24–26).

Our compassionate Father helps us believe His promises. When we receive the fullness of His great love for us, we can spread the good news about His grace.

By:  [Xochitl Dixon](https://odb.org/author/xochitldixon/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When have you felt consumed by your past sins? How has God helped you rest in the sure hope of His immeasurable love and grace?

Compassionate Father, please help me place my hope in the surety of Your great love for me as I spread the good news about Your grace wherever I go.

#### **Insight**

The book of Lamentations was written in the days following Judah’s tragic defeat and exile to Babylon (586 bc; see [Lamentations 1:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%201.3)). In painful detail, the author attributes horrific national suffering not just to the cruelty of the Babylonian military but to divine wrath that doesn’t sound compassionate or merciful (2:1–4). Yet the prophet’s tears mirrored the heart of God who didn’t enjoy allowing His people to suffer (3:33). For many years, however, His people had been following other gods while exploiting poor and defenseless neighbors ([Isaiah 1:23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%201.23)). God had been patient. But because His people had grown stubbornly cold-hearted in the way they ignored Him and hurt one another, He followed through on His many warnings to them. Yet there was still hope. There would be restoration ([Jeremiah 30:1–3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2030.1%E2%80%933); [33:6–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jeremiah%2033.6%E2%80%939)).

By: [**Mart DeHaan**](https://odb.org/author/martdehaan-2/)

# God Calling – 4/3/22

# Greatness is Service

My children, I am here, your waiting Lord, ready at your call. I am among you as one that serveth, Meek and Holy, ready to be used and commanded. Remember that is the finest quality of greatness -- service. I, who could command a universe -- I await the commands of My children. Bring Me into everything.

You will find such Joy as the time goes on in speaking to each other of Me, and together climbing higher. Always humble, meek, and lowly in heart.

Learn this -- no position -- just a servant.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" Philippians 4:4

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/4/22

# The Way to Permanent Faith



Indeed the hour is coming…that you will be scattered… —[John 16:32](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+16%3A32)

Jesus was not rebuking the disciples in this passage. Their faith was real, but it was disordered and unfocused, and was not at work in the important realities of life. The disciples were scattered to their own concerns and they had interests apart from Jesus Christ. After we have the perfect relationship with God, through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, our faith must be exercised in the realities of everyday life. We will be scattered, not into service but into the emptiness of our lives where we will see ruin and barrenness, to know what internal death to God’s blessings means. Are we prepared for this? It is certainly not of our own choosing, but God engineers our circumstances to take us there. Until we have been through that experience, our faith is sustained only by feelings and by blessings. But once we get there, no matter where God may place us or what inner emptiness we experience, we can praise God that all is well. That is what is meant by faith being exercised in the realities of life.

“…you…will leave Me alone.” Have we been scattered and have we left Jesus alone by not seeing His providential care for us? Do we not see God at work in our circumstances? Dark times are allowed and come to us through the sovereignty of God. Are we prepared to let God do what He wants with us? Are we prepared to be separated from the outward, evident blessings of God? Until Jesus Christ is truly our Lord, we each have goals of our own which we serve. Our faith is real, but it is not yet permanent. And God is never in a hurry. If we are willing to wait, we will see God pointing out that we have been interested only in His blessings, instead of in God Himself. The sense of God’s blessings is fundamental.

“…be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” ([John 16:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+16:33)). Unyielding spiritual fortitude is what we need.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The sympathy which is reverent with what it cannot understand is worth its weight in gold.  Baffled to Fight Better, 69 L

# CCEL – 4/4/22

Fear not; I am the first and the last.—[REV. 1:17.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.1.html" \l "Rev.1.17)

Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, but ye are come unto mount Sion, . . . to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.—Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.—We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.—The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One?—Who is God, save the Lord? and who is a rock, save our God?

[Heb. 12:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.18),[22-24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.22). -[Heb. 12:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html#Heb.12.2). -[Heb. 4:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.4.html" \l "Heb.4.15).[Isa. 44:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.44.html" \l "Isa.44.6). -[Isa. 9:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.9.html" \l "Isa.9.6).[Hab. 1:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hab.1.html" \l "Hab.1.12). -[II Sam. 22:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiSam.22.html" \l "iiSam.22.32).

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” [2 Corinthians 5:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.21)

Mourning Christian! why weepest thou? Art thou mourning over thine own corruptions? Look to thy perfect Lord, and remember, thou art complete in him; thou art in God’s sight as perfect as if thou hadst never sinned; nay, more than that, the Lord our Righteousness hath put a divine garment upon thee, so that thou hast more than the righteousness of man—thou hast the righteousness of God. O thou who art mourning by reason of inbred sin and depravity, remember, none of thy sins can condemn thee. Thou hast learned to hate sin; but thou hast learned also to know that sin is not thine—it was laid upon Christ’s head. Thy standing is not in thyself—it is in Christ; thine acceptance is not in thyself, but in thy Lord; thou art as much accepted of God today, with all thy sinfulness, as thou wilt be when thou standest before his throne, free from all corruption. O, I beseech thee, lay hold on this precious thought, perfection in Christ! For thou art “complete in him.” With thy Saviour’s garment on, thou art holy as the Holy one. “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Christian, let thy heart rejoice, for thou art “accepted in the beloved”—what hast thou to fear? Let thy face ever wear a smile; live near thy Master; live in the suburbs of the Celestial City; for soon, when thy time has come, thou shalt rise up where thy Jesus sits, and reign at his right hand; and all this because the divine Lord “was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

# Word Live – 4/4/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/4/22

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# Today in the Word – 4/4/22

# Deep in Sin

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 5:20–31**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+5%3a20%e2%80%9331)

Digging into our sin is like peeling an onion. We’re never done—there always seems to be another layer. And the more layers are revealed, the more we recognize the depths of our sinfulness and our inability to help ourselves. As Jeremiah said later in the book: “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure” (17:9).

These people have stubborn and rebellious hearts. Jeremiah 5:23

Sadly, Jeremiah’s peeling of Judah’s onion of sin led to no tears of repentance. Things were definitely not as they should have been (vv. 21–25). What should have been happening was awe, reverence, fear, trembling, gratitude, and worship. Just as nature keeps to its divinely set boundaries, people should know how to act toward God. But Judah was acting in ways that were spiritually blind and deaf, foolish, stubborn, and rebellious. “They [had] turned aside and gone away” from the path of righteousness (v. 23). God had planned to bless them, but their ongoing sin was depriving them of the good He intended (v. 25).

The next layer was even worse (vv. 26–29)! Simply rebelling wasn’t enough for some wrongdoers. They set traps for others. They became rich and powerful through deceit and exploitation. In opposition to biblical justice, which seeks others’ good (Deut. 10:17–19; James 1:27), they were only looking after themselves. “Their evil deeds [had] no limit” (v. 28). They deserved God’s punishment, and God took it personally: “Should I not avenge myself on such a nation as this?” (v. 29).

Still another layer—how low could it go (vv. 30–31)? “Horrible” and “shocking” are the only appropriate words. Prophets told lies instead of truth, priests ministered by their own authority instead of God’s, and, most appallingly, “my people love it this way” (v. 31).

**Apply the Word**

The “fat and sleek” of Jeremiah’s day did not speak up for the poor or the orphan (v. 28). What about us? Where in our lives are we speaking up for biblical justice?

[Extended reading: Jeremiah 5–6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+5-6&version=NIV)

### **Pray with Us**

You are a God who loves justice. We are Your children, and we want to be like You. Plant in us a deep love for godly justice, discernment to understand what is just, and the fire to pursue justice for others.

## BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/4/22

# Wise Counsel

 **Read:** [**Exodus 18:13–22**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2018.13%E2%80%9322)

13The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. 14When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, “What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?”

15Moses answered him, “Because the people come to me to seek God’s will. 16Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God’s decrees and instructions.”

17Moses’ father-in-law replied, “What you are doing is not good. 18You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. 19Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him. 20Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. 21But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. 22Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.

The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. [Exodus 18:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2018.18)

While attending seminary, I was working full-time. Add to that a chaplaincy rotation and an internship at a church. I was busy. When my father visited me, he said, “You’re going to have a breakdown.” I shrugged off his warning thinking he was of another generation and didn’t understand goal-setting.

I didn’t have a breakdown. But I did experience a very rough, dry season in which I fell into depression. Since then, I’ve learned to listen to warnings—especially from loved ones—more carefully.

That reminds me of Moses’ story. He too was diligently working, serving as Israel’s judge ([Exodus 18:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2018.13)). Yet he chose to listen to his father-in-law’s warning (vv. 17–18). Jethro wasn’t in the thick of things, but he loved Moses and his family and could see trouble ahead. Perhaps that’s why Moses was able to listen to Jethro and heed his advice. Moses set up a system for “capable men from all the people” to take on the smaller disputes, and he took the more difficult cases (vv. 21–22). Because he listened to Jethro, rearranged his work, and entrusted others to shoulder the load, he was able to avoid burnout during that season of life.

Many of us take our work for God, our families, and others seriously—passionately even. But we still need to heed the advice of trusted loved ones and to rely on the wisdom and power of God in all we do.

By:  [Katara Patton](https://odb.org/author/katarapatton/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Whose voice can you trust to remind you to serve wisely? What mechanisms do you have in place to avoid burnout? When did you implement them last?

Almighty God, thank You for allowing me to serve You in many ways. As I passionately care for others, teach me to also work wisely so that I’ll have energy to do what You want me to do.

#### **Insight**

Jethro’s advice to Moses in [Exodus 18:13–26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2018.13%E2%80%9326) came at a strategic time. At the age of eighty (see [Acts 7:23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%207.23), [30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%207.30)), Moses had spent the previous forty years in relative isolation and anonymity in the Midian desert. Now he found himself the leader of a massive extended family numbering perhaps in the millions—a far cry from watching his father-in-law’s sheep. With the Red Sea behind them and Mount Sinai before them, this was the ideal time for Jethro’s counsel. With the provision of the Law as Israel’s national constitution, additional layers of leadership would be extremely valuable to Moses and to the people he led.

By: [**Bill Crowder**](https://odb.org/author/billcrowder/)

# God Calling – 4/4/22

# Divine Efficiency

I am all-powerful and all-knowing and I have all your affairs in My Hands. Divine efficiency as well as Divine power is being brought to bear on them. All miracle-work is not the work of a moment as so often men imagine.

My servant Peter was not changed in a flash from a simple fisherman to a great leader and teacher, but through the very time of faithlessness -- through the very time of denial -- I was yet making him all that he should be. Impetuous spokesman as he always was, ready to lead the other disciples, Peter could never have been the after power he was, had he not learned his weakness. No man can save, unless he understands the sinner.

The Peter who was a mighty force for Me afterwards, who, more than all others, founded My church, was not even first the Peter who said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," but the Peter who denied Me. He who had tested My forgiveness in his moment of abject remorse, he could best speak of Me as the Savior.

The Kingdom of Heaven can only be preached by those who have learned to prize the authority of its Kingdom. A many-sided training My Apostles need. Oh! joy. Oh, rejoice. I love you. Not one test too much will I lay on you.

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory." 1 Peter 11:7