# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/5/22

# His Agony and Our Access



Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples…."Stay here and watch with Me." —[Matthew 26:36, 38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+26%3A36%2C+38)

We can never fully comprehend Christ’s agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, but at least we don’t have to misunderstand it. It is the agony of God and man in one Person, coming face to face with sin. We cannot learn about Gethsemane through personal experience. Gethsemane and Calvary represent something totally unique— they are the gateway into life for us.

It was not death on the cross that Jesus agonized over in Gethsemane. In fact, He stated very emphatically that He came with the purpose of dying. His concern here was that He might not get through this struggle as the Son of Man. He was confident of getting through it as the Son of God— Satan could not touch Him there. But Satan’s assault was that our Lord would come through for us on His own solely as the Son of Man. If Jesus had done that, He could not have been our Savior (see [Hebrews 9:11-15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+9:11-15)). Read the record of His agony in Gethsemane in light of His earlier wilderness temptation— “…the devil…departed from Him until an opportune time” ([Luke 4:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+4:13)). In Gethsemane, Satan came back and was overthrown again. Satan’s final assault against our Lord as the Son of Man was in Gethsemane.

The agony in Gethsemane was the agony of the Son of God in fulfilling His destiny as the Savior of the world. The veil is pulled back here to reveal all that it cost Him to make it possible for us to become sons of God. His agony was the basis for the simplicity of our salvation. The Cross of Christ was a triumph for the Son of Man. It was not only a sign that our Lord had triumphed, but that He had triumphed to save the human race. Because of what the Son of Man went through, every human being has been provided with a way of access into the very presence of God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 4/5/22

I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.—[GEN. 32:26.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.32.html" \l "Gen.32.26)

Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me.

O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.—According to your faith be it unto you.—Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

They drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and [Jesus] made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: . . . he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?—I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight.—My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

[Isa. 27:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.27.html" \l "Isa.27.5).[Matt. 15:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.15.html" \l "Matt.15.28). -[Matt. 9:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.9.html" \l "Matt.9.29). -[Jas. 1:6,7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html" \l "Jas.1.6).[Luke 24:28,29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.24.html" \l "Luke.24.28),[31,32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.24.html" \l "Luke.24.31). -[Exo. 33:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.33.html" \l "Exod.33.13). -[Exo. 33:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.33.html" \l "Exod.33.14).

“On him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.” [Luke 23:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.23.html" \l "Luke.23.26)

We see in Simon’s carrying the cross a picture of the work of the Church throughout all generations; she is the cross-bearer after Jesus. Mark then, Christian, Jesus does not suffer so as to exclude your suffering. He bears a cross, not that you may escape it, but that you may endure it. Christ exempts you from sin, but not from sorrow. Remember that, and expect to suffer.

But let us comfort ourselves with this thought, that in our case, as in Simon's, it is not our cross, but Christ’s cross which we carry. When you are molested for your piety; when your religion brings the trial of cruel mockings upon you, then remember it is not your cross, it is Christ's cross; and how delightful is it to carry the cross of our Lord Jesus!

You carry the cross after him. You have blessed company; your path is marked with the footprints of your Lord. The mark of his blood-red shoulder is upon that heavy burden. 'Tis his cross, and he goes before you as a shepherd goes before his sheep. Take up your cross daily, and follow him.

Do not forget, also, that you bear this cross in partnership. It is the opinion of some that Simon only carried one end of the cross, and not the whole of it. That is very possible; Christ may have carried the heavier part, against the transverse beam, and Simon may have borne the lighter end. Certainly it is so with you; you do but carry the light end of the cross, Christ bore the heavier end.

And remember, though Simon had to bear the cross for a very little while, it gave him lasting honour. Even so the cross we carry is only for a little while at most, and then we shall receive the crown, the glory. Surely we should love the cross, and, instead of shrinking from it, count it very dear, when it works out for us “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

# Word Live – 4/5/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/5/22

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# Today in the Word – 4/5/22

# Call to Repent

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 7:1–11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+7%3a1%e2%80%9311)

### **False Religion Worthless**

7 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 2“Stand at the gate of the Lord’s house and there proclaim this message:

“‘Hear the word of the Lord, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the Lord. 3This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place. 4Do not trust in deceptive words and say, “This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!” 5If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, 6if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, 7then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors for ever and ever. 8But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.

9“‘Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+7%3A1%E2%80%9311+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-19129a)] burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, 10and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, “We are safe”—safe to do all these detestable things? 11Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the Lord.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Jeremiah 7:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+7%3A1%E2%80%9311+&version=NIV#en-NIV-19129) Or and swear by false gods

When Jesus cleansed the Temple, he angrily drove out the moneychangers and overturned the tables of those exploiting the poor by selling doves for offerings. “‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it ‘a den of robbers’” (Matt. 21:13).

Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? Jeremiah 7:11

In this dramatic scene, Jesus was quoting from Isaiah and Jeremiah. The “house of prayer” is from Isaiah 56:7, and the “den of robbers” is from today’s verse. Why? Because the same sin committed in Jesus’ presence had happened in Jeremiah’s time. What should have been happening at the Temple? Worship and repentance. As God said through Jeremiah: “Change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly” (v. 5).

You may wonder: What was actually happening at the Temple? The short answer is: sin. Judah’s sins included stealing, murder, adultery, perjury, injustice, and idolatry (vv. 6, 9). They were oppressing the poor and worshiping false gods.

The main sin highlighted in this passage is hypocrisy. They were showing one face to the world and another to God (as if He wouldn’t know!). They acted one way in the Temple and another way in the world. They had the gall to worship idols and sin wantonly, then enter the house of God and think they were “safe.” They thought that being God’s “chosen people” was a lucky charm, keeping them safe from the consequences of their sin (v. 10). After all, that’s what the false prophets had told them, and they’d put their trust in their deceptive words (vv. 4, 8). God would never destroy His own Temple, right?

We know differently. God hates sin and is righteously angry when His people take advantage of their identity and His grace (see also Rom. 6:1–2).

**Apply the Word**

In light of today’s devotion, we encourage you to prepare your hearts for next Sunday’s worship service. This is not just because it will be Palm Sunday but because worshiping God is serious business.

## **Pray with Us**

Father, we thank You for Your love, mercy, and longsuffering. But don’t let us forget Your holiness, power, and wrath against sin. We worship You with awe; You are greater than we can comprehend.

### BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/5/22

# A Good Work

 **Read:** [**Psalm 139:13–24**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20139.13%E2%80%9324)

13For you created my inmost being;  
    you knit me together in my mother’s womb.  
14I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
    your works are wonderful,  
    I know that full well.  
15My frame was not hidden from you  
    when I was made in the secret place,  
    when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.  
16Your eyes saw my unformed body;  
    all the days ordained for me were written in your book  
    before one of them came to be.  
17How precious to me are your thoughts,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+139%3A13%E2%80%9324&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16257a)] God!  
    How vast is the sum of them!  
18Were I to count them,  
    they would outnumber the grains of sand—  
    when I awake, I am still with you.

19If only you, God, would slay the wicked!  
    Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!  
20They speak of you with evil intent;  
    your adversaries misuse your name.  
21Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord,  
    and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?  
22I have nothing but hatred for them;  
    I count them my enemies.  
23Search me, God, and know my heart;  
    test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
24See if there is any offensive way in me,  
    and lead me in the way everlasting.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Psalm 139:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+139%3A13%E2%80%9324&version=NIV#en-NIV-16257) Or How amazing are your thoughts concerning me

He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. [Philippians 1:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%201.6)

As a teenager, Charles Spurgeon wrestled with God. He’d grown up going to church, but what was preached seemed bland and meaningless. It was a struggle for him to believe in God, and Charles, in his own words, “rebelled and revolted.” One night a fierce snowstorm forced the sixteen-year-old Spurgeon to seek shelter in a tiny Methodist church. The pastor’s sermon seemed directed at him personally. In that moment, God won the wrestling match, and Charles gave his heart to Jesus.

Spurgeon later wrote, “Long before I began with Christ, He began with me.” In fact, our life with God doesn’t begin with the moment of salvation. The psalmist notes that God “created [our] inmost being,” knitting us together in our mother’s womb ([Psalm 139:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20139.13)). The apostle Paul writes, “Even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace” ([Galatians 1:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%201.15) nlt). And God doesn’t stop working with us when we’re saved: “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion” ([Philippians 1:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%201.6)).

We’re all works-in-progress in the hands of a loving God. He leads us through our rebellious wrestling and into His warm embrace. But His purpose with us then is only beginning. “For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him” ([Philippians 2:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%202.13) nlt). Rest assured, we’re His good work regardless of how old we are or what stage of life we’re in.

By:  [Kenneth Petersen](https://odb.org/author/kenpetersen/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How’s God working in your life at this very moment? What’s He doing with you for His purposes?

Loving God, I’m overwhelmed to think of Your loving care for me from the moment of my birth. Thank You. Help me to respond to Your ongoing work in my life.

#### **Insight**

[Psalm 139](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20139) is a lyrical composition of undisputed beauty. The psalmist celebrates God’s omniscience (His knowledge of everything; vv. 1–6), His omnipresence (His presence everywhere; vv. 7–12), and David’s intimacy with such an omnipotent (all-powerful) God (vv. 13–18). The way the psalm ends (vv. 23–24) mirrors the way it begins (vv. 1–2). Notice the repetition of the words search and know.

At first glance, verses 19–22 seem out of place. They differ from the rest of the psalm in tone and content. While David writes as an intimate friend of God, there were those who lived and functioned in opposition to Him. They’re described as “wicked” (v. 19), “adversaries” (v. 20), and “[those] who are in rebellion” (v. 21). The God-conscious psalmist, however, wasn’t among them and distinguished himself as such. The similarity of verses 19–22 to what follows in [Psalm 140](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20140) may suggest that the two psalms should be read together.

By: [**Arthur Jackson**](https://odb.org/author/arthurjackson/)

# God Calling – 4/5/22

# Heart's Interpreter

Rest in Me. Seek this evening time just to be with Me. Do not feel you have failed if sometimes I ask you only to rest together in My Presence.

I am with you, much with you both, not only at these times, at all times. Feel conscious of My Presence. Earth has no greater joy than that.

I am the heart's great Interpreter. Even souls who are the nearest together have much in their natures that remain a sealed book to each other, and only as I enter and control their lives, do I reveal to each the mysteries of the other.

Each soul is so different -- I alone understand perfectly the language of each, and I can interpret between the two.

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." Psalm 116:7

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/6/22

# The Collision of God and Sin



…who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree… —[1 Peter 2:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Peter+2%3A24)

The Cross of Christ is the revealed truth of God’s judgment on sin. Never associate the idea of martyrdom with the Cross of Christ. It was the supreme triumph, and it shook the very foundations of hell. There is nothing in time or eternity more absolutely certain and irrefutable than what Jesus Christ accomplished on the Cross— He made it possible for the entire human race to be brought back into a right-standing relationship with God. He made redemption the foundation of human life; that is, He made a way for every person to have fellowship with God.

The Cross was not something that happened to Jesus— He came to die; the Cross was His purpose in coming. He is “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” ([Revelation 13:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+13:8)). The incarnation of Christ would have no meaning without the Cross. Beware of separating “God was manifested in the flesh…” from “…He made Him…to be sin for us…” ([1 Timothy 3:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Timothy+3:16) ; [2 Corinthians 5:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5:21)). The purpose of the incarnation was redemption. God came in the flesh to take sin away, not to accomplish something for Himself. The Cross is the central event in time and eternity, and the answer to all the problems of both.

The Cross is not the cross of a man, but the Cross of God, and it can never be fully comprehended through human experience. The Cross is God exhibiting His nature. It is the gate through which any and every individual can enter into oneness with God. But it is not a gate we pass right through; it is one where we abide in the life that is found there.

The heart of salvation is the Cross of Christ. The reason salvation is so easy to obtain is that it cost God so much. The Cross was the place where God and sinful man merged with a tremendous collision and where the way to life was opened. But all the cost and pain of the collision was absorbed by the heart of God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We can understand the attributes of God in other ways, but we can only understand the Father’s heart in the Cross of Christ.  The Highest Good—Thy Great Redemption, 558 L

# CCEL – 4/6/22

He ever liveth to make intercession.—[HEB. 7:25.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.7.html" \l "Heb.7.25)

Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died . . . who also maketh intercession for us.—Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.—There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Seeing . . . that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an 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.—Through him we . . . have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

[Rom. 8:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.34). -[Heb. 9:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.9.html" \l "Heb.9.24).[I John 2:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html" \l "iJohn.2.1). -[I Tim. 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.2.html" \l "iTim.2.5).[Heb. 4:14-16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.4.html" \l "Heb.4.14). -[Eph. 2:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.18).

“Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp.” [Hebrews 13:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.13)

Jesus, bearing his cross, went forth to suffer without the gate. The Christian’s reason for leaving the camp of the world’s sin and religion is not because he loves to be singular, but because Jesus did so; and the disciple must follow his Master. Christ was “not of the world:” his life and his testimony were a constant protest against conformity with the world. Never was such overflowing affection for men as you find in him; but still he was separate from sinners. In like manner Christ’s people must “go forth unto him.” They must take their position “without the camp,” as witness-bearers for the truth. They must be prepared to tread the straight and narrow path. They must have bold, unflinching, lion-like hearts, loving Christ first, and his truth next, and Christ and his truth beyond all the world. Jesus would have his people “go forth without the camp” for their own sanctification. You cannot grow in grace to any high degree while you are conformed to the world. The life of separation may be a path of sorrow, but it is the highway of safety; and though the separated life may cost you many pangs, and make every day a battle, yet it is a happy life after all. No joy can excel that of the soldier of Christ: Jesus reveals himself so graciously, and gives such sweet refreshment, that the warrior feels more calm and peace in his daily strife than others in their hours of rest. The highway of holiness is the highway of communion. It is thus we shall hope to win the crown if we are enabled by divine grace faithfully to follow Christ “without the camp.” The crown of glory will follow the cross of separation. A moment’s shame will be well recompensed by eternal honour; a little while of witness-bearing will seem nothing when we are “forever with the Lord.”

# Word Live – 4/6/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/6/22

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

# Today in the Word – 4/6/22

# Worthless Idols

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 10:1–16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+10%3a1%e2%80%9316)

### **God and Idols**

10 Hear what the Lord says to you, people of Israel. 2This is what the Lord says:

“Do not learn the ways of the nations  
    or be terrified by signs in the heavens,  
    though the nations are terrified by them.  
3For the practices of the peoples are worthless;  
    they cut a tree out of the forest,  
    and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel.  
4They adorn it with silver and gold;  
    they fasten it with hammer and nails  
    so it will not totter.  
5Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field,  
    their idols cannot speak;  
they must be carried  
    because they cannot walk.  
Do not fear them;  
    they can do no harm  
    nor can they do any good.”

6No one is like you, Lord;  
    you are great,  
    and your name is mighty in power.  
7Who should not fear you,  
    King of the nations?  
    This is your due.  
Among all the wise leaders of the nations  
    and in all their kingdoms,  
    there is no one like you.

8They are all senseless and foolish;  
    they are taught by worthless wooden idols.  
9Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish  
    and gold from Uphaz.  
What the craftsman and goldsmith have made  
    is then dressed in blue and purple—  
    all made by skilled workers.  
10But the Lord is the true God;  
    he is the living God, the eternal King.  
When he is angry, the earth trembles;  
    the nations cannot endure his wrath.

11“Tell them this: ‘These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens.’”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+10%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-19213a)]

12But God made the earth by his power;  
    he founded the world by his wisdom  
    and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.  
13When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar;  
    he makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth.  
He sends lightning with the rain  
    and brings out the wind from his storehouses.

14Everyone is senseless and without knowledge;  
    every goldsmith is shamed by his idols.  
The images he makes are a fraud;  
    they have no breath in them.  
15They are worthless, the objects of mockery;  
    when their judgment comes, they will perish.  
16He who is the Portion of Jacob is not like these,  
    for he is the Maker of all things,  
including Israel, the people of his inheritance—  
    the Lord Almighty is his name.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Jeremiah 10:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+10%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#en-NIV-19213) The text of this verse is in Aramaic.

In The Wizard of Oz, the Scarecrow dreams of getting a brain. On the road, he sings, “I would not be just a nothin’ / My head all full of stuffin’...If I only had a brain.” Dorothy agrees, “With the thoughts you’ll be thinkin’/ You could be another Lincoln / If you only had a brain.”

The LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. Jeremiah 10:10

At this point in the book of Jeremiah, you may be thinking that the people of Judah should have been singing this same song! If they’d only had a brain, they would have repented and returned to the Lord. Idolatry was not complicated. They knew that exchanging their “glorious God” for “worthless idols” (Jer. 2:11) was a big mistake.

Idols are objects made by human craftsmen, so why would God’s people choose to worship them? They cannot walk, speak or do anything else, good or bad. They’re “like a scarecrow in a cucumber field” (10:5). Not even the crows respect them! Furthermore, the Jews were God’s chosen people. They had been given His Law. Why would they follow the ways of sinful nations? Jeremiah compares these idols to the one true God (vv. 6–7). Our God is King over all nations. He deserves to be feared and worshiped. There is none like Him!

This back-and-forth pattern continues throughout today’s reading—an attack on Judah’s idolatry, followed by words of praise for the Lord. As far as idols go, it’s “senseless and foolish” to worship sticks of wood (vv. 8–9; see Isa. 41:22–24). They can do nothing (v. 11). They’re dead, powerless, a fraud (vv. 14–15). Our God, by contrast, is “not like these” at all (v. 16). He’s true, living, eternal, and sovereign (v. 10). As the Creator, He “made the earth by his power” and “founded the world by his wisdom” (vv. 12–13).

**Apply the Word**

We all have blind spots and temptations. Ask the Lord to examine your hearts and teach you His wisdom (Ps. 90:12).

## **Pray with Us**

When we seek wisdom, we do not want the cynical wisdom of the world! We want Your wisdom, Lord. Show us our blind spots where sinful attitudes and habits damage our witness and hinder our relationship with You.

### BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/6/22

# Parking Lot Quarrel

 **Read:** [**James 1:19–27**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%201.19%E2%80%9327)

### **Listening and Doing**

19My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. 21Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

22Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

26Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. 27Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Do not merely listen to the word . . . . Do what it says. [James 1:22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%201.22)

The scene in the parking lot might have been funny if it wasn’t so tragic. Two drivers were arguing loudly over one of their cars that was blocking the passage of the other, and harsh words were being exchanged.

What made it especially painful to watch was that this quarrel was taking place in the parking lot of a church. The two men had possibly just heard a sermon about love, patience, or forgiveness, but it was all forgotten in the heat of the moment.

Passing by, I shook my head—then quickly realized I was no better. How many times had I read the Bible, only to fall into sin moments later with an uncharitable thought? How many times had I behaved like the person who “looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like” ([James 1:23–24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%201.23%E2%80%9324))?

James was calling on his readers not only to read and reflect on God’s instruction, but also to do what it says (v. 22). A complete faith, he noted, means both knowing Scripture and putting it into action.

Life’s circumstances can make it hard to apply what Scripture reveals. But if we ask the Father, He’ll surely help us obey His words and please Him with our actions.

By:  [Leslie Koh](https://odb.org/author/lesliekoh/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What have you read in Scripture that you can do today? What might you stop doing?

Dear God, forgive me for the times I haven’t done what You’ve instructed. Give me the strength and the willingness to obey You with words, actions, and thoughts that please You.

#### **Insight**

The book of James is often referred to as the Proverbs of the New Testament because its message centers around wise living in light of the Scriptures. The middle paragraph of today’s passage (1:22–25) highlights this focus.

Though in our English translations verse 22 seems to contain two commands—“do not” and “do”—in Greek there’s only a single imperative verb, ginesthe, which means “to be.” It indicates continuing action—“continue to be”—rather than a single completed action. Be is also the first word in the Greek, which emphasizes its significance in the verse. So James’ command in 1:22 would literally read: “Be, and continue to be, doers of the word and not merely hearers, deceiving yourselves.” James is emphasizing that actions guided by the Scriptures and the enabling of the Spirit are to define the believer in Jesus.

By: [**J.R. Hudberg**](https://odb.org/author/jrhudberg/)

# God Calling – 4/6/22

# Easter Joy

I lay My loving Hands on you in blessing. Wait in Love and longing to feel their tender pressure and, as you wait, courage and hope will flow into your being, irradiating all your lives with the warm sun of My Presence.

Let all go this Eastertide. Loosen your hold on earth, its care, its worries, even its joys. Unclasp your hands, relax, and then the tide of Easter Joy will come. Put aside all thought of the future, of the past. Relinquish all to get the Easter Sacrament of Spiritual Life.

So often man, crying out for some blessing, has yet such tight hold on some earth-treasure that he has no hand to receive Mine, as I hold it out in Love. Easter is the wonder-time of all the year. A blessing is yours to take. Sacrifice all to that.

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow." Matthew 6:34

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/7/22

# Why We Lack Understanding



He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead. — [Mark 9:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Mark+9%3A9)

As the disciples were commanded, you should also say nothing until the Son of Man has risen in you— until the life of the risen Christ so dominates you that you truly understand what He taught while here on earth. When you grow and develop the right condition inwardly, the words Jesus spoke become so clear that you are amazed you did not grasp them before. In fact, you were not able to understand them before because you had not yet developed the proper spiritual condition to deal with them.

Our Lord doesn’t hide these things from us, but we are not prepared to receive them until we are in the right condition in our spiritual life. Jesus said, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now” ([John 16:12](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+16:12)). We must have a oneness with His risen life before we are prepared to bear any particular truth from Him. Do we really know anything about the indwelling of the risen life of Jesus? The evidence that we do is that His Word is becoming understandable to us. God cannot reveal anything to us if we don’t have His Spirit. And our own unyielding and headstrong opinions will effectively prevent God from revealing anything to us. But our insensible thinking will end immediately once His resurrection life has its way with us.

“…tell no one….” But so many people do tell what they saw on the Mount of Transfiguration— their mountaintop experience. They have seen a vision and they testify to it, but there is no connection between what they say and how they live. Their lives don’t add up because the Son of Man has not yet risen in them. How long will it be before His resurrection life is formed and evident in you and in me?

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Awe is the condition of a man’s spirit realizing Who God is and what He has done for him personally. Our Lord emphasizes the attitude of a child; no attitude can express such solemn awe and familiarity as that of a child.  Not Knowing Whither, 882 L

# CCEL – 4/7/22

As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.—[II COR. 6:10.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.6.html" \l "iiCor.6.10)

We . . . rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.—I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.—Believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

In a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.—Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.

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?—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.

[Rom. 5:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.2). -[II Cor. 7:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.7.html" \l "iiCor.7.4). -[I Pet. 1:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.8).[II Cor. 8:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.8.html" \l "iiCor.8.2). -[Eph. 3:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.3.html" \l "Eph.3.8).[Jas 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.2.html" \l "Jas.2.5). -[II Cor. 9:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.9.html" \l "iiCor.9.8).

“O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame?” [Psalm 4:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.4.html" \l "Ps.4.2)

An instructive writer has made a mournful list of the honours which the blinded people of Israel awarded to their long expected King.

1. They gave him a procession of honour, in which Roman legionaries, Jewish priests, men and women, took a part, he himself bearing his cross. This is the triumph which the world awards to him who comes to overthrow man’s direst foes. Derisive shouts are his only acclamations, and cruel taunts his only paeans of praise.

2. They presented him with the wine of honour. Instead of a golden cup of generous wine they offered him the criminal’s stupefying death-draught, which he refused because he would preserve an uninjured taste wherewith to taste of death; and afterwards when he cried, “I thirst,” they gave him vinegar mixed with gall, thrust to his mouth upon a sponge. Oh! wretched, detestable inhospitality to the King’s Son.

3. He was provided with a guard of honour, who showed their esteem of him by gambling over his garments, which they had seized as their booty. Such was the body-guard of the adored of heaven; a quaternion of brutal gamblers.

4. A throne of honour was found for him upon the bloody tree; no easier place of rest would rebel men yield to their liege Lord. The cross was, in fact, the full expression of the world’s feeling towards him; “There,” they seemed to say, “thou Son of God, this is the manner in which God himself should be treated, could we reach him.”

5. The title of honour was nominally “King of the Jews,” but that the blinded nation distinctly repudiated, and really called him “King of thieves,” by preferring Barabbas, and by placing Jesus in the place of highest shame between two thieves. His glory was thus in all things turned into shame by the sons of men, but it shall yet gladden the eyes of saints and angels, world without end.

# Word Live – 4/7/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/7/22

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

# Today in the Word – 4/7/22

# Why Do the Wicked Prosper?

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 12:1–13**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+12%3a1%e2%80%9313)

### **Jeremiah’s Complaint**

12 You are always righteous, Lord,  
    when I bring a case before you.  
Yet I would speak with you about your justice:  
    Why does the way of the wicked prosper?  
    Why do all the faithless live at ease?  
2You have planted them, and they have taken root;  
    they grow and bear fruit.  
You are always on their lips  
    but far from their hearts.  
3Yet you know me, Lord;  
    you see me and test my thoughts about you.  
Drag them off like sheep to be butchered!  
    Set them apart for the day of slaughter!  
4How long will the land lie parched  
    and the grass in every field be withered?  
Because those who live in it are wicked,  
    the animals and birds have perished.  
Moreover, the people are saying,  
    “He will not see what happens to us.”

### **God’s Answer**

5“If you have raced with men on foot  
    and they have worn you out,  
    how can you compete with horses?  
If you stumble[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+12%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-19255a)] in safe country,  
    how will you manage in the thickets by[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+12%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-19255b)] the Jordan?  
6Your relatives, members of your own family—  
    even they have betrayed you;  
    they have raised a loud cry against you.  
Do not trust them,  
    though they speak well of you.

7“I will forsake my house,  
    abandon my inheritance;  
I will give the one I love  
    into the hands of her enemies.  
8My inheritance has become to me  
    like a lion in the forest.  
She roars at me;  
    therefore I hate her.  
9Has not my inheritance become to me  
    like a speckled bird of prey  
    that other birds of prey surround and attack?  
Go and gather all the wild beasts;  
    bring them to devour.  
10Many shepherds will ruin my vineyard  
    and trample down my field;  
they will turn my pleasant field  
    into a desolate wasteland.  
11It will be made a wasteland,  
    parched and desolate before me;  
the whole land will be laid waste  
    because there is no one who cares.  
12Over all the barren heights in the desert  
    destroyers will swarm,  
for the sword of the Lord will devour  
    from one end of the land to the other;  
    no one will be safe.  
13They will sow wheat but reap thorns;  
    they will wear themselves out but gain nothing.  
They will bear the shame of their harvest  
    because of the Lord’s fierce anger.”

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Jeremiah 12:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+12%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#en-NIV-19255) Or you feel secure only
2. [Jeremiah 12:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+12%3A1%E2%80%9313+&version=NIV#en-NIV-19255) Or the flooding of

Just prior to today’s reading, enemies in Jeremiah’s hometown of Anathoth had plotted to kill him, but God had revealed their plot (Jer. 11:18–23). Without this revelation, the prophet would have been “like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter” (11:19). God promised to punish those wrongdoers.

Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all the faithless live at ease? Jeremiah 12:1

Jeremiah wanted immediate justice (vv. 1–4). He asked, “Why does the way of the wicked prosper?” (12:1). He wondered why these would-be murderers had not yet been punished? This wasn’t about revenge—the prophet wanted to see God vindicated. These evil doers were saying that God could not see. And what’s more, they thought they were getting away with it.

Jeremiah also had a bigger question. Why did God allow the wicked to live comfortable lives? That question puzzles us still today. We ask: Does God lack the power to make justice happen? Is He lacking in love? Is He uncaring about goodness? In a way, Jeremiah was accusing God of not being good or just. God appeared to let the faithless “live at ease,” as if the wicked are a special tree that God takes care of (the opposite of Ps. 1:3).

God answered Jeremiah (Jer. 12:5–6). But He answered with more questions. God doesn’t need to justify Himself, and He knew that His prophet trusted Him despite his frustration. Essentially, God’s questions indicate that worse was going to happen. If Jeremiah’s faith could not wait for justice in this case, how would he handle even tougher tests down the road?

These worse things would include the coming judgment on Judah (vv. 7–13). Because of their ongoing sin and rebellion, God would abandon His people and His house (the Temple). His love and protection would be withdrawn. Things would get worse before they get better.

**Apply the Word**

The writer of Psalm 73 had similar feelings and doubts. He needed to relearn the truth about God. Why not read this psalm as you conclude your devotional time today?

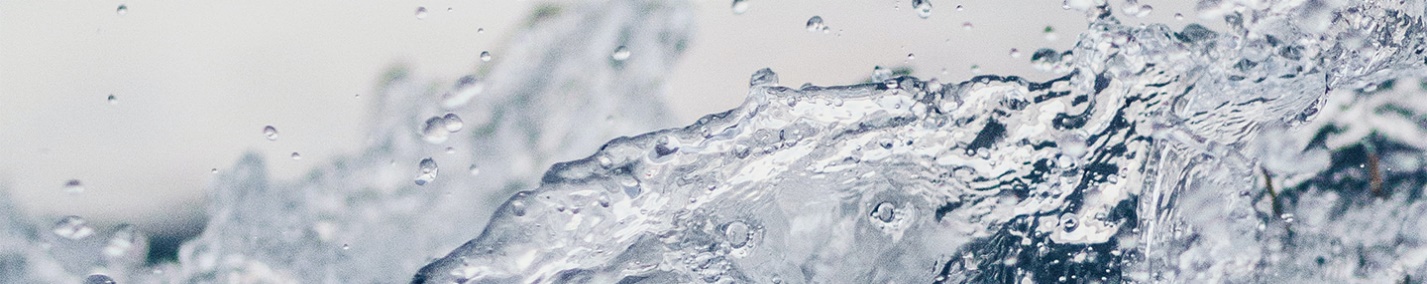
## **Pray with Us**

“Yet you know me, LORD; you see me and test my thoughts about you. Drag them off like sheep to be butchered! Set them apart for the day of slaughter!” (Jer. 12:3). How we long for the day when we are fully sanctified, perfectly trusting You!

### BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/7/22

# Real Hospitality

 **Read:** [**Genesis 24:12–20**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2024.12%E2%80%9320)

12Then he prayed, “Lord, God of my master Abraham, make me successful today, and show kindness to my master Abraham. 13See, I am standing beside this spring, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water. 14May it be that when I say to a young woman, ‘Please let down your jar that I may have a drink,’ and she says, ‘Drink, and I’ll water your camels too’—let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master.”

15Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milkah, who was the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor. 16The woman was very beautiful, a virgin; no man had ever slept with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar and came up again.

17The servant hurried to meet her and said, “Please give me a little water from your jar.”

18“Drink, my lord,” she said, and quickly lowered the jar to her hands and gave him a drink.

19After she had given him a drink, she said, “I’ll draw water for your camels too, until they have had enough to drink.” 20So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, ran back to the well to draw more water, and drew enough for all his camels.

Offer hospitality to one another . . . use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. [1 Peter 4:9–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Pet%204.9%E2%80%9310)

“Kumain ka na ba?” (Have you eaten?)

This is what you’ll always hear as a visitor in many homes in the Philippines, where I’m from. It’s the Filipino way of expressing care and kindness for our guests. And regardless of your reply, your host will always prepare something for you to eat. Filipinos believe that true kindness isn’t just saying the standard greeting but also going beyond words to show real hospitality.

Rebekah too, knew all about being kind. Her daily chores included drawing water from the well outside town and carrying the heavy jar of water home. When Abraham’s servant, who was very thirsty from his journey, asked for a little water from her jar, she didn’t hesitate to give him a drink ([Genesis 24:17–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2024.17%E2%80%9318)).

But then Rebekah did even more. When she saw that the visitor’s camels were thirsty, she quickly offered to go back to draw more water for them (vv. 19–20).  She didn’t hesitate to help, even if it meant making an extra trip (or more) to the well and back with a heavy jar.

Life is tough for many people, and often a small gesture of practical kindness can encourage them and lift their spirits. Being a channel of God’s love doesn’t always mean delivering a powerful sermon or planting a church. Sometimes, it can simply be giving someone a drink of water.

By:  [Karen Huang](https://odb.org/author/karenhuang/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Who do you know who might need some encouragement? What act of practical kindness can you offer to encourage them?

Heavenly Father, open my eyes to the needs of people around me. Give me the wisdom to know how to show kindness and care to them.

Learn more about the stories in Genesis with Our Daily Bread University's [online course](https://odbu.org/courses/ot216/?utm_source=April+7+ODB+article+&utm_medium=email%2C+app%2C+web&utm_campaign=Genesis-Leviticus+ODBU-ODB+).

#### **Insight**

Some might believe that the prayer of Abraham’s servant equated to testing God ([Genesis 24:12–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2024.12%E2%80%9314)). But the servant was in no way trying to manipulate the Almighty. He lived in a thoroughly pagan culture that habitually sought the guidance of false gods and inanimate idols. His prayer indicates a deep abiding faith in the one true God. The servant brought the challenge facing him to God, and He honored that faith. Verse 15 states that “before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder.” Whenever we truly turn to God, He meets us where we are.

By: [**Tim Gustafson**](https://odb.org/author/timgustafson/)

# God Calling – 4/7/22

# Calvary

From the death of My Body on the Cross, as from the shedding of husks in seed-life, springs that New Life which is My Gift to every man who will accept it.

Die with Me to self -- to human life, and then you will know the rapturous Joy of Easter Resurrection.

A Risen Life so glad and free can be yours.

Mary left home and kindred, friends, all, that Easter morning in her search for Me, and not until the "Mary" had been followed by the glad triumphant rapture of her "Rabboni" was her search over.

So with each of you. Man speaks to you too of the buried Christ. Search until you meet Me face to face, and My tender uttering of your name awakes your glad "Rabboni."

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." Galatians 2:20

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/8/22

# His Resurrection Destiny



Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? —[Luke 24:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+24%3A26)

Our Lord’s Cross is the gateway into His life. His resurrection means that He has the power to convey His life to me. When I was born again, I received the very life of the risen Lord from Jesus Himself.

Christ’s resurrection destiny— His foreordained purpose— was to bring “many sons to glory” ([Hebrews 2:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+2:10)). The fulfilling of His destiny gives Him the right to make us sons and daughters of God. We never have exactly the same relationship to God that the Son of God has, but we are brought by the Son into the relation of sonship. When our Lord rose from the dead, He rose to an absolutely new life— a life He had never lived before He was God Incarnate. He rose to a life that had never been before. And what His resurrection means for us is that we are raised to His risen life, not to our old life. One day we will have a body like His glorious body, but we can know here and now the power and effectiveness of His resurrection and can “walk in newness of life” ([Romans 6:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6:4)). Paul’s determined purpose was to “know Him and the power of His resurrection” ([Philippians 3:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+3:10)).

Jesus prayed, “…as You have given Him authority over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him” ([John 17:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17:2)). The term Holy Spirit is actually another name for the experience of eternal life working in human beings here and now. The Holy Spirit is the deity of God who continues to apply the power of the atonement by the Cross of Christ to our lives. Thank God for the glorious and majestic truth that His Spirit can work the very nature of Jesus into us, if we will only obey Him.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The truth is we have nothing to fear and nothing to overcome because He is all in all and we are more than conquerors through Him. The recognition of this truth is not flattering to the worker’s sense of heroics, but it is amazingly glorifying to the work of Christ. Approved Unto God, 4 R

# CCEL – 4/8/22

In everything ye are enriched by him.—[I COR. 1:5.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.1.html" \l "iCor.1.5)

When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.—He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine ye are the branches: he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.—To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.—Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.—Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

[Rom. 5:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.6). -[Rom. 8:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.32).[Col. 2:9,10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html" \l "Col.2.9).[John 15:4,5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html" \l "John.15.4). -[Rom. 7:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.7.html" \l "Rom.7.18). -[Eph. 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.7).[John 15:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html" \l "John.15.7). –[Col. 3:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.3.html" \l "Col.3.16).

“If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?” [Luke 23:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.23.html" \l "Luke.23.31)

Among other interpretations of this suggestive question, the following is full of teaching: “If the innocent substitute for sinners, suffer thus, what will be done when the sinner himself—the dry tree—shall fall into the hands of an angry God?” When God saw Jesus in the sinner’s place, he did not spare him; and when he finds the unregenerate without Christ, he will not spare them. O sinner, Jesus was led away by his enemies: so shall you be dragged away by fiends to the place appointed for you. Jesus was deserted of God; and if he, who was only imputedly a sinner, was deserted, how much more shall you be? “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” what an awful shriek! But what shall be your cry when you shall say, “O God! O God! why hast thou forsaken me?” and the answer shall come back, “Because ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.” If God spared not his own Son, how much less will he spare you! What whips of burning wire will be yours when conscience shall smite you with all its terrors. Ye richest, ye merriest, ye most self-righteous sinners—who would stand in your place when God shall say, “Awake, O sword, against the man that rejected me; smite him, and let him feel the smart forever”? Jesus was spit upon: sinner, what shame will be yours! We cannot sum up in one word all the mass of sorrows which met upon the head of Jesus who died for us; therefore it is impossible for us to tell you what streams, what oceans of grief must roll overyour spirit if you die as you now are. You may die so, you may die now. By the agonies of Christ, by his wounds and by his blood, do not bring upon yourselves the wrath to come! Trust in the Son of God, and you shall never die.

# Word Live – 4/8/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/8/22

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

# Today in the Word – 4/8/22

# A Useless Linen Belt

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 13:1–11**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+13%3a1%e2%80%9311)

### **A Linen Belt**

13 This is what the Lord said to me: “Go and buy a linen belt and put it around your waist, but do not let it touch water.” 2So I bought a belt, as the Lord directed, and put it around my waist.

3Then the word of the Lord came to me a second time: 4“Take the belt you bought and are wearing around your waist, and go now to Perath[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+13%3A1%E2%80%9311+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-19271a)] and hide it there in a crevice in the rocks.” 5So I went and hid it at Perath, as the Lord told me.

6Many days later the Lord said to me, “Go now to Perath and get the belt I told you to hide there.” 7So I went to Perath and dug up the belt and took it from the place where I had hidden it, but now it was ruined and completely useless.

8Then the word of the Lord came to me: 9“This is what the Lord says: ‘In the same way I will ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem. 10These wicked people, who refuse to listen to my words, who follow the stubbornness of their hearts and go after other gods to serve and worship them, will be like this belt—completely useless! 11For as a belt is bound around the waist, so I bound all the people of Israel and all the people of Judah to me,’ declares the Lord, ‘to be my people for my renown and praise and honor. But they have not listened.’

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Jeremiah 13:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+13%3A1%E2%80%9311+&version=NIV#en-NIV-19271) Or possibly to the Euphrates; similarly in verses 5-7

I have a vivid childhood memory of attending Good News Club. The teacher held up a candy bar and offered it to whomever would receive it. I sprinted to the front and grabbed my gift! Then she told us salvation was like that candy bar—a free gift from God to whomever receives it.

Hear and pay attention, do not be arrogant, for the Lord has spoken. Jeremiah 13:15

The Good News Club teacher used the candy bar as a spiritual object lesson, one that I still remember to this day. Object lessons can be powerful teaching tools, which is why we see them throughout the book of Jeremiah. In today’s reading, God instructed Jeremiah to purchase a linen belt and use it as an object lesson (vv. 1–7). First, he was told to buy a linen belt and to wear it but not wash it. Priestly garments were made of linen, so the belt was probably a symbolic reminder of Judah’s identity as God’s chosen people. Jeremiah was then told to bury it, then to dig it up. By this time it was filthy and “completely useless” (vv. 7, 10).

After this, God interpreted the object lesson (vv. 8–11). The linen belt represented His love, with which He’d bound the people of Israel and Judah to Himself. Why? For His glory and honor, the purpose of all things. What Jeremiah had done with the belt is a symbol of what God would do with Judah—ruin them. Why? They were proud. They didn’t listen. They thought they could sin and get away with it. They stubbornly persisted in their idolatry.

Just as Jeremiah’s linen belt had utterly failed to serve its intended purpose, so also had Judah. As a result of their unfaithfulness (see Deut. 26:16–19), the “treasured possession” would become a filthy rag.

**Apply the Word**

How about us? Are we living “a life worthy of the calling [we] have received” (Eph. 4:1)? Or are we living as if we’ve “exchanged the truth about God for a lie” (Rom. 1:25)?

## **Pray with Us**

Some of us may doubt our salvation. We don’t want to read Scripture, and we don’t want to pray. We are desperate for You to revitalize our faith and fervor. Lead us back to a worthy pursuit of Your calling.

### BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/8/22

# Permanent Address

 **Read:** [**Psalm 27:1–6**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.1%E2%80%936)

#### **Of David.**

1The Lord is my light and my salvation—  
    whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the stronghold of my life—  
    of whom shall I be afraid?

2When the wicked advance against me  
    to devour[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+27%3A1%E2%80%936&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14288a)] me,  
it is my enemies and my foes  
    who will stumble and fall.  
3Though an army besiege me,  
    my heart will not fear;  
though war break out against me,  
    even then I will be confident.

4One thing I ask from the Lord,  
    this only do I seek:  
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord  
    all the days of my life,  
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord  
    and to seek him in his temple.  
5For in the day of trouble  
    he will keep me safe in his dwelling;  
he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent  
    and set me high upon a rock.

6Then my head will be exalted  
    above the enemies who surround me;  
at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy;  
    I will sing and make music to the Lord.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Psalm 27:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+27%3A1%E2%80%936&version=NIV#en-NIV-14288) Or slander

One thing I ask from the Lord . . . that I may dwell in the house of the Lord. [Psalm 27:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.4)

Not long ago we moved to a new home just a short distance from our old one. Despite the close proximity, we still needed to load all of our belongings onto a moving truck because of the timing of the financial transactions. Between the sale and purchase, our furnishings stayed on the truck and our family found temporary lodging. During that time, I was surprised to discover how “at home” I felt despite the displacement from our physical home—simply because I was with those I love most: my family.

For part of his life, David lacked a physical home. He lived life on the run from King Saul. As David was God’s appointed successor to the throne, Saul perceived him as a threat and sought to kill him. David fled his home and slept wherever he found shelter. Though he had companions with him, David’s most earnest desire was to “dwell in the house of the Lord”—to enjoy permanent fellowship with Him ([Psalm 27:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.4)).

Jesus is our constant companion, our sense of “home” no matter where we are. He’s with us in our present troubles and even prepares a place for us to live with Him forever ([John 14:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014.3)). Despite the uncertainty and change we might experience as citizens of this earth, we can dwell permanently in our fellowship with Him every day and everywhere.

By:  [Kirsten Holmberg](https://odb.org/author/kirstenholmberg/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When have you felt most at home in God’s presence? How can you know that Jesus is your constant companion and that He’s always with you regardless of where you are and what you’re going through?

Loving God, I thank You for being my permanent address. Help me to recognize You as my most faithful companion who’s with me wherever I go.

#### **Insight**

Some of David’s expressions of courage might leave the impression that he lived with the confidence that no harm or evil could touch him. Yet many of his songs, including [Psalm 27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027), suggest that he knew what it meant to fear and tremble in the presence of his enemies (10:1; 13:1; 22:1–2). So David’s point is not that he’s never desperately afraid. Rather, despite his fears, he acknowledges that his strength and hope are in God (27:9–14). Time after time, he senses enough danger to pray, “You have always been my helper. Don’t leave me now; don’t abandon me, O God of my salvation!” (v. 9 nlt). Because he knows that his enemies are still a force to be reckoned with, he reminds himself to “be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (v. 14).

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

# God Calling – 4/8/22

# Marks of the Kingdom

Our Savior, we greet Thee. Thy Love and Sacrifice we would return in our poor faulty measure by Love and sacrifice.

No gift is poor if it expresses the true Love of the giver. So to Me your heart's gifts are rich and precious. Rejoice in My glad acceptance as you bring your Easter offerings.

My children must make a stand. "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate" was the command. Today in life and work, in Love and service, My children must be outstanding. I called a Peculiar People to make known My Name. My servant Paul said that My followers must be willing to be deemed "fools" for My Sake.

Be ready to stand aside and let the fashions and customs of the world go by, when My Glory and My Kingdom are thereby served. Be known by the Marks that distinguish those of My Kingdom. Be ready to confess Me before man. To count all things as loss so that you may gain Me in your lives.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 2 Corinthians 6:17

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/9/22

# Have You Seen Jesus?



After that, He appeared in another form to two of them… —[Mark 16:12](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Mark+16%3A12)

Being saved and seeing Jesus are not the same thing. Many people who have never seen Jesus have received and share in God’s grace. But once you have seen Him, you can never be the same. Other things will not have the appeal they did before.

You should always recognize the difference between what you see Jesus to be and what He has done for you. If you see only what He has done for you, your God is not big enough. But if you have had a vision, seeing Jesus as He really is, experiences can come and go, yet you will endure “as seeing Him who is invisible” ([Hebrews 11:27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+11:27)). The man who was blind from birth did not know who Jesus was until Christ appeared and revealed Himself to him (see [John 9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+9)). Jesus appears to those for whom He has done something, but we cannot order or predict when He will come. He may appear suddenly, at any turn. Then you can exclaim, “Now I see Him!” (see [John 9:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+9:25)).

Jesus must appear to you and to your friend individually; no one can see Jesus with your eyes. And division takes place when one has seen Him and the other has not. You cannot bring your friend to the point of seeing; God must do it. Have you seen Jesus? If so, you will want others to see Him too. “And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either” ([Mark 16:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+16:13)). When you see Him, you must tell, even if they don’t believe.

O could I tell, you surely would believe it!  
O could I only say what I have seen!  
How should I tell or how can you receive it,  
How, till He bringeth you where I have been?

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Christianity is not consistency to conscience or to convictions; Christianity is being true to Jesus Christ.  Biblical Ethics, 111 L

# CCEL – 4/9/22

Fear not; for I have redeemed thee.—[ISA. 43:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.43.html" \l "Isa.43.1)

Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel.—I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.—With the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name: he shall throughly plead their cause.—My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[Isa. 54:4,5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.54.html" \l "Isa.54.4)-[Isa. 44:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.44.html" \l "Isa.44.22). -[I Pet. 1:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html#iPet.1.19).[Jer. 50:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.50.html#Jer.50.34). -[John 10:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.29).[Gal. 1:3-5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.1.html" \l "Gal.1.3).

“And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.” [Luke 23:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.23.html" \l "Luke.23.27)

Amid the rabble rout which hounded the Redeemer to his doom, there were some gracious souls whose bitter anguish sought vent in wailing and lamentations—fit music to accompany that march of woe. When my soul can, in imagination, see the Saviour bearing his cross to Calvary, she joins the godly women and weeps with them; for, indeed, there is true cause for grief—cause lying deeper than those mourning women thought. They bewailed innocence maltreated, goodness persecuted, love bleeding, meekness about to die; but my heart has a deeper and more bitter cause to mourn. My sins were the scourges which lacerated those blessed shoulders, and crowned with thorn those bleeding brows: my sins cried “Crucify him! crucify him!” and laid the cross upon his gracious shoulders. His being led forth to die is sorrow enough for one eternity: but my having been his murderer, is more, infinitely more, grief than one poor fountain of tears can express.

Why those women loved and wept it were not hard to guess: but they could not have had greater reasons for love and grief than my heart has. Nain’s widow saw her son restored—but I myself have been raised to newness of life. Peter’s wife’s mother was cured of the fever—but I of the greater plague of sin. Out of Magdalene seven devils were cast—but a whole legion out of me. Mary and Martha were favoured with visits—but he dwells with me. His mother bare his body—but he is formed in me the hope of glory. In nothing behind the holy women in debt, let me not be behind them in gratitude or sorrow.

“Love and grief my heart dividing,

With my tears his feet I'll lave—

Constant still in heart abiding,

Weep for him who died to save.”

# Word Live – 4/9/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/9/22

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

# Today in the Word – 4/9/22

# The Weeping Prophet

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 14:1–10**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+14%3a1%e2%80%9310)

### **Drought, Famine, Sword**

14 This is the word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the drought:

2“Judah mourns,  
    her cities languish;  
they wail for the land,  
    and a cry goes up from Jerusalem.  
3The nobles send their servants for water;  
    they go to the cisterns  
    but find no water.  
They return with their jars unfilled;  
    dismayed and despairing,  
    they cover their heads.  
4The ground is cracked  
    because there is no rain in the land;  
the farmers are dismayed  
    and cover their heads.  
5Even the doe in the field  
    deserts her newborn fawn  
    because there is no grass.  
6Wild donkeys stand on the barren heights  
    and pant like jackals;  
their eyes fail  
    for lack of food.”

7Although our sins testify against us,  
    do something, Lord, for the sake of your name.  
For we have often rebelled;  
    we have sinned against you.  
8You who are the hope of Israel,  
    its Savior in times of distress,  
why are you like a stranger in the land,  
    like a traveler who stays only a night?  
9Why are you like a man taken by surprise,  
    like a warrior powerless to save?  
You are among us, Lord,  
    and we bear your name;  
    do not forsake us!

10This is what the Lord says about this people:

“They greatly love to wander;  
    they do not restrain their feet.  
So the Lord does not accept them;  
    he will now remember their wickedness  
    and punish them for their sins.”

Jeremiah was called “the weeping prophet.” He was not just sad in an emotional sense. His tears expressed deep grief for sin and its consequences. At the same time Jeremiah’s grief was rooted in faith that God would ultimately make everything right. In that same spirit, Rend Collective affirms: “I will sing of Your name / Here in the shadows / I’ll light up an offering of praise / What was true in the light / Is still true in the dark / You’re good and You’re kind / And You care for this heart / Lord I believe / That you weep with me.”

Do something, LORD, for the sake of your name. Jeremiah 14:7

Today’s passage is a lament over a drought that was a warning to Judah (see Lev. 26:18–20). God was trying to get His people’s attention, calling them to repent. In a lament, a speaker typically describes a crisis and asks God for help. A lament expresses godly sorrow, but with underlying and sometimes explicit notes of hope and faith. The individual grief is also meant to express empathy with the community.

Today’s passage follows the typical form of a lament. He described the drought and grieved over the suffering it caused (vv. 1–6). This natural disaster affected everyone. Not even the “nobles” could get water (v. 3). The farmers couldn’t either, foreshadowing a food shortage to come. Covering their heads was a cultural gesture of mourning. Even nature was affected. The doe deserting her fawn and the wild donkeys panting with thirst evoke our pity and sorrow.

Jeremiah asked God to help (vv. 7–9). He admitted that the people had sinned and deserved judgment but asked the Lord to be merciful. God, however, answered “no” (v. 10). The nation was not repenting, despite the warning embedded in the prophet’s lament.

**Apply the Word**

How do you handle a “no” from the Lord? Do you trust Him anyway? Do you check your heart to see if repentance is needed? These are godly responses.

## **Pray with Us**

How do we handle disappointment when You say no to our desires? We want to be obedient, but we still grieve. We want to trust You, but the future frightens us. Show us if we need to repent and stoke our belief that You know best.

### BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/9/22

# Chatty Bus

 **Read:** [**Colossians 4:2–6**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%204.2%E2%80%936)

### **Further Instructions**

2Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. 5Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. 6Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Let your conversation be always full of grace. [Colossians 4:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%204.6)

In 2019, the Oxford Bus Company launched the instantly popular “Chatty Bus,” a bus with designated people on board willing to talk with interested passengers. The route was initiated in response to government research which found that 30 percent of Britons go at least one day each week without a meaningful conversation.

Many of us have likely experienced the loneliness that comes from not having someone to talk to in a time of need. As I reflect on the value of important conversations in my life, I’m especially reminded of discussions that were full of grace. Those times brought me joy and encouragement, and they helped to cultivate deeper relationships.

At the end of his letter to the Colossian church, Paul encouraged his readers with principles of authentic living for believers in Jesus, including ways our conversations can exhibit love to everyone we encounter. The apostle wrote, “Let your conversation be always full of grace” (4:6), reminding his readers that it is not simply the presence of words but the quality of those words—“full of grace”—that would allow them to be a true encouragement to others.

The next time you have the opportunity to connect deeply in conversation—with a friend, co-worker, or even a stranger seated next to you on a bus or in a waiting room—look for ways your time together might bring blessing into both of your lives.

By:  [Lisa M. Samra](https://odb.org/author/lisasamra/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When have you experienced the blessing of grace-filled words? How might you extend encouragement to someone today through what you say?

Heavenly Father, help me to be a blessing to everyone I speak with today, filling these conversations with Your grace.

#### **Insight**

Paul’s normal pattern for writing letters to churches is well evidenced in this epistle to the Colossians. That pattern calls for the first half of the book to be primarily theological in nature with the remainder providing practical application of that doctrinal teaching. The first two chapters of Colossians describe the relationship between Christ (the head of the church) and the church (the body of Christ). Chapters 3–4 then give the practical outworking of those realities. In today’s Scripture reading, we find clear counsel on how to live and function as the church body. This includes the need for intercessory prayer (vv. 2–3) and the importance of personal testimony, which includes graciously using the opportunities God gives us (vv. 5–6). This is wise counsel that’s still needed today.

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

# God Calling – 4/9/22

# Risen Life

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isaiah 60:1

The Call comes on this My Day for all who love Me, to arise from earth-bands, from sin, and sloth and depression, distrust, fear, all that hinders the Risen Life. To arise to Beauty, to Holiness, to Joy, to Peace, to work inspired by Love and Joy, to rise from death to Life.

Remember that death was the last enemy I destroyed. So with death My Victory was complete. You have nothing then to fear. Sin, too, is conquered and forgiven, as you live and move and work with Me. All that depresses you, all that you fear, are powerless to harm you. They are but phantoms. The real forces I conquered in the wilderness, the Garden of Gethsemane, on the Cross, in the Tomb.

Let nothing hinder your Risen Life. "Risen with Christ," said My servant Paul. Seek to know more and more of that Risen Life. That is the Life of Conquest. Of that Risen Life was it truly said: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Fear and despair and tears come as you stand by the empty Tomb. "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

Rise from your fears and go out into the sunlight to meet Me, your Risen Lord.

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Philippians 3:10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/10/22

# Complete and Effective Decision About Sin



…our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. —[Romans 6:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+6%3A6)

**Co-Crucifixion.** Have you made the following decision about sin—that it must be completely killed in you? It takes a long time to come to the point of making this complete and effective decision about sin. It is, however, the greatest moment in your life once you decide that sin must die in you– not simply be restrained, suppressed, or counteracted, but crucified— just as Jesus Christ died for the sin of the world. No one can bring anyone else to this decision. We may be mentally and spiritually convinced, but what we need to do is actually make the decision that Paul urged us to do in this passage.

Pull yourself up, take some time alone with God, and make this important decision, saying, “Lord, identify me with Your death until I know that sin is dead in me.” Make the moral decision that sin in you must be put to death.

This was not some divine future expectation on the part of Paul, but was a very radical and definite experience in his life. Are you prepared to let the Spirit of God search you until you know what the level and nature of sin is in your life— to see the very things that struggle against God’s Spirit in you? If so, will you then agree with God’s verdict on the nature of sin— that it should be identified with the death of Jesus? You cannot “reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin” ([Romans 6:11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6:11)) unless you have radically dealt with the issue of your will before God.

Have you entered into the glorious privilege of being crucified with Christ, until all that remains in your flesh and blood is His life? “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me…” ([Galatians 2:20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+2:20)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

It is impossible to read too much, but always keep before you why you read. Remember that “the need to receive, recognize, and rely on the Holy Spirit” is before all else. Approved Unto God, 11 L

# CCEL – 4/10/22

I am black, but comely.—[SONG 1:5.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.1.html" \l "Song.1.5)

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.—Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.

I am a sinful man, O Lord.—Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair.

I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.—Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.

When I would do good, evil is present with me.—Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing—Ye are complete in him.—Perfect in Christ Jesus.

Ye are washed, . . . ye are sanctified, . . . ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.—That ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

[Psa. 51:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html" \l "Ps.51.5). -[Ezek. 16:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.16.html" \l "Ezek.16.14).[Luke 5:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.5.html" \l "Luke.5.8). -[Song 4:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.4.html" \l "Song.4.1).[Job 42:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.42.html" \l "Job.42.6). -[Song 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.4.html" \l "Song.4.7).[Rom. 7:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.7.html" \l "Rom.7.21). -[Matt. 9:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.9.html" \l "Matt.9.2).[Rom. 7:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.7.html#Rom.7.18). -[Col. 2:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html" \l "Col.2.10). -[Col. 1:28](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.28).[I Cor. 6:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.6.html" \l "iCor.6.11). -[I Pet. 2:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.9).

“The place which is called Calvary.” [Luke 23:33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.23.html" \l "Luke.23.33)

The hill of comfort is the hill of Calvary; the house of consolation is built with the wood of the cross; the temple of heavenly blessing is founded upon the riven rock—riven by the spear which pierced his side. No scene in sacred history ever gladdens the soul like Calvary’s tragedy.

“Is it not strange, the darkest hour

That ever dawned on sinful earth,

Should touch the heart with softer power,

For comfort, than an angel’s mirth?

That to the Cross the mourner’s eye should turn,

Sooner than where the stars of Bethlehem burn?”

Light springs from the midday-midnight of Golgotha, and every herb of the field blooms sweetly beneath the shadow of the once accursed tree. In that place of thirst, grace hath dug a fountain which ever gusheth with waters pure as crystal, each drop capable of alleviating the woes of mankind. You who have had your seasons of conflict, will confess that it was not at Olivet that you ever found comfort, not on the hill of Sinai, nor on Tabor; but Gethsemane, Gabbatha, and Golgotha have been a means of comfort to you. The bitter herbs of Gethsemane have often taken away the bitters of your life; the scourge of Gabbatha has often scourged away your cares, and the groans of Calvary have put all other groans to flight. Thus Calvary yields us comfort rare and rich. We never should have known Christ’s love in all its heights and depths if he had not died; nor could we guess the Father’s deep affection if he had not given his Son to die. The common mercies we enjoy all sing of love, just as the sea-shell, when we put it to our ears, whispers of the deep sea whence it came; but if we desire to hear the ocean itself, we must not look at every-day blessings, but at the transactions of the crucifixion. He who would know love, let him retire to Calvary and see the Man of sorrows die.

# Word Live – 4/10/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/10/22

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

# Today in the Word – 4/10/22

# Keeping the Sabbath

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 17:19–27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+17%3a19%e2%80%9327)

### **Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy**

19This is what the Lord said to me: “Go and stand at the Gate of the People,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+17%3A19%E2%80%9327+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-19377a)] through which the kings of Judah go in and out; stand also at all the other gates of Jerusalem. 20Say to them, ‘Hear the word of the Lord, you kings of Judah and all people of Judah and everyone living in Jerusalem who come through these gates. 21This is what the Lord says: Be careful not to carry a load on the Sabbath day or bring it through the gates of Jerusalem. 22Do not bring a load out of your houses or do any work on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your ancestors. 23Yet they did not listen or pay attention; they were stiff-necked and would not listen or respond to discipline. 24But if you are careful to obey me, declares the Lord, and bring no load through the gates of this city on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it, 25then kings who sit on David’s throne will come through the gates of this city with their officials. They and their officials will come riding in chariots and on horses, accompanied by the men of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever. 26People will come from the towns of Judah and the villages around Jerusalem, from the territory of Benjamin and the western foothills, from the hill country and the Negev, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and incense, and bringing thank offerings to the house of the Lord. 27But if you do not obey me to keep the Sabbath day holy by not carrying any load as you come through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle an unquenchable fire in the gates of Jerusalem that will consume her fortresses.’”

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Jeremiah 17:19](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+17%3A19%E2%80%9327+&version=NIV#en-NIV-19377) Or Army

Disaster movies such as Independence Day, Deep Impact, and The Day After Tomorrow like to use special effects to show the Statue of Liberty being destroyed. It’s a shorthand way of symbolizing the destruction of America. For the people of Jeremiah’s time, the gates of Jerusalem had a similar importance. To speak of their destruction was a shorthand way of symbolizing the end of the nation. To deliver such a message while standing at the Gate of the People was a powerful thing to do (vv. 19–20)!

Keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it. Jeremiah 17:24

Today’s reading focuses on one of Judah’s sins—breaking the Sabbath, the fourth of the Ten Commandments (vv. 21–22; Ex. 20:8–11). This commandment intertwines rest (not laboring), consecration (keeping the day holy), and following God’s example of resting on the seventh day of creation (Gen. 2:2–3). Historically, the Jews had often disobeyed this command (Jer. 17:23), and the people of Judah then were no different.

Two conditionals follow: If the people obey and keep the Sabbath, God will bless them (vv. 24–26). The Davidic line of kings will continue. The city of Jerusalem “will be inhabited forever.” Solomon’s Temple will endure, and the people will continue to worship there. But if the people disobey and break the Sabbath—as was happening before Jeremiah’s very eyes—God “will kindle an unquenchable fire in the gates of Jerusalem” (v. 27). The contrast and what’s at stake couldn’t have been more clear!

Interestingly, in His day Jesus condemned the Pharisees on the issue of Sabbath-keeping. On the surface, they kept it through a long list of regulations. But when they criticized Him for healing on the Sabbath, He called them out for their hypocrisy. They had lost sight of God’s purposes for this command (Matt. 12:9–14).

**Apply the Word**

While Christians differ in their practice of Sabbath keeping, the creation principle of rest is still God’s design for us today. How can you honor the Sabbath today?

## **Pray with Us**

Father God, help us formulate a theology of rest. You created us with limits—and You who have no limits exemplified rest on the seventh day. We ask You to bless our rest, restoring our strength to serve You.

### BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/10/22

# A King on a Donkey

 **Read:** [**Matthew 21:1–11**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2021.1%E2%80%9311)

### **Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King**

21 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

4This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

5“Say to Daughter Zion,  
    ‘See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
    and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23832a)]

6The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. 7They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. 8A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23836b)] to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23836c)]

“Hosanna[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23836d)] in the highest heaven!”

10When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”

11The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Matthew 21:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-23832) Zech. 9:9
2. [Matthew 21:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-23836) A Hebrew expression meaning “Save!” which became an exclamation of praise; also in verse 15
3. [Matthew 21:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-23836) Psalm 118:25,26
4. [Matthew 21:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+21%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-23836) A Hebrew expression meaning “Save!” which became an exclamation of praise; also in verse 15

See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey. [Matthew 21:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2021.5)

It was Sunday—the day we now call Palm Sunday. Without a doubt, this wasn’t Jesus’ first visit to Jerusalem. As a devout Jew, He would’ve gone to the city every year for the three great feasts ([Luke 2:41–42](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%202.41%E2%80%9342); [John 2:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%202.13); [5:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%205.1)). In the past three years, Christ had also ministered and taught in Jerusalem. But this Sunday His coming into the city was radically different.

By riding a young donkey into Jerusalem at a time when thousands of worshipers were coming into the city, Jesus was the center of attention ([Matthew 21:9–11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2021.9%E2%80%9311)). Why would He take the place of prominence before thousands of people when for the past three years He’d deliberately kept a low profile? Why would He accept the people’s proclamation that He was King just five days before His death?

Matthew says that this took place to fulfill a five-hundred-year-old prophecy ([Matthew 21:4–5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2021.4%E2%80%935)) that God’s chosen king would come into Jerusalem “righteous and victorious, [yet] lowly and riding on a donkey” ([Zechariah 9:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Zech%209.9); see also [Genesis 49:10–11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2049.10%E2%80%9311)).

This was a truly unusual way for a triumphant king to enter a city. Conquering kings normally rode on mighty stallions. But Jesus didn’t come riding a warhorse. This reveals what kind of King Jesus is. He came in meekness and lowliness. Jesus came not for war, but for peace, establishing peace between God and us ([Acts 10:36](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2010.36); [Colossians 1:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.20)).

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What kind of king is Jesus to you today? How can you honor Him as your King?

Jesus, thank You for coming into Jerusalem to reveal Your mighty and humble ways. Fill my heart with Your peace.

Learn more about Jesus' life in the area of Judea with this [online course](https://odbu.org/courses/nt221/?utm_source=April+10+ODB+article+&utm_medium=email%2C+app%2C+web&utm_campaign=Jesus+in+Judea+ODBU-ODB+).

#### **Insight**

On the day that we now refer to as Palm Sunday, Jesus entered Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. Today, the mount’s western slope is blanketed with the tombs of Jewish men and women—all facing the Temple Mount and the city’s blockaded Eastern Gate (also known as the Golden Gate or the Beautiful Gate). Why? [Ezekiel 44:1–3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ezek%2044.1%E2%80%933) says that the “prince” shall enter Jerusalem by the Eastern Gate, and Jewish rabbinic teaching has presented that “prince” as the Anointed One (the Messiah). It was this Messiah’s coming that would trigger the resurrection of the dead—which was part of Israel’s future hope (see Martha’s statement in [John 11:24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2011.24)). As a result, Jewish people wanted to be buried facing the Eastern Gate to be among the first to experience that resurrection.

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

# God Calling – 4/10/22

# Pride Bars the Way

Obedience is one of the keys unlocking the door into My Kingdom, so love and obey. No man can obey Me implicitly without in time realizing My Love, in his turn responding by love to that Love, and then experiencing the joy won of the beloved, and the lover.

The rough stone steps of obedience lead up to the mosaic of Joy and Love that floor My Heaven. As one on earth who loves another says, "Where you are is home," so it is in relation with Me. Where I am is My Home -- is Heaven.

Heaven may be in a sordid slum or a palace, and I can make My Home in the humblest heart. I can only dwell with the humble. Pride stands sentinel at the door of the heart to shut out the lowly, humble Christ.

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." 1 John 3:22

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/11/22

# Complete and Effective Divinity



If we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection… —[Romans 6:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+6%3A5)

**Co-Resurrection.** The proof that I have experienced crucifixion with Jesus is that I have a definite likeness to Him. The Spirit of Jesus entering me rearranges my personal life before God. The resurrection of Jesus has given Him the authority to give the life of God to me, and the experiences of my life must now be built on the foundation of His life. I can have the resurrection life of Jesus here and now, and it will exhibit itself through holiness.

The idea all through the apostle Paul’s writings is that after the decision to be identified with Jesus in His death has been made, the resurrection life of Jesus penetrates every bit of my human nature. It takes the omnipotence of God— His complete and effective divinity— to live the life of the Son of God in human flesh. The Holy Spirit cannot be accepted as a guest in merely one room of the house— He invades all of it. And once I decide that my “old man” (that is, my heredity of sin) should be identified with the death of Jesus, the Holy Spirit invades me. He takes charge of everything. My part is to walk in the light and to obey all that He reveals to me. Once I have made that important decision about sin, it is easy to “reckon” that I am actually “dead indeed to sin,” because I find the life of Jesus in me all the time ([Romans 6:11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+6:11)). Just as there is only one kind of humanity, there is only one kind of holiness— the holiness of Jesus. And it is His holiness that has been given to me. God puts the holiness of His Son into me, and I belong to a new spiritual order.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Always keep in contact with those books and those people that enlarge your horizon and make it possible for you to stretch yourself mentally. The Moral Foundations of Life, 721 R

# CCEL – 4/11/22

**In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.**—[PROV. 10:19.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.10.html" \l "Prov.10.19)

My beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.—He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.—If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able to bridle the whole body.—By thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.—Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

Christ . . . suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.—Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

[Jas. 1:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html" \l "Jas.1.19). -[Prov. 16:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.16.html" \l "Prov.16.32). -[Jas. 3:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.3.html" \l "Jas.3.2). -[Matt. 12:37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.12.html" \l "Matt.12.37). -[Psa. 141:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.141.html" \l "Ps.141.3).[I Pet. 2:21-23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.21). -[Heb. 12:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.3).[Rev. 14:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.14.html" \l "Rev.14.5).

“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint.” **[Psalm 22:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.22.html" \l "Ps.22.14)**

Did earth or heaven ever behold a sadder spectacle of woe! In soul and body, our Lord felt himself to be weak as water poured upon the ground. The placing of the cross in its socket had shaken him with great violence, had strained all the ligaments, pained every nerve, and more or less dislocated all his bones. Burdened with his own weight, the august sufferer felt the strain increasing every moment of those six long hours. His sense of faintness and general weakness were overpowering; while to his own consciousness he became nothing but a mass of misery and swooning sickness. When Daniel saw the great vision, he thus describes his sensations, “There remained no strength in me, for my vigour was turned into corruption, and I retained no strength:” how much more faint must have been our greater Prophet when he saw the dread vision of the wrath of God, and felt it in his own soul! To us, sensations such as our Lord endured would have been insupportable, and kind unconsciousness would have come to our rescue; but in his case, he was wounded, and felt the sword; he drained the cup andtasted every drop.

“O King of Grief! (a title strange, yet true

To thee of all kings only due)

O King of Wounds! how shall I grieve for thee,

Who in all grief preventest me!”

As we kneel before our now ascended Saviour’s throne, let us remember well the way by which he prepared it as a throne of grace for us; let us in spirit drink of his cup, that we may be strengthened for our hour of heaviness whenever it may come. In his natural body every member suffered, and so must it be in the spiritual; but as out of all his griefs and woes his body came forth uninjured to glory and power, even so shall his mystical body come through the furnace with not so much as the smell of fire upon it.

# Word Live – 4/11/22

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

# Scripture Union – 4/11/22

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

# Today in the Word – 4/11/22

# Keeping the Sabbath

**Read:** [**Jeremiah 17:19–27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+17%3a19%e2%80%9327)

### **Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy**

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Keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it. Jeremiah 17:24

Today’s reading focuses on one of Judah’s sins—breaking the Sabbath, the fourth of the Ten Commandments (vv. 21–22; Ex. 20:8–11). This commandment intertwines rest (not laboring), consecration (keeping the day holy), and following God’s example of resting on the seventh day of creation (Gen. 2:2–3). Historically, the Jews had often disobeyed this command (Jer. 17:23), and the people of Judah then were no different.

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## **Pray with Us**

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### BY Brad Baurain

# Our Daily Bread – 4/11/22

# Making Every Moment Count

 **Read:** [**Matthew 24:36–44**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2024.36%E2%80%9344)

### **The Day and Hour Unknown**

36“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A36%E2%80%9344&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23994a)] but only the Father. 37As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. 38For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; 39and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. 40Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. 41Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

42“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. 43But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. 44So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Matthew 24:36](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+24%3A36%E2%80%9344&version=NIV#en-NIV-23994) Some manuscripts do not have nor the Son.

Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. [Matthew 24:42](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2024.42)

The halted hands of a pocket watch in a library’s archives at the University of North Carolina tell a harrowing tale. They mark the exact moment (8:19 and 56 seconds) the watch’s owner Elisha Mitchell slipped and fell to his death at a waterfall in the Appalachian Mountains on the morning of June 27, 1857.

Mitchell, a professor at the university, was gathering data to defend his (correct) claim that the peak he was on—which now bears his name, Mount Mitchell—was the highest one east of the Mississippi. His grave is located at the mountain’s summit, not far from where he fell.

As I ascended that mountain peak recently, I reflected on Mitchell’s story and my own mortality and how each of us has only so much time. And I pondered Jesus’ words about His return as He spoke to His disciples on the Mount of Olives: “So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him” ([Matthew 24:44](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2024.44)).

Jesus clearly indicates that none of us knows either the moment He’ll return and establish His kingdom forever or when He may summon us to leave this world and come to Him. But He tells us to be prepared and “keep watch” (v. 42).

Tick . . . tick . . . The “clockwork” of our lives is still in motion—but for how long? May we live our moments in love with our merciful Savior, waiting and working for Him.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How are you preparing to meet Jesus? What do you look forward to the most about being with Him?

Loving Savior, please help me to be ready to meet You at any time. Help me to serve You and prepare for Your return today.

#### **Insight**

Matthew’s gospel, written primarily to a Jewish audience, is built around Jesus’ five major teaching discourses (chs. 5–7, 10, 13, 18–20, 24–25). Today’s passage is part of the last one, known as the Olivet Discourse because it took place on the Mount of Olives. It’s the most eschatological (related to the end times) of these five messages. One of the interesting side points is that it’s the only time when Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, is included with Jesus’ so-called “inner circle” of Peter, James, and John (see [Mark 13:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%2013.3)). This is ironic because Andrew was one of the first two disciples to follow Christ ([John 1:40–41](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.40%E2%80%9341)). Yet he wasn’t usually included with the other three in their private times with Him—such as at the raising of Jairus’ daughter ([Mark 5:37](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%205.37)), at the transfiguration (9:2–13), and in the inner sanctum of Gethsemane (14:33). Andrew is included only in Christ’s teaching at the Mount of Olives.

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

# God Calling – 4/11/22

# Hold Your Fort

Remember that My followers are to be a peculiar people, separated from among others. Different ways, a different standard of living, different customs, actuated by different motives. Pray for Love.

Pray for My Spirit of Love to be showered on all you meet. Deal with yourself severely. Learn to love discipline.

Never yield one point that you have already won. Discipline, discipline. Love it and rejoice -- rejoice. Mountains can be removed by thought -- by desire.

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:33