# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/11/23

# 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 – 4/11/23

**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 – 4/11/23

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

# Scripture Union – 4/11/23

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

# Today in the Word – 4/11/23

# You Are What You Eat

**Read:** [**Leviticus 11:1–47**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+11%3a1%e2%80%9347)

### **Clean and Unclean Food**

11 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 2“Say to the Israelites: ‘Of all the animals that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: 3You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud.

4“‘There are some that only chew the cud or only have a divided hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is ceremonially unclean for you. 5The hyrax, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you. 6The rabbit, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you. 7And the pig, though it has a divided hoof, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. 8You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you.

9“‘Of all the creatures living in the water of the seas and the streams you may eat any that have fins and scales. 10But all creatures in the seas or streams that do not have fins and scales—whether among all the swarming things or among all the other living creatures in the water—you are to regard as unclean. 11And since you are to regard them as unclean, you must not eat their meat; you must regard their carcasses as unclean. 12Anything living in the water that does not have fins and scales is to be regarded as unclean by you.

13“‘These are the birds you are to regard as unclean and not eat because they are unclean: the eagle,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+11%3A1%E2%80%9347+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3011a)] the vulture, the black vulture, 14the red kite, any kind of black kite, 15any kind of raven, 16the horned owl, the screech owl, the gull, any kind of hawk, 17the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, 18the white owl, the desert owl, the osprey, 19the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe and the bat.

20“‘All flying insects that walk on all fours are to be regarded as unclean by you. 21There are, however, some flying insects that walk on all fours that you may eat: those that have jointed legs for hopping on the ground. 22Of these you may eat any kind of locust, katydid, cricket or grasshopper. 23But all other flying insects that have four legs you are to regard as unclean.

24“‘You will make yourselves unclean by these; whoever touches their carcasses will be unclean till evening. 25Whoever picks up one of their carcasses must wash their clothes, and they will be unclean till evening.

26“‘Every animal that does not have a divided hoof or that does not chew the cud is unclean for you; whoever touches the carcass of any of them will be unclean. 27Of all the animals that walk on all fours, those that walk on their paws are unclean for you; whoever touches their carcasses will be unclean till evening. 28Anyone who picks up their carcasses must wash their clothes, and they will be unclean till evening. These animals are unclean for you.

29“‘Of the animals that move along the ground, these are unclean for you: the weasel, the rat, any kind of great lizard, 30the gecko, the monitor lizard, the wall lizard, the skink and the chameleon. 31Of all those that move along the ground, these are unclean for you. Whoever touches them when they are dead will be unclean till evening. 32When one of them dies and falls on something, that article, whatever its use, will be unclean, whether it is made of wood, cloth, hide or sackcloth. Put it in water; it will be unclean till evening, and then it will be clean. 33If one of them falls into a clay pot, everything in it will be unclean, and you must break the pot. 34Any food you are allowed to eat that has come into contact with water from any such pot is unclean, and any liquid that is drunk from such a pot is unclean. 35Anything that one of their carcasses falls on becomes unclean; an oven or cooking pot must be broken up. They are unclean, and you are to regard them as unclean. 36A spring, however, or a cistern for collecting water remains clean, but anyone who touches one of these carcasses is unclean. 37If a carcass falls on any seeds that are to be planted, they remain clean. 38But if water has been put on the seed and a carcass falls on it, it is unclean for you.

39“‘If an animal that you are allowed to eat dies, anyone who touches its carcass will be unclean till evening. 40Anyone who eats some of its carcass must wash their clothes, and they will be unclean till evening. Anyone who picks up the carcass must wash their clothes, and they will be unclean till evening.

41“‘Every creature that moves along the ground is to be regarded as unclean; it is not to be eaten. 42You are not to eat any creature that moves along the ground, whether it moves on its belly or walks on all fours or on many feet; it is unclean. 43Do not defile yourselves by any of these creatures. Do not make yourselves unclean by means of them or be made unclean by them. 44I am the Lord your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature that moves along the ground. 45I am the Lord, who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.

46“‘These are the regulations concerning animals, birds, every living thing that moves about in the water and every creature that moves along the ground. 47You must distinguish between the unclean and the clean, between living creatures that may be eaten and those that may not be eaten.’”

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Leviticus 11:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+11%3A1%E2%80%9347+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3011) The precise identification of some of the birds, insects and animals in this chapter is uncertain.

Keto. Paleo. Atkins. Vegan. Carnivore. Mediterranean. The sheer number of popular diets can be bewildering. We love food and, at the same time, we worry about what we eat. That makes diets a lucrative business. According to CNBC, in 2021 the diet industry was worth an estimated $71 billion.

Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them. Mark 7:15

In Leviticus, God gave His people specific laws about food. Israel did not have to turn to diet books to discern what was acceptable to eat or not. It is important to note that Israel did not separate religion from the rest of their life. They understood that obedience to God involved not just worshiping at the sanctuary, but also everyday decisions of what to eat, what to wear, and how to treat people. Following dietary laws would have reminded Israelites a couple of times each day that they were God’s people. Observing these laws would help instill an attitude of obedience to God.

It is important to remember that in places Leviticus was primarily a procedural manual. It does not always explain the rationale for various laws. Several explanations have been offered to explain the logic of the food laws: (1) Hygiene—unclean animals were often unhealthy and more prone to disease; (2) Morality—some animals acted in ways that served as examples of behavior to avoid or emulate; and (3) Holiness—Israel was to be separate from the nations around them.

This last option finds the most biblical support. After presenting the food laws, God says, “Be holy, because I am holy” (v. 45). These laws would prevent God’s people from having close table fellowship with their Canaanite neighbors and maintain their distinctive Israelite identity. These laws became especially important during exile.

**Apply the Word**

Does your belief in God influence what you eat, what you wear, or how you spend your free time? While the New Testament makes clear that all foods have been declared clean (Mark 7:19), we are also called to stand out from the world because of our commitment to Christ (John 13:35).

## **Pray with Us**

God, may our devotion to You be reflected in every choice that we make, from what we eat to how we spend our time. If others notice and ask questions, may our words and example lead them to You!

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 4/11/23

# Seize the Opportunity

 **Read:** [**2 Timothy 4:1–5**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204.1%E2%80%935)

4 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. 3For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 5But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

Do the work of an evangelist. [2 Timothy 4:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204.5)

While waiting to enter the university, twenty-year-old Shin Yi decided to commit three months of her break to serving in a youth mission organization. It seemed like an odd time to do this, given the COVID-19 restrictions that prevented face-to-face meetings. But Shin Yi soon found a way. “We couldn’t meet up with students on the streets, in shopping malls, or fast-food centers like we usually did,” she shared. “But we continued to keep in touch with the Christian students via Zoom to pray for one another and with the non-believers via phone calls.”

Shin Yi did what the apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to do: “Do the work of an evangelist” ([2 Timothy 4:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204.5)). Paul warned that people would find teachers who would tell them what they wanted to hear and not what they needed to hear (vv. 3–4). Yet Timothy was called to take courage and “be prepared in season and out of season.” He was to “correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction” (v. 2).

Though not all of us are called to be evangelists or preachers, each one of us can play a part in sharing our faith with those around us. Unbelievers are perishing without Christ. Believers need strengthening and encouragement. With God’s help, let’s proclaim His good news whenever and wherever we can.

By:  [Poh Fang Chia](https://odb.org/author/pohfangchia/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What discourages you from sharing your faith? How might remembering that Jesus is coming back help you to overcome your fear?

Dear Jesus, help me to seize every opportunity to share Your words with others that they may find hope and comfort in You.

#### **Insight**

Paul’s words to Timothy that he “be prepared in season and out of season” ([2 Timothy 4:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%204.2)) might seem a bit odd. In context, Paul wants Timothy to carry out the task of preaching “the word” when it’s appropriate to his audience (in season) and also when that audience doesn’t want to hear it (out of season).

Then Paul points out that soon Timothy’s audience won’t tolerate the hard truths of following Jesus; instead, they will turn to “what their itching ears want to hear” (v. 3). Paul wanted Timothy to preach the gospel to people regardless of whether they felt up to denying themselves, caring for the poor, the widow, the orphan, or following Jesus into death. As a young church planter, Timothy faced a world that would hate his message as well as embrace it. And still, he preached “the word” (v. 2).

By: [**Jed Ostoich**](https://odb.org/author/jedostoich/)

# God Calling – 4/11/23

# 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

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/12/23

# Complete and Effective Dominion



Death no longer has dominion over Him.…the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God… —[Romans 6:9-11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+6%3A9-11)

**Co-Eternal Life.** Eternal life is the life which Jesus Christ exhibited on the human level. And it is this same life, not simply a copy of it, which is made evident in our mortal flesh when we are born again. Eternal life is not a gift from God; eternal life is the gift of God. The energy and the power which was so very evident in Jesus will be exhibited in us by an act of the absolute sovereign grace of God, once we have made that complete and effective decision about sin.

“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you…” (Acts 1:8)— not power as a gift from the Holy Spirit; the power is the Holy Spirit, not something that He gives us. The life that was in Jesus becomes ours because of His Cross, once we make the decision to be identified with Him. If it is difficult to get right with God, it is because we refuse to make this moral decision about sin. But once we do decide, the full life of God comes in immediately. Jesus came to give us an endless supply of life— “…that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” ([Ephesians 3:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+3:19)). Eternal life has nothing to do with time. It is the life which Jesus lived when He was down here, and the only Source of life is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even the weakest saint can experience the power of the deity of the Son of God, when he is willing to “let go.” But any effort to “hang on” to the least bit of our own power will only diminish the life of Jesus in us. We have to keep letting go, and slowly, but surely, the great full life of God will invade us, penetrating every part. Then Jesus will have complete and effective dominion in us, and people will take notice that we have been with Him.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

It is perilously possible to make our conceptions of God like molten lead poured into a specially designed mould, and when it is cold and hard we fling it at the heads of the religious people who don’t agree with us. Disciples Indeed, 388 R

# CCEL – 4/12/23

**What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.**—[ROM. 8:3.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.3)

The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered?—By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Forasmuch . . . as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.

[Heb. 10:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.1). -[Acts 13:39](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.13.html" \l "Acts.13.39).[Heb. 2:14-17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.2.html" \l "Heb.2.14).

“My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.” **[Psalm 22:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.22.html" \l "Ps.22.14)**

Our blessed Lord experienced a terrible sinking and melting of soul. “The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?” Deep depression of spirit is the most grievous of all trials; all besides is as nothing. Well might the suffering Saviour cry to his God, “Be not far from me,” for above all other seasons a man needs his God when his heart is melted within him because of heaviness. Believer, come near the cross this morning, and humbly adore the King of glory as having once been brought far lower, in mental distress and inward anguish, than any one among us; and mark his fitness to become a faithful High Priest, who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. Especially let those of us whose sadness springs directly from the withdrawal of a present sense of our Father’s love, enter into near and intimate communion with Jesus. Let us not give way to despair, since through this dark room the Master has passed before us. Our souls may sometimes long and faint, and thirst even to anguish, to behold the light of the Lord’s countenance: at such times let us stay ourselves with the sweet fact of the sympathy of our great High Priest. Our drops of sorrow may well be forgotten in the ocean of his griefs; but how high ought our love to rise! Come in, O strong and deep love of Jesus, like the sea at the flood in spring tides, cover all my powers, drown all my sins, wash out all my cares, lift up my earth-bound soul, and float it right up to my Lord’s feet, and there let me lie, a poor broken shell, washed up by his love, having no virtue or value; and only venturing to whisper to him that if he will put his ear to me, he will hear within my heart faint echoes of the vast waves of his own love which have brought me where it is my delight to lie, even at his feet forever.

# Word Live – 4/12/23

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

# Scripture Union – 4/12/23

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

# Today in the Word – 4/12/23

# Clean and Unclean

**Read:** [**Leviticus 12:1–8**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+12%3a1%e2%80%938)

### **Purification After Childbirth**

12 The Lord said to Moses, 2“Say to the Israelites: ‘A woman who becomes pregnant and gives birth to a son will be ceremonially unclean for seven days, just as she is unclean during her monthly period. 3On the eighth day the boy is to be circumcised. 4Then the woman must wait thirty-three days to be purified from her bleeding. She must not touch anything sacred or go to the sanctuary until the days of her purification are over. 5If she gives birth to a daughter, for two weeks the woman will be unclean, as during her period. Then she must wait sixty-six days to be purified from her bleeding.

6“‘When the days of her purification for a son or daughter are over, she is to bring to the priest at the entrance to the tent of meeting a year-old lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a dove for a sin offering.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+12%3A1%E2%80%938+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3051a)] 7He shall offer them before the Lord to make atonement for her, and then she will be ceremonially clean from her flow of blood.

“‘These are the regulations for the woman who gives birth to a boy or a girl. 8But if she cannot afford a lamb, she is to bring two doves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. In this way the priest will make atonement for her, and she will be clean.’”

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Leviticus 12:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+12%3A1%E2%80%938+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3051) Or purification offering; also in verse 8

Have you seen those dishwasher magnets with two words on them: “Dirty” and “Clean”? They help us know when it’s okay to add dirty dishes to the racks and when it’s time to put clean dishes away.

Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Psalm 51:2

In Leviticus, we read many laws about what is considered clean or unclean. These categories may seem strange to us today. But it is important to realize that uncleanness did not necessarily equate with sinfulness. Many non-sinful aspects of life could make you unclean.

Welcoming a child into the world was one such event. A woman was considered ceremonially unclean after giving birth (v. 1). She could not enter the sanctuary or participate in the normal duties of life until she was purified. There was nothing sinful about having children. In Scripture it is clearly considered a blessing (Ps. 127:3). But the loss of blood in childbirth rendered the woman unclean. Things associated with death, such as losing bodily fluids or touching a corpse, were nonmoral reasons why a person might be rendered unclean. A practical benefit was that it gave a new mother time to recover from labor before returning to normal life.

Some may wonder why having a girl rendered the mother unclean for twice as long as a boy (vv. 1, 5). The length did not have anything to do with perceived value. Both male and female were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). The sacrifice for both was also the same (vv. 6–8). Some think the shorter length for the male baby could be so the woman could participate in the ceremony related to circumcision (v. 3). When Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph obeyed these regulations, including offering a sacrifice (Luke 2:22–24). As a poor family, they offered pigeons or doves instead of a lamb.

**Apply the Word**

Reading through these laws may make you wonder how anyone could ever achieve holiness. But we know that because of Jesus’ death and resurrection, we are clean before God (John 15:3).

## **Pray with Us**

“Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee, though the eyes of sinful man Thy glory may not see. Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee. Perfect in power, in love and purity.”

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 4/12/23

# God Speaking to Us

 **Read:** [**1 Samuel 3:3–10**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%203.3%E2%80%9310)

3The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was. 4Then the Lord called Samuel.

Samuel answered, “Here I am.” 5And he ran to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

But Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.” So he went and lay down.

6Again the Lord called, “Samuel!” And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

“My son,” Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.”

7Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

8A third time the Lord called, “Samuel!” And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. 9So Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!”

Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” [1 Samuel 3:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%203.10)

I received a phone call from an unknown number. Often, I let those calls go to voicemail, but this time I picked up. The random caller asked politely if I had just a minute for him to share a short Bible passage. He quoted [Revelation 21:3–5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2021.3%E2%80%935) about how God “will wipe every tear from their eyes.” He talked about Jesus, how he was our assurance and hope. I told him I already know Jesus as my personal Savior. But the caller wasn’t aiming to “witness” to me. Instead, he simply asked if he could pray with me. And he did, asking God to give me encouragement and strength.

That call reminded me of another “call” in Scripture—God called out to the young boy Samuel in the middle of the night ([1 Samuel 3:4–10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%203.4%E2%80%9310)). Three times Samuel heard the voice, thinking it was the elderly priest Eli. The final time, following Eli’s instruction, Samuel realized that God was calling him: “Speak, for your servant is listening” (v. 10). Likewise, through our days and nights, God may be speaking to us. We need to “pick up,” which might mean spending more time in His presence and listening for His voice.

I then thought of “the call” in another way. What if we sometimes are the messenger of God’s words to someone else? We might feel we have no way of helping others. But as God guides us, we could phone a friend and ask, “Would it be okay if I just prayed with you today?”

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What message of encouragement did someone recently share with you? Who might be encouraged by a phone call from you?

Dear God, prompt me to think of others whom I can encourage with Your wisdom.

#### **Insight**

Eli was a priest in Israel and, as such, a valuable mentor to young Samuel. Unfortunately, Eli’s struggles as a dad are pictured in the failings of his sons Hophni and Phinehas. These men followed in their father’s footsteps as priests but defiled the sacrifices ([1 Samuel 2:12–17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Sam%202.12%E2%80%9317)) and even engaged in sexual acts with women at the very gate of the tabernacle—Israel’s tent of meeting and primary place of worship (v. 22). Verse 12 describes them as “scoundrels” and verse 17 adds that “this sin of the young men was very great in the Lord’s sight.” So severe was their activity that a “man of God” later came to Eli and chastened him for honoring his sons more than God, pronouncing a verdict of judgment upon the house of Eli (vv. 27–36).

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

# God Calling – 4/12/23

# Golden Opportunity

I am your Guide. Strength and help will come to you; just trust Me wholly.

Fear not. I am evermore ready to hear than you to ask. Walk in My ways, and know that help will come.

Man's need is God's chance to help. I love to help and save. Man's need is God's golden opportunity for him of letting his faith find expression. That expression of faith is all that God needs to manifest His Power. Faith is the Key that unlocks the storehouse of God's resources.

My faithful servants, you long for perfection and see your bitter failures. I see faithfulness, and as a mother takes the soiled, imperfect work of her child and invests it with perfection because of the sweet love, so I take your poor faithfulness and crown it with perfection.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." Ephesians 3:20

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/13/23

# What To Do When Your Burden Is Overwhelming



Cast your burden on the Lord… —[Psalm 55:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Psalm+55%3A22)

We must recognize the difference between burdens that are right for us to bear and burdens that are wrong. We should never bear the burdens of sin or doubt, but there are some burdens placed on us by God which He does not intend to lift off. God wants us to roll them back on Him— to literally “cast your burden,” which He has given you, “on the Lord….” If we set out to serve God and do His work but get out of touch with Him, the sense of responsibility we feel will be overwhelming and defeating. But if we will only roll back on God the burdens He has placed on us, He will take away that immense feeling of responsibility, replacing it with an awareness and understanding of Himself and His presence.

Many servants set out to serve God with great courage and with the right motives. But with no intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ, they are soon defeated. They do not know what to do with their burden, and it produces weariness in their lives. Others will see this and say, “What a sad end to something that had such a great beginning!”

“Cast your burden on the Lord….” You have been bearing it all, but you need to deliberately place one end on God’s shoulder. “…the government will be upon His shoulder” ([Isaiah 9:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+9:6)). Commit to God whatever burden He has placed on you. Don’t just cast it aside, but put it over onto Him and place yourself there with it. You will see that your burden is then lightened by the sense of companionship. But you should never try to separate yourself from your burden.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We never enter into the Kingdom of God by having our head questions answered, but only by commitment. [The Highest Good—Thy Great Redemption](http://www.dhp.org/Products/Quotable-Oswald-Chambers--The__BW382.aspx?affid=RBCHAMB)

# CCEL – 4/13/23

**Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.**—[PROV. 3:9.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.3.html" \l "Prov.3.9)

He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.—Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.

God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister.

I beseech you . . . brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.—The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.—Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

[II Cor. 9:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.9.html" \l "iiCor.9.6). -[I Cor. 16:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.16.html" \l "iCor.16.2).[Heb. 6:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.6.html" \l "Heb.6.10).[Rom. 12:l](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.12.html" \l "Rom.12.1). -[II Cor. 5:14,15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.14). -[I Cor. 10:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.10.html" \l "iCor.10.31).

“A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me.” **[Song of Solomon 1:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.1.html" \l "Song.1.13)**

Myrrh may well be chosen as the type of Jesus on account of its preciousness, its perfume, its pleasantness, its healing, preserving, disinfecting qualities, and its connection with sacrifice. But why is he compared to “a bundle of myrrh”? First, for plenty. He is not a drop of it, he is a casket full. He is not a sprig or flower of it, but a whole bundle. There is enough in Christ for all my necessities; let me not be slow to avail myself of him. Our well-beloved is compared to a “bundle” again, for variety: for there is in Christ not only the one thing needful, but in “him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;” everything needful is in him. Take Jesus in his different characters, and you will see a marvellous variety—Prophet, Priest, King, Husband, Friend, Shepherd. Consider him in his life, death, resurrection, ascension, second advent; view him in his virtue, gentleness, courage, self-denial, love, faithfulness, truth, righteousness—everywhere he is a bundle of preciousness. He is a “bundle of myrrh” for preservation—not loose myrrh to be dropped on the floor or trodden on, but myrrh tied up, myrrh to be stored in a casket. We must value him as our best treasure; we must prize his words and his ordinances; and we must keep our thoughts of him and knowledge of him as under lock and key, lest the devil should steal anything from us. Moreover, Jesus is a “bundle of myrrh” for speciality; the emblem suggests the idea of distinguishing, discriminating grace. From before the foundation of the world, he was set apart for his people; and he gives forth his perfume only to those who understand how to enter into communion with him, to have close dealings with him. Oh! blessed people whom the Lord hath admitted into his secrets, and for whom he sets himself apart. Oh! choice and happy who are thus made to say, “A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me.”

# Word Live – 4/13/23

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

# Scripture Union – 4/13/23

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

# Today in the Word – 4/13/23

# Made Clean

**Read:** [**Leviticus 13:1–46**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+13%3a1%e2%80%9346)

### **Regulations About Defiling Skin Diseases**

13 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 2“When anyone has a swelling or a rash or a shiny spot on their skin that may be a defiling skin disease,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+13%3A1%E2%80%9346+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3055a)] they must be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+13%3A1%E2%80%9346+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3055b)] who is a priest. 3The priest is to examine the sore on the skin, and if the hair in the sore has turned white and the sore appears to be more than skin deep, it is a defiling skin disease. When the priest examines that person, he shall pronounce them ceremonially unclean. 4If the shiny spot on the skin is white but does not appear to be more than skin deep and the hair in it has not turned white, the priest is to isolate the affected person for seven days. 5On the seventh day the priest is to examine them, and if he sees that the sore is unchanged and has not spread in the skin, he is to isolate them for another seven days. 6On the seventh day the priest is to examine them again, and if the sore has faded and has not spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce them clean; it is only a rash. They must wash their clothes, and they will be clean. 7But if the rash does spread in their skin after they have shown themselves to the priest to be pronounced clean, they must appear before the priest again. 8The priest is to examine that person, and if the rash has spread in the skin, he shall pronounce them unclean; it is a defiling skin disease.

9“When anyone has a defiling skin disease, they must be brought to the priest. 10The priest is to examine them, and if there is a white swelling in the skin that has turned the hair white and if there is raw flesh in the swelling, 11it is a chronic skin disease and the priest shall pronounce them unclean. He is not to isolate them, because they are already unclean.

12“If the disease breaks out all over their skin and, so far as the priest can see, it covers all the skin of the affected person from head to foot, 13the priest is to examine them, and if the disease has covered their whole body, he shall pronounce them clean. Since it has all turned white, they are clean. 14But whenever raw flesh appears on them, they will be unclean. 15When the priest sees the raw flesh, he shall pronounce them unclean. The raw flesh is unclean; they have a defiling disease. 16If the raw flesh changes and turns white, they must go to the priest. 17The priest is to examine them, and if the sores have turned white, the priest shall pronounce the affected person clean; then they will be clean.

18“When someone has a boil on their skin and it heals, 19and in the place where the boil was, a white swelling or reddish-white spot appears, they must present themselves to the priest. 20The priest is to examine it, and if it appears to be more than skin deep and the hair in it has turned white, the priest shall pronounce that person unclean. It is a defiling skin disease that has broken out where the boil was. 21But if, when the priest examines it, there is no white hair in it and it is not more than skin deep and has faded, then the priest is to isolate them for seven days. 22If it is spreading in the skin, the priest shall pronounce them unclean; it is a defiling disease. 23But if the spot is unchanged and has not spread, it is only a scar from the boil, and the priest shall pronounce them clean.

24“When someone has a burn on their skin and a reddish-white or white spot appears in the raw flesh of the burn, 25the priest is to examine the spot, and if the hair in it has turned white, and it appears to be more than skin deep, it is a defiling disease that has broken out in the burn. The priest shall pronounce them unclean; it is a defiling skin disease. 26But if the priest examines it and there is no white hair in the spot and if it is not more than skin deep and has faded, then the priest is to isolate them for seven days. 27On the seventh day the priest is to examine that person, and if it is spreading in the skin, the priest shall pronounce them unclean; it is a defiling skin disease. 28If, however, the spot is unchanged and has not spread in the skin but has faded, it is a swelling from the burn, and the priest shall pronounce them clean; it is only a scar from the burn.

29“If a man or woman has a sore on their head or chin, 30the priest is to examine the sore, and if it appears to be more than skin deep and the hair in it is yellow and thin, the priest shall pronounce them unclean; it is a defiling skin disease on the head or chin. 31But if, when the priest examines the sore, it does not seem to be more than skin deep and there is no black hair in it, then the priest is to isolate the affected person for seven days. 32On the seventh day the priest is to examine the sore, and if it has not spread and there is no yellow hair in it and it does not appear to be more than skin deep, 33then the man or woman must shave themselves, except for the affected area, and the priest is to keep them isolated another seven days. 34On the seventh day the priest is to examine the sore, and if it has not spread in the skin and appears to be no more than skin deep, the priest shall pronounce them clean. They must wash their clothes, and they will be clean. 35But if the sore does spread in the skin after they are pronounced clean, 36the priest is to examine them, and if he finds that the sore has spread in the skin, he does not need to look for yellow hair; they are unclean. 37If, however, the sore is unchanged so far as the priest can see, and if black hair has grown in it, the affected person is healed. They are clean, and the priest shall pronounce them clean.

38“When a man or woman has white spots on the skin, 39the priest is to examine them, and if the spots are dull white, it is a harmless rash that has broken out on the skin; they are clean.

40“A man who has lost his hair and is bald is clean. 41If he has lost his hair from the front of his scalp and has a bald forehead, he is clean. 42But if he has a reddish-white sore on his bald head or forehead, it is a defiling disease breaking out on his head or forehead. 43The priest is to examine him, and if the swollen sore on his head or forehead is reddish-white like a defiling skin disease, 44the man is diseased and is unclean. The priest shall pronounce him unclean because of the sore on his head.

45“Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+13%3A1%E2%80%9346+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3098c)] cover the lower part of their face and cry out, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’ 46As long as they have the disease they remain unclean. They must live alone; they must live outside the camp.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Leviticus 13:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+13%3A1%E2%80%9346+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3055) The Hebrew word for defiling skin disease, traditionally translated “leprosy,” was used for various diseases affecting the skin; here and throughout verses 3-46.
2. [Leviticus 13:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+13%3A1%E2%80%9346+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3055) Or descendants
3. [Leviticus 13:45](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+13%3A1%E2%80%9346+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3098) Or clothes, uncover their head

My father enjoyed quoting Leviticus 13:40: “A man who has lost his hair and is bald is clean.” Certainly, that verse is a comfort to many who have experienced male-pattern baldness.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. Revelation 21:4

Today we continue to discuss what makes something clean or unclean. We have learned that it is not simply a moral category. Sin could make one unclean, but so could many other things. Cleanness represented wholeness or normalcy. Things that made one unclean were often associated with death or mortality. Things that were unclean were not to come in contact with what was holy. The unclean could not touch what was clean without contaminating it.

The camp of Israel was considered holy. In it was the tabernacle where God met with His people. Part of a priests’ job was to protect the holiness of the camp and the tabernacle. In Leviticus 13, we read about various types of skin diseases that might render someone unclean. There is a clear pattern to this chapter.

If a person had an anomaly on the skin, they were to come to a priest (v. 1). The priest would assess whether that person was clean or unclean (v. 3). If the situation was unclear, the priest would ask the person to come back after a week to reassess it (v. 4). Twenty-one different types of skin issues are covered.

There are many instances in Scripture when God afflicted people with a skin disease as an act of His judgment (Num. 12:10–12). Some in Israel were tempted to believe that all skin diseases were a result of sin, which was clearly not necessarily the case (see Job 2:7).

**Apply the Word**

When Jesus touched someone with a skin disease, He did not become unclean. Instead, the unclean person because whole and healthy again (Matt. 8:1–4). Jesus came to redeem us from all aspects of the Fall, including disease. We look forward to the day when those kinds of afflictions will be no more (Rev. 21:4).

## **Pray with Us**

Lord, we are washed in Your blood, made clean forever, robed in Your righteousness. May we never cease to praise You for freeing us from our sin! May we never stop striving to honor You with our lives, day to day.

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 4/13/23

# Tears of Praise

### Today's Devotional **Read:** [**Psalm 30**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2030)**[**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14321a)**]**

#### **A psalm. A song. For the dedication of the temple.[**[**b**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14321b)**] Of David.**

1I will exalt you, Lord,  
    for you lifted me out of the depths  
    and did not let my enemies gloat over me.  
2Lord my God, I called to you for help,  
    and you healed me.  
3You, Lord, brought me up from the realm of the dead;  
    you spared me from going down to the pit.

4Sing the praises of the Lord, you his faithful people;  
    praise his holy name.  
5For his anger lasts only a moment,  
    but his favor lasts a lifetime;  
weeping may stay for the night,  
    but rejoicing comes in the morning.

6When I felt secure, I said,  
    “I will never be shaken.”  
7Lord, when you favored me,  
    you made my royal mountain[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14327c)] stand firm;  
but when you hid your face,  
    I was dismayed.

8To you, Lord, I called;  
    to the Lord I cried for mercy:  
9“What is gained if I am silenced,  
    if I go down to the pit?  
Will the dust praise you?  
    Will it proclaim your faithfulness?  
10Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me;  
    Lord, be my help.”

11You turned my wailing into dancing;  
    you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,  
12that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.  
    Lord my God, I will praise you forever.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Psalm 30:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30&version=NIV#en-NIV-14321) In Hebrew texts 30:1-12 is numbered 30:2-13.
2. [Psalm 30:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30&version=NIV#en-NIV-14321) Title: Or palace
3. [Psalm 30:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+30&version=NIV#en-NIV-14327) That is, Mount Zion

Sing the praises of the Lord, you his faithful people; praise his holy name. [Psalm 30:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2030.4)

Years ago, I cared for my mom as she was in hospice. I thanked God for the four months He allowed me to serve as her caregiver and asked Him to help me through the grieving process. I often struggled to praise God as I wrestled with my mixed emotions. But as my mom breathed her last breath and I wept uncontrollably, I whispered, “Hallelujah.” I felt guilty for praising God in that devastating moment until, years later, I took a closer look at [Psalm 30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2030).

In David’s song “for the dedication of the temple,” he worshiped God for His faithfulness and mercy (vv. 1–3). He encouraged others to “praise his holy name” (v. 4). Then David explored how intimately God entwines hardship and hope (v. 5). He acknowledged times of grief and rejoicing, times of feeling secure and being dismayed (vv. 6–7). His cries for help remained laced with confidence in God (vv. 7–10). The echo of his praise wove through David’s moments of wailing and dancing, grief and joy (v. 11). As if acknowledging the mystery and complexity of enduring affliction and anticipating God’s faithfulness, David proclaimed his endless devotion to God (v. 12).

Like David, we can sing, “Lord my God, I will praise you forever” (v. 12). Whether we’re happy or hurting, God can help us declare our trust in Him and lead us to worship Him with joyful shouts and tears of praise.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How has God helped you trust Him with your mixed emotions? How can you praise Him while still processing hardship?

Dear God, please help me trust You and praise You as I process my emotions.

#### **Insight**

The book of Psalms is one of the most cited books of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Jesus Himself told His disciples that all Scripture anticipated His coming and specifically mentioned the book of Psalms ([Luke 24:27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2024.27), [44–45](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2024.44%E2%80%9345)). Jesus’ words remind us that when we read the Psalms, we should always reflect on how a psalm might point to Him. After all, He’s the Good Shepherd ([John 10:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2010.11); [Psalm 23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2023)); He’s “God’s Anointed One” ([Psalm 2:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%202.2); Hebrew for Messiah); He’s our divine warrior who defeats the spiritual powers by His death and resurrection ([Ephesians 4:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.8), citing [Psalm 68:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2068.18)).

Adapted from [Understanding the Bible: The Poetic Books.](https://DiscoverySeries.org/Q0425).

# God Calling – 4/13/23

# Gentle With All

Love and laugh. Make your world the happier for your being in it. Love and rejoice on the gray days.

There are wilderness days for My Disciples as well as Mountains of Transfiguration, but on both it is duty, persistently, faithfully done, that tells.

Be gentle with all. Try to see the heart I see, to know the pain and difficulty of the other life, that I know. Try, before you interview anyone, or speak to anyone, to ask Me to act as interpreter between you two.

Just live the spirit of prayer. In speaking to Me, you find soul-rest. Simple tasks, faithfully done and persisted in, bring their own reward, and are mosaics being laid in the pavement of success.

Welcome all who come here. I love you.

"Let love be without dissimulation." Romans 12:9

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/14/23

# Inner Invincibility



Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me… —[Matthew 11:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+11%3A29)

“Whom the Lord loves He chastens…” ([Hebrews 12:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12:6)). How petty our complaining is! Our Lord begins to bring us to the point where we can have fellowship with Him, only to hear us moan and groan, saying, “Oh Lord, just let me be like other people!” Jesus is asking us to get beside Him and take one end of the yoke, so that we can pull together. That’s why Jesus says to us, “My yoke is easy and My burden is light” ([Matthew 11:30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+11:30)). Are you closely identified with the Lord Jesus like that? If so, you will thank God when you feel the pressure of His hand upon you.

“…to those who have no might He increases strength” ([Isaiah 40:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+40:29)). God comes and takes us out of our emotionalism, and then our complaining turns into a hymn of praise. The only way to know the strength of God is to take the yoke of Jesus upon us and to learn from Him.

“…the joy of the Lord is your strength” ([Nehemiah 8:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Nehemiah+8:10)). Where do the saints get their joy? If we did not know some Christians well, we might think from just observing them that they have no burdens at all to bear. But we must lift the veil from our eyes. The fact that the peace, light, and joy of God is in them is proof that a burden is there as well. The burden that God places on us squeezes the grapes in our lives and produces the wine, but most of us see only the wine and not the burden. No power on earth or in hell can conquer the Spirit of God living within the human spirit; it creates an inner invincibility.

If your life is producing only a whine, instead of the wine, then ruthlessly kick it out. It is definitely a crime for a Christian to be weak in God’s strength.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 4/14/23

**My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.**—[PSA. 63:5,6.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.63.html" \l "Ps.63.5)

How precious . . . are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.—How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!—Thy love is better than wine.

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.—Thou art fairer than the children of men.

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.—His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend.

[Psa. 139:17,18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.139.html" \l "Ps.139.17). -[Psa. 119:103](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.103). -[Song 1:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.1.html" \l "Song.1.2).[Psa. 73:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.73.html" \l "Ps.73.25). -[Psa. 45:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.45.html" \l "Ps.45.2).[Song 2:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.2.html" \l "Song.2.3). -[Song 5:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.5.html" \l "Song.5.15).

“All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head.” **[Psalm 22:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.22.html" \l "Ps.22.7)**

Mockery was a great ingredient in our Lord’s woe. Judas mocked him in the garden; the chief priests and scribes laughed him to scorn; Herod set him at nought; the servants and the soldiers jeered at him, and brutally insulted him; Pilate and his guards ridiculed his royalty; and on the tree all sorts of horrid jests and hideous taunts were hurled at him. Ridicule is always hard to bear, but when we are in intense pain it is so heartless, so cruel, that it cuts us to the quick. Imagine the Saviour crucified, racked with anguish far beyond all mortal guess, and then picture that motley multitude, all wagging their heads or thrusting out the lip in bitterest contempt of one poor suffering victim! Surely there must have been something more in the crucified One than they could see, or else such a great and mingled crowd would not unanimously have honoured him with such contempt. Was it not evil confessing, in the very moment of its greatest apparent triumph, that after all it could do no more than mock at that victorious goodness which was then reigning on the cross? O Jesus, “despised and rejected of men,” how couldst thou die for men who treated thee so ill? Herein is love amazing, love divine, yea, love beyond degree. We, too, have despised thee in the days of our unregeneracy, and even since our new birth we have set the world on high in our hearts, and yet thou bleedest to heal our wounds, and diest to give us life. O that we could set thee on a glorious high throne in all men’s hearts! We would ring out thy praises over land and sea till men should as universally adore as once they did unanimously reject.

“Thy creatures wrong thee, O thou sovereign Good!

Thou art not loved, because not understood:

This grieves me most, that vain pursuits beguile

Ungrateful men, regardless of thy smile.”

# Word Live – 4/14/23

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

# Scripture Union – 4/14/23

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

# Today in the Word – 4/14/23

# Uncanceled Culture

**Read:** [**Leviticus 14:1–22**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3a1%e2%80%9322)

### **Cleansing From Defiling Skin Diseases**

14 The Lord said to Moses, 2“These are the regulations for any diseased person at the time of their ceremonial cleansing, when they are brought to the priest: 3The priest is to go outside the camp and examine them. If they have been healed of their defiling skin disease,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3115a)] 4the priest shall order that two live clean birds and some cedar wood, scarlet yarn and hyssop be brought for the person to be cleansed. 5Then the priest shall order that one of the birds be killed over fresh water in a clay pot. 6He is then to take the live bird and dip it, together with the cedar wood, the scarlet yarn and the hyssop, into the blood of the bird that was killed over the fresh water. 7Seven times he shall sprinkle the one to be cleansed of the defiling disease, and then pronounce them clean. After that, he is to release the live bird in the open fields.

8“The person to be cleansed must wash their clothes, shave off all their hair and bathe with water; then they will be ceremonially clean. After this they may come into the camp, but they must stay outside their tent for seven days. 9On the seventh day they must shave off all their hair; they must shave their head, their beard, their eyebrows and the rest of their hair. They must wash their clothes and bathe themselves with water, and they will be clean.

10“On the eighth day they must bring two male lambs and one ewe lamb a year old, each without defect, along with three-tenths of an ephah[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3122b)] of the finest flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering, and one log[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3122c)] of oil. 11The priest who pronounces them clean shall present both the one to be cleansed and their offerings before the Lord at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

12“Then the priest is to take one of the male lambs and offer it as a guilt offering, along with the log of oil; he shall wave them before the Lord as a wave offering. 13He is to slaughter the lamb in the sanctuary area where the sin offering[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3125d)] and the burnt offering are slaughtered. Like the sin offering, the guilt offering belongs to the priest; it is most holy. 14The priest is to take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot. 15The priest shall then take some of the log of oil, pour it in the palm of his own left hand, 16dip his right forefinger into the oil in his palm, and with his finger sprinkle some of it before the Lord seven times. 17The priest is to put some of the oil remaining in his palm on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot, on top of the blood of the guilt offering. 18The rest of the oil in his palm the priest shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed and make atonement for them before the Lord.

19“Then the priest is to sacrifice the sin offering and make atonement for the one to be cleansed from their uncleanness. After that, the priest shall slaughter the burnt offering 20and offer it on the altar, together with the grain offering, and make atonement for them, and they will be clean.

21“If, however, they are poor and cannot afford these, they must take one male lamb as a guilt offering to be waved to make atonement for them, together with a tenth of an ephah[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3133e)] of the finest flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering, a log of oil, 22and two doves or two young pigeons, such as they can afford, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Leviticus 14:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3115) The Hebrew word for defiling skin disease, traditionally translated “leprosy,” was used for various diseases affecting the skin; also in verses 7, 32, 54 and 57.
2. [Leviticus 14:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3122) That is, probably about 11 pounds or about 5 kilograms
3. [Leviticus 14:10](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3122) That is, about 1/3 quart or about 0.3 liter; also in verses 12, 15, 21 and 24
4. [Leviticus 14:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3125) Or purification offering; also in verses 19, 22 and 31
5. [Leviticus 14:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+14%3A1%E2%80%9322+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3133) That is, probably about 3 1/2 pounds or about 1.6 kilograms

The term “cancel culture” is often used today. Someone who says or does something another group does not like is “canceled,” ignored or disregarded. While our society has become pretty good at canceling people, we are not so skilled at welcoming into the community.

Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. Hebrews 13:12

In the book of Leviticus, we learn how a person was determined to be clean or unclean. The purpose again was to protect the holiness of the camp and the tabernacle. Some types of uncleanness were severe enough that people were required to live outside the camp (13:46). However, the laws did not leave those people without hope. There were also instructions on reintegrating people into the community (vv. 1–7).

This ceremony had four elements: two birds, cedar wood, scarlet yarn, and hyssop (v. 4). The significance of this ceremony is not given and is a bit obscure to us today. However, the result is clear enough. After going through the ceremony, the whole community would know that this person was now considered clean. They would now be integrated back into the camp and could join in corporate worship.

If you read further in chapter 15, you will see laws regarding bodily discharges for men and women. These occur in the regular course of life and could be handled without going to a priest. For these situations, people had to trust each other that they would not defile the sanctuary by entering it when they were not ceremonially clean. As believers, we have permanent access to worshiping God at any time because of the finished work of Christ (Heb. 13:12). God provided a temporary way for this to be accomplished in ancient Israel that pointed forward to Jesus who “suffered outside the gate” on our behalf!

**Apply the Word**

How and when can we welcome back those who have been “outside the camp” of our Christian community? This is a topic worthy of prayer and discussion as individuals and as a church body.

## **Pray with Us**

Give us the grace to discern where wisdom and wariness diverge and help us choose the path of wisdom in welcoming back a believer who once turned away from the faith. Help us rejoice in their restoration, building them up.

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 4/14/23

# Uphill All the Way

 **Read:** [**2 Samuel 15:13–14**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2015.13%E2%80%9314)**,** [**23–26**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Samuel%2015.23%E2%80%9326)

### **David Flees**

13A messenger came and told David, “The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom.”

14Then David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, “Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin on us and put the city to the sword.”

**Read:** [**2 Samuel 15:13–14**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2015.13%E2%80%9314)**,** [**23–26**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Samuel%2015.23%E2%80%9326)

23The whole countryside wept aloud as all the people passed by. The king also crossed the Kidron Valley, and all the people moved on toward the wilderness.

24Zadok was there, too, and all the Levites who were with him were carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down the ark of God, and Abiathar offered sacrifices until all the people had finished leaving the city.

25Then the king said to Zadok, “Take the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the Lord’s eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again. 26But if he says, ‘I am not pleased with you,’ then I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to him.”

Let him do to me whatever seems good to him. [2 Samuel 15:26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2015.26)

Christina Rossetti, a poet and devotional writer, found that nothing came easily for her. She suffered from depression and various illnesses throughout her life and endured broken engagements. Eventually she died of cancer.

When David burst into Israel’s national consciousness, it was as a triumphant warrior. Yet throughout his life, David faced hardship. Late in his reign, his own son, along with his trusted advisor and much of the country, turned against him ([2 Samuel 15:1–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2015.1%E2%80%9312)). So David took the priests Abiathar and Zadok and the sacred ark of God with him and fled Jerusalem (vv. 14, 24).

After Abiathar had offered sacrifices to God, David told the priests, “Take the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the Lord’s eyes, he will bring me back and let me see it and his dwelling place again” (v. 25). Despite the uncertainty, David said, “If [God] says, ‘I am not pleased with you,’ . . . let him do to me whatever seems good to him” (v. 26). He knew he could trust God.

Christina Rossetti trusted God too, and her life ended in hope. The road may indeed wind uphill all the way, but it leads to our heavenly Father, who awaits us with open arms.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

In what ways has life seemed uphill and winding to you? How will you trust God to lead you on the road you’re traveling?

Dear God, this life seems so hard sometimes. Yet I trust You to do what’s right, for me and for everyone. Help me live in Your hope, anticipating the day I’ll be with You.

#### **Insight**

[Psalm 3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%203) is among a few psalms that include notes (superscriptions) that identify authors or other helpful information. The header reads: “A psalm of David. When he fled from his son Absalom.” This notation connects the psalm with [2 Samuel 15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2015), where we see Absalom, the rival king, on the rise (vv. 1–12) and David, the rightful king, on the run (vv. 13–37). The rebellion of Absalom, along with other family challenges (see [2 Samuel 13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Sam%2013)), fulfilled the word of the prophet: “Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity on you” (12:11). Because the battered king didn’t equate the discipline of God with the abandonment of God, he could say, “But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high. I call out to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy mountain” ([Psalm 3:3–4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%203.3%E2%80%934)).

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

# God Calling – 4/14/23

# Equally Yoked

My children, I guide you always. The walking in the way may not be always carried out, but the guiding is always so sure. God is using you both in marvelous ways. Go on gladly. You will see.

To be a perfect gymnast you must learn balance. It is balance and poise, perfect balance and poise, I am teaching you now. This will give you power in dealing with the lives of others, and that power is already being marvelously manifested.

The vision you both have is the means of clearing the obstacles away. When My disciple sees My purpose ahead, that very sight is the power that clears away every obstacle along the range of vision. You will both have mighty power to do this. Spiritual Light is in itself a miracle-worker.

People waste so much time in seeking to work out what they see. I declare to you that in the seeing My purpose all is done. Truly I said to My Disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." But to you, and the twos who gather to hear Me as you do, I can declare those things now, that then I left unsaid.

Is not the message of My servant Paul now plain: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," because My Guidance is intensified immeasurably in power, when the two are one in desire to be with Me -- but so few have understood.

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Isaiah 30:21

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/15/23

# The Failure To Pay Close Attention



The high places were not removed from Israel. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was loyal all his days. —[2 Chronicles 15:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Chronicles+15%3A17)

Asa was not completely obedient in the outward, visible areas of his life. He was obedient in what he considered the most important areas, but he was not entirely right. Beware of ever thinking, “Oh, that thing in my life doesn’t matter much.” The fact that it doesn’t matter much to you may mean that it matters a great deal to God. Nothing should be considered a trivial matter by a child of God. How much longer are we going to prevent God from teaching us even one thing? But He keeps trying to teach us and He never loses patience. You say, “I know I am right with God”— yet the “high places” still remain in your life. There is still an area of disobedience. Do you protest that your heart is right with God, and yet there is something in your life He causes you to doubt? Whenever God causes a doubt about something, stop it immediately, no matter what it may be. Nothing in our lives is a mere insignificant detail to God.

Are there some things regarding your physical or intellectual life to which you have been paying no attention at all? If so, you may think you are all correct in the important areas, but you are careless— you are failing to concentrate or to focus properly. You no more need a day off from spiritual concentration on matters in your life than your heart needs a day off from beating. As you cannot take a day off morally and remain moral, neither can you take a day off spiritually and remain spiritual. God wants you to be entirely His, and it requires paying close attention to keep yourself fit. It also takes a tremendous amount of time. Yet some of us expect to rise above all of our problems, going from one mountaintop experience to another, with only a few minutes’ effort.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 4/15/23

**Their Redeemer is strong.**—[JER. 50:34.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.50.html" \l "Jer.50.34)

I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins.—I have laid help upon one that is mighty.—TheLord. . . thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob.—Mighty to save.—Able to keep you from falling.—Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.—He is able . . . to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.

Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . . I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[Amos 5:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Amos.5.html" \l "Amos.5.12). -[Psa. 89:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.89.html" \l "Ps.89.19). -[Isa. 49:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.49.html" \l "Isa.49.26). -[Isa. 63:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.63.html" \l "Isa.63.1). -[Jude 24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jude.1.html" \l "Jude.1.24). -[Rom. 5:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.5.html" \l "Rom.5.20).[John 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html" \l "John.3.18). -[Heb. 7:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.7.html" \l "Heb.7.25).[Isa. 50:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.50.html" \l "Isa.50.2).[Rom. 8:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.35),[38,39](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.38).

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” **[Psalm 22:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.22.html" \l "Ps.22.1)**

We here behold the Saviour in the depth of his sorrows. No other place so well shows the griefs of Christ as Calvary, and no other moment at Calvary is so full of agony as that in which his cry rends the air—“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” At this moment physical weakness was united with acute mental torture from the shame and ignominy through which he had to pass; and to make his grief culminate with emphasis, he suffered spiritual agony surpassing all expression, resulting from the departure of his Father’s presence. This was the black midnight of his horror; then it was that he descended the abyss of suffering. No man can enter into the full meaning of these words. Some of us think at times that we could cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” There are seasons when the brightness of our Father’s smile is eclipsed by clouds and darkness; but let us remember that God never does really forsake us. It is only a seeming forsaking with us, but in Christ’s case it was a real forsaking. We grieve at a little withdrawal of our Father’s love; but the real turning away of God’s face from his Son, who shall calculate how deep the agony which it caused him?

In our case, our cry is often dictated by unbelief: in his case, it was the utterance of a dreadful fact, for God had really turned away from him for a season. O thou poor, distressed soul, who once lived in the sunshine of God’s face, but art now in darkness, remember that he has not really forsaken thee. God in the clouds is as much our God as when he shines forth in all the lustre of his grace; but since even the thought that he has forsaken us gives us agony, what must the woe of the Saviour have been when he exclaimed, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

# Word Live – 4/15/23

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

# Scripture Union – 4/15/23

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

# Today in the Word – 4/15/23

# The Day of Atonement

**Read:** [**Leviticus 16:1–34**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+16%3a1%e2%80%9334)

### **The Day of Atonement**

16 The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron who died when they approached the Lord. 2The Lord said to Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron that he is not to come whenever he chooses into the Most Holy Place behind the curtain in front of the atonement cover on the ark, or else he will die. For I will appear in the cloud over the atonement cover.

3“This is how Aaron is to enter the Most Holy Place: He must first bring a young bull for a sin offering[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+16%3A1%E2%80%9334+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3205a)] and a ram for a burnt offering. 4He is to put on the sacred linen tunic, with linen undergarments next to his body; he is to tie the linen sash around him and put on the linen turban. These are sacred garments; so he must bathe himself with water before he puts them on. 5From the Israelite community he is to take two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

6“Aaron is to offer the bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household. 7Then he is to take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the entrance to the tent of meeting. 8He is to cast lots for the two goats—one lot for the Lord and the other for the scapegoat.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+16%3A1%E2%80%9334+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3210b)] 9Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the Lord and sacrifice it for a sin offering. 10But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to be used for making atonement by sending it into the wilderness as a scapegoat.

11“Aaron shall bring the bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household, and he is to slaughter the bull for his own sin offering. 12He is to take a censer full of burning coals from the altar before the Lord and two handfuls of finely ground fragrant incense and take them behind the curtain. 13He is to put the incense on the fire before the Lord, and the smoke of the incense will conceal the atonement cover above the tablets of the covenant law, so that he will not die. 14He is to take some of the bull’s blood and with his finger sprinkle it on the front of the atonement cover; then he shall sprinkle some of it with his finger seven times before the atonement cover.

15“He shall then slaughter the goat for the sin offering for the people and take its blood behind the curtain and do with it as he did with the bull’s blood: He shall sprinkle it on the atonement cover and in front of it. 16In this way he will make atonement for the Most Holy Place because of the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been. He is to do the same for the tent of meeting, which is among them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17No one is to be in the tent of meeting from the time Aaron goes in to make atonement in the Most Holy Place until he comes out, having made atonement for himself, his household and the whole community of Israel.

18“Then he shall come out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement for it. He shall take some of the bull’s blood and some of the goat’s blood and put it on all the horns of the altar. 19He shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times to cleanse it and to consecrate it from the uncleanness of the Israelites.

20“When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat. 21He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat’s head. He shall send the goat away into the wilderness in the care of someone appointed for the task. 22The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a remote place; and the man shall release it in the wilderness.

23“Then Aaron is to go into the tent of meeting and take off the linen garments he put on before he entered the Most Holy Place, and he is to leave them there. 24He shall bathe himself with water in the sanctuary area and put on his regular garments. Then he shall come out and sacrifice the burnt offering for himself and the burnt offering for the people, to make atonement for himself and for the people. 25He shall also burn the fat of the sin offering on the altar.

26“The man who releases the goat as a scapegoat must wash his clothes and bathe himself with water; afterward he may come into the camp. 27The bull and the goat for the sin offerings, whose blood was brought into the Most Holy Place to make atonement, must be taken outside the camp; their hides, flesh and intestines are to be burned up. 28The man who burns them must wash his clothes and bathe himself with water; afterward he may come into the camp.

29“This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you must deny yourselves[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+16%3A1%E2%80%9334+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3231c)] and not do any work—whether native-born or a foreigner residing among you— 30because on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the Lord, you will be clean from all your sins. 31It is a day of sabbath rest, and you must deny yourselves; it is a lasting ordinance. 32The priest who is anointed and ordained to succeed his father as high priest is to make atonement. He is to put on the sacred linen garments 33and make atonement for the Most Holy Place, for the tent of meeting and the altar, and for the priests and all the members of the community.

34“This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: Atonement is to be made once a year for all the sins of the Israelites.”

And it was done, as the Lord commanded Moses.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Leviticus 16:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+16%3A1%E2%80%9334+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3205) Or purification offering; here and throughout this chapter
2. [Leviticus 16:8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+16%3A1%E2%80%9334+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3210) The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain; also in verses 10 and 26.
3. [Leviticus 16:29](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+16%3A1%E2%80%9334+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3231) Or must fast; also in verse 31

Starting with Adam and Eve, the central problem the Bible addresses is this: “How can a holy God dwell with a sinful people?” This almost led to the destruction of Israel after they sinned by creating and worshiping a Golden Calf (see Ex. 32–34).

Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many. Hebrews 9:28

Today’s reading describes the Day of Atonement, the most theologically significant passage in Leviticus and perhaps in the entire Old Testament. It is important for every believer to understand the significance of this ceremony. After Aaron’s sons approached the Lord in the wrong way and were killed, God provided instructions for how Aaron could rightly enter the Holy of Holies to offer an atoning sacrifice for the nation (Lev. 16:1–2).

Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, Aaron was to offer a sin offering for himself and for the nation (vv. 3–5). This was a holy and solemn affair. It was the only day of the year that the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies. After offering the appropriate sacrifices, Aaron would enter the Holy of Holies, burn incense before the Ark of the Covenant, and sprinkle blood on the cover of the Ark, often called the Mercy Seat (vv. 11–14).

After performing this ritual, he was to take the scapegoat, lay his hands on its head, and confess the sins of Israel (v. 21). The goat was then to be led out of the camp into the wilderness, thus symbolically removing Israel’s sin from the camp (vv. 21–22). On that day, all Israel was to cease from work and mourn (v. 29).

**Apply the Word**

It was for our sin that Jesus died on the cross. His shed blood made the Day of Atonement ceremony no longer necessary. The curtain to the Holy of Holies was torn in two (Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38) and all believers were given direct access to the Father. Jesus served as the ultimate scapegoat, taking upon Himself the sin of the world (1 Peter 2:24; Heb. 9:28).

## **Pray with Us**

You alone know the true weight of sin, the real sting of death, and the desolation of being separated from Your Father. Yet You willingly endured all to free us from these things—and now we worship in Your presence!

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 4/15/23

# Reconciling Relationships

 **Read:** [**Ephesians 4:22–32**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.22%E2%80%9332)

22You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

25Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26“In your anger do not sin”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A22%E2%80%9332&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29299a)]: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27and do not give the devil a foothold. 28Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

29Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. 30And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Ephesians 4:26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A22%E2%80%9332&version=NIV#en-NIV-29299) Psalm 4:4 (see Septuagint)

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. [Ephesians 4:32](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.32)

My sister and I clashed frequently when we were younger, but one time especially stands out in my memory. After a bout of yelling back and forth where we’d both said hurtful things, she said something that in the moment seemed unforgivable. Witnessing the animosity growing between us, my grandmother reminded us of our responsibility to love each other: “God gave you one sister in life. You’ve got to show each other a little grace,” she said. When we asked God to fill us with love and understanding, He helped us acknowledge how we’d hurt each other and to forgive one another.

It can be so easy to hold on to bitterness and anger, but God desires for us to experience the peace that can only come when we ask Him to help us release feelings of resentment ([Ephesians 4:31](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%204.31)). Instead of harboring these feelings, we can look to Christ’s example of forgiveness that comes from a place of love and grace, striving to be “kind and compassionate” and to “[forgive] each other, just as in Christ God forgave [us]” (v. 32). When we find it challenging to forgive, may we consider the grace that He extends to us each day. No matter how many times we fall short, His compassion never fails ([Lamentations 3:22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203.22)). God can help us remove bitterness from our hearts, so we’re free to remain hopeful and receptive to His love.

By:  [Kimya Loder](https://odb.org/author/kimyaloder/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When has someone hurt you? What did you learn from that moment?

Heavenly Father, thank You for the people You’ve placed in my life. Help me to have a loving and forgiving spirit.

#### **Insight**

There’s some debate among scholars as to the actual destination of the letter of Ephesians. In [Ephesians 1:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%201.1), the words “in Ephesus” are absent in several ancient manuscripts—causing some to view this as an “encyclical letter”—a letter that was to be circulated among the various church gatherings in Asia Minor. Adding to this theory is that Paul addresses no individuals, which seems unusual, especially compared to [Romans 16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2016), where he mentions no less than twenty-six people by name while also referring to many others in that congregation. Many scholars, however, hold to the church at Ephesus as being the proper first destination, with the letter to be circulated to other churches from there. The circular nature of the letter perhaps explains its lack of personal address.

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

# God Calling – 4/15/23

# Never Feel Inadequate

Obey My demands. They are steps in the ladder that lead to success. Above all, keep calm, unmoved.

Go back into the silence to recover this calm when it is lost even for one moment. You accomplish more by this than by all the activities of a long day. At all cost keep calm, you can help nobody when you are agitated. I, your Lord, see not as man sees.

Never feel inadequate for any task. All work here is accomplished by My Spirit, and that can flow through the most humble and lowly. It simply needs an unblocked channel. Rid yourself of self and all is well.

Pray about all, but concentrate on a few things until those are accomplished. I am watching over you. Strength for your daily, hourly task is provided. Yours is the fault, the sin, if it is unclaimed, and you fail for lack of it.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" 2 Corinthians 12:9

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/16/23

# Can You Come Down From the Mountain?



While you have the light, believe in the light… —[John 12:36](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+12%3A36)

We all have moments when we feel better than ever before, and we say, “I feel fit for anything; if only I could always be like this!” We are not meant to be. Those moments are moments of insight which we have to live up to even when we do not feel like it. Many of us are no good for the everyday world when we are not on the mountaintop. Yet we must bring our everyday life up to the standard revealed to us on the mountaintop when we were there.

Never allow a feeling that was awakened in you on the mountaintop to evaporate. Don’t place yourself on the shelf by thinking, “How great to be in such a wonderful state of mind!” Act immediately— do something, even if your only reason to act is that you would rather not. If, during a prayer meeting, God shows you something to do, don’t say, “I’ll do it”— just do it! Pick yourself up by the back of the neck and shake off your fleshly laziness. Laziness can always be seen in our cravings for a mountaintop experience; all we talk about is our planning for our time on the mountain. We must learn to live in the ordinary “gray” day according to what we saw on the mountain.

Don’t give up because you have been blocked and confused once— go after it again. Burn your bridges behind you, and stand committed to God by an act of your own will. Never change your decisions, but be sure to make your decisions in the light of what you saw and learned on the mountain.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 4/16/23

**I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.**—[PSA. 31:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.31.html" \l "Ps.31.22)

I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.—Waters flowed over mine head; then I said, I am cut off. I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.

Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.—I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

[Psa. 69:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.69.html" \l "Ps.69.2). -[Lam. 3:54-57](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lam.3.html" \l "Lam.3.54).[Psa. 77:7-11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.77.html" \l "Ps.77.7). -[Psa. 27:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.13).

“The precious blood of Christ.” **[1 Peter 1:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.19)**

Standing at the foot of the cross, we see hands, and feet, and side, all distilling crimson streams of precious blood. It is “precious” because of its redeeming and atoning efficacy. By it the sins of Christ’s people are atoned for; they are redeemed from under the law; they are reconciled to God, made one with him. Christ’s blood is also “precious” in its cleansing power; it “cleanseth from all sin.” “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” Through Jesus’ blood there is not a spot left upon any believer, no wrinkle nor any such thing remains. O precious blood, which makes us clean, removing the stains of abundant iniquity, and permitting us to stand accepted in the Beloved, notwithstanding the many ways in which we have rebelled against our God. The blood of Christ is likewise “precious” in its preserving power. We are safe from the destroying angel under the sprinkled blood. Remember it is God’s seeing the blood which is the true reason for our being spared. Here is comfort for us when the eye of faith is dim, for God’s eye is still the same. The blood of Christ is “precious” also in its sanctifying influence. The same blood which justifies by taking away sin, does in its after-action, quicken the new nature and lead it onward to subdue sin and to follow out the commands of God. There is no motive for holiness so great as that which streams from the veins of Jesus. And “precious,” unspeakably precious, is this blood, because it has an overcoming power. It is written, “They overcame through the blood of the Lamb.” How could they do otherwise? He who fights with the precious blood of Jesus, fights with a weapon which cannot know defeat. The blood of Jesus! sin dies at its presence, death ceases to be death: heaven’s gates are opened. The blood of Jesus! we shall march on, conquering and to conquer, so long as we can trust its power!

# Word Live – 4/16/23

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

# Scripture Union – 4/16/23

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

# Today in the Word – 4/16/23

# Washed by the Blood

**Read:** [**Leviticus 17:1–16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+17%3a1%e2%80%9316)

### **Eating Blood Forbidden**

17 The Lord said to Moses, 2“Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israelites and say to them: ‘This is what the Lord has commanded: 3Any Israelite who sacrifices an ox,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+17%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3239a)] a lamb or a goat in the camp or outside of it 4instead of bringing it to the entrance to the tent of meeting to present it as an offering to the Lord in front of the tabernacle of the Lord—that person shall be considered guilty of bloodshed; they have shed blood and must be cut off from their people. 5This is so the Israelites will bring to the Lord the sacrifices they are now making in the open fields. They must bring them to the priest, that is, to the Lord, at the entrance to the tent of meeting and sacrifice them as fellowship offerings. 6The priest is to splash the blood against the altar of the Lord at the entrance to the tent of meeting and burn the fat as an aroma pleasing to the Lord. 7They must no longer offer any of their sacrifices to the goat idols[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+17%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3243b)] to whom they prostitute themselves. This is to be a lasting ordinance for them and for the generations to come.’

8“Say to them: ‘Any Israelite or any foreigner residing among them who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice 9and does not bring it to the entrance to the tent of meeting to sacrifice it to the Lord must be cut off from the people of Israel.

10“‘I will set my face against any Israelite or any foreigner residing among them who eats blood, and I will cut them off from the people. 11For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+17%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3247c)] 12Therefore I say to the Israelites, “None of you may eat blood, nor may any foreigner residing among you eat blood.”

13“‘Any Israelite or any foreigner residing among you who hunts any animal or bird that may be eaten must drain out the blood and cover it with earth, 14because the life of every creature is its blood. That is why I have said to the Israelites, “You must not eat the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood; anyone who eats it must be cut off.”

15“‘Anyone, whether native-born or foreigner, who eats anything found dead or torn by wild animals must wash their clothes and bathe with water, and they will be ceremonially unclean till evening; then they will be clean. 16But if they do not wash their clothes and bathe themselves, they will be held responsible.’”

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Leviticus 17:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+17%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3239) The Hebrew word can refer to either male or female.
2. [Leviticus 17:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+17%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3243) Or the demons
3. [Leviticus 17:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+17%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#en-NIV-3247) Or atonement by the life in the blood

Some people fear the sight of blood. They have to look away during their annual blood test and have a hard time helping bandage a wound. While blood can be frightening, it is also necessary. Every moment, blood pumps through our bodies, keeping us alive by supplying our body with oxygen and nutrients.

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. John 6:54

In today’s reading, we have arrived at a major turning point in the book. Up to this point, the commands and teaching have been given to the priests. It instructed them on how to atone for sin and maintain purity in the tabernacle and the camp. Beginning in this chapter, Moses addresses all Israel (v. 1). This part of Leviticus teaches Israel how to maintain holiness in their everyday life.

This chapter addresses two issues. The first issue was how to properly slaughter animals for food (vv. 3–7). If Israel desired to slaughter an animal to eat, they were required to bring it to the Tent of Meeting and offer it as a fellowship offering (v. 5). This ensured that the animal was slaughtered properly. It also reminded Israel that food was a gift from God and a part of regular worship. It would prevent Israel from being tempted to sacrifice to false gods away from the tabernacle (v. 7).

The second issue was a prohibition against consuming blood of any kind (vv. 10–14). Blood represented the life of the animal. By refraining from consuming the blood, Israel showed respect for the sanctity of life (Gen. 9:4–6). Blood was also used in worship as a source of sanctification (Lev. 17:11).

**Apply the Word**

The word “blood” takes on even more meaning in the New Testament. We speak of Christ’s blood when we observe the Lord’s Supper. It is His blood that cleanses us from sin and makes us holy in God’s sight (1 Cor. 11:23–26). When we are “Washed by the Blood”, as the hymn proclaims, we are forever changed!

## **Pray with Us**

May we, “being rooted and established in love, have power” and “grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge!” (Eph. 3:17–19).

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 4/16/23

# Greater Love

 **Read:** [**John 15:9–17**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.9%E2%80%9317)

9“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. 11I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. 14You are my friends if you do what I command. 15I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. 16You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. 17This is my command: Love each other.Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. [John 15:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.13)

Just days before Holy Week, when Christians around the world remember Jesus’ sacrifice and celebrate His resurrection, a terrorist stormed into a supermarket in southwest France opening fire and killing two. After negotiation, the terrorist released all but one hostage, whom he turned into a human shield. Knowing the danger, police officer Arnaud Beltrame did the unthinkable: he volunteered to take the woman’s place. The perpetrator released her, but in the ensuing scuffle Beltrame was injured and later died.

A minister who knew the police officer attributed his heroism to his faith in Jesus, pointing to His words in [John 15:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.13): “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” Those were the words Christ spoke to His disciples after their last meal together. He told His friends to “Love each other as I have loved you” (v. 12) and that the greatest love is to lay down one’s life for another (v. 13). This is exactly what Jesus did the next day, when He went to the cross to save us from our sin—as only He could.

We may never be called to follow the heroism of this officer. But as we remain in God’s love, we can serve others sacrificially, laying down our own plans and desires as we seek to share the story of His great love.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How do you react to stories such as that of Arnaud Beltrame? How can you serve someone sacrificially today?

Dear Jesus, You died to give me life everlasting. May I live with gratitude for this gift and share it with those You put in my path.

#### **Insight**

Two important themes in [John 15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015) are remaining in Jesus and friendship with Jesus. Twice, Christ instructs us to “remain in [His] love” (vv. 9–10)—to continue in a personal, enduring, and endearing intimate relationship with Him. To remain in Jesus’ love is to “remain faithful to [His] teachings” (8:31 nlt) and obey His commands (15:10).

Jesus contrasted servants and friends (v. 15) to show the new level of intimacy that believers now have with Him. He proved this friendship by laying down His life for us (v. 13). Because Abraham was privileged to be called a “friend” of God ([2 Chronicles 20:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Chron%2020.7); [James 2:23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%202.23)), God revealed His plans to him ([Genesis 18:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2018.17)). He also spoke to Moses “as one speaks to a friend” ([Exodus 33:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2033.11)). Jesus likewise tells us “everything that [He] learned from [His] Father” ([John 15:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2015.15)) because we are His friends.

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

# God Calling – 4/16/23

# Love Your Servants

Love, love, love. Tender Love is the secret. Love those you are training, love those who work with you, love those who serve you.

Dwell on that thought -- God is Love. Link it up with My "I and my Father are one." Dwell on My actions on earth. See in them Love in operation.

If it was God who so acted, then it was Love, Perfect Love, performed those actions, those wonders. Then you, too, must put Love (God) into action in your lives. Perfect Love means perfect forgiveness. Lo, my children, you see that where God is there can be no lack of forgiveness, for that is really lack of love.

God is Love . . . no judging.   
God is Love . . . no resentment.   
God is Love . . . all patience.   
God is Love . . . all power.   
God is Love . . . all supply.

All you need to have is love to God and man. Love to God ensures obedience to every wish, every command. Love is the fulfilling of all law.

Pray much for love.

"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16

# My Utmost for His Highest – 4/17/23

# All or Nothing?



When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment…and plunged into the sea. —[John 21:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+21%3A7)

Have you ever had a crisis in your life in which you deliberately, earnestly, and recklessly abandoned everything? It is a crisis of the will. You may come to that point many times externally, but it will amount to nothing. The true deep crisis of abandonment, or total surrender, is reached internally, not externally. The giving up of only external things may actually be an indication of your being in total bondage.

Have you deliberately committed your will to Jesus Christ? It is a transaction of the will, not of emotion; any positive emotion that results is simply a superficial blessing arising out of the transaction. If you focus your attention on the emotion, you will never make the transaction. Do not ask God what the transaction is to be, but make the determination to surrender your will regarding whatever you see, whether it is in the shallow or the deep, profound places internally.

If you have heard Jesus Christ’s voice on the waves of the sea, you can let your convictions and your consistency take care of themselves by concentrating on maintaining your intimate relationship to Him.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The emphasis to-day is placed on the furtherance of an organization; the note is, “We must keep this thing going.” If we are in God’s order the thing will go; if we are not in His order, it won’t.  Conformed to His Image, 357 R

# CCEL – 4/17/23

**Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.**—[PSA. 50:23.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.50.html" \l "Ps.50.23)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.—Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Ye are a royal priesthood . . . that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.—Ye . . . as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.—By him . . . let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.

[Col. 3:16,17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.3.html" \l "Col.3.16). -[I Cor. 6:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.6.html" \l "iCor.6.20).[I Pet. 2:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.9). -[I Pet. 2:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.5). -[Heb. 13:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.15).[Psa. 34:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.2).

“Ye are come to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” **[Hebrews 12:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.24)**

Reader, have you come to the blood of sprinkling? The question is not whether you have come to a knowledge of doctrine, or an observance of ceremonies, or to a certain form of experience, but have you come to the blood of Jesus? The blood of Jesus is the life of all vital godliness. If you have truly come to Jesus, we know how you came—the Holy Spirit sweetly brought you there. You came to the blood of sprinkling with no merits of your own. Guilty, lost, and helpless, you came to take that blood, and that blood alone, as your everlasting hope. You came to the cross of Christ, with a trembling and an aching heart; and oh! what a precious sound it was to you to hear the voice of the blood of Jesus! The dropping of his blood is as the music of heaven to the penitent sons of earth. We are full of sin, but the Saviour bids us lift our eyes to him, and as we gaze upon his streaming wounds, each drop of blood, as it falls, cries, “It is finished; I have made an end of sin; I have brought in everlasting righteousness.” Oh! sweet language of the precious blood of Jesus! If you have come to that blood once, you will come to it constantly. Your life will be “Looking unto Jesus.” Your whole conduct will be epitomized in this—“To whom coming.” Not to whom I have come, but to whom I am always coming. If thou hast ever come to the blood of sprinkling, thou wilt feel thy need of coming to it every day. He who does not desire to wash in it every day, has never washed in it at all. The believer ever feels it to be his joy and privilege that there is still a fountain opened. Past experiences are doubtful food for Christians; a present coming to Christ alone can give us joy and comfort. This morning let us sprinkle our door-post fresh with blood, and then feast upon the Lamb, assured that the destroying angel must pass us by.

# Word Live – 4/17/23

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# Today in the Word – 4/17/23

# Faithfulness in Marriage

**Read:** [**Leviticus 18:1–30**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+18%3a1%e2%80%9330)

### **Unlawful Sexual Relations**

18 The Lord said to Moses, 2“Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘I am the Lord your God. 3You must not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices. 4You must obey my laws and be careful to follow my decrees. I am the Lord your God. 5Keep my decrees and laws, for the person who obeys them will live by them. I am the Lord.

6“‘No one is to approach any close relative to have sexual relations. I am the Lord.

7“‘Do not dishonor your father by having sexual relations with your mother. She is your mother; do not have relations with her.

8“‘Do not have sexual relations with your father’s wife; that would dishonor your father.

9“‘Do not have sexual relations with your sister, either your father’s daughter or your mother’s daughter, whether she was born in the same home or elsewhere.

10“‘Do not have sexual relations with your son’s daughter or your daughter’s daughter; that would dishonor you.

11“‘Do not have sexual relations with the daughter of your father’s wife, born to your father; she is your sister.

12“‘Do not have sexual relations with your father’s sister; she is your father’s close relative.

13“‘Do not have sexual relations with your mother’s sister, because she is your mother’s close relative.

14“‘Do not dishonor your father’s brother by approaching his wife to have sexual relations; she is your aunt.

15“‘Do not have sexual relations with your daughter-in-law. She is your son’s wife; do not have relations with her.

16“‘Do not have sexual relations with your brother’s wife; that would dishonor your brother.

17“‘Do not have sexual relations with both a woman and her daughter. Do not have sexual relations with either her son’s daughter or her daughter’s daughter; they are her close relatives. That is wickedness.

18“‘Do not take your wife’s sister as a rival wife and have sexual relations with her while your wife is living.

19“‘Do not approach a woman to have sexual relations during the uncleanness of her monthly period.

20“‘Do not have sexual relations with your neighbor’s wife and defile yourself with her.

21“‘Do not give any of your children to be sacrificed to Molek, for you must not profane the name of your God. I am the Lord.

22“‘Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable.

23“‘Do not have sexual relations with an animal and defile yourself with it. A woman must not present herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it; that is a perversion.

24“‘Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations that I am going to drive out before you became defiled. 25Even the land was defiled; so I punished it for its sin, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. 26But you must keep my decrees and my laws. The native-born and the foreigners residing among you must not do any of these detestable things, 27for all these things were done by the people who lived in the land before you, and the land became defiled. 28And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you.

29“‘Everyone who does any of these detestable things—such persons must be cut off from their people. 30Keep my requirements and do not follow any of the detestable customs that were practiced before you came and do not defile yourselves with them. I am the Lord your God.’”

Larry Nassar held an important role as team doctor for USA Gymnastics. But in 2017, Nassar fell from grace when he was convicted of abusing hundreds of children and young women under his care. He is currently serving a 175-year prison sentence. One of the elements that make his actions so reprehensible is that he was in a trusted position of authority.

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. Hebrews 13:4

In ancient Israel, male heads of households were in a position of authority and power. Back then, households were structured differently than they are today. It was not uncommon for four or more generations to live together in close proximity with members of one’s extended family. In a world before police officers or social workers, the head of house was responsible for the well-being of everyone in his family.

With such big responsibility comes the potential for abuse. And today’s reading provides a series of prohibitions directed at a male head of household. Most of the commands clarify for the head of house who in his family is sexually off-limits—everyone but his wife. Family members needed to feel safe from abuse while living and working together.

These commands are given twice in the chapter for emphasis; Israel was to be different from other nations (vv. 1–2, 30). God judged Canaan because of the abusive sexual practices and custom of child sacrifice (v. 21). God held the nations accountable for these practices, which included adultery and homosexuality (vv. 20–22).

God created sexuality to be enjoyed in the right context: a committed marriage relationship. Outside of this context, it can be abusive and destructive. Part of what it means to be holy is to follow God’s direction in this area (Col. 3:5).

**Apply the Word**

God’s directions about sexuality were countercultural for Israel, as well as for us today. The book of Leviticus reminds us that God wants the best for us in every aspect of our lives. He has provided specific guidelines for sexuality and cares deeply about the abused and vulnerable.

## **Pray with Us**

There are so many ways to abuse or misuse our sexuality. However, You created it for good! Single or married, regardless of our past, help us move forward by honoring You with our bodies.

### BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 4/17/23

# Remembering to Praise

**Read:** [**Isaiah 63:7–9**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2063.7%E2%80%939)

### **Praise and Prayer**

7I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord,  
    the deeds for which he is to be praised,  
    according to all the Lord has done for us—  
yes, the many good things  
    he has done for Israel,  
    according to his compassion and many kindnesses.  
8He said, “Surely they are my people,  
    children who will be true to me”;  
    and so he became their Savior.  
9In all their distress he too was distressed,  
    and the angel of his presence saved them.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+63%3A7%E2%80%939&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18876a)]  
In his love and mercy he redeemed them;  
    he lifted them up and carried them  
    all the days of old.

#### **Footnotes**

1. [Isaiah 63:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+63%3A7%E2%80%939&version=NIV#en-NIV-18876) Or Savior 9in their distress. / It was no envoy or angel / but his own presence that saved them

I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord. [Isaiah 63:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2063.7)

When our congregation built our first building, people wrote thankful reminders on the wall studs and concrete floors before the interior of the building was finished. Pull back the drywall from the studs and you’ll find them there. Verse after verse from Scripture, written beside prayers of praise like “You are so good!” We left them there as a witness to future generations that regardless of our challenges, God had been kind and taken care of us.

We need to remember what God has done for us and tell others about it. Isaiah exemplified this when he wrote, “I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the Lord has done for us” ([Isaiah 63:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2063.7)). Later, the prophet also recounts God’s compassion for His people throughout history, even telling how “in all their distress he too was distressed” (v. 9). But if you keep reading the chapter, you’ll notice Israel is again in a time of trouble, and the prophet longs for God’s intervention.

Remembering God’s past kindnesses helps when times are hard. Challenging seasons come and go, but His faithful character never changes. As we turn to Him with grateful hearts in remembrance of all He’s done, we discover afresh that He’s always worthy of our praise.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What kindnesses has God shown you in the past? How does praising Him for them help you when you’re going through challenging times?

Father, You’re sovereign over all creation. I praise You because Your goodness doesn’t change, and You’re always with me.

For further study, read [Worshipping God Means More than Singing](https://discoveryseries.org/courses/worshipping-god-means-more-than-singing/).

#### **Insight**

[Isaiah 63:7–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2063.7%E2%80%939) form the first part of the prophet Isaiah’s prayer. It follows the pattern of thanksgiving, confession, and supplication (making a request of our heavenly Father). The thanksgiving portion recounts God’s history of caring for Israel. He’s done “many good things” and bestowed “many kindnesses” on them (v. 7). He calls them “my people, children who will be true to me” (v. 8). Verse 10 begins the confession segment of the prayer. “Yet they rebelled and grieved [God’s] Holy Spirit,” laments Isaiah, and he poetically wonders, “Where is he who set his Holy Spirit among [Israel] . . . who divided the waters before them, to gain for himself everlasting renown?” (vv. 11–12). All this is a prelude to Isaiah’s plea for God to again show Himself strong. “Look down from heaven and see,” he says (v. 15). “Return for the sake of your servants” (v. 17).

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

# God Calling – 4/17/23

# The Two Joys

My children, I come. Hearts eager to do My Will, send out a call that ever I find irresistible. I know no barrier then.

Resignation to My Will keeps Me barred out from more Hearts than does unbelief. Can anything be such a crime against Love as being resigned? My Will should be welcomed with a glad wonder if I am to do My Work in the heart and life.

The only resignation that could possibly be acceptable to Me is when Self, ousted by My claims, accepts the inevitable and resigns the throne for Me, leaving My Disciple free to carry out My Will, to welcome My Will gladly, rapturously.

In all true discipleship, and in the true spiritual development of each disciple, there is first the wonder and the joy of first acquaintance, then comes the long plain stretch of lesson-learning and discipline, when Joy seems so much a thing of the past as never to be recaptured again.

But the constant experience of Me, the constant persistent recognition of My Work  in daily happenings — the ever accumulating weight of evidence in support of My Guidance —  the numberless instances in which seeming chance or wonderful coincidence can be, must be, traced back to My loving forethought -- all these gradually engender a feeling of wonder, certainty, gratitude, followed in time by Joy.

Joy is of two kinds. The Joy born of Love and Wonder, and the Joy born of Love and Knowledge, and between the experience of the two Joys lie discipline, disappointment, almost disillusion.

But combat these in My Strength, or rather cling blindly, helplessly to Me and let Me combat them, persevere in obeying My Will, accept My discipline, and the second Joy will follow .

And of this second Joy it was that I said, "Your joy no man taketh from you."

Do not regret the first, the second is the greater gift.

If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make your free." John 8:31, 32