# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/14/20

# Suffering Afflictions and Going the Second Mile



I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. —[Matthew 5:39](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+5%3A39)

This verse reveals the humiliation of being a Christian. In the natural realm, if a person does not hit back, it is because he is a coward. But in the spiritual realm, it is the very evidence of the Son of God in him if he does not hit back. When you are insulted, you must not only not resent it, but you must make it an opportunity to exhibit the Son of God in your life. And you cannot imitate the nature of Jesus— it is either in you or it is not. A personal insult becomes an opportunity for a saint to reveal the incredible sweetness of the Lord Jesus.

The teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is not, “Do your duty,” but is, in effect, “Do what is not your duty.” It is not your duty to go the second mile, or to turn the other cheek, but Jesus said that if we are His disciples, we will always do these things. We will not say, “Oh well, I just can’t do any more, and I’ve been so misrepresented and misunderstood.” Every time I insist on having my own rights, I hurt the Son of God, while in fact I can prevent Jesus from being hurt if I will take the blow myself. That is the real meaning of filling “up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ…” ([Colossians 1:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1:24)). A disciple realizes that it is his Lord’s honor that is at stake in his life, not his own honor.

Never look for righteousness in the other person, but never cease to be righteous yourself. We are always looking for justice, yet the essence of the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is— Never look for justice, but never cease to give it.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 7/14/20

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.—[MATT. 12:34.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.12.html" \l "Matt.12.34)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.—Death and life are in the power of the tongue. —The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. The law of his God is in his heart: none of his steps shall slide.—Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.—I believed, therefore have I spoken.

Whosoever . . . shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.—With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

[Col. 3:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.3.html" \l "Col.3.16).[Prov. 4:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.4.html" \l "Prov.4.23). -[Prov. 18:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.18.html" \l "Prov.18.21). -[Psa. 37:30,31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.30). -[Eph. 4:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.29).[Acts 4:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.4.html" \l "Acts.4.20). -[Psa. 116:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.116.html" \l "Ps.116.10).[Matt. 10:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.10.html" \l "Matt.10.32). -[Rom. 10:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.10.html" \l "Rom.10.10).

“If thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.” [Exodus 20:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.20.html" \l "Exod.20.25)

God’s altar was to be built of unhewn stones, that no trace of human skill or labour might be seen upon it. Human wisdom delights to trim and arrange the doctrines of the cross into a system more artificial and more congenial with the depraved tastes of fallen nature; instead, however, of improving the gospel carnal wisdom pollutes it, until it becomes another gospel, and not the truth of God at all. All alterations and amendments of the Lord’s own Word are defilements and pollutions. The proud heart of man is very anxious to have a hand in the justification of the soul before God; preparations for Christ are dreamed of, humblings and repentings are trusted in, good works are cried up, natural ability is much vaunted, and by all means the attempt is made to lift up human tools upon the divine altar. It were well if sinners would remember that so far from perfecting the Saviour’s work, their carnal confidences only pollute and dishonour it. The Lord alone must be exalted in the work of atonement, and not a single mark of man’s chisel or hammer will be endured. There is an inherent blasphemy in seeking to add to what Christ Jesus in His dying moments declared to be finished, or to improve that in which the Lord Jehovah finds perfect satisfaction. Trembling sinner, away with thy tools, and fall upon thy knees in humble supplication; and accept the Lord Jesus to be the altar of thine atonement, and rest in him alone.

Many professors may take warning from this morning’s text as to the doctrines which they believe. There is among Christians far too much inclination to square and reconcile the truths of revelation; this is a form of irreverence and unbelief, let us strive against it, and receive truth as we find it; rejoicing that the doctrines of the Word are unhewn stones, and so are all the more fit to build an altar for the Lord

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“The earnest of our inheritance.” [Ephesians 1:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html#Eph.1.14)

Oh! what enlightenment, what joys, what consolation, what delight of heart is experienced by that man who has learned to feed on Jesus, and on Jesus alone. Yet the realization which we have of Christ’s preciousness is, in this life, imperfect at the best. As an old writer says, “'Tis but a taste!” We have tasted “that the Lord is gracious,” but we do not yet know how good and gracious he is, although what we know of his sweetness makes us long for more. We have enjoyed the first fruits of the Spirit, and they have set us hungering and thirsting for the fullness of the heavenly vintage. We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption. Here we are like Israel in the wilderness, who had but one cluster from Eshcol, there we shall be in the vineyard. Here we see the manna falling small, like coriander seed, but there shall we eat the bread of heaven and the old corn of the kingdom. We are but beginners now in spiritual education; for although we have learned the first letters of the alphabet, we cannot read words yet, much less can we put sentences together; but as one says, “He that has been in heaven but five minutes, knows more than the general assembly of divines on earth.” We have many ungratified desires at present, but soon every wish shall be satisfied; and all our powers shall find the sweetest employment in that eternal world of joy. O Christian, antedate heaven for a few years. Within a very little time thou shalt be rid of all thy trials and thy troubles. Thine eyes now suffused with tears shall weep no longer. Thou shalt gaze in ineffable rapture upon the splendour of him who sits upon the throne. Nay, more, upon his throne shalt thou sit. The triumph of his glory shall be shared by thee; his crown, his joy, his paradise, these shall be thine, and thou shalt be co-heir with him who is the heir of all things.

# Word Live – 7/14/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/14/20

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 7/14/20

# The Consequence of Evil

**Read:** [**Joshua 7:20–26**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326)

20Achan replied, “It is true! I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. This is what I have done: 21When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326#fen-NIV-5998a)] two hundred shekels[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326#fen-NIV-5998b)] of silver and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326#fen-NIV-5998c)] I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”

22So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent, and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver underneath. 23They took the things from the tent, brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites and spread them out before the Lord.

24Then Joshua, together with all Israel, took Achan son of Zerah, the silver, the robe, the gold bar, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys and sheep, his tent and all that he had, to the Valley of Achor. 25Joshua said, “Why have you brought this trouble on us? The Lord will bring trouble on you today.”

Then all Israel stoned him, and after they had stoned the rest, they burned them. 26Over Achan they heaped up a large pile of rocks, which remains to this day. Then the Lord turned from his fierce anger. Therefore that place has been called the Valley of Achor[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326#fen-NIV-6003d)] ever since.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Joshua 7:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326#en-NIV-5998) Hebrew Shinar
2. [Joshua 7:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326#en-NIV-5998) That is, about 5 pounds or about 2.3 kilograms
3. [Joshua 7:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326#en-NIV-5998) That is, about 1 1/4 pounds or about 575 grams
4. [Joshua 7:26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+7%3a20%e2%80%9326#en-NIV-6003) Achor means trouble.

Sherlock Holmes was famous for solving mysteries. The fictional character first appeared in 1887, created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The hero used his acute observation skills to solve difficult crime cases. In today’s reading, Joshua had a mystery to solve. Who had stolen the devoted items from Jericho?

But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Psalm 19:12

Achan admitted that he had taken the spoils of battles and confessed his actions. Joshua then confirmed Achan’s guilt by locating the stolen goods (v. 22) and bringing everyone to the Valley of Achor (v. 24). Joshua’s question in verse 25 brought insight into the consequence that would take place. Achan’s actions would result in his own death and the deaths of his family. Many would agree that Achan deserved to be punished, but why was the penalty so brutal? In addition, why was his family included (v. 25)? It is important to remember that Achan’s sin, most likely with approval from his family, cost the lives of many who died at Ai. God was teaching His people that if Israel was going to inherit the Promised Land, they were to be fully obedient to Him. They must obey God every step of the way; there was no exception.

The actions of Achan stand in stark contrast to Rahab. In both narratives, destruction and salvation came through one person’s actions. Similarly, sin and death entered into our world through one man, Adam, but salvation came solely through Jesus (Rom. 5:12–21). When we read Achan’s story, it is easy to see our own sin and fate. But like Rahab, our lives are spared through God’s grace.

**Apply the Word**

It is easy to read about Achan’s story and think, “How could he do such an evil thing? I would never do that.” But in our consumeristic world, our eyes often wander. Covetousness lurks behind every corner. We must be careful not to fall into the same trap. Honor God with your possessions and your self-restraint.

### Pray with Us

Again, we come to God acknowledging that we are sinful people and we need Christ’s righteousness to lead lives that are pleasing to Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you areas that need to change.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/14/20

# Playing the Fool

 **Read:** [**James 4:4–12**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%204.4%E2%80%9312)

4You adulterous people,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A4%E2%80%9312&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-30342a" \o "See footnote a)] don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A4%E2%80%9312&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30343b)]? 6But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

“God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A4%E2%80%9312&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30344c)]

7Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

11Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A4%E2%80%9312&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30349d)] or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

#### Footnotes:

1. [James 4:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A4%E2%80%9312&version=NIV#en-NIV-30342) An allusion to covenant unfaithfulness; see Hosea 3:1.
2. [James 4:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A4%E2%80%9312&version=NIV#en-NIV-30343) Or that the spirit he caused to dwell in us envies intensely; or that the Spirit he caused to dwell in us longs jealously
3. [James 4:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A4%E2%80%9312&version=NIV#en-NIV-30344) Prov. 3:34
4. [James 4:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+4%3A4%E2%80%9312&version=NIV#en-NIV-30349) The Greek word for brother or sister (adelphos) refers here to a believer, whether man or woman, as part of God’s family.

God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. [James 4:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%204.6)

My most humiliating experience ever was the day I addressed the faculty, students, and friends of a seminary on its fifty-year anniversary. I approached the lectern with my manuscript in hand and looked out on a vast crowd, but my eye fell on the distinguished professors seated in the front row, garbed in academic gowns and looking very serious. I immediately took leave of my senses. My mouth dried up and detached itself from my brain. I fumbled the first few sentences and then I began to improvise. Since I had no idea where I was in my lecture, I began frantically turning pages, while talking a line of nonsense that baffled everyone. Somehow I made it through, crept back to my chair, and stared at the floor. I wanted to die.

However, I learned that humiliation can be a good thing if it leads to humility, for this is the key that opens God’s heart. The Scriptures say, “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble” ([James 4:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%204.6)). He showers the humble with grace. God Himself said, “These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word” ([Isaiah 66:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2066.2)). As we humble ourselves before God, He lifts us up ([James 4:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%204.10)).

Humiliation and shame can bring us to God for His shaping. When we fall, we have fallen into His hands.

By:  [David H. Roper](https://odb.org/author/davidhroper/)

#### Reflect & Pray

What was your most humiliating and embarrassing moment? What good thing did you see come from it?

Loving God, help me to accept humiliation if it in some way brings honor and glory to You.

#### Insight

James’ emphasis on resisting temptation fits within his broader teaching regarding the behavior of believers in Jesus. For James, being “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (1:22 nkjv) is central to being a believer, which echoes Christ’s words that true faith is confirmed by obedience ([Luke 6:49](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%206.49); [11:28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%2011.28)).

In today’s text, James helps believers understand one way to live with integrity—through humility. [James 4:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%204.6), a reference to [Proverbs 3:34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%203.34), fits within many Jewish wisdom texts emphasizing the relationship between humility and godly living. Humility allows us to submit naturally to God and His plan (v. 8). Submitting to God means we’re “friends” with Him, instead of the world (v. 4). When we’re friends with God, we naturally live according to His kingdom and values, not the world’s (3:15, 17). As we live and walk humbly with our God (see [Micah 6:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Micah%206.8)), He lifts us up ([James 4:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%204.10)), draws near to us (v. 8), and makes the devil powerless.

# God Calling – 7/14/20

# True Success

Our Lord, we thank Thee that Thou hast kept us.

Rejoice indeed that you see My Hand in all the happenings and the keepings of the day.  Protected, the Israelites crossed the Red Sea; so are you protected in all things.

Rely on this and go forward.  You have now entered upon the stage of success.  You must not doubt this.  You must see this.  Beyond all doubt you must know it.  It is true.  It is sure.

There is no age in Eternal Life.  Have no pity for yourself, nothing but joy and gratitude.

These last few weeks have been the submerging before the consciousness of rescue.  Go forward now and conquer.  Go forward unafraid.

Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.  Joshua 1:3

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/15/20

# My Life’s Spiritual Honor and Duty



I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians… —[Romans 1:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+1%3A14)

Paul was overwhelmed with the sense of his indebtedness to Jesus Christ, and he spent his life to express it. The greatest inspiration in Paul’s life was his view of Jesus Christ as his spiritual creditor. Do I feel that same sense of indebtedness to Christ regarding every unsaved soul? As a saint, my life’s spiritual honor and duty is to fulfill my debt to Christ in relation to these lost souls. Every tiny bit of my life that has value I owe to the redemption of Jesus Christ. Am I doing anything to enable Him to bring His redemption into evident reality in the lives of others? I will only be able to do this as the Spirit of God works into me this sense of indebtedness.

I am not a superior person among other people— I am a bondservant of the Lord Jesus. Paul said, “…you are not your own…you were bought at a price…” ([1 Corinthians 6:19-20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6:19-20)). Paul sold himself to Jesus Christ and he said, in effect, “I am a debtor to everyone on the face of the earth because of the gospel of Jesus; I am free only that I may be an absolute bondservant of His.” That is the characteristic of a Christian’s life once this level of spiritual honor and duty becomes real. Quit praying about yourself and spend your life for the sake of others as the bondservant of Jesus. That is the true meaning of being broken bread and poured-out wine in real life.

**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

# CCEL – 7/15/20

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.—[MATT. 6:10.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html#Matt.6.10)

Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.—I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.—O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.—Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.—If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.—To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Be not conformed to this world: but ye be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

[Psa. 103:20,21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.103.html#Ps.103.20).[John 6:38](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.6.html#John.6.38). -[Psa. 40:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.40.html#Ps.40.8). -[Matt. 26:42](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.26.html#Matt.26.42).[Matt. 7:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.7.html#Matt.7.21). -[Rom. 2:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.2.html#Rom.2.13). -[John 13:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.13.html#John.13.17). -[Jas. 4:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.4.html#Jas.4.17).[Rom. 12:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.12.html#Rom.12.2).

“The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.” [Leviticus 6:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.6.html#Lev.6.13)

Keep the altar of private prayer burning. This is the very life of all piety. The sanctuary and family altars borrow their fires here, therefore let this burn well. Secret devotion is the very essence, evidence, and barometer, of vital and experimental religion.

Burn here the fat of your sacrifices. Let your closet seasons be, if possible, regular, frequent, and undisturbed. Effectual prayer availeth much. Have you nothing to pray for? Let us suggest the Church, the ministry, your own soul, your children, your relations, your neighbours, your country, and the cause of God and truth throughout the world. Let us examine ourselves on this important matter. Do we engage with lukewarmness in private devotion? Is the fire of devotion burning dimly in our hearts? Do the chariot wheels drag heavily? If so, let us be alarmed at this sign of decay. Let us go with weeping, and ask for the Spirit of grace and of supplications. Let us set apart special seasons for extraordinary prayer. For if this fire should be smothered beneath the ashes of a worldly conformity, it will dim the fire on the family altar, and lessen our influence both in the Church and in the world.

The text will also apply to the altar of the heart. This is a golden altar indeed. God loves to see the hearts of his people glowing towards himself. Let us give to God our hearts, all blazing with love, and seek his grace, that the fire may never be quenched; for it will not burn if the Lord does not keep it burning. Many foes will attempt to extinguish it; but if the unseen hand behind the wall pour thereon the sacred oil, it will blaze higher and higher. Let us use texts of Scripture as fuel for our heart’s fire, they are live coals; let us attend sermons, but above all, let us be much alone with Jesus.

# Word Live – 7/15/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/15/20

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 7/15/20

# Vengeance is the Lord's

**Read:** [**Romans 12:9–21**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3a9%e2%80%9321)

### Love in Action

9Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

14Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3a9%e2%80%9321" \l "fen-NIV-28262a" \o "See footnote a)] Do not be conceited.

17Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 18If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3a9%e2%80%9321" \l "fen-NIV-28265b" \o "See footnote b)] says the Lord. 20On the contrary:

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
    if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.  
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3a9%e2%80%9321#fen-NIV-28266c)]

21Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Romans 12:16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3a9%e2%80%9321#en-NIV-28262) Or willing to do menial work
2. [Romans 12:19](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3a9%e2%80%9321#en-NIV-28265) Deut. 32:35
3. [Romans 12:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12%3a9%e2%80%9321#en-NIV-28266) Prov. 25:21,22

The amount of death and destruction described in the book of Joshua is not for the squeamish. Historian John Bright somewhat jokingly writes, “You simply cannot preach from this book, and you ought not to teach it to children. Shield our gentle ears from violence such as this.” It is true that large sections of Joshua contain difficult passages about battles, conquest, and killing.

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Romans 12:18

As we read about the destruction of cities and kings, the violence can be overwhelming to modern-day readers, troubling to us as Christians, and offensive to skeptics. But let’s pause and consider this issue from a broader biblical and theological perspective. In Paul’s letter to the Romans, he discusses the repayment of evil. Paul contrasts our individual desire for retribution (v. 17) with God’s sovereign judgment of evil: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay” (v. 19). As Joshua led the conquest of the Promised Land, God would order the destruction of people and communities who were morally corrupt. Extra-biblical resources confirm that these places were populated by God-haters and were extremely evil. They practiced child sacrifice and other unthinkable behaviors. With each city destroyed, God was carrying out His divine judgment of sin.

Paul’s letter to the Romans is a reminder that God commands us to love one another, and, as much as possible, to live in peace. We are to be the people who are “joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer” (v. 12). But our call to exhibit these qualities does not negate God’s justice or His wrath in response to disobedience. Vengeance did not belong to Joshua, and it does not belong to us. Rather, it belongs to the Lord.

**Apply the Word**

God’s Word reminds us to abstain from seeking vengeance, and instead pursue peace. We are to love, care, and show generosity. When we leave vengeance to the Lord, we can better follow His leading. Are there people whom you need to approach with a more charitable attitude?

### Pray with Us

Praise the Lord! His grace is not limited, and we can extend it to those around us. Our freedom and forgiveness in Christ enable us to extend love and generosity to others.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/15/20

# Treasure the Moments

 **Read:** [**Ecclesiastes 3:1–14**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eccles%203.1%E2%80%9314)

### A Time for Everything

3 There is a time for everything,  
    and a season for every activity under the heavens:

2    a time to be born and a time to die,  
    a time to plant and a time to uproot,  
3    a time to kill and a time to heal,  
    a time to tear down and a time to build,  
4    a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
    a time to mourn and a time to dance,  
5    a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
    a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,  
6    a time to search and a time to give up,  
    a time to keep and a time to throw away,  
7    a time to tear and a time to mend,  
    a time to be silent and a time to speak,  
8    a time to love and a time to hate,  
    a time for war and a time for peace.

9What do workers gain from their toil? 10I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. 11He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiastes+3%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-17371a)] no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. 12I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. 13That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God. 14I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that people will fear him.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Ecclesiastes 3:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiastes+3%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-17371) Or also placed ignorance in the human heart, so that

[God] has made everything beautiful in its time. [Ecclesiastes 3:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eccles%203.11)

Su Dongpo (also known as Su Shi) was one of China’s greatest poets and essayists. While in exile and gazing upon a full moon, he wrote a poem to describe how much he missed his brother. “We rejoice and grieve, gather and leave, while the moon waxes and wanes. Since times of old, nothing remains perfect,” he writes. “May our loved ones live long, beholding this beautiful scene together though thousands of miles apart.”

His poem carries themes found in the book of Ecclesiastes. The author, known as the Teacher (1:1), observed that there’s “a time to weep and a time to laugh . . . a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing” (3:4–5). By pairing two contrasting activities, the Teacher, like Su Dongpo, seems to suggest that all good things must inevitably come to an end.

As Su Dongpo saw the waxing and waning of the moon as another sign that nothing remains perfect, the Teacher also saw in creation God’s providential ordering of the world He’d made. God oversees the course of events, and “He has made everything beautiful in its time” (v. 11).

Life may be unpredictable and sometimes filled with painful separations, but we can take heart that everything takes place under God’s gaze. We can enjoy life and treasure the moments—the good and the bad—for our loving God is with us.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What are some things you’re afraid to try because of life’s unpredictability? How can you lean on Jesus as you step forward in courage to forge new friendships and deepen relationships?

Thank You, loving Father, for watching over all seasons of my life. Help me to trust in You and enjoy the life You’ve given me.

#### Insight

The book of Ecclesiastes is a book for a postmodern world. The “Preacher,” whom many believe was Solomon, speaks of the frustrations and disappointments of life. Two key phrases in the book are “everything is meaningless” (1:1) and “under the sun” (v. 3). The phrase “everything is meaningless” speaks of life lived on human terms and according to the values of this world, which is described by the phrase “under the sun.” In the end, the Preacher says that the answer to this meaninglessness is to look beyond this world and “remember your Creator” (12:1), who is the only source of true meaning in this life.

To learn more about the book of Ecclesiastes, visit [go.odb.org/Ecclesiastes.](https://go.odb.org/Ecclesiastes.)

# God Calling – 7/15/20

# Songs on the Way

Many of My disciples have had to stay on in the dark, alone and friendless.

They struggled on, singing as they went.

For you, too, there must be songs on the way.  Should I plant your feet on an insecure ladder?  Its supports may be out of your sight, hidden in my secret Place of the Most High, but if I have asked you to step on and up firmly -- then surely have I secured your ladder.

Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.  Psalm 32:7

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/16/20

# The Concept of Divine Control



…how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! —[Matthew 7:11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+7%3A11)

Jesus is laying down the rules of conduct in this passage for those people who have His Spirit. He urges us to keep our minds filled with the concept of God’s control over everything, which means that a disciple must maintain an attitude of perfect trust and an eagerness to ask and to seek.

Fill your mind with the thought that God is there. And once your mind is truly filled with that thought, when you experience difficulties it will be as easy as breathing for you to remember, “My heavenly Father knows all about this!” This will be no effort at all, but will be a natural thing for you when difficulties and uncertainties arise. Before you formed this concept of divine control so powerfully in your mind, you used to go from person to person seeking help, but now you go to God about it. Jesus is laying down the rules of conduct for those people who have His Spirit, and it works on the following principle: God is my Father, He loves me, and I will never think of anything that He will forget, so why should I worry?

Jesus said there are times when God cannot lift the darkness from you, but you should trust Him. At times God will appear like an unkind friend, but He is not; He will appear like an unnatural father, but He is not; He will appear like an unjust judge, but He is not. Keep the thought that the mind of God is behind all things strong and growing. Not even the smallest detail of life happens unless God’s will is behind it. Therefore, you can rest in perfect confidence in Him. Prayer is not only asking, but is an attitude of the mind which produces the atmosphere in which asking is perfectly natural. “Ask, and it will be given to you…” ([Matthew 7:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+7:7)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We are not to preach the doing of good things; good deeds are not to be preached, they are to be performed. [So Send I You](http://www.dhp.org/Products/So-Send-I-You-emandem-Workmen-of-God__9741.aspx)

# CCEL – 7/16/20

Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.—[EXO. 19:6.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.19.html" \l "Exod.19.6)

Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.—Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God.—Priests of God and of Christ.

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.—By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

[Rev. 5:9,10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.5.html" \l "Rev.5.9). -[I Pet. 2:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.9).[Isa. 61:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.61.html" \l "Isa.61.6). -[Rev. 20:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.20.html" \l "Rev.20.6).[Heb. 3:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.3.html" \l "Heb.3.1). -[Heb. 13:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.15).[Eph. 2:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.10). -[I Cor. 3:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.3.html" \l "iCor.3.17).

“They gathered manna every morning.” [Exodus 16:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.16.html" \l "Exod.16.21)

Labour to maintain a sense of thine entire dependence upon the Lord’s good will and pleasure for the continuance of thy richest enjoyments. Never try to live on the old manna, nor seek to find help in Egypt. All must come from Jesus, or thou art undone forever. Old anointings will not suffice to impart unction to thy spirit; thine head must have fresh oil poured upon it from the golden horn of the sanctuary, or it will cease from its glory. To-day thou mayest be upon the summit of the mount of God, but he who has put thee there must keep thee there, or thou wilt sink far more speedily than thou dreamest. Thy mountain only stands firm when he settles it in its place; if he hide his face, thou wilt soon be troubled. If the Saviour should see fit, there is not a window through which thou seest the light of heaven which he could not darken in an instant. Joshua bade the sun stand still, but Jesus can shroud it in total darkness. He can withdraw the joy of thine heart, the light of thine eyes, and the strength of thy life; in his hand thy comforts lie, and at his will they can depart from thee. This hourly dependence our Lord is determined that we shall feel and recognize, for he only permits us to pray for “daily bread,” and only promises that “as our days our strength shall be.” Is it not best for us that it should be so, that we may often repair to his throne, and constantly be reminded of his love? Oh! how rich the grace which supplies us so continually, and doth not refrain itself because of our ingratitude! The golden shower never ceases, the cloud of blessing tarries evermore above our habitation. O Lord Jesus, we would bow at thy feet, conscious of our utter inability to do anything without thee, and in every favour which we are privileged to receive, we would adore thy blessed name and acknowledge thine unexhausted love.

# Word Live – 7/16/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/16/20

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 7/16/20

# Listen to the Lord

**Read:** [**Joshua 8:1–29**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+8%3a1%e2%80%9329)

### Ai Destroyed

8 Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai. For I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land. 2You shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king, except that you may carry off their plunder and livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the city.”

3So Joshua and the whole army moved out to attack Ai. He chose thirty thousand of his best fighting men and sent them out at night 4with these orders: “Listen carefully. You are to set an ambush behind the city. Don’t go very far from it. All of you be on the alert. 5I and all those with me will advance on the city, and when the men come out against us, as they did before, we will flee from them. 6They will pursue us until we have lured them away from the city, for they will say, ‘They are running away from us as they did before.’ So when we flee from them, 7you are to rise up from ambush and take the city. The Lord your God will give it into your hand. 8When you have taken the city, set it on fire. Do what the Lord has commanded. See to it; you have my orders.”

9Then Joshua sent them off, and they went to the place of ambush and lay in wait between Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai—but Joshua spent that night with the people.

10Early the next morning Joshua mustered his army, and he and the leaders of Israel marched before them to Ai. 11The entire force that was with him marched up and approached the city and arrived in front of it. They set up camp north of Ai, with the valley between them and the city. 12Joshua had taken about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the city. 13So the soldiers took up their positions—with the main camp to the north of the city and the ambush to the west of it. That night Joshua went into the valley.

14When the king of Ai saw this, he and all the men of the city hurried out early in the morning to meet Israel in battle at a certain place overlooking the Arabah. But he did not know that an ambush had been set against him behind the city. 15Joshua and all Israel let themselves be driven back before them, and they fled toward the wilderness. 16All the men of Ai were called to pursue them, and they pursued Joshua and were lured away from the city. 17Not a man remained in Ai or Bethel who did not go after Israel. They left the city open and went in pursuit of Israel.

18Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Hold out toward Ai the javelin that is in your hand, for into your hand I will deliver the city.” So Joshua held out toward the city the javelin that was in his hand. 19As soon as he did this, the men in the ambush rose quickly from their position and rushed forward. They entered the city and captured it and quickly set it on fire.

20The men of Ai looked back and saw the smoke of the city rising up into the sky, but they had no chance to escape in any direction; the Israelites who had been fleeing toward the wilderness had turned back against their pursuers. 21For when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that smoke was going up from it, they turned around and attacked the men of Ai. 22Those in the ambush also came out of the city against them, so that they were caught in the middle, with Israelites on both sides. Israel cut them down, leaving them neither survivors nor fugitives. 23But they took the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

24When Israel had finished killing all the men of Ai in the fields and in the wilderness where they had chased them, and when every one of them had been put to the sword, all the Israelites returned to Ai and killed those who were in it. 25Twelve thousand men and women fell that day—all the people of Ai. 26For Joshua did not draw back the hand that held out his javelin until he had destroyed[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+8%3a1%e2%80%9329#fen-NIV-6029a)] all who lived in Ai. 27But Israel did carry off for themselves the livestock and plunder of this city, as the Lord had instructed Joshua.

28So Joshua burned Ai[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+8%3a1%e2%80%9329#fen-NIV-6031b)] and made it a permanent heap of ruins, a desolate place to this day. 29He impaled the body of the king of Ai on a pole and left it there until evening. At sunset, Joshua ordered them to take the body from the pole and throw it down at the entrance of the city gate. And they raised a large pile of rocks over it, which remains to this day.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Joshua 8:26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+8%3a1%e2%80%9329#en-NIV-6029) The Hebrew term refers to the irrevocable giving over of things or persons to the Lord, often by totally destroying them.
2. [Joshua 8:28](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+8%3a1%e2%80%9329#en-NIV-6031) Ai means the ruin.

Have you ever noticed that a few moments after someone speaks you’ve already forgotten what they said? Relationship counselors often recommend a practice called “active listening” where one person repeats back what someone else has said to them. This ensures the speaker that the recipient has not only heard, but also clearly understood the intended message. As believers, we may sometimes struggle to listen well to God.

But whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm. Proverbs 1:33

The battle of Ai has similarities and differences to the battle of Jericho and the two are meant to be compared and contrasted. First, we can contrast their military approaches. At the battle of Ai, the Lord commanded Joshua to plan an ambush. They would trick the people by luring them from their city. Once they were vulnerable, 5,000 Israelite soldiers would conquer the city. This is a stark contrast to Jericho, where the Israelite army was exposed in broad daylight. Their first line of offense? Priests blowing trumpets! Another notable difference was the approval by the Lord to take possession of the plunder and livestock in Ai. At Jericho they were to destroy everything.

There are similarities in both narratives as well. In both cases the Lord declared that He had already delivered the opposition into the Israelites’ hands. Before any sword was lifted, the battle was already won. Yahweh clearly demonstrated that when His people listen and obey His commands, He will fulfill His promises. The point the Lord was making to Joshua, the Israelites, as well as future generations was that in order to take possession of the Promised Land, they must listen to and obey the Lord’s commands. Blessings and curses came for doing or not doing what the Lord commanded them to do.

**Apply the Word**

Perhaps we miss the Lord’s victories in our lives because we fail to listen and obey. Today, take time to listen for God’s leading. This means taking time to be quiet before Him, reading His Word, and listening to what He presses on your heart.

### Pray with Us

Lord, make us active listeners of your voice and active doers of your Word! Help us remember the message to Joshua and the Israelites in today’s passage: to gain a victory, we have to listen and obey.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/16/20

# Costly Joy

 **Read:** [**Matthew 13:44–46**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2013.44%E2%80%9346)

### The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

44“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

45“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

When a man found it, he . . . went and sold all he had and bought that field. [Matthew 13:44](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2013.44)

At the sound of the digital melody, all six of us sprang into action. Some slipped shoes on, others simply bolted for the door barefoot. Within seconds we were all sprinting down the driveway chasing the ice cream truck. It was the first warm day of summer, and there was no better way to celebrate than with a cold, sweet treat! There are things we do simply because of the joy it brings us, not out of discipline or obligation.

In the pair of parables found in [Matthew 13:44–46](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2013.44%E2%80%9346), the emphasis is selling everything to gain something else. We might think the stories are about sacrifice. But that’s not the point. In fact, the first story declares it was “joy” that led the man to sell everything and buy the field. Joy drives change—not guilt or duty.

Jesus isn’t one segment of our lives; His claims on us are total. Both men in the stories “sold all” (v. 44). But here’s the best part: the result of this selling of everything is actually gain. We may not have guessed that. Isn’t life in Christ about taking up your cross? Yes. It is. But when we die, we live; when we lose our life, we find it. When we “sell all,” we gain the greatest treasure: Jesus! Joy is the reason; surrender is the response. The treasure of knowing Jesus is the reward.

By:  [Glenn Packiam](https://odb.org/author/glennpackiam/)

#### Reflect & Pray

How have you experienced joy in your relationship with Jesus? What is He inviting you to surrender to Him?

Dear Jesus, open my eyes to see the treasure that You are! Direct my heart to You as the source of true and unfailing joy, and let me ever be fixed on You. Grant me the grace to surrender all to You.

#### Insight

The eight parables Jesus taught in [Matthew 13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2013) are collectively known as “kingdom” parables because they mostly begin with the characteristic phrase “the kingdom of heaven is like” (vv. 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47, 52). These parables also unveil a profound truth concerning “the secrets (Greek, mystērion) of the kingdom of heaven” (13:11). In the New Testament the word mystērion or mysteries is used to denote biblical truths which are now known to us only because God in His grace and with Jesus’ coming has been pleased to reveal them to us through the Holy Spirit ([Daniel 2:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%202.18), [27–28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Daniel%202.27%E2%80%9328), [47](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Daniel%202.47); [Romans 16:25–26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2016.25%E2%80%9326); [Ephesians 1:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%201.9); [3:3–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ephesians%203.3%E2%80%936); [Colossians 1:25–27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.25%E2%80%9327); [2:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Colossians%202.2)).

# God Calling – 7/16/20

# Refuge

Know My Divine Power. Trust in Me. Dwell in My Love. Laugh and trust. Laughter is a child's faith in God and good.

Seek safety in My Secret Place.

You cannot be touched or harmed there. That is sure.

Really feel as if you were in a strong Tower, strongly guarded, and against which nothing can prevail.

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me. Psalm 27:5

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/17/20

# The Miracle of Belief



My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom… —[1 Corinthians 2:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Corinthians+2%3A4)

Paul was a scholar and an orator of the highest degree; he was not speaking here out of a deep sense of humility, but was saying that when he preached the gospel, he would veil the power of God if he impressed people with the excellency of his speech. Belief in Jesus is a miracle produced only by the effectiveness of redemption, not by impressive speech, nor by wooing and persuading, but only by the sheer unaided power of God. The creative power of redemption comes through the preaching of the gospel, but never because of the personality of the preacher.

Real and effective fasting by a preacher is not fasting from food, but fasting from eloquence, from impressive diction, and from everything else that might hinder the gospel of God being presented. The preacher is there as the representative of God— “…as though God were pleading through us…” ([2 Corinthians 5:20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5:20)). He is there to present the gospel of God. If it is only because of my preaching that people desire to be better, they will never get close to Jesus Christ. Anything that flatters me in my preaching of the gospel will result in making me a traitor to Jesus, and I prevent the creative power of His redemption from doing its work.

“And I, if I am lifted up…, will draw all peoples to Myself” ([John 12:32](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+12:32)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The great word of Jesus to His disciples is Abandon. When God has brought us into the relationship of disciples, we have to venture on His word; trust entirely to Him and watch that when He brings us to the venture, we take it.  Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, 1459 R

# CCEL – 7/17/20

Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil—[JON. 4:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jonah.4.html" \l "Jonah.4.2)

I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.—Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.—We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for we have sinned against thee.

If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

[Num. 14:17,18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.14.html" \l "Num.14.17).[Psa. 79:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.79.html" \l "Ps.79.8). -[Jer. 14:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.14.html" \l "Jer.14.7). -[Jer. 14:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.14.html" \l "Jer.14.20).[Psa. 130:3,4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.130.html" \l "Ps.130.3).

“Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.” **[1 Thessalonians 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.1.html" \l "iThess.1.4)**

Many persons want to know their election before they look to Christ, but they cannot learn it thus, it is only to be discovered by “looking unto Jesus.” If you desire to ascertain your own election;—after the following manner, shall you assure your heart before God. Do you feel yourself to be a lost, guilty sinner? go straightway to the cross of Christ, and tell Jesus so, and tell him that you have read in the Bible, “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” Tell him that he has said, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” Look to Jesus and believe on him, and you shall make proof of your election directly, for so surely as thou believest, thou art elect. If you will give yourself wholly up to Christ and trust him, then you are one of God’s chosen ones; but if you stop and say, “I want to know first whether I am elect,” you ask you know not what. Go to Jesus, be you never so guilty, just as you are. Leave all curious inquiry about election alone. Go straight to Christ and hide in his wounds, and you shall know your election. The assurance of the Holy Spirit shall be given to you, so that you shall be able to say, “I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him.” Christ was at the everlasting council: he can tell you whether you were chosen or not; but you cannot find it out in any other way. Go and put your trust in him, and his answer will be—“I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.” There will be no doubt about his having chosen you, when you have chosen him.

“Sons we are through God’s election,

Who in Jesus Christ believe.”

# Word Live – 7/17/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/17/20

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 7/17/20

# Renewing a Covenant

**Read:** [**Joshua 8:30–34**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+8%3a30%e2%80%9334)

### The Covenant Renewed at Mount Ebal

30Then Joshua built on Mount Ebal an altar to the Lord, the God of Israel, 31as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded the Israelites. He built it according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses—an altar of uncut stones, on which no iron tool had been used. On it they offered to the Lord burnt offerings and sacrificed fellowship offerings. 32There, in the presence of the Israelites, Joshua wrote on stones a copy of the law of Moses. 33All the Israelites, with their elders, officials and judges, were standing on both sides of the ark of the covenant of the Lord, facing the Levitical priests who carried it. Both the foreigners living among them and the native-born were there. Half of the people stood in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord had formerly commanded when he gave instructions to bless the people of Israel.

34Afterward, Joshua read all the words of the law—the blessings and the curses—just as it is written in the Book of the Law.

Many married couples choose to renew their wedding vows. Some do this to celebrate a milestone in their relationship, others to let their friends and family know they would get married again in a heartbeat. Still, others reaffirm vows after successfully surviving a rough period. Whatever the reason, the renewal helps the couple reflect on the past and dream about the future. In essence, the act makes the relationship stronger.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

Our text today is the culmination of chapters 7 and 8. Tensions arose after the Ai attack. It was discovered that the defeat of the Israelites was a result of Achan’s sin. Starting afresh, Joshua and the Israelites ambushed Ai and made the city a permanent heap of ruins (v. 28). Therefore, after these two campaigns and internal conflict, God’s people renewed their commitment to the Lord.

Joshua built an altar to the Lord (v. 30) and presented offerings (v. 31). He wrote on stone copy of the law of Moses, reminding the Israelites, that they were not lawless people like those they had just defeated. Rather, they were a nation dictated and judged by God’s Rule of Law. Joshua proceeded to read the words of the Law to all in attendance. This act was significant because it demonstrated the importance of the Pentateuch, also known as the first five books of the Old Testament. Ultimately, Joshua was renewing the covenant he and the people had with Yahweh. The Lord would be their God and they would be His people. The renewed contract made their relationship with God stronger than ever.

**Apply the Word**

What commitments do you need to renew? A friendship? A family relationship? Perhaps your relationship with the Lord needs to be restored? A great place to start is by reading Scripture. Allow God’s Word to guide you and give you the wisdom and patience you need.

### Pray with Us

Is God calling you to a greater commitment to Him and His Word? Ask Him to show you how you can walk closer to Him, love Him more, and be a worthy witness to the gospel.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/17/20

# Light in the Dark

 **Read:** [**Psalm 18:28–36**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2018.28%E2%80%9336)

28You, Lord, keep my lamp burning;  
    my God turns my darkness into light.  
29With your help I can advance against a troop[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+18%3A28%E2%80%9336+%2C+46%E2%80%9349&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14148a)];  
    with my God I can scale a wall.

30As for God, his way is perfect:  
    The Lord’s word is flawless;  
    he shields all who take refuge in him.  
31For who is God besides the Lord?  
    And who is the Rock except our God?  
32It is God who arms me with strength  
    and keeps my way secure.  
33He makes my feet like the feet of a deer;  
    he causes me to stand on the heights.  
34He trains my hands for battle;  
    my arms can bend a bow of bronze.  
35You make your saving help my shield,  
    and your right hand sustains me;  
    your help has made me great.  
36You provide a broad path for my feet,  
    so that my ankles do not give way.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Psalm 18:29](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+18%3A28%E2%80%9336+%2C+46%E2%80%9349&version=NIV#en-NIV-14148) Or can run through a barricade

**Read:** [**Psalm 18:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2018.28%E2%80%9336)[**46–49**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalm%2018.46%E2%80%9349)

46The Lord lives! Praise be to my Rock!  
    Exalted be God my Savior!  
47He is the God who avenges me,  
    who subdues nations under me,  
48    who saves me from my enemies.  
You exalted me above my foes;  
    from a violent man you rescued me.  
49Therefore I will praise you, Lord, among the nations;  
    I will sing the praises of your name.

You, Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light. [Psalm 18:28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2018.28)

A severe thunderstorm passed through our new town, leaving high humidity and dark skies in its wake. I took our dog, Callie, for an evening stroll. The mounting challenges of my family’s cross-country move grew heavier on my mind. Frustrated by the countless ways things had strayed so far from our high hopes and expectations, I slowed to let Callie sniff the grass. I listened to the creek that runs beside our house. Tiny lights flashed on and off while hovering over the patches of wildflowers climbing up the creek’s bank. Fireflies.

The Lord wrapped me in peace as I watched the blinking lights cutting through the darkness. I thought of the psalmist David singing, “You, Lord, keep my lamp burning” ([Psalm 18:28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2018.28)). Proclaiming that God turns his darkness into light, David demonstrated confident faith in the Lord’s provision and protection (vv. 29–30). With God’s strength, he could handle anything that came his way (vv. 32–35). Trusting the living Lord to be with him through all circumstances, David promised to praise Him among the nations and sing the praises of His name (vv. 36–49).

Whether we’re enduring the unpredictable storms in life or enjoying the stillness after the rains have passed, the peace of God’s constant presence lights our way through the darkness. Our living God will always be our strength, our refuge, our sustainer, and our deliverer.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What verses help you trust God’s constant presence? How can relying on God’s sovereign goodness help you walk through storms with confident faith?

Father, please help me trust Your goodness and love even when I sometimes can’t see You in the dark circumstances in life.

#### Insight

[Psalm 18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2018) seems to be a song of retrospective understanding. In many of David’s psalms we find him being pursued and hunted, first by Saul and later by Absalom. During those times of flight and danger, David sometimes questioned God’s faithfulness, love, and care—wondering why God didn’t intervene on his behalf. In [Psalm 18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2018), however, we see a more reflective David. He looked back on his journey and saw continuous evidence of the presence and protection of God along the way (vv. 1–3, 16–19, 25–29, 35–36, 47–50)—even in the seasons of life where that evidence seemed scarce. Now, looking back, David affirmed what he’d questioned—the faithfulness of God.

# God Calling – 7/17/20

# Peace Be Still

Rejoice, rejoice. I have much to teach you both. Think not that I withhold My Presence when I do not reveal more of My Truth to you.

You are passing through a storm. Enough that I am with you to say "Peace be still," to quiet both winds and waves.

It was on the quiet mountain slopes that I taught My disciples the Truths of My Kingdom, not during the storm. So with you, the time of the mountain slopes will come, and you shall rest with Me and learn.

And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and   
rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. Matthew 8:26

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/18/20

# The Mystery of Believing



He said, "Who are You, Lord?" —[Acts 9:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Acts+9%3A5)

Through the miracle of redemption, Saul of Tarsus was instantly changed from a strong-willed and forceful Pharisee into a humble and devoted bondservant of the Lord Jesus.

There is nothing miraculous or mysterious about the things we can explain. We control what we are able to explain, consequently it is only natural to seek an explanation for everything. It is not natural to obey, yet it is not necessarily sinful to disobey. There can be no real disobedience, nor any moral virtue in obedience, unless a person recognizes the higher authority of the one giving the orders. If this recognition does not exist, even the one giving the orders may view the other person’s disobedience as freedom. If one rules another by saying, “You must do this,” and, “You will do that,” he breaks the human spirit, making it unfit for God. A person is simply a slave for obeying, unless behind his obedience is the recognition of a holy God.

Many people begin coming to God once they stop being religious, because there is only one master of the human heart— Jesus Christ, not religion. But “Woe is me” if after seeing Him I still will not obey ([Isaiah 6:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+6:5) , also see [Isaiah 6:1](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+6:1)). Jesus will never insist that I obey, but if I don’t,I have already begun to sign the death certificate of the Son of God in my soul. When I stand face to face with Jesus Christ and say, “I will not obey,” He will never insist. But when I do this, I am backing away from the recreating power of His redemption. It makes no difference to God’s grace what an abomination I am, if I will only come to the light. But “Woe is me” if I refuse the light (see [John 3:19-21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3:19-21)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Am I getting nobler, better, more helpful, more humble, as I get older? Am I exhibiting the life that men take knowledge of as having been with Jesus, or am I getting more self-assertive, more deliberately determined to have my own way? It is a great thing to tell yourself the truth.  
The Place of Help

# CCEL – 7/18/20

**He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.**—[JOHN 10:3.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.3)

The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.—Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you . . . depart from me, ye that work iniquity.—The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.—Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm.—The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

[II Tim. 2:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.2.html" \l "iiTim.2.19). -[Matt. 7:22,23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.7.html" \l "Matt.7.22). -[Psa. 1:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.1.html" \l "Ps.1.6).[Isa. 49:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.49.html" \l "Isa.49.16). -[Song 8:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.8.html" \l "Song.8.6). -[Nah. 1:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Nah.1.html" \l "Nah.1.7).[John 14:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.2).

“They shall go hindmost with their standards.” **[Numbers 2:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.2.html" \l "Num.2.31)**

The camp of Dan brought up the rear when the armies of Israel were on the march. The Danites occupied the hindmost place, but what mattered the position, since they were as truly part of the host as were the foremost tribes; they followed the same fiery cloudy pillar, they ate of the same manna, drank of the same spiritual rock, and journeyed to the same inheritance. Come, my heart, cheer up, though last and least; it is thy privilege to be in the army, and to fare as they fare who lead the van. Some one must be hindmost in honour and esteem, some one must do menial work for Jesus, and why should not I? In a poor village, among an ignorant peasantry; or in a back street, among degraded sinners, I will work on, and “go hindmost with my standard.”

The Danites occupied a very useful place. Stragglers have to be picked up upon the march, and lost property has to be gathered from the field. Fiery spirits may dash forward over untrodden paths to learn fresh truth, and win more souls to Jesus; but some of a more conservative spirit may be well engaged in reminding the church of her ancient faith, and restoring her fainting sons. Every position has its duties, and the slowly moving children of God will find their peculiar state one in which they may be eminently a blessing to the whole host.

The rear guard is a place of danger. There are foes behind us as well as before us. Attacks may come from any quarter. We read that Amalek fell upon Israel, and slew some of the hindmost of them. The experienced Christian will find much work for his weapons in aiding those poor doubting, desponding, wavering, souls, who are hindmost in faith, knowledge, and joy. These must not be left unaided, and therefore be it the business of well-taught saints to bear their standards among the hindmost. My soul, do thou tenderly watch to help the hindmost this day.

# Word Live – 7/18/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/18/20

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 7/18/20

# Deceitful Neighbors

**Read:** [**Joshua 9:1–27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+9%3a1%e2%80%9327)

### The Gibeonite Deception

9 Now when all the kings west of the Jordan heard about these things—the kings in the hill country, in the western foothills, and along the entire coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far as Lebanon (the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites)— 2they came together to wage war against Joshua and Israel.

3However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, 4they resorted to a ruse: They went as a delegation whose donkeys were loaded[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+9%3a1%e2%80%9327#fen-NIV-6042a)] with worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended. 5They put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes. All the bread of their food supply was dry and moldy. 6Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the Israelites, “We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us.”

7The Israelites said to the Hivites, “But perhaps you live near us, so how can we make a treaty with you?”

8“We are your servants,” they said to Joshua.

But Joshua asked, “Who are you and where do you come from?”

9They answered: “Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the fame of the Lord your God. For we have heard reports of him: all that he did in Egypt, 10and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan—Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth. 11And our elders and all those living in our country said to us, ‘Take provisions for your journey; go and meet them and say to them, “We are your servants; make a treaty with us.”’ 12This bread of ours was warm when we packed it at home on the day we left to come to you. But now see how dry and moldy it is. 13And these wineskins that we filled were new, but see how cracked they are. And our clothes and sandals are worn out by the very long journey.”

14The Israelites sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord. 15Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.

16Three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were neighbors, living near them. 17So the Israelites set out and on the third day came to their cities: Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath Jearim. 18But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the assembly had sworn an oath to them by the Lord, the God of Israel.

The whole assembly grumbled against the leaders, 19but all the leaders answered, “We have given them our oath by the Lord, the God of Israel, and we cannot touch them now. 20This is what we will do to them: We will let them live, so that God’s wrath will not fall on us for breaking the oath we swore to them.” 21They continued, “Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers in the service of the whole assembly.” So the leaders’ promise to them was kept.

22Then Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said, “Why did you deceive us by saying, ‘We live a long way from you,’ while actually you live near us? 23You are now under a curse: You will never be released from service as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God.”

24They answered Joshua, “Your servants were clearly told how the Lord your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you the whole land and to wipe out all its inhabitants from before you. So we feared for our lives because of you, and that is why we did this. 25We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you.”

26So Joshua saved them from the Israelites, and they did not kill them. 27That day he made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for the assembly, to provide for the needs of the altar of the Lord at the place the Lord would choose. And that is what they are to this day.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Joshua 9:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+9%3a1%e2%80%9327#en-NIV-6042) Most Hebrew manuscripts; some Hebrew manuscripts, Vulgate and Syriac (see also Septuagint) They prepared provisions and loaded their donkeys

Have you received an email saying you’ve received a great inheritance? All you need to do, says the sender, is click this link and enter your bank account information. Savvy people know it’s a scam. The sender wants to steal from you. These popular online deceptions may be easier to spot than deceitful acts which occur in personal relationships.

Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another. Leviticus 19:11

While Joshua was preparing his troops for battle, delegates from Gibeon seeking a peace treaty caught him off guard. Notice the carefully planned details of their deception: “worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended,” “worn and patched” sandals, and “dry and moldy” bread (vv. 3–5). At first, their request seemed reasonable. They tricked Joshua and the Israelites into thinking they were from a faraway country instead of revealing their true identity as close neighbors (vv. 7–15).

When the Israelites realized they had been duped, they faced a conundrum. Should they attack the Gibeonites? Or should they honor their commitment even though it was made under a false pretense? Joshua’s inexperience as a leader was on display. But he was a quick learner and refused to attack the Gibeonites. He kept his treaty with a condition that they serve the Israelites. This chapter presents a lesson Joshua learned on his quest: God would keep His promise and so should His people.

There are several occasions when the Lord had every right to turn His back on His people or annihilate them altogether. However, Yahweh had made a commitment to the people of Israel and was steadfast in honoring His promises. The lesson Joshua learned is one we need to learn as well: God keeps His promise and so should we.

**Apply the Word**

As Christ-followers, we are not to be deceptive, but people who are true to our word. God keeps His promises, and so should we! Consider how you can live in light of today’s lesson. Let’s make commitments carefully and honor our promises.

### Pray with Us

The deceitfulness of the Gibeonites is a sobering reminder that Christ-followers have to be true to our word and follow God’s Word. Lord, help us stay faithful and truthful even in the most challenging times.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/18/20

# When the Splendor Is Gone

 **Read:** [**Lamentations 3:13–24**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203.13%E2%80%9324)

13He pierced my heart  
    with arrows from his quiver.  
14I became the laughingstock of all my people;  
    they mock me in song all day long.  
15He has filled me with bitter herbs  
    and given me gall to drink.

16He has broken my teeth with gravel;  
    he has trampled me in the dust.  
17I have been deprived of peace;  
    I have forgotten what prosperity is.  
18So I say, “My splendor is gone  
    and all that I had hoped from the Lord.”

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

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

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

I can never recapture the splendor that was our daughter Melissa. Fading from my memory are those wonderful times when we watched her joyfully playing high school volleyball. And it’s sometimes hard to remember the shy smile of contentment that crossed her face when we were doing family activities. Her death at age seventeen dropped a curtain on the joy of her presence.

In the book of Lamentations, Jeremiah’s words show he understood that the heart can be punctured. “My splendor is gone,” he said, “and all that I had hoped from the Lord” (3:18). His situation was far different from yours and mine. He had preached God’s judgment, and he saw Jerusalem defeated. The splendor was gone because he felt defeated (v. 12), isolated (v. 14), and abandoned by God (vv. 15–20).

But that’s not the end of his story. Light shined through. Jeremiah, burdened and broken, stammered out “I have hope” (v. 21)—hope that comes from realizing that “because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed” (v. 22). And here is just what we need to remember when the splendor is gone: God’s “compassions never fail. They are new every morning” (vv. 22–23).

Even in our darkest days, God’s great faithfulness shines through.

By:  [Dave Branon](https://odb.org/author/davebranon/)

#### Reflect & Pray

How has God encouraged you when you felt hopeless? How might He want you to use that to encourage others?

Thank You, Father, that You’re the God of compassion. Even while I walk through the valley of darkness, morning will follow as I remember Your compassion and Your faithfulness.

#### Insight

[Lamentations 3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lam%203) is a bit puzzling. The writer, the prophet Jeremiah, spends a considerable amount of time describing his afflictions: abandonment, broken bones, bitterness, hardship, ridicule. In verse 1 he makes it clear that he feels God is the source of his pain, that it’s God who’s caused him to suffer. Yet despite all these afflictions he has hope because of one thing—God’s great love. “Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail” (3:22). This is an incredible affirmation! The man who feels he’s been crushed by God says that he’s not consumed because of His compassion! God’s love can’t be understood by our circumstances alone. His compassion saves us and preserves us, not from all harm but from being completely consumed.

# God Calling – 7/18/20

# Walk Humbly

Fear of what others will say is want of trust in Me. This must not be. Convert all these difficulties into the purification of your characters.

See yourselves as those around you see you, not as you wish to be, and walk very humbly with your God.

I will set you on high because you have known My Name, but it must be a purified you to be so exalted.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Philippians 2:3

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/19/20

# The Submission of the Believer



You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. —[John 13:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+13%3A13)

Our Lord never insists on having authority over us. He never says, “You will submit to me.” No, He leaves us perfectly free to choose— so free, in fact, that we can spit in His face or we can put Him to death, as others have done; and yet He will never say a word. But once His life has been created in me through His redemption, I instantly recognize His right to absolute authority over me. It is a complete and effective domination, in which I acknowledge that “You are worthy, O Lord…” ([Revelation 4:11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+4:11)). It is simply the unworthiness within me that refuses to bow down or to submit to one who is worthy. When I meet someone who is more holy than myself, and I don’t recognize his worthiness, nor obey his instructions for me, it is a sign of my own unworthiness being revealed. God teaches us by using these people who are a little better than we are; not better intellectually, but more holy. And He continues to do so until we willingly submit. Then the whole attitude of our life is one of obedience to Him.

If our Lord insisted on our obedience, He would simply become a taskmaster and cease to have any real authority. He never insists on obedience, but when we truly see Him we will instantly obey Him. Then He is easily Lord of our life, and we live in adoration of Him from morning till night. The level of my growth in grace is revealed by the way I look at obedience. We should have a much higher view of the word obedience, rescuing it from the mire of the world. Obedience is only possible between people who are equals in their relationship to each other; like the relationship between father and son, not that between master and servant. Jesus showed this relationship by saying, “I and My Father are one” ([John 10:30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+10:30)). “…though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” ([Hebrews 5:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+5:8)). The Son was obedient as our Redeemer, because He was the Son, not in order to become God’s Son.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The place for the comforter is not that of one who preaches, but of the comrade who says nothing, but prays to God about the matter. The biggest thing you can do for those who are suffering is not to talk platitudes, not to ask questions, but to get into contact with God, and the “greater works” will be done by prayer (see John 14:12–13).  Baffled to Fight Better, 56 R

# CCEL – 7/19/20

He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.—[LUKE 1:49.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.1.html" \l "Luke.1.49)

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?—Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.—Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy.—Hallowed be thy name

.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.—I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

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, . . . be glory.

[Exo. 15:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.15.html" \l "Exod.15.11). -[Psa. 86:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.86.html" \l "Ps.86.8). -[Rev. 15:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.15.html" \l "Rev.15.4). -[Matt 6:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.9).[Luke 1:68](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.1.html" \l "Luke.1.68).[Isa. 63:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.63.html" \l "Isa.63.1). -[Psa. 89:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.89.html" \l "Ps.89.19).[Eph. 3:20,21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.3.html" \l "Eph.3.20).

“The Lord our God hath shewed us his glory.” **[Deuteronomy 5:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Deut.5.html" \l "Deut.5.24)**

God’s great design in all his works is the manifestation of his own glory. Any aim less than this were unworthy of himself. But how shall the glory of God be manifested to such fallen creatures as we are? Man’s eye is not single, he has ever a side glance towards his own honour, has too high an estimate of his own powers, and so is not qualified to behold the glory of the Lord. It is clear, then, that self must stand out of the way, that there may be room for God to be exalted; and this is the reason why he bringeth his people ofttimes into straits and difficulties, that, being made conscious of their own folly and weakness, they may be fitted to behold the majesty of God when he comes forth to work their deliverance. He whose life is one even and smooth path, will see but little of the glory of the Lord, for he has few occasions of self-emptying, and hence, but little fitness for being filled with the revelation of God. They who navigate little streams and shallow creeks, know but little of the God of tempests; but they who “do business in great waters,” these see his “wonders in the deep.” Among the huge Atlantic-waves of bereavement, poverty, temptation, and reproach, we learn the power of Jehovah, because we feel the littleness of man. Thank God, then, if you have been led by a rough road: it is this which has given you your experience of God’s greatness and lovingkindness. Your troubles have enriched you with a wealth of knowledge to be gained by no other means: your trials have been the cleft of the rock in which Jehovah has set you, as he did his servant Moses, that you might behold his glory as it passed by. Praise God that you have not been left to the darkness and ignorance which continued prosperity might have involved, but that in the great fight of affliction, you have been capacitated for the outshinings of his glory in his wonderful dealings with you.

# Word Live - 7/19/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/19/20

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 7/19/20

# He Fights for You

**Read:** [**Joshua 10:1–15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+10%3a1%e2%80%9315)

### The Sun Stands Still

10 Now Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai and totally destroyed[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+10%3a1%e2%80%9315#fen-NIV-6066a)] it, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and that the people of Gibeon had made a treaty of peace with Israel and had become their allies. 2He and his people were very much alarmed at this, because Gibeon was an important city, like one of the royal cities; it was larger than Ai, and all its men were good fighters. 3So Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem appealed to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish and Debir king of Eglon. 4“Come up and help me attack Gibeon,” he said, “because it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites.”

5Then the five kings of the Amorites—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon—joined forces. They moved up with all their troops and took up positions against Gibeon and attacked it.

6The Gibeonites then sent word to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal: “Do not abandon your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, because all the Amorite kings from the hill country have joined forces against us.”

7So Joshua marched up from Gilgal with his entire army, including all the best fighting men. 8The Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you.”

9After an all-night march from Gilgal, Joshua took them by surprise. 10The Lord threw them into confusion before Israel, so Joshua and the Israelites defeated them completely at Gibeon. Israel pursued them along the road going up to Beth Horon and cut them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah. 11As they fled before Israel on the road down from Beth Horon to Azekah, the Lord hurled large hailstones down on them, and more of them died from the hail than were killed by the swords of the Israelites.

12On the day the Lord gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the Lord in the presence of Israel:

“Sun, stand still over Gibeon,  
    and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon.”  
13So the sun stood still,  
    and the moon stopped,  
    till the nation avenged itself on[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+10%3a1%e2%80%9315#fen-NIV-6078b)] its enemies,

as it is written in the Book of Jashar.

The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. 14There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the Lord listened to a human being. Surely the Lord was fighting for Israel!

15Then Joshua returned with all Israel to the camp at Gilgal.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Joshua 10:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+10%3a1%e2%80%9315#en-NIV-6066) The Hebrew term refers to the irrevocable giving over of things or persons to the Lord, often by totally destroying them; also in verses 28, 35, 37, 39 and 40.
2. [Joshua 10:13](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua+10%3a1%e2%80%9315#en-NIV-6078) Or nation triumphed over

The annual Midnight Sun Game is held in Fairbanks, Alaska, on June 21, the longest day of the year. The game is played through the midnight hour and never uses artificial lights. For residents, it is a way to reflect on the passing year and survival during a long winter. In Joshua’s day, the Israelites experienced their own long day of survival. Thankfully, the Lord was fighting their battle.

Surely the Lord was fighting for Israel! Joshua 10:14

Joshua marched his army all night in order to execute a surprise attack on the king of Jerusalem and his allies. While Joshua was in the lead, Yahweh was in command. This is most evident when the author records the Lord performing two distinct miracles.

The first was when He made the sun and moon stand still so the Israelites could continue their dominance on the battlefield (vv. 12–13). This language is probably not literal but describes the phenomenon from an observer’s point of view. Just as we, for example, often speak of the sun as “rising” and “setting.” The text doesn’t explain how the Lord prolonged the hours of light during the battle, but it demonstrated that the Lord of Lights was in complete control and would fight for His people. This was not a new occurrence! After all, Yahweh had created a pillar of fire in front of Pharaoh so the Israelites could escape Egypt. He held back the waters of the Red Sea, allowing them to escape. He provided food and drink in the midst of their desert journey. Then, outside of Gilgal, He extended the hours of the day, so that the Israelites could continue their quest. Shortly after, He sent hailstones to destroy their enemies. We should never doubt God’s power. The Lord of Lights continues to fight for His people today.

**Apply the Word**

What battles are you fighting today? An argument with family or friends? Anxiety or depression? An unexpected trial? Allow the Lord of Lights to fight for you. Seek His face and His Word. As you go through your day, commit your battles to the Lord, He will get you through it.

### Pray with Us

Thank the Lord that He is fighting our battles for us. Praise Him that, as in ancient times, He fights for His people today. Believe that in Christ the victory is already won.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/19/20

# On Our Hearts

 **Read:** [**Deuteronomy 6:1–9**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%206.1%E2%80%939)

### Love the Lord Your God

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

4Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+6%3A1%E2%80%939&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-5091a" \o "See footnote a)] 5Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Deuteronomy 6:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+6%3A1%E2%80%939&version=NIV#en-NIV-5091) Or The Lord our God is one Lord; or The Lord is our God, the Lord is one; or The Lord is our God, the Lord alone

These commandments . . . are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. [Deuteronomy 6:6–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%206.6%E2%80%937)

After a young boy faced some challenges in school, his dad began to teach him a pledge to recite each morning before school: “I thank God for waking me up today. I am going to school so I can learn . . . and be the leader that God has created me to be.” The pledge is one way the father hopes to help his son apply himself and deal with life’s inevitable challenges.

In a way, by helping his son to commit this pledge to memory, the father is doing something similar to what God commanded the Israelites in the desert: “These commandments . . . are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children” ([Deuteronomy 6:6–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%206.6%E2%80%937)).

After wandering in the wilderness for forty years, the next generation of Israelites was about to enter the Promised Land. God knew it wouldn’t be easy for them to succeed—unless they kept their focus on Him. And so, through Moses, He urged them to remember and be obedient to Him—and to help their children to know and love God by talking about His Word “when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (v. 7).

Each new day, we too can commit to allowing Scripture to guide our hearts and minds as we live in gratitude to Him.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What can you do to keep Scripture on your heart? Why is it important to read and talk about the Word with loved ones?

Dear God, thank You for giving me each new day. Help me to keep Your wisdom in my heart and on my mind.

To learn more about how to study the Bible, visit [christianuniversity.org/sf106.](https://christianuniversity.org/sf106.)

#### Insight

[Deuteronomy 6:4–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%206.4%E2%80%939), known as the Shema, from Hebrew šāmaʽ for “hear” (v. 4), is the basic Jewish confession of faith recited by every devout Jew twice daily to remind them of the first and second commandments ([Exodus 20:2–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2020.2%E2%80%936)). After giving the Ten Commandments ([Deuteronomy 5:1–21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%205.1%E2%80%9321)), Moses gave God’s people the one-heart principle that undergirds the entire Law: “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (6:5). God demands exclusive, wholehearted, and undivided allegiance and devotion. Jesus affirms that loving God with our whole being is “the most important [commandment]” ([Mark 12:29–30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%2012.29%E2%80%9330)), calling it “the first and greatest commandment” ([Matthew 22:36–38](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2022.36%E2%80%9338)). Orthodox Jews carried out the commands of [Deuteronomy 6:8–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%206.8%E2%80%939) literally, placing portions of the Torah (such as the Shema or the Decalogue) in small boxes (mezuzahs) attached to the doorframes of houses, or in phylacteries tied to their arms or foreheads ([Exodus 13:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2013.9), [16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exodus%2013.16); [Deuteronomy 11:18–20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2011.18%E2%80%9320)).

# God Calling – 7/19/20

# Marvelous Happenings

Our Lord, with hearts full of joy we thank Thee for Thy marvelous blessings showered on us today and every day.

I am beside you. Follow in all things My Guiding. Marvels beyond all your imaginings are unfolding. I am your Guide. Joy in that thought. Your Guide and your Friend.

Remember that to Me a miracle is only a natural happening. To My disciples, to My chosen, a miracle is only a natural happening. But it is a natural happening operative through spiritual forces, and therefore the man who works and understands through the senses only, regards it as something contrary to Nature.

Remember too that the natural man is at enmity with God. Realize fully, and pray to realize more and more fully, that there is no wonder too marvelous to be with you an everyday happening, if you are guided and strengthened by Me.

My children, the children of My Kingdom are a peculiar people, set apart, different hopes, and aspirations, and motives, and sense of reward.

You see a marvelous happening (as that today), happening so easily, so simply, so free from all other agency, and you wonder.

My children, listen, this has not happened easily and simply. It has been achieved by hours, days, months of weariness and heartache battled against and overcome, by a steadfast, unflinching desire to conquer self, and to do My Will and live My teachings.

The frets and the worries and the scorn patiently borne mean spiritual Power acquired, operating marvelously.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. Psalm 23:1

# My Utmost for His Highest – 7/20/20

# Dependent on God’s Presence



Those who wait on the Lord…shall walk and not faint. —[Isaiah 40:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Isaiah+40%3A31)

There is no thrill for us in walking, yet it is the test for all of our steady and enduring qualities. To “walk and not faint” is the highest stretch possible as a measure of strength. The word walk is used in the Bible to express the character of a person— “…John…looking at Jesus as He walked…said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God!’ ” (John 1:35-36). There is nothing abstract or obscure in the Bible; everything is vivid and real. God does not say, “Be spiritual,” but He says, “Walk before Me…” ([Genesis 17:1](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+17:1)).

When we are in an unhealthy condition either physically or emotionally, we always look for thrills in life. In our physical life this leads to our efforts to counterfeit the work of the Holy Spirit; in our emotional life it leads to obsessions and to the destruction of our morality; and in our spiritual life, if we insist on pursuing only thrills, on mounting up “with wings like eagles” ([Isaiah 40:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+40:31)), it will result in the destruction of our spirituality.

Having the reality of God’s presence is not dependent on our being in a particular circumstance or place, but is only dependent on our determination to keep the Lord before us continually. Our problems arise when we refuse to place our trust in the reality of His presence. The experience the psalmist speaks of— “We will not fear, even though…” ([Psalm 46:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46:2))— will be ours once we are grounded on the truth of the reality of God’s presence, not just a simple awareness of it, but an understanding of the reality of it. Then we will exclaim, “He has been here all the time!” At critical moments in our lives it is necessary to ask God for guidance, but it should be unnecessary to be constantly saying, “Oh, Lord, direct me in this, and in that.” Of course He will, and in fact, He is doing it already! If our everyday decisions are not according to His will, He will press through them, bringing restraint to our spirit. Then we must be quiet and wait for the direction of His presence.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Sincerity means that the appearance and the reality are exactly the same. Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, 1449 L

# CCEL – 7/20/20

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.—[JOHN 17:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.16)

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.—In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.—That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.

Jesus of Nazareth . . . went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.—As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.—Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

[Isa. 53:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.3). -[John 16:33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html#John.16.33).[Heb. 7:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.7.html" \l "Heb.7.26). -[Phi. 2:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html" \l "Phil.2.15).[Acts 10:38](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.10.html" \l "Acts.10.38). -[Gal. 6:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.6.html" \l "Gal.6.10).[John 1:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.9). -[Matt. 5:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.5.html" \l "Matt.5.14),[16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.5.html" \l "Matt.5.16).

“The earnest of our inheritance.” **[Ephesians 1:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.14)**

Oh! what enlightenment, what joys, what consolation, what delight of heart is experienced by that man who has learned to feed on Jesus, and on Jesus alone. Yet the realization which we have of Christ’s preciousness is, in this life, imperfect at the best. As an old writer says, “'Tis but a taste!” We have tasted “that the Lord is gracious,” but we do not yet know how good and gracious he is, although what we know of his sweetness makes us long for more. We have enjoyed the firstfruits of the Spirit, and they have set us hungering and thirsting for the fulness of the heavenly vintage. We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption. Here we are like Israel in the wilderness, who had but one cluster from Eshcol, there we shall be in the vineyard. Here we see the manna falling small, like coriander seed, but there shall we eat the bread of heaven and the old corn of the kingdom. We are but beginners now in spiritual education; for although we have learned the first letters of the alphabet, we cannot read words yet, much less can we put sentences together; but as one says, “He that has been in heaven but five minutes, knows more than the general assembly of divines on earth.” We have many ungratified desires at present, but soon every wish shall be satisfied; and all our powers shall find the sweetest employment in that eternal world of joy. O Christian, antedate heaven for a few years. Within a very little time thou shalt be rid of all thy trials and thy troubles. Thine eyes now suffused with tears shall weep no longer. Thou shalt gaze in ineffable rapture upon the splendour of him who sits upon the throne. Nay, more, upon his throne shalt thou sit. The triumph of his glory shall be shared by thee; his crown, his joy, his paradise, these shall be thine, and thou shalt be co-heir with him who is the heir of all things.

# Word Live - 7/20/20

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

# Scripture Union – 7/20/20

# <https://scriptureunion.org/encounters/>

# Today in the Word – 7/20/20

# God and Science

**Read:** [**Job 38:2–15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+38%3a2%e2%80%9315)

2“Who is this that obscures my plans  
    with words without knowledge?  
3Brace yourself like a man;  
    I will question you,  
    and you shall answer me.

4“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation?  
    Tell me, if you understand.  
5Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!  
    Who stretched a measuring line across it?  
6On what were its footings set,  
    or who laid its cornerstone—  
7while the morning stars sang together  
    and all the angels[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+38%3a2%e2%80%9315#fen-NIV-13801a)] shouted for joy?

8“Who shut up the sea behind doors  
    when it burst forth from the womb,  
9when I made the clouds its garment  
    and wrapped it in thick darkness,  
10when I fixed limits for it  
    and set its doors and bars in place,  
11when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther;  
    here is where your proud waves halt’?

12“Have you ever given orders to the morning,  
    or shown the dawn its place,  
13that it might take the earth by the edges  
    and shake the wicked out of it?  
14The earth takes shape like clay under a seal;  
    its features stand out like those of a garment.  
15The wicked are denied their light,  
    and their upraised arm is broken.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Job 38:7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+38%3a2%e2%80%9315#en-NIV-13801) Hebrew the sons of God

When you think about God and science, do they seem pitted against one another? Some people wrestle with accepting biblical accounts that seem to go against the natural order of things. They ask questions such as: Was the world created by the spoken word of God? Did a flood cover the entire earth? Why aren’t dinosaurs mentioned in the Bible?

Have you ever given orders to the morning, or shown the dawn its place? Job 38:12

It is helpful to pause from Joshua’s quest to address this sticky issue. In Joshua we have read several accounts that seem to go against natural scientific principles: holding back the Jordan River (3:1–17), the walls of Jericho falling (6:1–27), the sun and the moon standing still (10:12–13), and hailstones thrown from heaven (10:11).

Our text today helps us unpack this seeming contradiction. Job and his friends had been wrestling with the character and nature of God. If you read the earlier portions of Job, you would get the impression that they thought they knew more about God and the world than God did. Finally, God speaks in Job 38:1–18 and declares His power over all creation. He explains the distinctive difference between human understanding and the divine: “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand” (v. 4). Of course, we know that is a rhetorical question. None of us has the ability to understand God.

God asks Job to consider His authority over the natural world. God “laid the earth’s foundation” (v. 4). He placed the sea and the stars and the clouds (vv. 7–9). The Lord is unambiguously clear that He is not in opposition to nature; rather, He is in control of it. While this passage may not answer all of our questions, it helps frame our conversations about God and science.

**Apply the Word**

What are some questions you have about God and the Bible? Our Today in the Word Bible answers team would love to hear from you. Go to [todayintheword.org/connect/](https://www.todayintheword.org/connect/) to submit your questions.

### Pray with Us

Today we invite you to praise God as Creator and Sustainer of all life. He has authority over the natural world, He “laid the earth’s foundation” (Job 38:4), and He has a plan for your life.

## BY Chris Rappazini

# Our Daily Bread – 7/20/20

# How to Wait

**Read:** [**Psalm 27:1–3**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.1%E2%80%933)

#### Of David.

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

2When the wicked advance against me  
    to devour[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+27%3A1%E2%80%933+%2C+7%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-14288a)] me,  
it is my enemies and my foes  
    who will stumble and fall.  
3Though an army besiege me,  
    my heart will not fear;  
though war break out against me,  
    even then I will be confident.

#### Footnotes:

1. [Psalm 27:2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+27%3A1%E2%80%933+%2C+7%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-14288) Or slander

**Read:** [**Psalm 27:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.1%E2%80%933)[**7–14**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalm%2027.7%E2%80%9314)

7Hear my voice when I call, Lord;  
    be merciful to me and answer me.  
8My heart says of you, “Seek his face!”  
    Your face, Lord, I will seek.  
9Do not hide your face from me,  
    do not turn your servant away in anger;  
    you have been my helper.  
Do not reject me or forsake me,  
    God my Savior.  
10Though my father and mother forsake me,  
    the Lord will receive me.  
11Teach me your way, Lord;  
    lead me in a straight path  
    because of my oppressors.  
12Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes,  
    for false witnesses rise up against me,  
    spouting malicious accusations.

13I remain confident of this:  
    I will see the goodness of the Lord  
    in the land of the living.  
14Wait for the Lord;  
    be strong and take heart  
    and wait for the Lord.

Hear my voice when I call, Lord; be merciful to me and answer me. [Psalm 27:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.7)

Frustrated and disappointed with church, seventeen-year-old Trevor began a years-long quest for answers. But nothing he explored seemed to satisfy his longings or answer his questions.

His journey did draw him closer to his parents. Still, he had problems with Christianity. During one discussion, he exclaimed bitterly, “The Bible is full of empty promises.”

Another man faced disappointment and hardship that fueled his doubts. But as David fled from enemies who sought to kill him, his response was not to run from God but to praise Him. “Though war break out against me, even then I will be confident,” he sang ([Psalm 27:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.3)).

Yet David’s poem still hints at doubt. His cry, “Be merciful to me and answer me” (v. 7), sounds like a man with fears and questions. “Do not hide your face from me,” David pleaded. “Do not reject me or forsake me” (v. 9).

David didn’t let his doubts paralyze him, however. Even in those doubts, he declared, “I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (v. 13). Then he addressed his readers: you, me, and the Trevors of this world. “Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (v. 14).

We won’t find fast, simple answers to our huge questions. But we will find—when we wait for Him—a God who can be trusted.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What do you do with your big questions? Where have you seen answers “in the land of the living” ([Psalm 27:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.13)), and where are you still waiting for answers?

Father, melt my heart along with my fears and my anger.

#### Insight

Twice in [Psalm 27:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2027.14) the ancient writer (believed to be David) urges believers in all generations to “wait for the Lord.” The Hebrew word for “wait” is qavah, which variously means “to wait, look for, hope, expect.” This is the word used in [Isaiah 40:31](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2040.31), a well-known Old Testament verse about waiting on God: “But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (nkjv). One Bible scholar describes “wait” as living “in confident, eager suspense. . . . To live with the tensions of promises revealed but not fulfilled. . . . [To wait] with eager longing” (Ortlund, Isaiah: God Saves Sinners).

# God Calling – 7/20/20

# My Standard

Carry out My Commands and leave the result to Me. Do this as obediently and faithfully as you would expect a child to follow out a given rule in the working of a sum, with no question but that, if the working out is done according to commands, the result will be right.

Remember that the commands I have given you have been already worked out by Me in the Spirit World to produce in your case, and in your circumstances, the required result. So follow My rules faithfully.

Realize that herein lies the perfection of Divine Guidance. To follow a rule, laid down, even by earth's wisest, might lead to disaster.

The knowledge of your individual life and character, capability, circumstances, and temptations must be, to some extent, lacking, but to follow My direct Guidance means to carry out instructions given with a full knowledge of you and the required result.

Each individual was meant to walk with Me in this way, to act under Divine control, strengthened by Divine Power.

Have I not taught you to love simplicity? No matter what the world may think, earth's aims and intrigues are not for you. Oh! My children, learn of Me. Simplicity brings rest. True rest and Power.

To the world foolishness, maybe, but to Me a foretaste of Divinity. Never be led by the world's standard. My Standard only is for you.

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:3