# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/2/21

# Have You Felt the Pain Inflicted by the Lord?



He said to him the third time, "…do you love Me?" —[John 21:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+21%3A17)

Have you ever felt the pain, inflicted by the Lord, at the very center of your being, deep down in the most sensitive area of your life? The devil never inflicts pain there, and neither can sin nor human emotions. Nothing can cut through to that part of our being but the Word of God. “Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ ” Yet he was awakened to the fact that at the center of his personal life he was devoted to Jesus. And then he began to see what Jesus’ patient questioning meant. There was not the slightest bit of doubt left in Peter’s mind; he could never be deceived again. And there was no need for an impassioned response; no need for immediate action or an emotional display. It was a revelation to him to realize how much he did love the Lord, and with amazement he simply said, “Lord, You know all things….” Peter began to see how very much he did love Jesus, and there was no need to say, “Look at this or that as proof of my love.” Peter was beginning to discover within himself just how much he really did love the Lord. He discovered that his eyes were so fixed on Jesus Christ that he saw no one else in heaven above or on the earth below. But he did not know it until the probing, hurting questions of the Lord were asked. The Lord’s questions always reveal the true me to myself.

Oh, the wonder of the patient directness and skill of Jesus Christ with Peter! Our Lord never asks questions until the perfect time. Rarely, but probably once in each of our lives, He will back us into a corner where He will hurt us with His piercing questions. Then we will realize that we do love Him far more deeply than our words can ever say.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 3/2/21

**God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.**—[GEN. 41:52.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.41.html" \l "Gen.41.52)

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

Now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.—The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me.

Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

[II Cor. 1:3-5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.1.html" \l "iiCor.1.3).[I Pet. 1:6,7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.6)-[II Tim 4:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.4.html" \l "iiTim.4.17).[I Pet. 4:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.4.html" \l "iPet.4.19).

“But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.” [1 Samuel 13:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iSam.13.html" \l "iSam.13.20)

We are engaged in a great war with the Philistines of evil. Every weapon within our reach must be used. Preaching, teaching, praying, giving, all must be brought into action, and talents which have been thought too mean for service, must now be employed. Coulter, and axe, and mattock, may all be useful in slaying Philistines; rough tools may deal hard blows, and killing need not be elegantly done, so long as it is done effectually. Each moment of time, in season or out of season; each fragment of ability, educated or untutored; each opportunity, favourable or unfavourable, must be used, for our foes are many and our force but slender.

Most of our tools want sharpening; we need quickness of perception, tact, energy, promptness, in a word, complete adaptation for the Lord’s work. Practical common sense is a very scarce thing among the conductors of Christian enterprises. We might learn from our enemies if we would, and so make the Philistines sharpen our weapons. This morning let us note enough to sharpen our zeal during this day by the aid of the Holy Spirit. See the energy of the Papists, how they compass sea and land to make one proselyte, are they to monopolize all the earnestness? Mark the heathen devotees, what tortures they endure in the service of their idols! are they alone to exhibit patience and self-sacrifice? Observe the prince of darkness, how persevering in his endeavours, how unabashed in his attempts, how daring in his plans, how thoughtful in his plots, how energetic in all! The devils are united as one man in their infamous rebellion, while we believers in Jesus are divided in our service of God, and scarcely ever work with unanimity. O that from Satan’s infernal industry we may learn to go about like good Samaritans, seeking whom we may bless!

# Word Live – 3/2/21

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

# Scripture Union – 3/2/21

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

# Today in the Word – 3/2/21

# Eve - Work, Worship, and Partnership

**Read:** [**Genesis 2:4–25**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+)

### **Adam and Eve**

4This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

5Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#fen-NIV-36a)] and no plant had yet sprung up, for the Lord God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, 6but streams[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#fen-NIV-37b)] came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. 7Then the Lord God formed a man[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#fen-NIV-38c)] from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

8Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. 9The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. 11The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12(The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#fen-NIV-43d)] and onyx are also there.) 13The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush.[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#fen-NIV-44e)] 14The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

18The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

19Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#fen-NIV-51f)] no suitable helper was found. 21So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs[[g](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#fen-NIV-52g)] and then closed up the place with flesh. 22Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib[[h](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#fen-NIV-53h)] he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones  
    and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called ‘woman,’  
    for she was taken out of man.”

24That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

25Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Genesis 2:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#en-NIV-36) Or land; also in verse 6
2. [Genesis 2:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#en-NIV-37) Or mist
3. [Genesis 2:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#en-NIV-38) The Hebrew for man (adam) sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew for ground (adamah); it is also the name Adam (see verse 20).
4. [Genesis 2:12](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#en-NIV-43) Or good; pearls
5. [Genesis 2:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#en-NIV-44) Possibly southeast Mesopotamia
6. [Genesis 2:20](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#en-NIV-51) Or the man
7. [Genesis 2:21](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+2%3a4%e2%80%9325+#en-NIV-52) Or took part of the man’s side

Our twelve-year-old son would probably tell you that “work” is a dirty word. As parents, we want to encourage him to see work differently, to model a joyful approach, and to invite him into that mindset.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters. Colossians 3:23

In Genesis 2:15, we learn about Adam’s role in creation (and Eve’s when she joins him). God put him in the garden to “work it and take care of it.” In Scripture, the verb used for “work” most often describes service to God, rather than agricultural tasks. Thus, Adam’s assignment (and Eve’s) was not merely a utilitarian or physical job. It was a spiritual one. Their work was their worship.

Then, in verse 18, God evaluated this arrangement. In chapter one, He had already declared that everything He made was “good.” Here, for the first time, something—man’s aloneness—was considered “not good.” Since man was unable to function in the complete way that God had created Him, God determined to make a “helper suitable for him.” In verses 19–20, Adam began his work and worship by naming each of the animals, but in the process, no “suitable helper” for him was found. The word “helper” describes someone who comes to the aid of someone else—both physically and spiritually, but “helper” in no way indicates a lesser position or inferior worth. The word used for “suitable” describes the woman as equal in worth, as well as “opposite” and “harmonizing.” Thus, a “complementary partner” was required for the first man. To form Eve, God sent Adam to sleep and took a handful of bone, muscle, and flesh from Adam’s side (v. 22). Adam’s response—“This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”—recognized both their similarity and her derivative nature (v. 23). Eve was his partner—in work and in worship.

**Apply the Word**

This passage should be foundational to how we view ourselves, our work, and our relationships. What does it reveal to you about God’s intent in creation? Does it change the way you think about yourself?

### **Pray with Us**

Our culture often holds men and women in opposition, but Father, we recognize that you created us to complement one another and to serve you. Orient our attitudes toward one another around your purposes in creation.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/2/21

# Safe and Still

 **Read:** [**Psalm 91**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2091)

1Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High  
    will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+91&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-15397a" \o "See footnote a)]  
2I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress,  
    my God, in whom I trust.”

3Surely he will save you  
    from the fowler’s snare  
    and from the deadly pestilence.  
4He will cover you with his feathers,  
    and under his wings you will find refuge;  
    his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.  
5You will not fear the terror of night,  
    nor the arrow that flies by day,  
6nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,  
    nor the plague that destroys at midday.  
7A thousand may fall at your side,  
    ten thousand at your right hand,  
    but it will not come near you.  
8You will only observe with your eyes  
    and see the punishment of the wicked.

9If you say, “The Lord is my refuge,”  
    and you make the Most High your dwelling,  
10no harm will overtake you,  
    no disaster will come near your tent.  
11For he will command his angels concerning you  
    to guard you in all your ways;  
12they will lift you up in their hands,  
    so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.  
13You will tread on the lion and the cobra;  
    you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

14“Because he[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+91&version=NIV#fen-NIV-15410b)] loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him;  
    I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.  
15He will call on me, and I will answer him;  
    I will be with him in trouble,  
    I will deliver him and honor him.  
16With long life I will satisfy him  
    and show him my salvation.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 91:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+91&version=NIV#en-NIV-15397) Hebrew Shaddai
2. [Psalm 91:14](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+91&version=NIV#en-NIV-15410) That is, probably the king

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. [Psalm 91:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2091.1)

As a full-of-energy preschooler, my son Xavier avoided afternoon quiet time. Being still often resulted in an unwanted, though much-needed, nap. So, he’d wiggle in his seat, slide off the sofa, scoot across the hardwood floor, and even roll across the room to evade the quiet. “Mom, I’m hungry . . . I’m thirsty . . . I have to go to the bathroom . . . I want a hug.”

Understanding the benefits of stillness, I’d help Xavier settle down by inviting him to snuggle. Leaning into my side, he’d give in to sleep.

Early in my spiritual life, I mirrored my son’s desire to remain active. Busyness made me feel accepted, important, and in control, while noise distracted me from fretting over my shortcomings and trials. Surrendering to rest only affirmed my frail humanity. So I avoided stillness and silence, doubting God could handle things without my help.

But He’s our refuge, no matter how many troubles or uncertainties surround us. The path ahead may seem long, scary, or overwhelming, but His love envelops us. He hears us, answers us, and stays with us . . . now and forever into eternity ([Psalm 91](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2091)).

We can embrace the quiet and lean into God’s unfailing love and constant presence. We can be still and rest in Him because we’re safe under the shelter of His unchanging faithfulness (v. 4).

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

In what ways have you seen God’s protection in your life? How can you face difficulties knowing that God has you under His wings?

Heavenly Father, thank You for providing a safe haven of unfailing love.

To learn more about growing spiritually in your walk with God, visit [ChristianUniversity.org/SF104.](https://ChristianUniversity.org/SF104.)

#### **Insight**

In trying to get Jesus to sin in the wilderness, Satan told Him: “[God] will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone” ([Matthew 4:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%204.6)). This is a quote from [Psalm 91:11–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2091.11%E2%80%9312). Intriguingly, the next verse in [Psalm 91](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2091) says, “You will trample the great lion and the serpent” (v. 13). The lion and the serpent are two images used in Scripture to refer to the devil ([1 Peter 5:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Pet%205.8); [Revelation 12:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2012.9)). Jesus countered the devil’s misuse of Scripture by quoting Scripture accurately, thus effectively “trampling” His enemy.

# God Calling – 3/2/21

# Spirit Words



"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

Just as much as the words I spoke to My disciples of old. This is your reward for not seeking spirit-communication through a medium. Those who do it can never know the ecstasy, the wonder, of spirit-communication as you know it.

Life, Joy, Peace, and Healing are yours in very full measure. You will see this as you go on. At first, you can hardly credit the powers I am bestowing on you.

I sent My disciples out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits, and to heal all manner of diseases.

Wonderful indeed must it have been to St. Peter to feel suddenly that His Lord's power was his.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. - John 4:24

# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/3/21

# His Commission to Us



Feed My sheep. —[John 21:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+21%3A17)

This is love in the making. The love of God is not created— it is His nature. When we receive the life of Christ through the Holy Spirit, He unites us with God so that His love is demonstrated in us. The goal of the indwelling Holy Spirit is not just to unite us with God, but to do it in such a way that we will be one with the Father in exactly the same way Jesus was. And what kind of oneness did Jesus Christ have with the Father? He had such a oneness with the Father that He was obedient when His Father sent Him down here to be poured out for us. And He says to us, “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” ([John 20:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20:21)).

Peter now realizes that he does love Him, due to the revelation that came with the Lord’s piercing question. The Lord’s next point is— “Pour yourself out. Don’t testify about how much you love Me and don’t talk about the wonderful revelation you have had, just ‘Feed My sheep.’ ” Jesus has some extraordinarily peculiar sheep: some that are unkempt and dirty, some that are awkward or pushy, and some that have gone astray! But it is impossible to exhaust God’s love, and it is impossible to exhaust my love if it flows from the Spirit of God within me. The love of God pays no attention to my prejudices caused by my natural individuality. If I love my Lord, I have no business being guided by natural emotions— I have to feed His sheep. We will not be delivered or released from His commission to us. Beware of counterfeiting the love of God by following your own natural human emotions, sympathies, or understandings. That will only serve to revile and abuse the true love of God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Re-state to yourself what you believe, then do away with as much of it as possible, and get back to the bedrock of the Cross of Christ.  My Utmost for His Highest, November 25, 848 R

# CCEL – 3/3/21

**Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.**—[PROV. 3:5,6.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.3.html" \l "Prov.3.5)

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.—Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

[Psa. 62:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.62.html" \l "Ps.62.8).[Psa. 32:8-10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.32.html" \l "Ps.32.8). -[Isa. 30:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.30.html" \l "Isa.30.21).[Exo. 33:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.33.html" \l "Exod.33.15).

“I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” [Isaiah 48:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.48.html" \l "Isa.48.10)

Comfort thyself, tried believer, with this thought: God saith, “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” Does not the word come like a soft shower, assuaging the fury of the flame? Yea, is it not an asbestos armour, against which the heat hath no power? Let affliction come—God has chosen me. Poverty, thou mayst stride in at my door, but God is in the house already, and he has chosen me. Sickness, thou mayst intrude, but I have a balsam ready—God has chosen me. Whatever befalls me in this vale of tears, I know that he has “chosen” me. If, believer, thou requirest still greater comfort, remember that you have the Son of Man with you in the furnace. In that silent chamber of yours, there sitteth by your side One whom thou hast not seen, but whom thou lovest; and ofttimes when thou knowest it not, he makes all thy bed in thy affliction, and smooths thy pillow for thee. Thou art in poverty; but in that lovely house of thine the Lord of life and glory is a frequent visitor. He loves to come into these desolate places, that he may visit thee. Thy friend sticks closely to thee. Thou canst not see him, but thou mayst feel the pressure of his hands. Dost thou not hear his voice? Even in the valley of the shadow of death he says, “Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God.” Remember that noble speech of Caesar: “Fear not, thou carriest Caesar and all his fortune.” Fear not, Christian; Jesus is with thee. In all thy fiery trials, his presence is both thy comfort and safety. He will never leave one whom he has chosen for his own. “Fear not, for I am with thee,” is his sure word of promise to his chosen ones in the “furnace of affliction.” Wilt thou not, then, take fast hold of Christ, and say—

“Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead, I'll follow where he goes.”

# Word Live – 3/3/21

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

# Scripture Union – 3/2/21

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

# Today in the Word – 3/3/21

# Eve - Then Came Shame

**Read:** [**Genesis 3:1–7**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+3%3a1%e2%80%937)

### **The Fall**

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

2The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

4“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

In the movies, the villain often approaches with ominous music. In Genesis 3, the snake arrived with no fanfare at all. No explanation is given for his entrance. He was a “wild animal” whose presence was seemingly expected, and Eve did not seem alarmed in the least.

In this way death came to all people, because all sinned. Romans 5:12

But this serpent was “crafty” (v. 1). This Hebrew word can have a positive or negative connotation. In the book of Proverbs, it is considered an antidote for naiveté. Clearly, though, a negative connotation is intended here, as the serpent immediately began to dismantle God’s creative order. The serpent asked Eve to articulate God’s command in her own words.

But when she explained God’s command, she deviated from His actual instruction. She added to God’s restrictions (“…and you must not touch it…” v. 3). Then, she distorted the consequence (“…or you will die”). God’s actual statement was “you will surely die,” and the serpent would capitalize on this difference. The serpent told Eve, “You will not surely die.” Notice that he did not deny the penalty. Rather, he made it less imminent. He continued to cast doubt by focusing on the perceived positive outcome (v. 5). God knew that the tree was a good pursuit. Why would He withhold His best?

Eve looked at the tree with new eyes. She saw the fruit as beautiful and beneficial, and so she ate. She shared some with Adam, and he ate— without question. Immediately, their eyes were opened (v. 7). They received the knowledge they were seeking, but it was not a pleasant understanding. Instead, they were filled with shame. Their nakedness, which they previously experienced in innocence, now drove them to cover up.

**Apply the Word**

Has the tempter used similar tactics on you? Maybe he suggested: “The consequences won’t be as bad as God says they will be. This behavior leads to something good! He’s holding out on you.” How have you hidden in response to shame? Built walls of anger? Put up a facade of perfection? Run from God?

### **Pray with Us**

Dear God, all things outside of you are trustworthy only to the extent that they derive from you. We ask that you strengthen our confidence in your promises so we won’t be led astray.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/3/21

# Preserved

 **Read:** [**Deuteronomy 31:1–8**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2031.1%E2%80%938)

### **Joshua to Succeed Moses**

31 Then Moses went out and spoke these words to all Israel: 2“I am now a hundred and twenty years old and I am no longer able to lead you. The Lord has said to me, ‘You shall not cross the Jordan.’ 3The Lord your God himself will cross over ahead of you. He will destroy these nations before you, and you will take possession of their land. Joshua also will cross over ahead of you, as the Lord said. 4And the Lord will do to them what he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, whom he destroyed along with their land. 5The Lord will deliver them to you, and you must do to them all that I have commanded you. 6Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”

7Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, “Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. 8The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”

The Lord himself goes before you. [Deuteronomy 31:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2031.8)

While I was clearing out the garden in preparation for spring planting, I pulled up a large clump of winter weeds . . . and leapt into the air! A venomous copperhead snake lay hidden in the undergrowth just below my hand—an inch lower and I would have grabbed it by mistake. I saw its colorful markings as soon as I lifted the clump; the rest of it was coiled in the weeds between my feet.

When my feet hit the ground a few feet away, I thanked God I hadn’t been bitten. And I wondered how many other times He had kept me from dangers I never knew were there.

God watches over His people. Moses told the Israelites as they prepared to enter the promised land, “The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” ([Deuteronomy 31:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2031.8)). They couldn’t see God, but He was with them nonetheless.

Sometimes difficult things happen that we may not understand, but we can also reflect on the number of times God has preserved us without our ever being aware!

Scripture reminds us that His perfect, providential care remains over His people every day. He’s always with us ([Matthew 28:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2028.20)).

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How does the biblical truth that God watches over His people comfort you? Who can you tell about His faithfulness today?

Faithful Father, thank You for watching over me every day. Please give me grace to walk closely with You in everything I do today.

#### **Insight**

God’s promise never to leave or forsake the Israelites as they enter the promised land ([Deuteronomy 31:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2031.8)) is in fulfillment of His promises to their ancestors (v. 7). God promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan after four hundred years in slavery in Egypt ([Genesis 15:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2015.13); [17:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Genesis%2017.8)). And He brought Israel out of slavery so they could trust Him as they entered the promised land.

Centuries later, those who are believers in Jesus are also regarded as children of Abraham and share in His inheritance of the whole world ([Romans 4:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%204.13)). Just as God promised to be with Israel as they took hold of their inheritance ([Deuteronomy 31:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%2031.6); [Hebrews 13:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2013.5)), so He’ll be with us ([Matthew 28:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2028.20)).

# God Calling – 3/3/21

# Grow Like Me

Think of Me. Look at Me often, and unconsciously you will grow like Me.

You may never see it. The nearer you get to Me, the more will you see your unlikeness to Me. So be comforted, My children.

Your very deep sense of failure is a sure sign that you are growing nearer to Me. And if you desire to help others to Me, then that prayer-desire is answered.

Remember, too, it is only struggle that hurts. In sloth, spiritual or mental, or physical, there is no sense of failure or discomfort, but with action, with effort, you are conscious not of strength but of weakness - at least at first.

That again is a sign of Life, of spiritual growth.

And remember, My Strength is made perfect in weakness.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,  are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." - 2 Corinthians 3:18

# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/4/21

# Is This True of Me?



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

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

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

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 3/4/21

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Word Live – 3/4/21

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

# Scripture Union – 3/4/21

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

# Today in the Word – 3/4/21

# Eve - Driving the Wedge

**Read:** [**Genesis 3:8–24**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+3%3a8%e2%80%9324)

8Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”

10He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

11And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

12The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

13Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

14So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock  
    and all wild animals!  
You will crawl on your belly  
    and you will eat dust  
    all the days of your life.  
15And I will put enmity  
    between you and the woman,  
    and between your offspring[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-71a)] and hers;  
he will crush[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-71b)] your head,  
    and you will strike his heel.”

16To the woman he said,

“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;  
    with painful labor you will give birth to children.  
Your desire will be for your husband,  
    and he will rule over you.”

17To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

“Cursed is the ground because of you;  
    through painful toil you will eat food from it  
    all the days of your life.  
18It will produce thorns and thistles for you,  
    and you will eat the plants of the field.  
19By the sweat of your brow  
    you will eat your food  
until you return to the ground,  
    since from it you were taken;  
for dust you are  
    and to dust you will return.”

20Adam[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-76c)] named his wife Eve,[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-76d" \o "See footnote d)] because she would become the mother of all the living.

21The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. 22And the Lord God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” 23So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-80e)] of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Genesis 3:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#en-NIV-71) Or seed
2. [Genesis 3:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#en-NIV-71) Or strike
3. [Genesis 3:20](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#en-NIV-76) Or The man
4. [Genesis 3:20](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#en-NIV-76) Eve probably means living.
5. [Genesis 3:24](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+3%3A8%E2%80%9324+&version=NIV#en-NIV-80) Or placed in front

Our family often enjoys an evening walk around our neighborhood. We like to call our route the “McHenry Loop.” We wander through the park, along the river, and back via our quaint downtown. The Bible tells us in Genesis 3:8 that God walked in the garden “in the cool of the day.” Adam and Eve were hiding, but they heard Him. God’s walk was not a leisurely after-dinner stroll. The word for “day” can mean “storm.” I wonder if Adam and Eve heard Him howl in a mighty gale.

You, God, know my folly; my guilt is not hidden from you. Psalm 69:5

In verse 7, the couple covered themselves with leaves because they recognized their defilement. They hid because they knew God could not tolerate their sin. More tragic than personal corruption and shame was their lost access to God. When God called, Adam gave a half-truth. “I was afraid because I was naked.” He failed to mention his sin. When God persisted, Adam blamed Eve—now driving in an interpersonal wedge. He pointed to her, and—in effect—also to God. “It was the woman you put here with me” (v. 12). Eve blamed the serpent. And God cursed all three. Since our focus is on the female characters, let’s look closely at verse 16. God would “make your pains in childbearing very severe.” This word for “childbearing” is concerned with conception, and the word for “pain” is mental anguish—not physical. The second clause seems to repeat the first. (“With painful labor you will give birth to children.”) However, this word for “pain” refers to strenuous physical work. Together, these clauses describe the entirety of the child-bearing process. Women experience anxiety and pain throughout.

Adam gave Eve her name. “Mother of all the living” (v. 20). In spite of their judgment life would continue. And as another act of grace and continued care, God made them clothes before He banished them from the Garden.

**Apply the Word**

We experience the consequences of sin every day. How do you respond to God about your sin? Is it similar to Adam and Eve’s response?

### **Pray with Us**

Generations later, we are still drawn to sin, just like Adam and Eve. We evade the truth, make excuses, and lay the blame on others. Teach us to confess our sins and repent on a daily basis.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/4/21

# Knowing the Father

 **Read:** [**John 14:8–11**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014.8%E2%80%9311)

8Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

9Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. 11Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.

Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” [John 14:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014.9)

According to legend, British conductor Sir Thomas Beecham once saw a distinguished-looking woman in a hotel foyer. Believing he knew her but unable to remember her name, he paused to talk with her. As the two chatted, he vaguely recollected that she had a brother. Hoping for a clue, he asked how her brother was doing and whether he was still working at the same job. “Oh, he’s very well,” she said, “And still king.”

A case of mistaken identity can be embarrassing, as it was for Sir Beecham. But at other times it may be more serious, as it was for Jesus’ disciple Philip. The disciple knew Christ, of course, but he hadn’t fully appreciated who He was. He wanted Jesus to “show [them] the Father,” and Jesus responded, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” ([John 14:8–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014.8%E2%80%939)). As God’s unique Son, Christ reveals the Father so perfectly that to know one is to know the other (vv. 10–11).

If we ever wonder what God is like in His character, personality, or concern for others, we only need to look to Jesus to find out. Christ’s character, kindness, love, and mercy reveal God’s character. And although our amazing, awesome God is beyond our complete comprehension and understanding, we have a tremendous gift in what He’s revealed of Himself in Jesus.

By:  [Con Campbell](https://odb.org/author/constantinecampbell/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How well do you know God’s character? How does it match your perception of who Jesus is?

Dear God, help me to grow in my knowledge and appreciation of who You are.

#### **Insight**

Jesus’ response to Philip’s request to “show us the Father” ([John 14:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014.8)) likely echoes Moses’ request in [Exodus 33:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2033.18) (“show me your glory”). In response to Moses’ request, God promised to “cause all [His] goodness to pass” before Moses, but Moses wasn’t permitted to see His face ([Exodus 33:20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2033.20)). Jesus’ response to Philip in [John 14:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014.9)—“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father”—makes it clear that Jesus is the fullest possible encounter with God’s glory. Echoes of Moses’ request can also be heard in [John 1:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.14), which describes witnessing in Christ “the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father.” John explains, “No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known” (v. 18).

# God Calling – 3/4/21

# Key to Holiness

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/5/21

# Is He Really My Lord?



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

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

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

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 3/5/21

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And hear how these two pilgrims talk together;

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

Thus to keep open their drowsy slumb'ring eyes.

Saints’ fellowship, if it be managed well,

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

# Word Live – 3/5/21

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

# Scripture Union – 3/5/21

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

# Today in the Word – 3/5/21

# Eve - The Greatest Gift

**Read:** [**Genesis 4:1–16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+4%3a1%e2%80%9316)

### **Cain and Abel**

4 Adam[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#fen-NIV-81a)] made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#fen-NIV-81b)] She said, “With the help of the Lord I have brought forth[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#fen-NIV-81c)] a man.” 2Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. 3In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. 4And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

6Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”

8Now Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.”[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#fen-NIV-88d)] While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

9Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”

“I don’t know,” he replied. “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

10The Lord said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground. 11Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. 12When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.”

13Cain said to the Lord, “My punishment is more than I can bear. 14Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.”

15But the Lord said to him, “Not so[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#fen-NIV-95e)]; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over.” Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. 16So Cain went out from the Lord’s presence and lived in the land of Nod,[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-96f" \o "See footnote f)] east of Eden.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Genesis 4:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#en-NIV-81) Or The man
2. [Genesis 4:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#en-NIV-81) Cain sounds like the Hebrew for brought forth or acquired.
3. [Genesis 4:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#en-NIV-81) Or have acquired
4. [Genesis 4:8](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#en-NIV-88) Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; Masoretic Text does not have “Let’s go out to the field.”
5. [Genesis 4:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#en-NIV-95) Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; Hebrew Very well
6. [Genesis 4:16](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+4%3A1%E2%80%9316&version=NIV#en-NIV-96) Nod means wandering (see verses 12 and 14).

My husband Peter and I have grieved several losses in our twenty years of marriage - his father, both of my parents, and three babies by miscarriage. Experiencing such pain together can either deepen a couple’s bond or push two people apart.

The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Numbers 14:18

In Genesis 4, the effects of the Fall become more evident—on humanity, and also on the family. The first thing we learn about Adam and Eve—post-Fall—is that they have a son. Eve announced the birth herself in verse 1: “With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man.” Significantly, Eve expressed gratitude that the Lord’s grace carried her through. Even though anguish accompanied the childbearing process, God was still faithful.

Then, as we move through Genesis chapter 4, we see the tragic descent of Adam and Eve’s offspring—delving deeper and deeper into sin. As Eve’s sin began with a desire to be more like God, Cain’s sin begins with a desire to have what his brother has—the good pleasure of God (v. 5). With Cain’s jealousy and murder, sin infiltrates new territory as it destroys the family unit. Just as Adam and Eve were distanced from God’s presence when they were removed from the Garden, now Cain is expelled from both God’s presence and His protection (vv. 11–12).

Interestingly, while Eve’s celebratory and grateful words open this chapter, she is not mentioned again in this passage. But can you imagine her grief? It is difficult to conceive of her sorrow when she learned about the death of one son—at the hand of another. Then she was faced with Cain’s banishment. Eve seems somehow even more human when we consider her immense loss and ponder her pain.

**Apply the Word**

How have you experienced God’s faithfulness and grace, even as you navigate the consequences of sin? How do you connect with Eve’s grief? Can God use our study of it to bring healing to our own hurts?

### **Pray with Us**

We can’t escape the painful, all-pervading consequences of sin. Even in the depths of misery, give us eyes to perceive your mercies, Lord. May we know our greatest joys in times of suffering.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/5/21

# Who Knows?

# Today's Devotional Read: [Ecclesiastes 6:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eccles%206.12)

12For who knows what is good for a person in life, during the few and meaningless days they pass through like a shadow? Who can tell them what will happen under the sun after they are gone?

**Read:** [**Ecclesiastes**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eccles%206.12) [**7:13–14**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ecclesiastes%207.13%E2%80%9314)

13Consider what God has done:

Who can straighten  
    what he has made crooked?  
14When times are good, be happy;  
    but when times are bad, consider this:  
God has made the one  
    as well as the other.  
Therefore, no one can discover  
    anything about their future.

When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. [Ecclesiastes 7:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eccles%207.14)

According to Chinese legend, when Sai Weng lost one of his prized horses, his neighbor expressed sorrow for his loss. But Sai Weng was unconcerned. He said, “Who knows if it may be a good thing for me?” Surprisingly, the lost horse returned home with another horse. As the neighbor congratulated him, Sai Weng said, “Who knows if it may be a bad thing for me?” As it turned out, his son broke his leg when he rode on the new horse. This seemed like a misfortune, until the army arrived at the village to recruit all able-bodied men to fight in the war. Because of the son’s injury, he wasn’t recruited, which ultimately could have spared him from death.

This is the story behind the Chinese proverb which teaches that a difficulty can be a blessing in disguise and vice versa. This ancient wisdom has a close parallel in [Ecclesiastes 6:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eccles%206.12), where the author observes: “Who knows what is good for a person in life?” Indeed, none of us know what the future holds. An adversity might have positive benefits, and prosperity might have ill effects.

Each day offers new opportunities, joys, struggles, and suffering. As God’s beloved children, we can rest in His sovereignty and trust Him through the good and bad times alike. God has “made the one as well as the other” (7:14). He’s with us in all the events in our lives and promises His loving care.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Can you think of an example where a misfortune turned out to be a blessing? How can you keep your focus on God in good times as well as in bad times?

Sovereign God, thank You for ordering my life. Help me to praise You in both good and bad times, believing that You work all things for the ultimate good of those who love You.

#### **Insight**

Today’s text might make us conclude that the author of Ecclesiastes, the “Teacher” (1:1), is a fatalist. Gloomy thoughts seem to dominate his writing: Life is “meaningless” and our days pass like a “shadow” (6:12); good and bad stuff happen (7:14). But some Bible scholars offer another perspective by pointing us to the writer’s call to “consider what God has done” (7:13)—reminding us to look carefully at how He works and has worked in the world. “Who can straighten what [God] has made crooked?” (v. 13). Who can fix the difficulties in our lives? No one except God. When we consider His character and acts, we see that “in all things” He works “for the good of those who love him” ([Romans 8:28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%208.28)). When we trust in God’s goodness, we can be happy (joyful) “when times are good.” And when “times are bad,” we can remember that God has given us those days as well ([Ecclesiastes 7:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eccles%207.14)).

# God Calling – 3/5/21

# Fear Is Evil

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

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

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

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

Ask Me and I will show it you.

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

# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/6/21

# Taking the Next Step



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

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

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

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 3/6/21

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Word Live – 3/6/21

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

# Scripture Union – 3/6/21

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

# Today in the Word – 3/6/21

# Sarai - The Call and the Covenant

**Read:** [**Genesis 11:27–12:9**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+11%3a27%e2%80%9312%3a9)

### **Abram’s Family**

27This is the account of Terah’s family line.

Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot. 28While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the land of his birth. 29Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor’s wife was Milkah; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milkah and Iskah. 30Now Sarai was childless because she was not able to conceive.

31Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Harran, they settled there.

32Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Harran.

### **The Call of Abram**

12 The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

2“I will make you into a great nation,  
    and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
    and you will be a blessing.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+11%3A27%E2%80%9312%3A9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-301a)]  
3I will bless those who bless you,  
    and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
    will be blessed through you.”[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+11%3A27%E2%80%9312%3A9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-302b)]

4So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. 5He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

6Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7The Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+11%3A27%E2%80%9312%3A9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-306c)] I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

8From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.

9Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Genesis 12:2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+11%3A27%E2%80%9312%3A9&version=NIV#en-NIV-301) Or be seen as blessed
2. [Genesis 12:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+11%3A27%E2%80%9312%3A9&version=NIV#en-NIV-302) Or earth / will use your name in blessings (see 48:20)
3. [Genesis 12:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+Genesis+11%3A27%E2%80%9312%3A9&version=NIV#en-NIV-306) Or seed

God’s general call to each of us is to love, follow, and obey Him. But sometimes He communicates a more specific calling—to a specific person at a specific time and for a specific purpose. At the end of Genesis 11, we are introduced to Sarai as Abram’s wife. The only description is this: “Sarai was childless because she was not able to conceive” (v. 30). This status is significant for her story, given the covenant call that God would place on Abram’s life.

Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. Genesis 12:1

Abram’s father Terah took Abram, Sarai, and Lot on a journey from Ur of the Chaldeans toward Canaan. But along the way, they settled in Harran (v. 31). Immediately after Terah’s death, at age 205, Abram’s call comes: “Go from your country, your people, and your father’s household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing” (12:1–3).

It was a beautiful promise—one that came with care, protection, and favor. But it also required sacrifice. Abram and Sarai had to leave all that was familiar and walk by faith into uncertainty. Abram left—“as the Lord had told him” (v. 4)—and set out from Haran. Great risk and effort were involved in his obedience. This was a month-long journey of 500 miles into unknown and potentially dangerous territory—with his wife and nephew, their people, and possessions. At a pit stop at Shechem, God gave Abram a glimpse of what was to come, sharing a bit more of His plan—“To your offspring, I will give this land” (v. 7). In response, Abram stopped and built an altar to keep himself and Sarai and their clan focused on the Lord.

**Apply the Word**

How is God calling you today? Consider ways you can keep focused on Him and His plans, even if obeying means risk or sacrifice.

### **Pray with Us**

Father, we don’t want anything that you have not chosen for us. We take our uncertainties, our fears, and our desires before you and ask for your peace and guidance; accomplish your purposes in our lives.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/6/21

# Minding My Own Business

 **Read:** [**1 Thessalonians 4:9–12**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Thess%204.9%E2%80%9312)

9Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. 10And in fact, you do love all of God’s family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, 11and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, 12so that your daily life may win the respeMind your own business and work with your hands. [1 Thessalonians 4:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Thess%204.11)

Years ago, my son Josh and I were making our way up a mountain trail when we spied a cloud of dust rising in the air. We crept forward and discovered a badger busy making a den in a dirt bank. He had his head and shoulders in the hole and was vigorously digging with his front paws and kicking the dirt out of the hole with his hind feet. He was so invested in his work he didn’t hear us.

I couldn’t resist and prodded him from behind with a long stick lying nearby. I didn’t hurt the badger, but he leaped straight up in the air and turned toward us. Josh and I set new world records for the hundred-yard dash.

I learned something from my brashness: Sometimes it’s best not to poke around in other people’s business. That’s especially true in relationships with fellow believers in Jesus. The apostle Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to “make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands” ([1 Thessalonians 4:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Thess%204.11)). We’re to pray for others and seek by God’s grace to share the Scriptures, and occasionally we may be called to offer a gentle word of correction. But learning to live a quiet life and not meddling into others’ lives is important. It becomes an example to those who are now outside God’s family (v. 12). Our calling is to “love each other” (v. 9).

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What happens when you meddle in other people’s business? What’s the first thing you should do instead for others?

God, teach me to know what it means to love others better.

#### **Insight**

The church at Thessalonica, imperfect like all human organizations, was nevertheless one of the premier congregations in the New Testament. Established by Paul, Silas, and Timothy ([Acts 16:1–5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2016.1%E2%80%935); [17:1–3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2017.1%E2%80%933)), this church quickly became a hub of missionary activity—in part because of the profound witness the Thessalonians presented of the transforming power of the gospel. Paul applauds this transformation in the opening verses of this letter, where he says that their witness had reached throughout their land: “They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” ([1 Thessalonians 1:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Thess%201.9)). In a first-century Greek culture that proliferated with idols, their turning away from them speaks of dramatic change—turning away from dead idols of wood and stone to the God who is not only living but life-giving to all who trust Him. From idolatry to a living faith in the living God, the Thessalonians displayed true transformation.

# God Calling – 3/6/21

# Love and Laugh

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

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

Prepare the ground, and prepare it as I say.

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

# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/7/21

# The Source of Abundant Joy



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

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

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

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

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 3/7/21

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

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

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

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

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

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

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

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

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

# Word Live – 3/7/21

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

# Scripture Union – 3/7/21

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

# Today in the Word – 3/7/21

# Sarai - Self-Preservation

**Read:** [**Genesis 12:10–20**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+12%3a10%e2%80%9320)

### **Abram in Egypt**

10Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. 11As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, “I know what a beautiful woman you are. 12When the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will let you live. 13Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.”

14When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. 15And when Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. 16He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

17But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram’s wife Sarai. 18So Pharaoh summoned Abram. “What have you done to me?” he said. “Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife? 19Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!” 20Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

Early last year, our state’s governor issued a disaster proclamation in response to the COVID-19 virus. A shelter-in-place order followed, bringing long-term consequences that we are only beginning to comprehend. These circumstances left many simply asking: How do we survive?

For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. Matthew 16:25

While Abram and Sarai were still heading toward the Negev, they realized the severity of the area famine and detoured toward Egypt. Because of the Nile’s predictable flooding, Egypt was less threatened by drought. Remember, not long before this, Abram had built altars to the Lord, accepting His call into Canaan (vv. 6–7). Did this detour represent doubt? Did Abram fear that God would not provide as He promised to? Was going to Egypt Abram’s first mistake?

As they were about to enter Egypt, Abram hatched another plan. He instructed Sarai to tell everyone that she was his sister. Sarai was so beautiful that Abram was afraid the Egyptians would kill him to get to her (v. 11). His justification sounds so self-serving: “Say you are my sister so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you” (v. 13). Fear does that to us, doesn’t it? It pushes us into self-preservation mode and short-circuits our decision-making ability. Pharaoh’s household bore the immediate consequences. They were struck with disease (v. 17). But even when Abram was caught and sent away, he seemed unrepentant—even though his lie had put God’s covenant at risk. If Pharaoh had taken Sarai, what might have happened to the great nation God had promised?

**Apply the Word**

Abram was not so different from us. The virus of sin has infected us all. God gave His promises knowing our weakness. That is the majesty of grace. Have you ever boldly followed God’s call . . . until you hit your first problem? How would it be different if we responded, not out of fear, but in faith?

### **Pray with Us**

Dear God, while our own plans give us a sense of security, your plans are often inscrutable. We desire to follow you with childlike faith, trusting you even when we don’t understand.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/7/21

# Pleading with God

 **Read:** [**Daniel 9:1–5**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%209.1%E2%80%935)

### **Daniel’s Prayer**

9 In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+9%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+17%E2%80%9319&version=NIV#fen-NIV-21990a)] (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+9%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+17%E2%80%9319&version=NIV#fen-NIV-21990b)] kingdom— 2in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. 3So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

4I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed:

“Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 5we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Daniel 9:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+9%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+17%E2%80%9319&version=NIV#en-NIV-21990) Hebrew Ahasuerus
2. [Daniel 9:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+9%3A1%E2%80%935+%2C+17%E2%80%9319&version=NIV#en-NIV-21990) Or Chaldean

**Read:** [**Daniel 9:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%209.1%E2%80%935)[**17–19**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Daniel%209.17%E2%80%9319)

17“Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. 18Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. 19Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name.”

I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures. . . . So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition. [Daniel 9:2–3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%209.2%E2%80%933)

A family’s prayer time ended with a surprising announcement one morning. As soon as Dad said, “Amen,” five-year-old Kaitlyn proclaimed, “And I prayed for Logan, because he had his eyes open during prayer.”

I’m pretty sure praying for your ten-year-old brother’s prayer protocol isn’t what Scripture has in mind when it calls us to intercessory prayer, but at least Kaitlyn realized that we can pray for others.

Bible teacher Oswald Chambers emphasized the importance of praying for someone else. He said that “intercession is putting yourself in God’s place; it is having His mind and perspective.” It’s praying for others in light of what we know about God and His love for us.

We find a great example of intercessory prayer in [Daniel 9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%209). The prophet understood God’s troubling promise that the Jews would have seventy years of captivity in Babylon ([Jeremiah 25:11–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2025.11%E2%80%9312)). Realizing that those years were nearing their completion, Daniel went into prayer mode. He referenced God’s commands ([Daniel 9:4–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%209.4%E2%80%936)), humbled himself (v. 8), honored His character (v. 9), confessed sin (v. 15), and depended on His mercy as he prayed for His people (v. 18). And he got an immediate answer from God (v. 21).

Not all prayer ends with such a dramatic response, but be encouraged that we can go to God on behalf of others with an attitude of trust and dependence on Him.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When you pray for others, how are you seeking the mind of God? How do you seek His perspective?

Dear heavenly Father, help me to know You better so that when I pray for others, I can filter my requests through my knowledge of Your will.

#### **Insight**

The prayer in [Daniel 9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%209) was written near the end of the Israelites’ seventy years in Babylon. It had been prophesied that after seventy years God would bring His people back to Jerusalem (v. 2; see also [Jeremiah 25:11–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2025.11%E2%80%9314); [29:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jeremiah%2029.10)). To prepare for the return, Daniel “pleaded with [God] in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes” ([Daniel 9:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%209.3)). At the time, praying this way was common in difficult situations (see [Esther 4:1–3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Esther%204.1%E2%80%933); [Jonah 3:6–9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jonah%203.6%E2%80%939)). Daniel’s prayer is now a model for believers in Jesus. He begins by worshiping God for His faithfulness ([Daniel 9:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Dan%209.4)), then he pleads with Him for forgiveness for himself and the nation (vv. 5–7), and finally reminds God of His covenant and asks Him to restore their land (v. 19).

# God Calling – 3/7/21

# Surprises

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

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

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

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

# My Utmost for His Highest – 3/8/21

# The Surrendered Life



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

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

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

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

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

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 3/8/21

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Word Live – 3/8/21

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

# Scripture Union – 3/8/21

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

# Today in the Word – 3/8/21

# Sarai - The God Who Sees

**Read:** [**Genesis 16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16)

### **Hagar and Ishmael**

16 Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; 2so she said to Abram, “The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.”

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. 3So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. 4He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. 5Then Sarai said to Abram, “You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me.”

6“Your slave is in your hands,” Abram said. “Do with her whatever you think best.” Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

7The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. 8And he said, “Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?”

“I’m running away from my mistress Sarai,” she answered.

9Then the angel of the Lord told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.” 10The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”

11The angel of the Lord also said to her:

“You are now pregnant  
    and you will give birth to a son.  
You shall name him Ishmael,[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+16++&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-393a" \o "See footnote a)]  
    for the Lord has heard of your misery.  
12He will be a wild donkey of a man;  
    his hand will be against everyone  
    and everyone’s hand against him,  
and he will live in hostility  
    toward[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+16++&version=NIV#fen-NIV-394b)] all his brothers.”

13She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+16++&version=NIV#fen-NIV-395c)] the One who sees me.” 14That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+16++&version=NIV#fen-NIV-396d)]; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

15So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. 16Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Genesis 16:11](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+16++&version=NIV#en-NIV-393) Ishmael means God hears.
2. [Genesis 16:12](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+16++&version=NIV#en-NIV-394) Or live to the east / of
3. [Genesis 16:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+16++&version=NIV#en-NIV-395) Or seen the back of
4. [Genesis 16:14](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+++++Genesis+16++&version=NIV#en-NIV-396) Beer Lahai Roi means well of the Living One who sees me.

My husband and I longed for biological children for many years before God finally opened the door for us to adopt our two children. And while God has healed much of the pain of infertility, it still gets triggered at times, and I have deep empathy for others who are experiencing that particular loss—even Bible characters in ancient accounts.

The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good. Proverbs 15:3

Genesis 16 begins by explaining that Sarai had borne no children to Abram, even after over ten years of marriage. Culturally, this was a big deal. But it was an even bigger deal because of God’s covenant with Abram—that he would become a great nation. The Moody Bible Commentary titles Genesis 16 “The Fall Reprised” because of its many parallels with Genesis 3. Like Eve before her, Sarai began to doubt the intention, timing, and sovereignty of God, so she took matters into her own hands. Like Eve before her, Sarai pulled her husband into a plan, and together they tried to accomplish God’s will in their own way—through Hagar (vv. 1–3).

As in Genesis 3, human sin resulted in all sorts of conflict. Hagar lorded her pregnancy over Sarai. Sarai blamed Abram. Abram passed responsibility back to Sarai, who then mistreated Hagar. Hagar understandably ran away. Then, the angel of the Lord appeared to Hagar in the desert and gave her a promise of her own—a son and innumerable descendants, but a son who would be the center of conflict (vv. 11–12). In an unusual move, Hagar gave a name to God—a name fitting to what she knew of His nature: “The One who sees me” (v. 13). And by His grace, He continued to work out His will, in His own way and in His own time.

**Apply the Word**

We often become impatient with God’s seeming delays. Have you ever taken things into your own hands when you should have just waited? What was the result? Where have you seen God work out His will in His own time?

### **Pray with Us**

Father, grant us contentment in the present, especially those of us in waiting periods. Help us to use this time wisely and profitably, looking for ways to serve you in every aspect of life.

## BY Kelli Worrall

# Our Daily Bread – 3/8/21

# The Reason for Writing

 **Read:** [**John 20:24–31**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2020.24%E2%80%9331)

### **Jesus Appears to Thomas**

24Now Thomas (also known as Didymus[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20%3A24%E2%80%9331&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26892a)]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

26A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” 27Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

28Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

29Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

### The Purpose of John’s Gospel

30Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31But these are written that you may believe[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20%3A24%E2%80%9331&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26899b)] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [John 20:24](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20%3A24%E2%80%9331&version=NIV#en-NIV-26892) Thomas (Aramaic) and Didymus (Greek) both mean twin.
2. [John 20:31](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20%3A24%E2%80%9331&version=NIV#en-NIV-26899) Or may continue to believe

But these are written that you may believe. [John 20:31](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2020.31)

“The Lord is my high tower . . . . We left the camp singing.” On September 7, 1943, Etty Hillesum wrote those words on a postcard and threw it from a train. Those were the final recorded words we would hear from her. On November 30, 1943, she was murdered at Auschwitz. Later, Hillesum’s diaries of her experiences in a concentration camp were translated and published. They chronicled her perspectives on the horrors of Nazi occupation along with the beauty of God’s world. Her diaries have been translated into sixty-seven languages—a gift to all who would read and believe the good as well as the bad.

The apostle John didn’t sidestep the harsh realities of Jesus’ life on earth; he wrote of both the good Jesus did and the challenges He faced. The final words from his gospel give insight into the purpose behind the book that bears his name. Jesus performed “many other signs . . . which are not recorded” (20:30) by John. But these, he says, were “written that you may believe” (v. 31). John’s “diary” ends on the note of triumph: “Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.” The gift of those gospel words allows us the opportunity to believe and “have life in his name.”

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) are diary accounts of God’s love for us. They’re words to read and believe and share, for they lead us to life. They lead us to Christ.

By:  [John Blase](https://odb.org/author/johnblase/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How might it change the way you read the Gospels if you thought of them as diaries? How are you being led to the heart of Christ through them?

Gracious God, thank You for the gift of the Scriptures, written down by faithful hands so that I might believe and have life.

#### **Insight**

Thomas is mentioned among Jesus’ disciples in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, but it’s John’s gospel that gives us a close-up view of him. John’s account of Jesus includes six scenes where Thomas appears (all in chapters 11–20), and he first speaks in 11:16 after the death of Lazarus. Jesus’ well-known words in [John 14:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2014.6)—“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”—were in response to Thomas’ query, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” (v. 5).

In John, we see Thomas as a pessimist and realist—inquisitive, human, honest. And he’s commonly referred to as “doubting Thomas” because of his words in [John 20:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2020.25) and Jesus’ response to him in verse 27. But his last recorded words reveal that he was convinced of who Jesus is: “My Lord and my God!” (v. 28).

# God Calling – 3/8/21

# Heaven-Life

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

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

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

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

seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand." - Mark 8:7-9