# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/16/23

# The Habit of Recognizing God’s Provision



…you may be partakers of the divine nature… —[2 Peter 1:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Peter+1%3A4)

We are made “partakers of the divine nature,” receiving and sharing God’s own nature through His promises. Then we have to work that divine nature into our human nature by developing godly habits. The first habit to develop is the habit of recognizing God’s provision for us. We say, however, “Oh, I can’t afford it.” One of the worst lies is wrapped up in that statement. We talk as if our heavenly Father has cut us off without a penny! We think it is a sign of true humility to say at the end of the day, “Well, I just barely got by today, but it was a severe struggle.” And yet all of Almighty God is ours in the Lord Jesus! And He will reach to the last grain of sand and the remotest star to bless us if we will only obey Him. Does it really matter that our circumstances are difficult? Why shouldn’t they be! If we give way to self-pity and indulge in the luxury of misery, we remove God’s riches from our lives and hinder others from entering into His provision. No sin is worse than the sin of self-pity, because it removes God from the throne of our lives, replacing Him with our own self-interests. It causes us to open our mouths only to complain, and we simply become spiritual sponges— always absorbing, never giving, and never being satisfied. And there is nothing lovely or generous about our lives.

Before God becomes satisfied with us, He will take everything of our so-called wealth, until we learn that He is our Source; as the psalmist said, “All my springs are in You” ([Psalm 87:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+87:7)). If the majesty, grace, and power of God are not being exhibited in us, God holds us responsible. “God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you…may have an abundance…” ([2 Corinthians 9:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+9:8))— then learn to lavish the grace of God on others, generously giving of yourself. Be marked and identified with God’s nature, and His blessing will flow through you all the time.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

Seeing is never believing: we interpret what we see in the light of what we believe. Faith is confidence in God before you see God emerging; therefore the nature of faith is that it must be tried.  He Shall Glorify Me, 494 R

# CCEL – 5/16/23

A servant of Jesus Christ.—[ROM. 1:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.1.html" \l "Rom.1.1)

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.—If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.—Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.—Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.—Thou art no more a servant, but a son.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh.

[John 13:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.13.html#John.13.13). -[John 12:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.12.html#John.12.26). -[Matt. 11:29,30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.11.html#Matt.11.29).[Phi. 3:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.3.html#Phil.3.7). -[Rom. 6:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html#Rom.6.22).[John 15:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html#John.15.15). -[Gal. 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.4.html#Gal.4.7).[Gal. 5:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html#Gal.5.1),[13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html#Gal.5.13).

“Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” [1 Timothy 6:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.6.html#iTim.6.17)

Our Lord Jesus is ever giving, and does not for a solitary instant withdraw his hand. As long as there is a vessel of grace not yet full to the brim, the oil shall not be stayed. He is a sun ever-shining; he is manna always falling round the camp; he is a rock in the desert, ever sending out streams of life from his smitten side; the rain of his grace is always dropping; the river of his bounty is ever-flowing, and the well-spring of his love is constantly overflowing. As the King can never die, so his grace can never fail. Daily we pluck his fruit, and daily his branches bend down to our hand with a fresh store of mercy. There are seven feast-days in his weeks, and as many as are the days, so many are the banquets in his years. Who has ever returned from his door unblessed? Who has ever risen from his table unsatisfied, or from his bosom un-emparadised? His mercies are new every morning and fresh every evening. Who can know the number of his benefits, or recount the list of his bounties? Every sand which drops from the glass of time is but the tardy follower of a myriad of mercies. The wings of our hours are covered with the silver of his kindness, and with the yellow gold of his affection. The river of time bears from the mountains of eternity the golden sands of his favour. The countless stars are but as the standard bearers of a more innumerable host of blessings. Who can count the dust of the benefits which he bestows on Jacob, or tell the number of the fourth part of his mercies towards Israel?

How shall my soul extol him who daily loadeth us with benefits, and who crowneth us with loving-kindness? O that my praise could be as ceaseless as his bounty! O miserable tongue, how canst thou be silent? Wake up, I pray thee, lest I call thee no more my glory, but my shame.

“Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake right early.”

# Word Live – 5/16/23

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

# Scripture Union – 5/16/23

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

# Today in the Word – 5/16/23

# A Chain of Sin

**Read:** [**1 Kings 15:25–16:20**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+15%3a25%e2%80%9316%3a20)

### Nadab King of Israel

25Nadab son of Jeroboam became king of Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. 26He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the ways of his father and committing the same sin his father had caused Israel to commit.

27Baasha son of Ahijah from the tribe of Issachar plotted against him, and he struck him down at Gibbethon, a Philistine town, while Nadab and all Israel were besieging it. 28Baasha killed Nadab in the third year of Asa king of Judah and succeeded him as king.

29As soon as he began to reign, he killed Jeroboam’s whole family. He did not leave Jeroboam anyone that breathed, but destroyed them all, according to the word of the Lord given through his servant Ahijah the Shilonite. 30This happened because of the sins Jeroboam had committed and had caused Israel to commit, and because he aroused the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel.

31As for the other events of Nadab’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? 32There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel throughout their reigns.

### Baasha King of Israel

33In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah became king of all Israel in Tirzah, and he reigned twenty-four years. 34He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the ways of Jeroboam and committing the same sin Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit.

16 Then the word of the Lord came to Jehu son of Hanani concerning Baasha: 2“I lifted you up from the dust and appointed you ruler over my people Israel, but you followed the ways of Jeroboam and caused my people Israel to sin and to arouse my anger by their sins. 3So I am about to wipe out Baasha and his house, and I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat. 4Dogs will eat those belonging to Baasha who die in the city, and birds will feed on those who die in the country.”

5As for the other events of Baasha’s reign, what he did and his achievements, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? 6Baasha rested with his ancestors and was buried in Tirzah. And Elah his son succeeded him as king.

7Moreover, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani to Baasha and his house, because of all the evil he had done in the eyes of the Lord, arousing his anger by the things he did, becoming like the house of Jeroboam—and also because he destroyed it.

### Elah King of Israel

8In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah son of Baasha became king of Israel, and he reigned in Tirzah two years.

9Zimri, one of his officials, who had command of half his chariots, plotted against him. Elah was in Tirzah at the time, getting drunk in the home of Arza, the palace administrator at Tirzah. 10Zimri came in, struck him down and killed him in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah. Then he succeeded him as king.

11As soon as he began to reign and was seated on the throne, he killed off Baasha’s whole family. He did not spare a single male, whether relative or friend. 12So Zimri destroyed the whole family of Baasha, in accordance with the word of the Lord spoken against Baasha through the prophet Jehu— 13because of all the sins Baasha and his son Elah had committed and had caused Israel to commit, so that they aroused the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel, by their worthless idols.

14As for the other events of Elah’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel?

### Zimri King of Israel

15In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned in Tirzah seven days. The army was encamped near Gibbethon, a Philistine town. 16When the Israelites in the camp heard that Zimri had plotted against the king and murdered him, they proclaimed Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that very day there in the camp. 17Then Omri and all the Israelites with him withdrew from Gibbethon and laid siege to Tirzah. 18When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the royal palace and set the palace on fire around him. So he died, 19because of the sins he had committed, doing evil in the eyes of the Lord and following the ways of Jeroboam and committing the same sin Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit.

20As for the other events of Zimri’s reign, and the rebellion he carried out, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel?

We would like to think that we learn from our mistakes. Unfortunately, we often repeat them again and again. In 1 Kings, we witness a generational chain of sin where no one seemed to learn from failures.

He did evil in the eyes of the LORD. 1 Kings 15:26

In chapter 15, after the story of Asa, our attention is directed back to the Kingdom of Israel. Jeroboam’s son, Nadab, had risen to the throne, but he was wicked, following the practices of his father and leading Israel astray (v. 25). As a result, Baasha, from Issachar, assassinated him and his entire household. This was God’s judgment for erecting the golden calves (12:28).

Baasha, who replaced Nadab, was wicked as well, and God condemned him for squandering the opportunity and leading like Jeroboam (15:33–34). The king led the people to sin (16:2). For this, Baasha’s entire line would be extinguished. This might seem especially harsh, but leaders have a critical role to play in the lives of their followers. Those who lead others to violate the first commandment are to be held accountable.

But the problems didn’t stop there! Baasha’s son, Elah, would reign two years (v. 8) before he too was assassinated by Zimri who went on to destroy Baasha’s entire line. Eventually, Zimri was assassinated by Omri, after reigning for just seven days (v. 15). With Zimri dead, half of the nation followed Tibni while the rest followed Omri. Eventually, Tibni was killed and Omri was crowned king. He would rule for 12 years.

What should we learn from this period of instability and chaos? First, we see the far-reaching consequence of Jeroboam’s sins. The decision to turn from the Lord led to complete chaos. But we must remember that while God was disciplining them, He had not abandoned them.

**Apply the Word**

Are you experiencing chaos? Ask God to reveal to you any sin that needs confessing. Once you are right with God, lean on His promised faithfulness and know that He is with you, even in times of confusion. We have a righteous leader in King Jesus.

## Pray with Us

You are always gracious to forgive us when we repent. Therefore, we ask You to convict us of our wrongdoing. We confess our sins to You openly, asking You to forgive us and to strengthen us to resist sin in future.

### BY Dr. Steven H. Sanchez

# Our Daily Bread – 5/16/23

# Who Am I?

 **Read:** [**John 1:6–13**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.6%E2%80%9313)

6There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

9The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

To all who did receive him . . . [Jesus] gave the right to become children of God. [John 1:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.12)

In 1859, Joshua Abraham Norton declared himself Emperor of the United States. Norton had made—and lost—his fortune in San Francisco shipping, but he wanted a new identity: America’s first emperor. When the San Francisco Evening Bulletin printed “Emperor” Norton’s announcement, most readers laughed. Norton made pronouncements aimed at correcting society’s ills, printed his own currency, and even wrote letters to Queen Victoria asking her to marry him and unite their kingdoms. He wore royal military uniforms designed by local tailors. One observer said Norton looked “every inch a king.” But of course, he wasn’t. We don’t get to make up who we are.

Many of us spend years searching for who we are and wondering what value we possess. We flail, trying to name or define ourselves, when only God can truly tell us the truth about who we are. And, thankfully, He calls us His sons and daughters when we receive salvation in His Son, Jesus. “Yet to all who did receive him,” John writes, “he gave the right to become children of God” ([John 1:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.12)). And this identity is purely a gift. We are His beloved “children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision . . . but born of God” (v. 13).

God gives us our name and our identity in Christ. We can stop striving and comparing ourselves to others, because He tells us who we are.

By:  [Winn Collier](https://odb.org/author/wcollier/)

#### Reflect & Pray

How do you know you’re chosen by God? How does being His child help you understand your true identity?

God, I know that I’m Yours. Help me feel confidence in knowing that I’m born of You—a child of the King.

Learn more about [your identity in Christ through salvation.](https://odbu.org/topic/sf130-01-lecture/?utm_source=2023+05+16+ODB+Article&utm_medium=Digital+link&utm_campaign=2023+05+16+ODB+Article+-+Union+with+Christ&utm_id=2023+05+16+ODB+Article+-+Union+with+Christ)

#### Insight

The Gospels are witnesses to the life and work of Jesus during His incarnation on earth. However, three of the four gospels begin with discussions of John the Baptist ([Mark 1:1–8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%201.1%E2%80%938); [Luke 1:8–25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%201.8%E2%80%9325), [57–80](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%201.57%E2%80%9380); [John 1:6–13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.6%E2%80%9313)). Here, in [John 1:6–13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%201.6%E2%80%9313), he’s described as a “witness to the light” (v. 8), but it’s made clear that he himself was not that light—Jesus was. Later, in 3:27–30, John the Baptist himself corrected any misconceptions that he was the Messiah. Using the metaphor of a wedding, he affirmed that he was not the bridegroom but the “friend who attends the bridegroom” (v. 29). Today, this is what we would call the best man. In Jesus’ words, there “is no one greater than John” ([Luke 7:28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Luke%207.28)). He still, however, wasn’t the Messiah. Jesus was.

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

# God Calling – 5/16/23

# Pray and Praise

I will be much entreated because I know that only in that earnest supplication, and the calm trust that results, does man learn strength and gain peace.  Therefore I have laid that incessant, persistent pleading as a duty upon My disciples.

Never weary in prayer.  When one day man sees how marvelously his prayer has been answered, then he will deeply, so deeply, regret that he prayed so little.

Prayer changes all. Prayer re-creates.  Prayer is irresistible.  So pray, literally without ceasing.

Pray until you almost cease to pray, because trust has become so rock-like, and then pray on because it has become so much a habit that you cannot resist it.

And always pray until Prayer merges into Praise.  That is the only note on which true prayer should end.  It is the Love and Laughter of your attitude towards man interpreted in the Pray and Praise of your attitude towards God.

Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.  Luke 18:1

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/17/23

# His Ascension and Our Access



It came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. —[Luke 24:51](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+24%3A51)

We have no experiences in our lives that correspond to the events in our Lord’s life after the transfiguration. From that moment forward His life was altogether substitutionary. Up to the time of the transfiguration, He had exhibited the normal, perfect life of a man. But from the transfiguration forward— Gethsemane, the Cross, the resurrection— everything is unfamiliar to us. His Cross is the door by which every member of the human race can enter into the life of God; by His resurrection He has the right to give eternal life to anyone, and by His ascension our Lord entered heaven, keeping the door open for humanity.

The transfiguration was completed on the Mount of Ascension. If Jesus had gone to heaven directly from the Mount of Transfiguration, He would have gone alone. He would have been nothing more to us than a glorious Figure. But He turned His back on the glory, and came down from the mountain to identify Himself with fallen humanity.

The ascension is the complete fulfillment of the transfiguration. Our Lord returned to His original glory, but not simply as the Son of God— He returned to His father as the Son of Man as well. There is now freedom of access for anyone straight to the very throne of God because of the ascension of the Son of Man. As the Son of Man, Jesus Christ deliberately limited His omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. But now they are His in absolute, full power. As the Son of Man, Jesus Christ now has all the power at the throne of God. From His ascension forward He is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

We should always choose our books as God chooses our friends, just a bit beyond us, so that we have to do our level best to keep up with them. Shade of His Hand, 1216 L

# CCEL – 5/17/23

I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them.—[EZEK. 20:19.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.20.html#Ezek.20.19)

As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.—He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.—Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.—Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.—Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—The God of peace, . . . make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.

[I Pet. 1:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html#iPet.1.15). -[I John 2:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html#iJohn.2.6),[29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html#iJohn.2.29). -[I Cor. 7:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.7.html#iCor.7.19). -[Jas. 2:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.2.html#Jas.2.10).[II Cor. 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.3.html#iiCor.3.5). -[Psa. 119:33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html#Ps.119.33).[Phi. 2:12,13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html#Phil.2.12). -[Heb. 13:20,21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html#Heb.13.20).

“So to walk even as he walked.” [1 John 2:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html#iJohn.2.6)

Why should Christians imitate Christ? They should do it for their own sakes. If they desire to be in a healthy state of soul—if they would escape the sickness of sin, and enjoy the vigour of growing grace, let Jesus be their model. For their own happiness’ sake, if they would drink wine on the lees, well refined; if they would enjoy holy and happy communion with Jesus; if they would be lifted up above the cares and troubles of this world, let them walk even as he walked. There is nothing which can so assist you to walk towards heaven with good speed, as wearing the image of Jesus on your heart to rule all its motions. It is when, by the power of the Holy Spirit, you are enabled to walk with Jesus in his very footsteps, that you are most happy, and most known to be the sons of God. Peter afar off is both unsafe and uneasy. Next, for religion’s sake, strive to be like Jesus. Ah! poor religion, thou hast been sorely shot at by cruel foes, but thou hast not been wounded one-half so dangerously by thy foes as by thy friends. Who made those wounds in the fair hand of Godliness? The professor who used the dagger of hypocrisy. The man who with pretences, enters the fold, being nought but a wolf in sheep’s clothing, worries the flock more than the lion outside. There is no weapon half so deadly as a Judas-kiss. Inconsistent professors injure the gospel more than the sneering critic or the infidel. But, especially for Christ’s own sake, imitate his example. Christian, lovest thou thy Saviour? Is his name precious to thee? Is his cause dear to thee? Wouldst thou see the kingdoms of the world become his? Is it thy desire that he should be glorified? Art thou longing that souls should be won to him? If so, imitate Jesus; be an “epistle of Christ, known and read of all men.”

# Word Live – 5/17/23

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

# Scripture Union – 5/17/23

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

# Today in the Word – 5/17/23

# Fame for the Wrong Reasons

**Read:** [**1 Kings 16:21–28**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+16%3a21%e2%80%9328)

### Omri King of Israel

21Then the people of Israel were split into two factions; half supported Tibni son of Ginath for king, and the other half supported Omri. 22But Omri’s followers proved stronger than those of Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died and Omri became king.

23In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned twelve years, six of them in Tirzah. 24He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+16%3A21%E2%80%9328+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9308a)] of silver and built a city on the hill, calling it Samaria, after Shemer, the name of the former owner of the hill.

25But Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord and sinned more than all those before him. 26He followed completely the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat, committing the same sin Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit, so that they aroused the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel, by their worthless idols.

27As for the other events of Omri’s reign, what he did and the things he achieved, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? 28Omri rested with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria. And Ahab his son succeeded him as king.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Kings 16:24](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+16%3A21%E2%80%9328+&version=NIV#en-NIV-9308) That is, about 150 pounds or about 68 kilograms

In 1846 Austen Henry Layard discovered the Black Obelisk which contained the earliest known depictions of a biblical figure. It depicts King Jehu, described as a son of Omri. The monument was carved by the Assyrians and found far from the land of Israel. Why would the name Omri be known beyond Israel’s borders?

The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart. 1 Samuel 16:7

Omri was famous, but for all the wrong reasons. Omri became king during civil conflict which split Israel into “two factions” (v. 21). When the previous king was assassinated, half of the country followed Omri, while the other half followed Tibni. When Omri’s faction overtook his opponent, he became king over both divisions. During his reign, Israel’s power expanded beyond its borders. He established Samaria as the capital city until it was destroyed in 722 BC (v. 24). The country he left to his son was recognized as a military power.

Yet for all his fame, Omri was wicked, and his 12-year reign was summarized in just eight verses. The judgment is that “he sinned more than all those before him” (v. 25). What did he do? He followed in the sins of Jeroboam (v. 26).

Decades after Jeroboam built the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, they were still a temptation to the kings who followed him. Once again God’s people turned to “worthless idols” (v. 26).

Though Omri was a stabilizing figure for Israel in many respects, his soul was rotten. He may have been renowned across the ancient Near East, but to God who put him on the throne, his reign was noted for its evil acts.

**Apply the Word**

What would you like to be known for? In our modern society, being known or influential is a highly prized characteristic. We spend a great deal of time trying to get people to notice and admire us. But it is important to remember that while people look on our outer reputation, God sees our heart (1 Sam. 16:7).

## Pray with Us

Though You see each evil thought and desire we entertain, You love us deeply and sacrificially. Lord, if we are known by the world at all, may we be known for our devotion to You.

### BY Dr. Steven H. Sanchez

# Our Daily Bread – 5/17/23

# God Remembers Names

 **Read:** [**Isaiah 43:1–7**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.1%E2%80%937)

### Israel’s Only Savior

43 But now, this is what the Lord says—  
    he who created you, Jacob,  
    he who formed you, Israel:  
“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
    I have summoned you by name; you are mine.  
2When you pass through the waters,  
    I will be with you;  
and when you pass through the rivers,  
    they will not sweep over you.  
When you walk through the fire,  
    you will not be burned;  
    the flames will not set you ablaze.  
3For I am the Lord your God,  
    the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;  
I give Egypt for your ransom,  
    Cush[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+43%3A1%E2%80%937&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18509a)] and Seba in your stead.  
4Since you are precious and honored in my sight,  
    and because I love you,  
I will give people in exchange for you,  
    nations in exchange for your life.  
5Do not be afraid, for I am with you;  
    I will bring your children from the east  
    and gather you from the west.  
6I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’  
    and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’  
Bring my sons from afar  
    and my daughters from the ends of the earth—  
7everyone who is called by my name,  
    whom I created for my glory,  
    whom I formed and made.”

#### Footnotes

1. [Isaiah 43:3](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+43%3A1%E2%80%937&version=NIV#en-NIV-18509) That is, the upper Nile region

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. [Isaiah 43:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.1)

The Sunday after I’d started working as a youth leader at a church and had met several of the young people, I spoke to a teen seated next to her mom. As I greeted the shy girl with a smile, I said her name and asked how she was doing. She lifted her head and her beautiful brown eyes widened. She too smiled and said in a small voice: “You remembered my name.” By simply calling that young girl by name—a girl who may have felt insignificant in a church filled with adults—I began a relationship of trust. She felt seen and valued.

In [Isaiah 43](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043), God is using the prophet Isaiah to convey a similar message to the Israelites: they were seen and valued. Even through captivity and time in the wilderness, God saw them and knew them “by name” (v. 1). They were not strangers; they belonged to Him. Even though they may have felt abandoned, they were “precious,” and His “love” was with them (v. 4). And along with the reminder that God knew them by name, He shared all that He would do for them, especially during trying times. When they went through trials, He would be with them (v. 2). They didn’t need to be afraid or worried since God remembered their names.

God knows each of His children’s names—and that’s good news, especially as we pass through the deep, difficult waters in life.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What trials are you facing these days? How can focusing on the fact that God knows you by name help you walk through trying times with confidence?

Thank You for knowing me by name, dear God.

#### Insight

God warned the Israelites that He’d use foreign armies to discipline them for their covenantal unfaithfulness. In 722 bc, the Assyrians destroyed Samaria, and the Northern Kingdom of Israel was exiled (see [Isaiah 7:18–25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%207.18%E2%80%9325); [10:3–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isaiah%2010.3%E2%80%936); [2 Kings 17:6–24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Kings%2017.6%E2%80%9324)). In 586 bc, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians and the Southern Kingdom of Judah was exiled (see [Isaiah 39:6–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2039.6%E2%80%937); [2 Kings 20:12–19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Kings%2020.12%E2%80%9319)). Despite God’s harsh and severe discipline, God reminded the Israelites that as His chosen people they had an unbreakable bond with Him and assured them of His unfailing love: “You are precious and honored in my sight, and . . . I love you” ([Isaiah 43:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.4)). God’s discipline isn’t inconsistent with His love: “The Lord disciplines those he loves” ([Proverbs 3:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%203.12); see [Job 5:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Job%205.17); [Hebrews 12:5–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Heb%2012.5%E2%80%936)). Though His people remained unfaithful and unrepentant, God in His mercy had purposed to forgive them of their sins ([Isaiah 43:22–25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2043.22%E2%80%9325)).

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

# God Calling – 5/17/23

# Sorrow into Joy

“Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”

My bravest are those who can anticipate the morning and feel in the night of sorrow that underlying Joy that tells of confident expectations of the morning.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep,  that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 1 Thessalonians 4:11

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/18/23

# Living Simply— Yet Focused



Look at the birds of the air….Consider the lilies of the field… —[Matthew 6:26, 28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+6%3A26%2C+28)

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin”— they simply are! Think of the sea, the air, the sun, the stars, and the moon— all of these simply are as well— yet what a ministry and service they render on our behalf! So often we impair God’s designed influence, which He desires to exhibit through us, because of our own conscious efforts to be consistent and useful. Jesus said there is only one way to develop and grow spiritually, and that is through focusing and concentrating on God. In essence, Jesus was saying, “Do not worry about being of use to others; simply believe on Me.” In other words, pay attention to the Source, and out of you “will flow rivers of living water” ([John 7:38](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:38)). We cannot discover the source of our natural life through common sense and reasoning, and Jesus is teaching here that growth in our spiritual life comes not from focusing directly on it, but from concentrating on our Father in heaven. Our heavenly Father knows our circumstances, and if we will stay focused on Him, instead of our circumstances, we will grow spiritually— just as “the lilies of the field.”

The people who influence us the most are not those who detain us with their continual talk, but those who live their lives like the stars in the sky and “the lilies of the field”— simply and unaffectedly. Those are the lives that mold and shape us.

If you want to be of use to God, maintain the proper relationship with Jesus Christ by staying focused on Him, and He will make use of you every minute you live— yet you will be unaware, on the conscious level of your life, that you are being used of Him.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

There is no condition of life in which we cannot abide in Jesus. We have to learn to abide in Him wherever we are placed.  Our Brilliant Heritage, 946 R

# CCEL – 5/18/23

As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.—[JOHN 5:26.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.5.html#John.5.26)

Our Saviour Jesus Christ, . . . hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.—I am the resurrection, and the life.—Because I live, ye shall live also.—We are made partakers of Christ.—Partakers of the Holy Ghost.—Partakers of the divine nature.—The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.—Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.—Who liveth for ever and ever.—The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality.—Unto the King eternal, immortal, . . . be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[II Tim. 1:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.1.html#iiTim.1.10). -[John 11:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.11.html#John.11.25). -[John 14:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html#John.14.19). -[Heb. 3:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.3.html#Heb.3.14). -[Heb. 6:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.6.html#Heb.6.4). –[II Pet. 1:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.1.html#iiPet.1.4). -[I Cor. 15:45](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html#iCor.15.45),[51,52](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.15.html#iCor.15.51).[Rev. 4:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.4.html#Rev.4.8). -[Rev. 4:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.4.html#Rev.4.9). -[I Tim. 6:15,16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.6.html#iTim.6.15). -[I Tim. 1:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.1.html#iTim.1.17).

“In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him.” [Colossians 2:9, 10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.2.html#Col.2.9)

All the attributes of Christ, as God and man, are at our disposal. All the fulness of the Godhead, whatever that marvellous term may comprehend, is ours to make us complete. He cannot endow us with the attributes of Deity; but he has done all that can be done, for he has made even his divine power and Godhead subservient to our salvation. His omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, immutability and infallibility, are all combined for our defence. Arise, believer, and behold the Lord Jesus yoking the whole of his divine Godhead to the chariot of salvation! How vast his grace, how firm his faithfulness, how unswerving his immutability, how infinite his power, how limitless his knowledge! All these are by the Lord Jesus made the pillars of the temple of salvation; and all, without diminution of their infinity, are covenanted to us as our perpetual inheritance. The fathomless love of the Saviour’s heart is every drop of it ours; every sinew in the arm of might, every jewel in the crown of majesty, the immensity of divine knowledge, and the sternness of divine justice, all are ours, and shall be employed for us. The whole of Christ, in his adorable character as the Son of God, is by himself made over to us most richly to enjoy. His wisdom is our direction, his knowledge our instruction, his power our protection, his justice our surety, his love our comfort, his mercy our solace, and his immutability our trust. He makes no reserve, but opens the recesses of the Mount of God and bids us dig in its mines for the hidden treasures. “All, all, all are yours,” saith he, “be ye satisfied with favour and full of the goodness of the Lord.” Oh! how sweet thus to behold Jesus, and to call upon him with the certain confidence that in seeking the interposition of his love or power, we are but asking for that which he has already faithfully promised.

# Word Live – 5/18/23

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

# Scripture Union – 5/18/23

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

# Today in the Word – 5/18/23

# A Pivotal Moment

**Read:** [**1 Kings 16:29–34**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+16%3a29%e2%80%9334)

### Ahab Becomes King of Israel

29In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years. 30Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him. 31He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. 32He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. 33Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to arouse the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel, than did all the kings of Israel before him.

34In Ahab’s time, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. He laid its foundations at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram, and he set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, in accordance with the word of the Lord spoken by Joshua son of Nun.

In his article, “Evolving Ideas of Sin,” Rich Barlow observes: “’Sin’ is in the eye of the beholder, and our society is richly multiperspectival: we don’t have a single definition of anything, ‘sin’ included.” What happens when we do not believe God defines right and wrong?

I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. Isaiah 13:11

We see the answer in the life of King Ahab. During his 22-year reign “Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him” (v. 30). After marrying Jezebel, a Sidonian princess, Ahab formally sanctioned Baal worship in Israel. Jezebel was a Baal worshiper and Ahab supported her to the point of constructing a shrine for Baal and an Asherah pole (vv. 32–33).

It is hard to ignore the impact of this moment on Israel’s history. The nation was teetering on a knife edge. None of its kings had been righteous—not a single one! Its history had been characterized by violence, chaos, and increasing theological drift. Now their king was partnering with his wife to draw Israel into worship of a rival deity.

Baal was worshiped by the nations in the eastern Mediterranean, in particular the Canaanites and Phoenicians. They believed Baal controlled life, fertility, the weather, and more. They worshiped him in ceremonies and activities that were an affront to the God of Israel. This was one of the religions God commanded Israel to eradicate. They failed to do so during the days of the judges and now Baal worship was becoming a regular part of life. These were dark days indeed. It is no surprise that God would take extraordinary measures to bring His people back to him!

**Apply the Word**

We don’t talk a great deal about evil in our modern world. We tend to see things in shades of gray, rather than black and white. But God has clearly stated what is right and what is wrong. We should learn from Ahab’s example never to compromise when it comes to sin.

## Pray with Us

“The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous... By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward” (Ps. 19:9–11).

### BY Dr. Steven H. Sanchez

# Our Daily Bread – 5/18/23

# Grandmother Research

 **Read:** [**Zephaniah 3:17–20**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Zeph%203.17%E2%80%9320)

17The Lord your God is with you,  
    the Mighty Warrior who saves.  
He will take great delight in you;  
    in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
    but will rejoice over you with singing.”

18“I will remove from you  
    all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals,  
    which is a burden and reproach for you.  
19At that time I will deal  
    with all who oppressed you.  
I will rescue the lame;  
    I will gather the exiles.  
I will give them praise and honor  
    in every land where they have suffered shame.  
20At that time I will gather you;  
    at that time I will bring you home.  
I will give you honor and praise  
    among all the peoples of the earth  
when I restore your fortunes[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Zephaniah+3%3A17%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#fen-NIV-22841a)]  
    before your very eyes,”  
says the Lord.

#### Footnotes

1. [Zephaniah 3:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Zephaniah+3%3A17%E2%80%9320&version=NIV#en-NIV-22841) Or I bring back your captives

He will take great delight in you. [Zephaniah 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Zeph%203.17)

Researchers at Emory University used MRI scans to study the brains of grandmothers. They measured empathetic responses to images that included their own grandchild, their own adult child, and one anonymous child. The study showed that grandmothers have a higher empathy toward their own grandchild than even their own adult child. This is attributed to what they call the “cute factor”—their own grandchild being more “adorable” than the adult.

Before we say, “Well, duh!” we might consider the words of James Rilling, who conducted the study: “If their grandchild is smiling, [the grandmother is] feeling the child’s joy. And if their grandchild is crying, they’re feeling the child’s pain and distress.”

One prophet paints an “MRI image” of God’s feelings as He looks upon His people: “He will take great delight in you; in his love he will . . . rejoice over you with singing” ([Zephaniah 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Zeph%203.17)). Some translate this to say, “You will make His heart full of joy, and He will sing loudly.” Like an empathetic grandmother, God feels our pain: “In all their distress he too was distressed” ([Isaiah 63:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Isa%2063.9)), and He feels our joy: “The Lord takes delight in his people” ([Psalm 149:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20149.4)).

When we feel discouraged, it’s good to remember that God has real feelings for us. He’s not a cold, far away God, but One who loves and delights in us. It’s time to draw close to Him, feel His smile—and listen to His singing.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How have you felt the pleasure of God? How does this make you feel?

Dear God, help me to feel Your smile upon me.

#### Insight

Zephaniah’s message is predominantly one of judgment. Chapter 1 aims this harsh message at the whole world (vv. 2–3), but Jerusalem and Judah are singled out for their idolatry (vv. 4–6). [Zephaniah 2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Zeph%202) targets specific nations (vv. 4–15), and, again, Judah is included. The prophet calls them a “shameful nation” and makes a heartfelt appeal for them to repent “before the Lord’s fierce anger comes upon [them]” (vv. 1–2). In [Zephaniah 3:1–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Zeph%203.1%E2%80%937), the prophet zeroes in on Jerusalem for its corrupt leadership. But verses 8–20 show how God’s eternal hope rises out of the ashes of judgment. “Wait for me,” God says (v. 8). After His judgment is complete, God will enable the people to call upon His name (v. 9). “Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,” He tells them through His prophet. “The Lord has taken away your punishment” (vv. 14–15).

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

# God Calling – 5/18/23

# New and Vital Power

“Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”   Not for merit was salvation, the promise was to all who looked.

To look is surely within the Power of everyone.  One look suffices. Salvation follows.

Look and you are saved from despair.  Look and you are saved from care. Look and you are saved from worry. Look, and into you there flows a peace beyond all understanding, a Power new and vital, a Joy wonderful indeed.

Look and keep looking. Doubt flees, Joy reigns, and Hope conquers.

Life, Eternal Life, is yours – revitalizing, renewing.

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.  John 10:10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/19/23

# Out of the Wreck I Rise



Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? —[Romans 8:35](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+8%3A35)

God does not keep His child immune from trouble; He promises, “I will be with him in trouble…” ([Psalm 91:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+91:15)). It doesn’t matter how real or intense the adversities may be; nothing can ever separate him from his relationship to God. “In all these things we are more than conquerors…” ([Romans 8:37](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8:37)). Paul was not referring here to imaginary things, but to things that are dangerously real. And he said we are “super-victors” in the midst of them, not because of our own ingenuity, nor because of our courage, but because none of them affects our essential relationship with God in Jesus Christ. I feel sorry for the Christian who doesn’t have something in the circumstances of his life that he wishes were not there.

“Shall tribulation…?” Tribulation is never a grand, highly welcomed event; but whatever it may be— whether exhausting, irritating, or simply causing some weakness— it is not able to “separate us from the love of Christ.” Never allow tribulations or the “cares of this world” to separate you from remembering that God loves you ([Matthew 13:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+13:22)).

“Shall…distress…?” Can God’s love continue to hold fast, even when everyone and everything around us seems to be saying that His love is a lie, and that there is no such thing as justice?

“Shall…famine…?” Can we not only believe in the love of God but also be “more than conquerors,” even while we are being starved?

Either Jesus Christ is a deceiver, having deceived even Paul, or else some extraordinary thing happens to someone who holds on to the love of God when the odds are totally against him. Logic is silenced in the face of each of these things which come against him. Only one thing can account for it— the love of God in Christ Jesus. “Out of the wreck I rise” every time.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The message of the prophets is that although they have forsaken God, it has not altered God. The Apostle Paul emphasizes the same truth, that God remains God even when we are unfaithful (see 2 Timothy 2:13). Never interpret God as changing with our changes. He never does; there is no variableness in Him.  Notes on Ezekiel, 1477 L

# CCEL – 5/19/23

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity.—[PSA. 51:2.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.51.html" \l "Ps.51.2)

I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.—Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.—If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

He saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.—Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

[Jer. 33:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.33.html#Jer.33.8). -[Ezek. 36:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.36.html#Ezek.36.25).[John 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.3.html#John.3.5). -[Heb. 9:13,14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.9.html#Heb.9.13).[Psa. 106:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.106.html#Ps.106.8). -[Psa. 115:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.115.html#Ps.115.1).

“I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.” [Ecclesiastes 10:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eccl.10.html#Eccl.10.7)

Upstarts frequently usurp the highest places, while the truly great pine in obscurity. This is a riddle in providence whose solution will one day gladden the hearts of the upright; but it is so common a fact, that none of us should murmur if it should fall to our own lot. When our Lord was upon earth, although he is the Prince of the kings of the earth, yet he walked the footpath of weariness and service as the Servant of servants: what wonder is it if his followers, who are princes of the blood, should also be looked down upon as inferior and contemptible persons? The world is upside down, and therefore, the first are last and the last first. See how the servile sons of Satan lord it in the earth! What a high horse they ride! How they lift up their horn on high! Haman is in the court, while Mordecai sits in the gate; David wanders on the mountains, while Saul reigns in state; Elijah is complaining in the cave while Jezebel is boasting in the palace; yet who would wish to take the places of the proud rebels? and who, on the other hand, might not envy the despised saints? When the wheel turns, those who are lowest rise, and the highest sink. Patience, then, believer, eternity will right the wrongs of time.

Let us not fall into the error of letting our passions and carnal appetites ride in triumph, while our nobler powers walk in the dust. Grace must reign as a prince, and make the members of the body instruments of righteousness. The Holy Spirit loves order, and he therefore sets our powers and faculties in due rank and place, giving the highest room to those spiritual faculties which link us with the great King; let us not disturb the divine arrangement, but ask for grace that we may keep under our body and bring it into subjection. We were not new created to allow our passions to rule over us, but that we, as kings, may reign in Christ Jesus over the triple kingdom of spirit, soul, and body, to the glory of God the Father.

# Word Live – 5/19/23

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

# Scripture Union – 5/19/23

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

# Today in the Word – 5/19/23

# Who Is in Charge?

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

### Elijah Announces a Great Drought

17 Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+17%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9319a)] in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.”

### Elijah Fed by Ravens

2Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: 3“Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. 4You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there.”

5So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. 6The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

### Elijah and the Widow at Zarephath

7Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. 8Then the word of the Lord came to him: 9“Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.” 10So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” 11As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.”

12“As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.”

13Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. 14For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.’”

15She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. 16For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Kings 17:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+17%3A1%E2%80%9316+&version=NIV#en-NIV-9319) Or Tishbite, of the settlers

In the 1930s, the Dust Bowl battered the southern plains of the United States. High winds and choking dust were sweeping across farmland from Texas to Nebraska for nearly six years, killing people and livestock and devastating crops.

Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. Deuteronomy 11:16

In 1 Kings 17, we read that a devastating drought had come to Israel. The prophet Elijah explains that this was ordered by God (v. 1). As a result of the idolatrous practices of Ahab and Jezebel, Israel had come to believe that Baal controlled the essential elements of life: the rain, the fertility of land, man and beast, life and death. They knew the one true God, yet they had abandoned Him.

In response, God took steps to bring His people back to Himself. First, He raised up a prophet, Elijah, and second, He stopped the rain. Israel had seen prophets before, but stopping the rain was new. Yet it was a fulfillment of a threat God made in the covenant at Sinai (Deut. 11:16–17).

The lack of rain demonstrated that God was in control of all things. They had been warned in love, now they would experience His discipline. But the Lord also provided a prophet to point the people back to Him. Elijah would call the people to repentance and faithfulness.

God’s care for Elijah by providing water and bread is not only a miracle, but also points to His loving care (vv. 4–5). He saw the prophet’s condition and cared for him. In addition, we see the faith of the widow at Zarephath who would give the smallest bit she had in obedience to God. In return, she also witnessed a miracle—“there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family” (v. 15).

**Apply the Word**

God’s provision for Elijah and the widow, even in the midst of a drought, is a beautiful example of how He cares for us. God sees your need. He loves you. He will provide for you.

## Pray with Us

Today we pray for people with big financial needs. Lord, please provide abundantly for them so they know the gift comes from You and no other. If you want to provide for someone through us, point us in the right direction!

### BY Dr. Steven H. Sanchez

# Our Daily Bread – 5/19/23

# You Are Heard

 **Read:** [**Psalm 116:1–7**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20116.1%E2%80%937)

1I love the Lord, for he heard my voice;  
    he heard my cry for mercy.  
2Because he turned his ear to me,  
    I will call on him as long as I live.

3The cords of death entangled me,  
    the anguish of the grave came over me;  
    I was overcome by distress and sorrow.  
4Then I called on the name of the Lord:  
    “Lord, save me!”

5The Lord is gracious and righteous;  
    our God is full of compassion.  
6The Lord protects the unwary;  
    when I was brought low, he saved me.

7Return to your rest, my soul,  
    for the Lord has been good to you.

He turned his ear to me. [Psalm 116:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20116.2)

In the book Physics, Charles Riborg Mann and George Ransom Twiss ask: “When a tree falls in a lonely forest, and no animal is nearby to hear it, does it make a sound?” Over the years, this question has prompted philosophical and scientific discussions about sound, perception, and existence. A definitive answer, however, has yet to emerge.

One night, while feeling lonely and sad about a problem I hadn’t shared with anyone, I recalled this question. When no one hears my cry for help, I thought, does God hear?

Facing the threat of death and overcome by distress, the writer of [Psalm 116](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20116) may have felt abandoned. So he called out to God—knowing He was listening and would help him. “He heard my voice,” the psalmist wrote, “he heard my cry for mercy. . . . [He] turned his ear to me” (vv. 1–2). When no one knows our pain, God knows. When no one hears our cries, God hears.

Knowing that God will show us His love and protection (vv. 5–6), we can be at rest in difficult times (v. 7). The Hebrew word translated “rest” (manoakh) describes a place of quiet and safety. We can be at peace, strengthened by the assurance of God’s presence and help.

The question posed by Mann and Twiss led to numerous answers. But the answer to the question, Does God hear? is simply yes.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What do you do when you’re feeling alone or abandoned? What will you ask God, who hears your every cry and cares for you?

Father, thank You for always hearing the cries of my heart. Your help and presence are my rest.

#### Insight

[Psalm 116](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20116) is one of six praise songs ([Psalms 113–118](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20113%E2%80%93118)) collectively known as the “Egyptian Hallel.” The Hebrew root word halal means “to praise,” and “Egyptian” is a designation that these songs were sung during the Passover remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian slavery. [Psalms 113–114](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20113%E2%80%93114) are recited before the Passover meal and [Psalms 115–118](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20115%E2%80%93118) afterward. The hymn that Jesus and the disciples sang after the Last Supper would probably be one of these psalms ([Mark 14:26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Mark%2014.26)).

In [Psalm 116](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20116), the author writes of his near-death experience (vv. 3–4) and celebrates his deliverance from the jaws of death (v. 8). In his musing about life and death, the psalmist assures us of God’s undying care and love, giving us precious comfort when facing death: “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants.” Or as one translation renders it, “The Lord cares deeply when his loved ones die” (v. 15 nlt).

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

# God Calling – 5/19/23

# Rescued and Guided

Rest knowing all is so safe in My Hands. Rest is Trust. Ceaseless activity is distrust. Without the knowledge that I am working for you, you do not rest. Inaction then would be the outcome of despair.

My Hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Know that, repeat it, rely on it, welcome the knowledge, delight in it. Such a truth is a hope flung to a drowning man. Every repetition of it is one pull nearer shore and safety.

Let that illustration teach you a great truth.  Lay hold of the truth, pray it, affirm it, hold on to the rope.  How foolish are your attempts to save yourself, one hand on the  rope, and one making efforts to swim ashore!  You may relinquish your hold of the rope and hinder the rescuer – who has to act with the greater caution lest he lose you.

The storms and tempests are not all of life.  The Psalmist who said “All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me” wrote also “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.”

Meditate upon that wonder – truth, the three steps safety, security, guidance.  (1) “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit” – Safety.  (2) “He set my feet upon a rock” – Security (3) “He established my goings” – Guidance. No. 3 is the final stage when the saved soul trusts Me so entirely it seeks no more its own way but leaves all future plans to Me its Rescuer.

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.  Deuteronomy 33:27

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/20/23

# Taking Possession of Our Own Soul



By your patience possess your souls. —[Luke 21:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Luke+21%3A19)

When a person is born again, there is a period of time when he does not have the same vitality in his thinking or reasoning that he previously had. We must learn to express this new life within us, which comes by forming the mind of Christ (see [Philippians 2:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+2:5)). [Luke 21:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+21:19) means that we take possession of our souls through patience. But many of us prefer to stay at the entrance to the Christian life, instead of going on to create and build our soul in accordance with the new life God has placed within us. We fail because we are ignorant of the way God has made us, and we blame things on the devil that are actually the result of our own undisciplined natures. Just think what we could be when we are awakened to the truth!

There are certain things in life that we need not pray about— moods, for instance. We will never get rid of moodiness by praying, but we will by kicking it out of our lives. Moods nearly always are rooted in some physical circumstance, not in our true inner self. It is a continual struggle not to listen to the moods which arise as a result of our physical condition, but we must never submit to them for a second. We have to pick ourselves up by the back of the neck and shake ourselves; then we will find that we can do what we believed we were unable to do. The problem that most of us are cursed with is simply that we won’t. The Christian life is one of spiritual courage and determination lived out in our flesh.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

Beware of bartering the Word of God for a more suitable conception of your own.  Disciples Indeed, 386 R

# CCEL – 5/20/23

Take heed unto thyself.—[I TIM. 4:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.4.html" \l "iTim.4.16)

Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.—Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against the flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.—For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.—Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

[I Cor. 9:25-27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.9.html#iCor.9.25). -[Eph. 6:11,12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.6.html#Eph.6.11).[Gal. 5:24,25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html#Gal.5.24). -[Rom. 8:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html#Rom.8.14). -[I Tim. 4:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.4.html#iTim.4.15).

“Marvellous lovingkindness.” [Psalm 17:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.17.html#Ps.17.7)

When we give our hearts with our alms, we give well, but we must often plead to a failure in this respect. Not so our Master and our Lord. His favours are always performed with the love of his heart. He does not send to us the cold meat and the broken pieces from the table of his luxury, but he dips our morsel in his own dish, and seasons our provisions with the spices of his fragrant affections. When he puts the golden tokens of his grace into our palms, he accompanies the gift with such a warm pressure of our hand, that the manner of his giving is as precious as the boon itself. He will come into our houses upon his errands of kindness, and he will not act as some austere visitors do in the poor man’s cottage, but he sits by our side, not despising our poverty, nor blaming our weakness. Beloved, with what smiles does he speak! What golden sentences drop from his gracious lips! What embraces of affection does he bestow upon us! If he had but given us farthings, the way of his giving would have gilded them; but as it is, the costly alms are set in a golden basket by his pleasant carriage. It is impossible to doubt the sincerity of his charity, for there is a bleeding heart stamped upon the face of all his benefactions. He giveth liberally and upbraideth not. Not one hint that we are burdensome to him; not one cold look for his poor pensioners; but he rejoices in his mercy, and presses us to his bosom while he is pouring out his life for us. There is a fragrance in his spikenard which nothing but his heart could produce; there is a sweetness in his honey-comb which could not be in it unless the very essence of his soul’s affection had been mingled with it. Oh! the rare communion which such singular heartiness effecteth! May we continually taste and know the blessedness of it!

# Word Live – 5/20/23

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# Scripture Union – 5/20/23

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# Today in the Word – 5/20/23

# God Raises the Dead

**Read:** [**1 Kings 17:17–24**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+17%3a17%e2%80%9324)

17Some time later the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. He grew worse and worse, and finally stopped breathing. 18She said to Elijah, “What do you have against me, man of God? Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?”

19“Give me your son,” Elijah replied. He took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his bed. 20Then he cried out to the Lord, “Lord my God, have you brought tragedy even on this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?” 21Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried out to the Lord, “Lord my God, let this boy’s life return to him!”

22The Lord heard Elijah’s cry, and the boy’s life returned to him, and he lived. 23Elijah picked up the child and carried him down from the room into the house. He gave him to his mother and said, “Look, your son is alive!”

24Then the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord from your mouth is the truth.”

There are many things in life that the modern world has learned to control. We can genetically modify crops. We are able stop disease. We can explore outer space. But we have yet to resurrect people from the dead! While it is true that we can sometimes resuscitate a dying person, after a certain point, even our highest medical skills fail.

Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is truth. 1 Kings 17:24

That is what makes resurrection such an overwhelming display of God’s power. After demonstrating His ability to care for His own prophet Elijah, by miraculously providing food for him and a widow, God creates another opportunity to declare He has power over life and death, and not Baal.

The son of the widow He just helped became ill and died suddenly. The woman interpreted this event as a punishment for some sin she had committed. Elijah took a different approach. Taking the child in his arms, he brought him before the Lord and asked for his life back (v. 21). Our modern minds struggle with this. Once death has come, we understand that there is no going back. There is nothing we can do! Yet in this Scripture passage we see that God’s power has not been exhausted.

The Creator of the universe has total control over everyone and everything, including life and death. Elijah prays to God, knowing what He can do! The child comes back to life, and his mother declares, “Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is truth” (v. 24).

Elijah’s credibility was established along with the power of God! This will be important as Elijah challenges God’s people to make a choice: Baal or Yahweh.

**Apply the Word**

Do you believe that God holds all power over life and death and everything in it? We may say that we hold this belief, but we often act as if outcomes are up to us. Today’s reading challenges us to place our most critical moments into the hands of the Creator of the universe.

## Pray with Us

We often hesitate to pray big prayers, fearing that unanswered prayer will shake our faith. First, may we know You more deeply, so that we can pray in accordance with Your will. Second, grant us unshakable faith, no matter what!

### BY Dr. Steven H. Sanchez

# Our Daily Bread – 5/20/23

# Keep in Touch

 **Read:** [**Matthew 6:5–9**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%206.5%E2%80%939)

### Prayer

5“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 6But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 7And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9“This, then, is how you should pray:

“‘Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

Pray to your Father. [Matthew 6:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%206.6)

Madeleine L’Engle made it a habit to call her mother once a week. As her mother moved into her later years, the beloved spiritual writer called more frequently, “just to keep in touch.” In the same way, Madeleine liked her children to call and maintain that connection. Sometimes it was a lengthy conversation filled with significant questions and answers. Other times a call simply making sure the number was still valid was sufficient. As she wrote in her book Walking on Water, “It is good for the children to keep in touch. It is good for all of us children to keep in touch with our Father.”

Most of us are familiar with the Lord’s Prayer in [Matthew 6:9–13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%206.9%E2%80%9313). But the verses that precede it are just as important, for they set the tone for what follows. Our prayers aren’t to be showy, “to be seen by others” (v. 5). And while there’s no limit on how long our prayers need to be, “many words” (v. 7) doesn’t automatically equate to quality prayer. The emphasis seems to be on maintaining regular contact with our Father who knows our need “before [we] ask him” (v. 8). Jesus stresses how good it is for us to keep in touch with our Father. Then instructs us: “This, then, is how you should pray” (v. 9).

Prayer is a good, vital choice for it keeps us in touch with the God and Father of us all.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

How can you better stay in touch with others? How have you experienced keeping in touch with the Father?

Father, thank You for knowing my needs before I even speak them.

#### Insight

In [Matthew 6:1–8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%206.1%E2%80%938), Jesus emphasizes that living for God should be done humbly, without seeking to draw attention to oneself or to gain praise. Believers in Jesus should have a humble attitude as they give to those in need (vv. 1–4) and as they pray (vv. 5–8). At first glance, this might seem to contradict 5:14–16, which emphasizes that the lives of Jesus’ disciples should shine brightly before others “that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (v. 16). There’s no contradiction, however, for when believers serve God humbly out of love for Him and others, it naturally results in His light shining in the world. When service and prayer is motivated by a desire for attention and praise, however, it can have the opposite effect, repulsing others who may detect self-serving, hypocritical motivations (6:5).

Learn more about [prayer](https://odbu.org/topic/sf120-01-lecture/?utm_source=2023+05+20+ODB+Insight&utm_medium=Digital+link&utm_campaign=2023+05+20+ODB+Insight+-+Prayer+Basics&utm_id=2023+05+20+ODB+Insight+-+Prayer+Basics).

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

# God Calling – 5/20/23

# Win Me – Win All

You will conquer.  The conquering spirit is never crushed.  Keep a brave and trusting heart. Face all your difficulties in the spirit of Conquest.

Rise to greater heights than you have known before. Remember where I am is Victory. Forces of evil, within and without you, flee at My Presence.

Win Me and all is won.  All.

Only be thou strong and very courageous. Joshua 1:7

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/21/23

# Having God’s “Unreasonable” Faith



Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. —[Matthew 6:33](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+6%3A33)

When we look at these words of Jesus, we immediately find them to be the most revolutionary that human ears have ever heard. “…seek first the kingdom of God….” Even the most spiritually-minded of us argue the exact opposite, saying, “But I must live; I must make a certain amount of money; I must be clothed; I must be fed.” The great concern of our lives is not the kingdom of God but how we are going to take care of ourselves to live. Jesus reversed the order by telling us to get the right relationship with God first, maintaining it as the primary concern of our lives, and never to place our concern on taking care of the other things of life.

“…do not worry about your life…” ([Matthew 6:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+6:25)). Our Lord pointed out that from His standpoint it is absolutely unreasonable for us to be anxious, worrying about how we will live. Jesus did not say that the person who takes no thought for anything in his life is blessed— no, that person is a fool. But Jesus did teach that His disciple must make his relationship with God the dominating focus of his life, and to be cautiously carefree about everything else in comparison to that. In essence, Jesus was saying, “Don’t make food and drink the controlling factor of your life, but be focused absolutely on God.” Some people are careless about what they eat and drink, and they suffer for it; they are careless about what they wear, having no business looking the way they do; they are careless with their earthly matters, and God holds them responsible. Jesus is saying that the greatest concern of life is to place our relationship with God first, and everything else second.

It is one of the most difficult, yet critical, disciplines of the Christian life to allow the Holy Spirit to bring us into absolute harmony with the teaching of Jesus in these verses.

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

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

# CCEL – 5/21/23

My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.—[EPH. 6:10.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.6.html#Eph.6.10)

My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.—I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.—The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.—I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.—We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

The joy of the Lord is your strength.—Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.

[II Cor. 12:9,10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.12.html#iiCor.12.9). -[Psa. 71:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.71.html#Ps.71.16). -[Rom. 1:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.1.html#Rom.1.16).[Phi. 4:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.4.html#Phil.4.13). -[Col. 1:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html#Col.1.29). -[II Cor. 4:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.4.html#iiCor.4.7).[Neh. 8:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Neh.8.html#Neh.8.10). -[Col. 1:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html#Col.1.11).

“If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” [1 Peter 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html#iPet.2.3)

If:—then, this is not a matter to be taken for granted concerning every one of the human race. “If:”—then there is a possibility and a probability that some may not have tasted that the Lord is gracious. “If:”—then this is not a general but a special mercy; and it is needful to enquire whether we know the grace of God by inward experience. There is no spiritual favour which may not be a matter for heart-searching.

But while this should be a matter of earnest and prayerful inquiry, no one ought to be content whilst there is any such thing as an “if” about his having tasted that the Lord is gracious. A jealous and holy distrust of self may give rise to the question even in the believer’s heart, but the continuance of such a doubt would be an evil indeed. We must not rest without a desperate struggle to clasp the Saviour in the arms of faith, and say, “I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him.” Do not rest, O believer, till thou hast a full assurance of thine interest in Jesus. Let nothing satisfy thee till, by the infallible witness of the Holy Spirit bearing witness with thy spirit, thou art certified that thou art a child of God. Oh, trifle not here; let no “perhaps” and “peradventure” and “if” and “maybe” satisfy thy soul. Build on eternal verities, and verily build upon them. Get the sure mercies of David, and surely get them. Let thine anchor be cast into that which is within the veil, and see to it that thy soul be linked to the anchor by a cable that will not break. Advance beyond these dreary “ifs;” abide no more in the wilderness of doubts and fears; cross the Jordan of distrust, and enter the Canaan of peace, where the Canaanite still lingers, but where the land ceaseth not to flow with milk and honey.

# Word Live – 5/21/23

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

# Scripture Union – 5/21/23

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# Today in the Word – 5/21/23

# Behind Enemy Lines

**Read:** [**1 Kings 18:1–15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3a1%e2%80%9315)

### Elijah and Obadiah

18 After a long time, in the third year, the word of the Lord came to Elijah: “Go and present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the land.” 2So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab.

Now the famine was severe in Samaria, 3and Ahab had summoned Obadiah, his palace administrator. (Obadiah was a devout believer in the Lord. 4While Jezebel was killing off the Lord’s prophets, Obadiah had taken a hundred prophets and hidden them in two caves, fifty in each, and had supplied them with food and water.) 5Ahab had said to Obadiah, “Go through the land to all the springs and valleys. Maybe we can find some grass to keep the horses and mules alive so we will not have to kill any of our animals.” 6So they divided the land they were to cover, Ahab going in one direction and Obadiah in another.

7As Obadiah was walking along, Elijah met him. Obadiah recognized him, bowed down to the ground, and said, “Is it really you, my lord Elijah?”

8“Yes,” he replied. “Go tell your master, ‘Elijah is here.’”

9“What have I done wrong,” asked Obadiah, “that you are handing your servant over to Ahab to be put to death? 10As surely as the Lord your God lives, there is not a nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to look for you. And whenever a nation or kingdom claimed you were not there, he made them swear they could not find you. 11But now you tell me to go to my master and say, ‘Elijah is here.’ 12I don’t know where the Spirit of the Lord may carry you when I leave you. If I go and tell Ahab and he doesn’t find you, he will kill me. Yet I your servant have worshiped the Lord since my youth. 13Haven’t you heard, my lord, what I did while Jezebel was killing the prophets of the Lord? I hid a hundred of the Lord’s prophets in two caves, fifty in each, and supplied them with food and water. 14And now you tell me to go to my master and say, ‘Elijah is here.’ He will kill me!”

15Elijah said, “As the Lord Almighty lives, whom I serve, I will surely present myself to Ahab today.”

If someone threatened your life, what would you do? Some people would flee while others might give up. We all like to think that we would take a brave stand against the enemy.

I your servant have worshiped the LORD since my youth. 1 Kings 18:12

While the prophet Elijah may have thought he was the only follower of the Lord being pursued by wicked King Ahab, the truth was that there was someone else serving behind enemy lines, a man named Obadiah (vv. 3–4). Obadiah was a faithful Israelite who did not worship Baal but worked for Ahab and Jezebel! The text describes him as “palace administrator” so his job would have put him near the rulers (v. 3). He had a front row seat to their wicked policies.

One of those policies involved killing God’s prophets (v. 4). Soon we will learn that Ahab and Jezebel replaced the prophets of Yahweh with their own state-sponsored prophets of Baal and Asherah. The purge involved the death of many faithful servants of God. At great risk to himself, Obadiah worked to save 100 of them by hiding them in caves (v. 4). The faithful prophet preserved their lives.

What motivated Obadiah to stand against the tide when everyone else around him had fallen under the sway of Baal worship? What caused him to take such a risk and openly defy an order of the king? Obadiah said, “If I go and tell Ahab and he doesn’t find you, he will kill me” (v. 12). Yet, he obeyed because he worshipped the Lord. As powerful as Ahab and Jezebel might have been, Yahweh was more powerful. Obadiah’s fear of God enabled him to be fearless in the face of wickedness.

**Apply the Word**

Living in what many are calling a post-biblical culture may inspire fear or nervousness in us. We may be tempted to be quiet and keep our beliefs private. But God’s people are not called to cower in fear. How can your knowledge of God motivate you to stand up for righteousness?

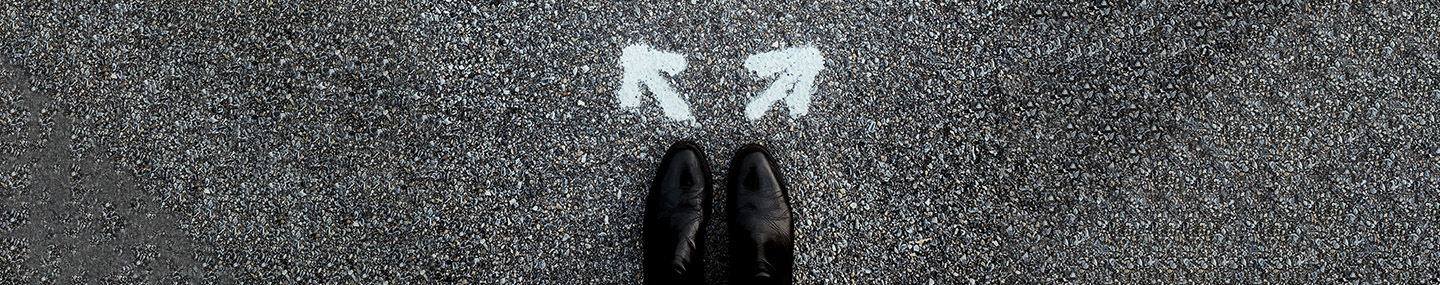
## Pray with Us

“If God is for us, who can be against us? . . . Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” (Rom. 8:31–35). No one. Give us courage, then, to proclaim Your name!

### BY Dr. Steven H. Sanchez

# Our Daily Bread – 5/21/23

# Our Choices Matter

 **Read:** [**Genesis 39:1–12**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2039.1%E2%80%9312)

### Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife

39 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

2The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. 3When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, 4Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. 5From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. 6So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, 7and after a while his master’s wife took notice of Joseph and said, “Come to bed with me!”

8But he refused. “With me in charge,” he told her, “my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. 9No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” 10And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

11One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. 12She caught him by his cloak and said, “Come to bed with me!” But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

But he refused. [Genesis 39:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2039.8)

A swimming instructor in New Jersey saw a car sinking into Newark Bay and heard the driver inside screaming “I can’t swim” as his SUV quickly sank into the murky waters. As a crowd watched from shore, Anthony ran to the rocks along the edge, removed his prosthetic leg, and jumped in to rescue the sixty-eight-year-old man and help him safely to shore. Thanks to Anthony’s decisive action, another man was saved.

Our choices matter. Consider the patriarch Jacob, the father of many sons, who openly favored his seventeen-year-old son Joseph. He foolishly made Joseph “an ornate robe” ([Genesis 37:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2037.3)). The result? Joseph’s brothers hated him (v. 4); and when the opportunity arose, they sold him into slavery (v. 28). Yet because Joseph ended up in Egypt, God used him to preserve Jacob’s family and many others during a seven-year famine—despite Joseph’s brothers’ intention to harm him (see 50:20). The choice that set it all in motion was Joseph’s decision to be honorable and run from Potiphar’s wife (39:1–12). The result was prison (39:20) and an eventual meeting with Pharaoh (ch. 41).

Anthony may have had the advantage of training, but he still had to make a choice. When we love God and seek to serve Him, He helps us make life-affirming and God-honoring choices. If we haven’t already, we can begin by trusting Jesus.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What was the result of a recent choice you’ve made? How has God’s Spirit led you to make wise choices?

Dear God, help me to make wise decisions that honor You.

#### Insight

When dealing with sexual temptation, Scripture calls for prompt, decisive action. Joseph “ran out of the house” ([Genesis 39:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2039.12)) when confronted by Potiphar’s wife. In the New Testament, Paul says to “put to death . . . whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust” ([Colossians 3:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%203.5)). He also says to “flee from sexual immorality” ([1 Corinthians 6:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%206.18)). We’re to renounce all sexual sins because they directly attack our own bodies which “are temples of the Holy Spirit” (v. 19) and this violates the sacred sanctuary of God’s holy presence (vv. 19–20; see [1 Corinthians 3:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%203.16); [1 Thessalonians 4:3–4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Thess%204.3%E2%80%934)).

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

# God Calling – 5/21/23

# Fling It At My Feet

To see Me you must bring Me your cares and show Me your heart of Trust.  Then, as you leave your cares, you become conscious of My Presence.

This consciousness persisted in brings its reward of Me.  Through a mist of care no man may see My Face.  Only when the burden is flung at My Feet do you pass on to consciousness and spiritual sight.

Remember, obedience, obedience, obedience – the straight and narrow way into the Kingdom.

Not of you must it be said, even in lovingly tender reproach – “Why call ye Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not the things which I say.”

Character is chiseled into Beauty by the daily discipline and daily duties done.  For in many ways, My disciples must work out their own salvation, though this is not possible without My strength and Help, and without converse with Me.

Even for the Spiritual Life the training is different for different spirits.  The man who would fain live a life of prayer and meditation is thrust into the busy ways of life, and the busy man is bidden to rest and wait patiently for Me.  O joy, O rest, and in the busy ways be ever at peace.

“And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.”  Mark 4:19

# My Utmost for His Highest – 5/22/23

# The Explanation For Our Difficulties



…that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us… —[John 17:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+17%3A21)

If you are going through a time of isolation, seemingly all alone, read [John 17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17) . It will explain exactly why you are where you are— because Jesus has prayed that you “may be one” with the Father as He is. Are you helping God to answer that prayer, or do you have some other goal for your life? Since you became a disciple, you cannot be as independent as you used to be.

God reveals in John 17 that His purpose is not just to answer our prayers, but that through prayer we might come to discern His mind. Yet there is one prayer which God must answer, and that is the prayer of Jesus— “…that they may be one just as We are one…” ([John 17:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17:22)). Are we as close to Jesus Christ as that?

God is not concerned about our plans; He doesn’t ask, “Do you want to go through this loss of a loved one, this difficulty, or this defeat?” No, He allows these things for His own purpose. The things we are going through are either making us sweeter, better, and nobler men and women, or they are making us more critical and fault-finding, and more insistent on our own way. The things that happen either make us evil, or they make us more saintly, depending entirely on our relationship with God and its level of intimacy. If we will pray, regarding our own lives, “Your will be done” ([Matthew 26:42](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+26:42)), then we will be encouraged and comforted by John 17, knowing that our Father is working according to His own wisdom, accomplishing what is best. When we understand God’s purpose, we will not become small-minded and cynical. Jesus prayed nothing less for us than absolute oneness with Himself, just as He was one with the Father. Some of us are far from this oneness; yet God will not leave us alone until we are one with Him— because Jesus prayed, “…that they all may be one….”

###### Wisdom From Oswald Chambers

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

# CCEL – 5/22/23

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.—[JOHN 14:27.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html#John.14.27)

The world passeth away, and the lust thereof.—Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches. and knoweth not who shall gather them.—What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

Martha, Martha, thou are careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.—I would have you without carefulness.

These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.—The Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means.—The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

[I John 2:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.2.html#iJohn.2.17). -[Psa. 39:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.39.html#Ps.39.6). -[Rom. 6:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.6.html#Rom.6.21).[Luke 10:41,42](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.10.html#Luke.10.41). -[I Cor.7:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.7.html#iCor.7.32).[John 16:33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html#John.16.33). -[II Thes. 3:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiThess.3.html#iiThess.3.16). -[Num. 6:24-26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.6.html#Num.6.24).

“He led them forth by the right way.” [Psalm 107:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.107.html#Ps.107.7)

Changeful experience often leads the anxious believer to inquire “Why is it thus with me?” I looked for light, but lo, darkness came; for peace, but behold, trouble. I said in my heart, my mountain standeth firm; I shall never be moved. Lord, thou dost hide thy face, and I am troubled. It was but yesterday that I could read my title clear; today my evidences are bedimmed, and my hopes are clouded. Yesterday, I could climb to Pisgah’s top, and view the landscape o'er, and rejoice with confidence in my future inheritance; today, my spirit has no hopes, but many fears; no joys, but much distress. Is this part of God’s plan with me? Can this be the way in which God would bring me to heaven? Yes, it is even so. The eclipse of your faith, the darkness of your mind, the fainting of your hope, all these things are but parts of God’s method of making you ripe for the great inheritance upon which you shall soon enter. These trials are for the testing and strengthening of your faith—they are waves that wash you further upon the rock—they are winds which waft your ship the more swiftly towards the desired haven. According to David’s words, so it might be said of you, “So he bringeth them to their desired haven.” By honour and dishonour, by evil report and by good report, by plenty and by poverty, by joy and by distress, by persecution and by peace, by all these things is the life of your souls maintained, and by each of these are you helped on your way. Oh, think not, believer, that your sorrows are out of God’s plan; they are necessary parts of it. “We must, through much tribulation, enter the kingdom.” Learn, then, even to “count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.”

“O let my trembling soul be still,

And wait thy wise, thy holy will!

I cannot, Lord, thy purpose see,

Yet all is well since ruled by thee.”

# Word Live – 5/22/23

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

# Scripture Union – 5/22/23

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

# Today in the Word – 5/22/23

# The Choice on Mount Carmel

**Read:** [**1 Kings 18:16–46**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3a16%e2%80%9346)

### Elijah on Mount Carmel

16So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. 17When he saw Elijah, he said to him, “Is that you, you troubler of Israel?”

18“I have not made trouble for Israel,” Elijah replied. “But you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the Lord’s commands and have followed the Baals. 19Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

20So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. 21Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”

But the people said nothing.

22Then Elijah said to them, “I am the only one of the Lord’s prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. 23Get two bulls for us. Let Baal’s prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. 24Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God.”

Then all the people said, “What you say is good.”

25Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.” 26So they took the bull given them and prepared it.

Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

27At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.” 28So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. 29Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

30Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come here to me.” They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down. 31Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Your name shall be Israel.” 32With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3A16%E2%80%9346+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9374a)] of seed. 33He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, “Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood.”

34“Do it again,” he said, and they did it again.

“Do it a third time,” he ordered, and they did it the third time. 35The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

36At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. 37Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

38Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

39When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!”

40Then Elijah commanded them, “Seize the prophets of Baal. Don’t let anyone get away!” They seized them, and Elijah had them brought down to the Kishon Valley and slaughtered there.

41And Elijah said to Ahab, “Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain.” 42So Ahab went off to eat and drink, but Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees.

43“Go and look toward the sea,” he told his servant. And he went up and looked.

“There is nothing there,” he said.

Seven times Elijah said, “Go back.”

44The seventh time the servant reported, “A cloud as small as a man’s hand is rising from the sea.”

So Elijah said, “Go and tell Ahab, ‘Hitch up your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.’”

45Meanwhile, the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain started falling and Ahab rode off to Jezreel. 46The power of the Lord came on Elijah and, tucking his cloak into his belt, he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 Kings 18:32](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3A16%E2%80%9346+&version=NIV#en-NIV-9374) That is, probably about 24 pounds or about 11 kilograms

While we might not witness outright idol worship in modern society, we do see people put their faith in unusual sources. Superstition haunts the sporting world. An athlete might wear the same hat or even the same pair of socks, hoping to ensure a winning streak. But is this trust warranted?

How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him. 1 Kings 18:21

Today’s reading in 1 Kings 18 marks a high point of the book: a confrontation between God and His people. The confrontation is not between Elijah and Ahab, or even Elijah and the prophets of Baal, but between Yahweh and His people.

Elijah is the focal point, but his message is from God. “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; if Baal is God, follow him,” the prophet asks (v. 21). The site is a mountain range east of Samaria, likely a high place for Baal worship. Here, Elijah threw down the challenge: You call for Baal and I’ll call upon Yahweh, whoever answers by fire is God!

The prophets of Baal went first. After hours of praying, crying out, and ritual cutting, nothing. No fire, no voice, nothing. Elijah took his turn and after preparing an altar and sacrifice in the acceptable manner, he doused everything in water. Then he prayed. “Answer me, LORD, so these people may know that you, LORD, are God and that you are turning their hearts back again” (v. 37).

In response, the fire of the Lord fell. The people were answered, and God’s power was clearly demonstrated. Even during this time of great suffering, God never abandoned His people. He used punishment to soften their hearts and appeared to them in indisputable ways.

**Apply the Word**

Today, we have front-row seats to the heart of a loving God drawing His people back to Himself. The confrontation was dramatic. The people acknowledged the authority of God—but would they continue to listen? How about us? Faced with the reality of God, are we ready to listen and to obey?

## Pray with Us

Great is Your name, God, and greatly to be praised! There is no greater reason to exist and to rejoice than knowing who You are. Holiness, power, and justice are Yours. May You be worshiped throughout the earth!

### BY Dr. Steven H. Sanchez

# Our Daily Bread – 5/22/23

# Tell the Story

**Read:** [**1 John 1:1–4**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%201.1%E2%80%934)

### The Incarnation of the Word of Life

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 2The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. 3We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. 4We write this to make our[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+1%3A1%E2%80%934&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30545a)] joy complete.

#### Footnotes

1. [1 John 1:4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+1%3A1%E2%80%934&version=NIV#en-NIV-30545) Some manuscripts your

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. [1 John 1:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20John%201.3)

Robert Todd Lincoln, son of US president Abraham Lincoln, was present for three major events—the death of his own father as well as the assassinations of presidents James Garfield and William McKinley.

But consider that the apostle John was present at four of history’s most crucial events: the last supper of Jesus, Christ’s agony in Gethsemane, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. John knew that bearing witness to these events was the ultimate why behind his presence in these moments. In [John 21:24](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2021.24), he wrote, “This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.”

John reaffirmed this in his letter of 1 John. He wrote, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim” (1:1). John felt a compelling duty to share his eyewitness account of Jesus. Why? “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard,” he said, “so that you also may have fellowship with us” (v. 3).

The events of our lives may be surprising or mundane, but in either case God is orchestrating them so we can bear witness to Him. As we rest in the grace and wisdom of Christ, may we speak for Him in even life’s surprising moments.

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

#### Reflect & Pray

What are some of the more surprising aspects of your faith story? How will you share your story with someone who needs to hear of God’s love?

Jesus, please help me be sensitive to those times when I can share with others how much You love us.

For further study, see [Gospel Conversations: Sharing the Story of Jesus](https://DiscoverySeries.org/HP185).

#### Insight

The word fellowship, used four times in 1 John (1:3 [twice], 6, 7) is the translation of the Greek word koinōnia, which means “participation, sharing, having something in common with others.” Elsewhere in the New Testament, this word or related words are used to show that those who embraced the truths about Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection also shared their lives in practical ways. “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” ([Acts 2:42](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%202.42)). In Philippians, Paul used several related words to acknowledge the believers’ participation in his ministry: “I thank my God every time I remember you . . . because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now” (1:3–5). Their partnership included some form of material support: “Not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only” (4:15).

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

# God Calling – 5/22/23

# Command Your Lord

Lord, I claim Thy help.

Yes!  Claim, be constantly claiming.  There is a trust that waits long, and a trust that brooks no delay – that once convinced of the right of a course, once sure of God’s guidance, says with all the persistence of a child, “Now.”  “Make no long tarrying, oh, my God.”

You are no longer servants but friends.  A friend can command his friend – can know that all the friend, the true friend, has is his by right.  That does not mean an idle living at the expense of a friend, but claiming the friend’s means:  name, time, all that he has, when your supply is exhausted.

Friendship – true friendship, implies the right to appropriate.  And in God’s service is perfect freedom.  Heirs of God – you are joint heirs with Me in the inheritance.  We share the Father’s property. You have the same right to use and claim I have.  Use your right.  A beggar supplicates.  A son, a daughter, appropriates.

Small wonder when I see My children sitting before My House supplicating and waiting – that I leave them there until they realize how foolish such action, when they have only to walk into their Home and take.

This cannot be the attitude of all.  There must be first a definite realization of Sonship.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall receive them.  Mark 11:24