# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/29/20

# The Awareness of the Call



…for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! —[1 Corinthians 9:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Corinthians+9%3A16)

We are inclined to forget the deeply spiritual and supernatural touch of God. If you are able to tell exactly where you were when you received the call of God and can explain all about it, I question whether you have truly been called. The call of God does not come like that; it is much more supernatural. The realization of the call in a person’s life may come like a clap of thunder or it may dawn gradually. But however quickly or slowly this awareness comes, it is always accompanied with an undercurrent of the supernatural— something that is inexpressible and produces a “glow.” At any moment the sudden awareness of this incalculable, supernatural, surprising call that has taken hold of your life may break through— “I chose you…” ([John 15:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:16)). The call of God has nothing to do with salvation and sanctification. You are not called to preach the gospel because you are sanctified; the call to preach the gospel is infinitely different. Paul describes it as a compulsion that was placed upon him.

If you have ignored, and thereby removed, the great supernatural call of God in your life, take a review of your circumstances. See where you have put your own ideas of service or your particular abilities ahead of the call of God. Paul said, “…woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!” He had become aware of the call of God, and his compulsion to “preach the gospel” was so strong that nothing else was any longer even a competitor for his strength.

If a man or woman is called of God, it doesn’t matter how difficult the circumstances may be. God orchestrates every force at work for His purpose in the end. If you will agree with God’s purpose, He will bring not only your conscious level but also all the deeper levels of your life, which you yourself cannot reach, into perfect harmony.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

We begin our Christian life by believing what we are told to believe, then we have to go on to so assimilate our beliefs that they work out in a way that redounds to the glory of God. The danger is in multiplying the acceptation of beliefs we do not make our own. Conformed to His Image, 381 L

# CCEL – 9/29/20

**Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.**—[I JOHN 3:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.16)

The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.—Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.—Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.—Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.—Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.—For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.—Christ . . . suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.

Ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.—We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

[Eph. 3:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.3.html" \l "Eph.3.19). -[John 15:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html" \l "John.15.13). -[II Cor. 8:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.8.html" \l "iiCor.8.9). -[I John 4:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.4.html" \l "iJohn.4.11). -[Eph. 4:32](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.32). -[Col. 3:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.3.html" \l "Col.3.13). -[Mark 10:45](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.10.html" \l "Mark.10.45). -[I Pet. 2:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.21).[John 13:14,15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.13.html" \l "John.13.14). -[I John 3:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html#iJohn.3.16).

“Behold, if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague.” **[Leviticus 13:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.13.html" \l "Lev.13.13)**

Strange enough this regulation appears, yet there was wisdom in it, for the throwing out of the disease proved that the constitution was sound. This morning it may be well for us to see the typical teaching of so singular a rule. We, too, are lepers, and may read the law of the leper as applicable to ourselves. When a man sees himself to be altogether lost and ruined, covered all over with the defilement of sin, and no part free from pollution; when he disclaims all righteousness of his own, and pleads guilty before the Lord, then is he clean through the blood of Jesus, and the grace of God. Hidden, unfelt, unconfessed iniquity is the true leprosy, but when sin is seen and felt it has received its death blow, and the Lord looks with eyes of mercy upon the soul afflicted with it. Nothing is more deadly than self-righteousness, or more hopeful than contrition. We must confess that we are “nothing else but sin,” for no confession short of this will be the whole truth, and if the Holy Spirit be at work with us, convincing us of sin, there will be no difficulty about making such an acknowledgment—it will spring spontaneously from our lips. What comfort does the text afford to those under a deep sense of sin! Sin mourned and confessed, however black and foul, shall never shut a man out from the Lord Jesus. Whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out. Though dishonest as the thief, though unchaste as the woman who was a sinner, though fierce as Saul of Tarsus, though cruel as Manasseh, though rebellious as the prodigal, the great heart of love will look upon the man who feels himself to have no soundness in him, and will pronounce him clean, when he trusts in Jesus crucified.

Come to him, then, poor heavy-laden sinner,

Come needy, come guilty, come loathsome and bare;

You can't come too filthy—come just as you are.

# Word Live – 9/29/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/29/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/29/20

# Finding Strength in God

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 30:1–31**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+30%3a1%e2%80%9331)

### **David Destroys the Amalekites**

30 David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, 2and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way.

3When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. 4So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep. 5David’s two wives had been captured—Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. 6David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.

7Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek, “Bring me the ephod.” Abiathar brought it to him, 8and David inquired of the Lord, “Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?”

“Pursue them,” he answered. “You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue.”

9David and the six hundred men with him came to the Besor Valley, where some stayed behind. 10Two hundred of them were too exhausted to cross the valley, but David and the other four hundred continued the pursuit.

11They found an Egyptian in a field and brought him to David. They gave him water to drink and food to eat— 12part of a cake of pressed figs and two cakes of raisins. He ate and was revived, for he had not eaten any food or drunk any water for three days and three nights.

13David asked him, “Who do you belong to? Where do you come from?”

He said, “I am an Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite. My master abandoned me when I became ill three days ago. 14We raided the Negev of the Kerethites, some territory belonging to Judah and the Negev of Caleb. And we burned Ziklag.”

15David asked him, “Can you lead me down to this raiding party?”

He answered, “Swear to me before God that you will not kill me or hand me over to my master, and I will take you down to them.”

16He led David down, and there they were, scattered over the countryside, eating, drinking and reveling because of the great amount of plunder they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from Judah. 17David fought them from dusk until the evening of the next day, and none of them got away, except four hundred young men who rode off on camels and fled. 18David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken, including his two wives. 19Nothing was missing: young or old, boy or girl, plunder or anything else they had taken. David brought everything back. 20He took all the flocks and herds, and his men drove them ahead of the other livestock, saying, “This is David’s plunder.”

21Then David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow him and who were left behind at the Besor Valley. They came out to meet David and the men with him. As David and his men approached, he asked them how they were. 22But all the evil men and troublemakers among David’s followers said, “Because they did not go out with us, we will not share with them the plunder we recovered. However, each man may take his wife and children and go.”

23David replied, “No, my brothers, you must not do that with what the Lord has given us. He has protected us and delivered into our hands the raiding party that came against us. 24Who will listen to what you say? The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle. All will share alike.” 25David made this a statute and ordinance for Israel from that day to this.

26When David reached Ziklag, he sent some of the plunder to the elders of Judah, who were his friends, saying, “Here is a gift for you from the plunder of the Lord’s enemies.”

27David sent it to those who were in Bethel, Ramoth Negev and Jattir; 28to those in Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa 29and Rakal; to those in the towns of the Jerahmeelites and the Kenites; 30to those in Hormah, Bor Ashan, Athak 31and Hebron; and to those in all the other places where he and his men had roamed.

“Out of the frying pan and into the fire” describes the feeling when you pass from one trouble only to find yourself in another difficult situation. Just when you breathe a sigh of relief that your troubles are over, you find yourself in a hot spot again.

David found strength in the LORD his God. 1 Samuel 30:6

Today’s passage paints exactly that type of situation for David. Perhaps he breathed a sigh of relief after leaving Achish behind. But if David expected to find rest, he was mistaken. While David had been with Achish, Amalekite raiders had burned Ziklag and carried off the women and children. Exhausted by travel and overcome with grief, David and his men “wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep” (v. 4). Sorrow gave way to anger as the men held David responsible for their loss. Having been called a traitor by the Philistine commanders, now David faced accusations from his men. They were so angry that they talked about stoning him. Instead of panicking, “David found strength in the Lord his God” (v. 6).

Like Saul, David sought direction from the Lord by asking Abiathar the priest to bring the ephod. This priestly garment contained the Urim and Thummim, two gemstones used for divine guidance. But unlike Saul, the Lord responded to David’s inquiry, reassuring him that they would be able to overtake the raiding party and rescue the captives. However, one-third of David’s men were too exhausted to continue the pursuit. They stayed with the baggage in the Besor Valley. When David and his men returned, “the evil men and troublemakers” in the group complained that those who stayed behind should not get a share of the spoils. David reminded them that God was responsible for the victory. Those who stayed received the same reward as those who went to the battle.

**Apply the Word**

Does it seem like troubles are following you? Even though you may not see the light at the end of the tunnel, you can be certain that God knows and controls the ending of your story. Rest in Him today.

### **Pray with Us**

Lord, thank you for the reminder today that your call involves not only action but also rest. Show us the ways to step away from striving and to find respite in your love, grace, and mercy.

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/29/20

# Eyes to See

 **Read:** [**Psalm 119:97–104**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20119.97%E2%80%93104)

#### **מ Mem**

97Oh, how I love your law!  
    I meditate on it all day long.  
98Your commands are always with me  
    and make me wiser than my enemies.  
99I have more insight than all my teachers,  
    for I meditate on your statutes.  
100I have more understanding than the elders,  
    for I obey your precepts.  
101I have kept my feet from every evil path  
    so that I might obey your word.  
102I have not departed from your laws,  
    for you yourself have taught me.  
103How sweet are your words to my taste,  
    sweeter than honey to my mouth!  
104I gain understanding from your precepts;  
    therefore I hate every wrong path.

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. [Psalm 119:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20119.18)

I recently discovered the wonder of anamorphic art. Appearing at first as an assortment of random parts, an anamorphic sculpture only makes sense when viewed from the correct angle. In one piece, a series of vertical poles align to reveal a famous leader’s face. In another, a mass of cable becomes the outline of an elephant. Another artwork, made of hundreds of black dots suspended by wire, becomes a woman’s eye when seen correctly. The key to anamorphic art is viewing it from different angles until its meaning is revealed.

With thousands of verses of history, poetry, and more, the Bible can sometimes be hard to understand. But Scripture itself tells us how to unlock its meaning. Treat it like an anamorphic sculpture: view it from different angles and meditate on it deeply.

Christ’s parables work this way. Those who care enough to ponder them gain “eyes to see” their meaning ([Matthew 13:10–16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2013.10%E2%80%9316)). Paul told Timothy to “reflect” on his words so God would give him insight ([2 Timothy 2:7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Tim%202.7)). And the repeated refrain of [Psalm 119](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20119) is how meditating on Scripture brings wisdom and insight, opening our eyes to see its meaning (119:18, 97–99).

How about pondering a single parable for a week or reading a gospel in one sitting? Spend some time viewing a verse from all angles. Go deep. Biblical insight comes from meditating on Scripture, not just reading it.

Oh, God, give us eyes to see.

By:  [Sheridan Voysey](https://odb.org/author/svoysey/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What do you think the difference is between reading Scripture and meditating on it? How will you spend time meditating on today’s verse?

God, open my eyes to see each wonderful thing within the Scriptures. Guide me down the paths connecting each one.

#### **Insight**

In [Psalm 119:97–104](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20119.97%E2%80%93104), the word meditate is used twice (vv. 97, 99). English translations of the Hebrew root word include talk, pray, speak, complain, and meditate. What’s in view when this word is translated “meditate” or “meditation” is “talking to oneself,” with God’s Word being the subject of the conversation (see [Psalm 119:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20119.15), [23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalm%20119.23), [48](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalm%20119.48), [78](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalm%20119.78), [148](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalm%20119.148)). We see the idea of ruminating over and pondering on the Scriptures in our hearts and minds in the following verses as well: “Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night” ([Joshua 1:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Josh%201.8)). “Blessed is the one . . . whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night” ([Psalm 1:1–2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%201.1%E2%80%932)).

# God Calling – 9/29/20

# I Touch Your Arm

**Thy touch has still its ancient Power**

Yes!  when you are quiet before Me I lay My Hand upon each head, and Divine Spirit flows through that healing, powerful Touch into your very beings.  Wait in silence before Me to feel that.

When you look to Me for guidance My Hand is laid upon your arm, a gentle Touch to point the way.  When in mental, physical, or spiritual weakness you cry to Me for healing, My Touch brings Strength and Healing, the renewal of your youth, the power to climb and strive.

When you faint by the way, and stumbling footsteps show human strength is waning, My Touch of the Strong and Helping Hand supports you on your Way.

Yes!  My Children, My touch has still its ancient Power and that Power is promised to you.  So go forward into the future bravely and unafraid.

And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.  Matthew 14:36

# My Utmost for His Highest – 9/30/20

# The Assigning of the Call



I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church… —[Colossians 1:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Colossians+1%3A24)

We take our own spiritual consecration and try to make it into a call of God, but when we get right with Him He brushes all this aside. Then He gives us a tremendous, riveting pain to fasten our attention on something that we never even dreamed could be His call for us. And for one radiant, flashing moment we see His purpose, and we say, “Here am I! Send me” ([Isaiah 6:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+6:8)).

This call has nothing to do with personal sanctification, but with being made broken bread and poured-out wine. Yet God can never make us into wine if we object to the fingers He chooses to use to crush us. We say, “If God would only use His own fingers, and make me broken bread and poured-out wine in a special way, then I wouldn’t object!” But when He uses someone we dislike, or some set of circumstances to which we said we would never submit, to crush us, then we object. Yet we must never try to choose the place of our own martyrdom. If we are ever going to be made into wine, we will have to be crushed—you cannot drink grapes. Grapes become wine only when they have been squeezed.

I wonder what finger and thumb God has been using to squeeze you? Have you been as hard as a marble and escaped? If you are not ripe yet, and if God had squeezed you anyway, the wine produced would have been remarkably bitter. To be a holy person means that the elements of our natural life experience the very presence of God as they are providentially broken in His service. We have to be placed into God and brought into agreement with Him before we can be broken bread in His hands. Stay right with God and let Him do as He likes, and you will find that He is producing the kind of bread and wine that will benefit His other children.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 9/30/20

**He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.**—[JOB 23:10.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.23.html" \l "Job.23.10)

He knoweth our frame.—He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.

The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.—I . . . will refine them as silver is refined, . . . they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, the Lord is my God

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[Psa. 103:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.103.html" \l "Ps.103.14). -[Lam. 3:33](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lam.3.html" \l "Lam.3.33).[II Tim. 2:19-21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiTim.2.html" \l "iiTim.2.19).[Mal. 3:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mal.3.html" \l "Mal.3.3). -[Zech. 13:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Zech.13.html" \l "Zech.13.9).

“Sing forth the honour of his name, make his praise glorious.” **[Psalm 66:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.66.html" \l "Ps.66.2)**

It is not left to our own option whether we shall praise God or not. Praise is God’s most righteous due, and every Christian, as the recipient of his grace, is bound to praise God from day to day. It is true we have no authoritative rubric for daily praise; we have no commandment prescribing certain hours of song and thanksgiving: but the law written upon the heart teaches us that it is right to praise God; and the unwritten mandate comes to us with as much force as if it had been recorded on the tables of stone, or handed to us from the top of thundering Sinai. Yes, it is the Christian’s duty to praise God. It is not only a pleasurable exercise, but it is the absolute obligation of his life. Think not ye who are always mourning, that ye are guiltless in this respect, or imagine that ye can discharge your duty to your God without songs of praise. You are bound by the bonds of his love to bless his name so long as you live, and his praise should continually be in your mouth, for you are blessed, in order that you may bless him; “this people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise”; and if you do not praise God, you are not bringing forth the fruit which he, as the Divine Husbandman, has a right to expect at your hands. Let not your harp then hang upon the willows, but take it down, and strive, with a grateful heart, to bring forth its loudest music. Arise and chant his praise. With every morning’s dawn, lift up your notes of thanksgiving, and let every setting sun be followed with your song. Girdle the earth with your praises; surround it with an atmosphere of melody, and God himself will hearken from heaven and accept your music.

“E'en so I love thee, and will love,

And in thy praise will sing,

Because thou art my loving God,

And my redeeming King.”

# Word Live – 9/30/20

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

# Scripture Union – 9/30/20

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

# Today in the Word – 9/30/20

# Death of a King

**Read:** [**1 Samuel 31:1–13**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Samuel+31%3a1%e2%80%9313)

### **Saul Takes His Life**

31 Now the Philistines fought against Israel; the Israelites fled before them, and many fell dead on Mount Gilboa. 2The Philistines were in hot pursuit of Saul and his sons, and they killed his sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malki-Shua. 3The fighting grew fierce around Saul, and when the archers overtook him, they wounded him critically.

4Saul said to his armor-bearer, “Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and run me through and abuse me.”

But his armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it; so Saul took his own sword and fell on it. 5When the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him. 6So Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together that same day.

7When the Israelites along the valley and those across the Jordan saw that the Israelite army had fled and that Saul and his sons had died, they abandoned their towns and fled. And the Philistines came and occupied them.

8The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. 9They cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and they sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to proclaim the news in the temple of their idols and among their people. 10They put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths and fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan.

11When the people of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, 12all their valiant men marched through the night to Beth Shan. They took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beth Shan and went to Jabesh, where they burned them. 13Then they took their bones and buried them under a tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they fasted seven days.

Although this Old Testament book gets its name from Samuel, one of its main characters, its primary focus is the contrast between Saul and David. Saul’s story unfolds like a great tragedy. His failure is foreshadowed at the outset, and all subsequent events move toward this sad conclusion. Today’s reading reveals the final chapter in Saul’s story. His life ended just as Samuel had predicted.

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king. 1 Samuel 15:23

The Philistines dishonored Saul’s body in death, fastening it to the city wall of Beth Shan as a token of their victory (v. 10). The men of Jabesh Gilead recovered the king’s body in a daring night-time raid and buried the bones beneath a Tamarisk tree. Saul’s first victory as king had been to rescue the people of Jabesh Gilead from the Ammonites (1 Sam. 11:1–11). Saul’s greatest tragedy was his lack of faith. He did not listen to the Lord and often took matters into his own hands. In the final scene of this tragedy, Saul’s weak character is on full display. Critically wounded by the archers, Saul begged his shield-bearer to finish the job. When the shield-bearer refused, Saul fell on his own sword.

What was the difference between Saul and David? David was a bold warrior, but it was not boldness that was the secret to his success. Ultimately, the difference between these two kings was a matter of faith. As Israel’s next king, David would go on to greater success. He would also have his own share of spectacular failures. But faith always led David back to God’s grace and forgiveness. This is why the Lord considered David “a man after his own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14). David turned his ear to God and obeyed His commands. David was a man of faith.

**Apply the Word**

We have learned many lessons from Samuel, David, and Saul. We have seen that courage is admirable, but faith is even more essential. And we are encouraged to turn our ear and our heart to God, honoring Him with every step of our life.

### **Pray with Us**

In conclusion, ask the Lord to help us remember the lessons He has taught us about His call, His love, courage, and forgiveness. May we listen to God’s words to us with our hearts. Thank you for studying and praying with us!

## BY Dr. John Koessler

# Our Daily Bread – 9/30/20

# Rooted in Love

 **Read:** [**Ephesians 3:14–2**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%203.14%E2%80%9321)**1**

### **A Prayer for the Ephesians**

14For this reason I kneel before the Father, 15from whom every family[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+3%3A14%E2%80%9321&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29267a)] in heaven and on earth derives its name. 16I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

20Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Ephesians 3:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+3%3A14%E2%80%9321&version=NIV#en-NIV-29267) The Greek for family (patria) is derived from the Greek for father (pater).

I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power . . . to grasp . . . the love of Christ. [Ephesians 3:17–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%203.17%E2%80%9318)

“That’s all it takes!” Megan said. She had clipped a stem from her geranium plant, dipped the cut end into honey, and stuck it into a pot filled with compost. Megan was teaching me how to propagate geraniums: how to turn one healthy plant into many plants, so I would have flowers to share with others. The honey, she said, was to help the young plant establish roots.

Watching her work, I wondered what kinds of things help us establish spiritual roots. What helps us mature into strong, flourishing people of faith? What keeps us from withering up or failing to grow? Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says that we are “rooted and established in love” ([Ephesians 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%203.17)). This love comes from God, who strengthens us by giving us the Holy Spirit. Christ dwells in our hearts. And as we begin to “grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ” (v. 18), we can have a rich experience of God’s presence as we’re “completely filled and flooded with God Himself” (v. 19 amp).

Growing spiritually requires rooting into the love of God—meditating on the truth that we are beloved by the God who is able to do “immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine” (v. 20). What an incredible basis for our faith!

By:  [Amy Peterson](https://odb.org/author/petersonamy/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How can you cultivate a habit of meditating on God’s love? Who could you share the truth of God’s love with today?

God, thank You for Your love for me. Help me to meditate on the truth of that love. May Your love grow in my heart, bringing beauty to my life and to a world in need.

#### **Insight**

Paul had a very close relationship with the Ephesian believers. He visited Ephesus toward the end of his second missionary journey, and upon leaving he promised to return ([Acts 18:19–21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2018.19%E2%80%9321)). At the start of his third journey (18:23–21:17), Paul returned to Ephesus and taught the church for three years before going to Macedonia (19:1–20; 20:31). On the return leg back to Jerusalem, Paul had a tearful reunion with the Ephesian church leaders (20:17–38). About five or six years later, while in prison in Rome ([Ephesians 3:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%203.1)), Paul wrote to encourage believers to “live a life worthy of [their] calling” (4:1). Paul’s unwavering commitment was to pray fervently for the growth of his spiritual children (1:15–16). [Ephesians 1:15–23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%201.15%E2%80%9323) is one of two recorded prayers of Paul in Ephesians. In his second prayer (3:14–21), Paul prays that having been “rooted and established in love,” they would “grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ” (vv. 17–18).

# God Calling – 9/30/20

# Wisdom

**As thy days so shall thy strength be.**

I have promised that for every day you live, the strength shall be given you.  Do not fear.

Face each difficulty sure that the wisdom and strength will be given you for it.  Claim it.

Rely on Me to keep My Promise about this.  In My Universe, for every task I give one of My children, there is  set aside all that is necessary for its performance.  So why fear?  So why doubt?

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts into wisdom.  Psalm 90:12

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/1/20

# The Place of Exaltation



…Jesus took…them up on a high mountain apart by themselves… —[Mark 9:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Mark+9%3A2)

We have all experienced times of exaltation on the mountain, when we have seen things from God’s perspective and have wanted to stay there. But God will never allow us to stay there. The true test of our spiritual life is in exhibiting the power to descend from the mountain. If we only have the power to go up, something is wrong. It is a wonderful thing to be on the mountain with God, but a person only gets there so that he may later go down and lift up the demon-possessed people in the valley (see [Mark 9:14-18](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+9:14-18)). We are not made for the mountains, for sunrises, or for the other beautiful attractions in life— those are simply intended to be moments of inspiration. We are made for the valley and the ordinary things of life, and that is where we have to prove our stamina and strength. Yet our spiritual selfishness always wants repeated moments on the mountain. We feel that we could talk and live like perfect angels, if we could only stay on the mountaintop. Those times of exaltation are exceptional and they have their meaning in our life with God, but we must beware to prevent our spiritual selfishness from wanting to make them the only time.

We are inclined to think that everything that happens is to be turned into useful teaching. In actual fact, it is to be turned into something even better than teaching, namely, character. The mountaintop is not meant to teach us anything, it is meant to make us something. There is a terrible trap in always asking, “What’s the use of this experience?” We can never measure spiritual matters in that way. The moments on the mountaintop are rare moments, and they are meant for something in God’s purpose.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 10/1/20

**The fruit of the Spirit is temperance.**—[GAL. 5:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.5.html" \l "Gal.5.22)

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.

Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess: but be filled with the Spirit.

If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Let us not sleep, as do others: but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober.—Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world: looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

[I Cor. 9:25-27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.9.html" \l "iCor.9.25).[Eph. 5:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.5.html" \l "Eph.5.18).[Matt. 16:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.16.html" \l "Matt.16.24).[I Thes. 5:6-8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.5.html" \l "iThess.5.6). -[Tit. 2:12,13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Titus.2.html" \l "Titus.2.12),.

“Pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.” [Song of Solomon 7:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.7.html" \l "Song.7.13)

The spouse desires to give to Jesus all that she produces. Our heart has “all manner of pleasant fruits,” both “old and new,” and they are laid up for our Beloved. At this rich autumnal season of fruit, let us survey our stores. We have new fruits. We desire to feel new life, new joy, new gratitude; we wish to make new resolves and carry them out by new labours; our heart blossoms with new prayers, and our soul is pledging herself to new efforts. But we have some old fruits too. There is our first love: a choice fruit that! and Jesus delights in it. There is our first faith: that simple faith by which, having nothing, we became possessors of all things. There is our joy when first we knew the Lord: let us revive it. We have our old remembrances of the promises. How faithful has God been! In sickness, how softly did he make our bed! In deep waters, how placidly did he buoy us up! In the flaming furnace, how graciously did he deliver us. Old fruits, indeed! We have many of them, for his mercies have been more than the hairs of our head. Old sins we must regret, but then we have had repentances which he has given us, by which we have wept our way to the cross, and learned the merit of his blood. We have fruits, this morning, both new and old; but here is the point—they are all laid up for Jesus. Truly, those are the best and most acceptable services in which Jesus is the solitary aim of the soul, and his glory, without any admixture whatever, the end of all our efforts. Let our many fruits be laid up only for our Beloved; let us display them when he is with us, and not hold them up before the gaze of men. Jesus, we will turn the key in our garden door, and none shall enter to rob thee of one good fruit from the soil which thou hast watered with thy bloody sweat. Our all shall be thine, thine only, O Jesus, our Beloved!

# Word Live – 10/1/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/1/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/1/20

# https://www.todayintheword.org/siteassets/header-images/2020/october/titw_october_open-graph_1200x630---copy.jpgLonging for God

**Read:** [**Psalms 42–43**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343)

### **Psalm 42[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#fen-NIV-14557a)**][[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343" \l "fen-NIV-14557b" \o "See footnote b)]**

#### For the director of music. A maskil[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#fen-NIV-14557c)] of the Sons of Korah.

1As the deer pants for streams of water,  
    so my soul pants for you, my God.  
2My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
    When can I go and meet with God?  
3My tears have been my food  
    day and night,  
while people say to me all day long,  
    “Where is your God?”  
4These things I remember  
    as I pour out my soul:  
how I used to go to the house of God  
    under the protection of the Mighty One[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#fen-NIV-14560d)]  
with shouts of joy and praise  
    among the festive throng.

5Why, my soul, are you downcast?  
    Why so disturbed within me?  
Put your hope in God,  
    for I will yet praise him,  
    my Savior and my God.

6My soul is downcast within me;  
    therefore I will remember you  
from the land of the Jordan,  
    the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.  
7Deep calls to deep  
    in the roar of your waterfalls;  
all your waves and breakers  
    have swept over me.

8By day the Lord directs his love,  
    at night his song is with me—  
    a prayer to the God of my life.

9I say to God my Rock,  
    “Why have you forgotten me?  
Why must I go about mourning,  
    oppressed by the enemy?”  
10My bones suffer mortal agony  
    as my foes taunt me,  
saying to me all day long,  
    “Where is your God?”

11Why, my soul, are you downcast?  
    Why so disturbed within me?  
Put your hope in God,  
    for I will yet praise him,  
    my Savior and my God.

### Psalm 43[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#fen-NIV-14568e)]

1Vindicate me, my God,  
    and plead my cause  
    against an unfaithful nation.  
Rescue me from those who are  
    deceitful and wicked.  
2You are God my stronghold.  
    Why have you rejected me?  
Why must I go about mourning,  
    oppressed by the enemy?  
3Send me your light and your faithful care,  
    let them lead me;  
let them bring me to your holy mountain,  
    to the place where you dwell.  
4Then I will go to the altar of God,  
    to God, my joy and my delight.  
I will praise you with the lyre,  
    O God, my God.

5Why, my soul, are you downcast?  
    Why so disturbed within me?  
Put your hope in God,  
    for I will yet praise him,  
    my Savior and my God.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 42:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#en-NIV-14557) In many Hebrew manuscripts Psalms 42 and 43 constitute one psalm.
2. [Psalm 42:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#en-NIV-14557) In Hebrew texts 42:1-11 is numbered 42:2-12.
3. [Psalm 42:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#en-NIV-14557) Title: Probably a literary or musical term
4. [Psalm 42:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#en-NIV-14560) See Septuagint and Syriac; the meaning of the Hebrew for this line is uncertain.
5. [Psalm 43:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+42%e2%80%9343#en-NIV-14568) In many Hebrew manuscripts Psalms 42 and 43 constitute one psalm.

“There are two easy ways to die in the desert: thirst and drowning,” says naturalist Craig Childs. We depend on water for life! In the second “book” of Psalms, our longing for God is compared to thirst. Chapters 42 and 43 were originally one Psalm—as evidenced in several manuscripts, as well as in the repeated refrain (42:5, 11; 43:5). In this lament, the Psalmist feels cut off from God’s presence (42:4). He is surrounded by enemies who taunt him, asking: “Where is your God?” (vv. 3, 10).

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. Psalm 42:5

The Psalmist uses water as a metaphor in both a positive and negative way. He longs for God “as the deer pants” for life-giving water (42:1). He drinks his own tears (v. 3). By contrast, he experienced God’s judgment, which he describes as God’s “waves and breakers” sweeping over him (v. 7). The Psalmist’s sense of abandonment by God and the presence of enemies led him to despair. He tries to remember when times were better, when he had experienced God’s presence and blessing at the temple or in the “land of the Jordan” (vv. 4, 6).

All through Psalm 42, he is speaking to himself. A shift takes place in the first verse of Psalm 43. He addresses God directly, asking Him for help, begging for His “light” and “faithful care” to guide him (43:3). This allows him to see hope for the future when he “will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God” (v. 4). Finally, he addresses himself, saying, “Put your hope in God,” taking some positive steps in that direction (v. 5).

**Apply the Word**

Today, we do not have to travel to a temple to experience God’s presence. Christians are filled with the Holy Spirit, “the temple of the living God” (2 Cor. 6:16). When God seems far away, pour out your heart to God, and know that He cares.

### **Pray with Us**

As we begin this study, Lord, we ask that you speak to our hearts through the words of the Psalmists and show us what we need to learn from them in our day and age.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/1/20

# How to Reflect Christ

 **Read:** [**Colossians 1:25–27**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.25%E2%80%9327)

25I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— 26the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people. 27To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

God has chosen to make known . . . the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. [Colossians 1:27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.27)

Thérèse of Lisieux was a joyful and carefree child—until her mother died when she was just four years old. She became timid and easily agitated. But many years later on Christmas Eve, all of that changed. After celebrating the birth of Jesus with her church community, she experienced God releasing her from her fear and giving her joy. She attributed the change to the power of God leaving heaven and becoming a man, Jesus, and through His dwelling in her.

What does it mean for Christ to dwell within us? It’s a mystery, said Paul to the Colossian church. It’s one that God “kept hidden for ages and generations” ([Colossians 1:26](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.26)), but which He disclosed to God’s people. To them God revealed “the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (v. 27). Because Christ now dwelled in the Colossians, they experienced the joy of new life. No longer were they enslaved to the old self of sin.

If we’ve asked Jesus to be our Savior, we too live out this mystery of His dwelling in us. Through His Spirit, He can release us from fear, as He did Thérèse, and grow within us the fruit of His Spirit, such as joy, peace, and self-control ([Galatians 5:22–23](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%205.22%E2%80%9323)).

Let’s give thanks for the wonderful mystery of Christ within us.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How do you see Jesus reflected in your life? In the lives of those you love who follow Him?

Jesus, thank You for lowering Yourself and becoming a man, and for living within me. Help me to understand more of Your work in my life.

#### **Insight**

Paul’s letter to the church at Colossae was unusual because most of his letters were addressed to churches he had helped establish. In fact, having not been to Colossae may have prompted him to prove his credentials for the ministry of an apostle ([Colossians 1:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.25)). While presenting himself as a servant of the church, Paul’s role is primarily a commission given to him by God Himself. He specifies the scope of that commission, stating that he’s been sent uniquely to “present to [the gentiles] the word of God in its fullness” (v. 25). All of this provided validation for his claim in [Colossians 1:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.1), where he identified himself as “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God.”

# God Calling – 10/1/20

# Secret of Prosperity

Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth. -- Isaiah 45:22.

Look to no other source of Salvation. Only look unto Me. See no other supply. Look unto Me, and you shall be saved. Regard Me as your only supply. That is the secret of prosperity for you, and you in your turn shall save many from poverty and distress.

Whatever danger threatens look unto Me.... Whatever you desire or need, or desire or need for others, look to Me. Claim all from My Storehouse. Claim, claim, claim.

Remember that I fed the Children of Israel with Heaven-sent manna. I made a way through the Red Sea for them. I led them through the wilderness of privation, difficulty, discipline. I led them into a land flowing with milk and honey. So trust. So be led.

Rejoice. These are your wilderness days. But surely and safely, you are being led to your Canaan of Plenty.

The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses ... in all that thou settest thine hand unto ... in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.  Deuteronomy 23:8

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/2/20

# The Place of Humiliation



If You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us. —[Mark 9:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Mark+9%3A22)

After every time of exaltation, we are brought down with a sudden rush into things as they really are, where it is neither beautiful, poetic, nor thrilling. The height of the mountaintop is measured by the dismal drudgery of the valley, but it is in the valley that we have to live for the glory of God. We see His glory on the mountain, but we never live for His glory there. It is in the place of humiliation that we find our true worth to God— that is where our faithfulness is revealed. Most of us can do things if we are always at some heroic level of intensity, simply because of the natural selfishness of our own hearts. But God wants us to be at the drab everyday level, where we live in the valley according to our personal relationship with Him. Peter thought it would be a wonderful thing for them to remain on the mountain, but Jesus Christ took the disciples down from the mountain and into the valley, where the true meaning of the vision was explained (see [Mark 9:5-6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+9:5-6), [Mark 9:14-23](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+9:14-23)).

“If you can do anything….” It takes the valley of humiliation to remove the skepticism from us. Look back at your own experience and you will find that until you learned who Jesus really was, you were a skillful skeptic about His power. When you were on the mountaintop you could believe anything, but what about when you were faced with the facts of the valley? You may be able to give a testimony regarding your sanctification, but what about the thing that is a humiliation to you right now? The last time you were on the mountain with God, you saw that all the power in heaven and on earth belonged to Jesus— will you be skeptical now, simply because you are in the valley of humiliation?

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

If a man cannot prove his religion in the valley, it is not worth anything.  Shade of His Hand, 1200 L

# CCEL – 10/2/20

**The goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.**—[LEV. 16:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.16.html" \l "Lev.16.22)

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.—In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.—Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.—Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity?

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.—He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.—The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

[Psa. 103:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.103.html" \l "Ps.103.12). -[Jer. 50:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.50.html" \l "Jer.50.20). -[Mic. 7:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mic.7.html" \l "Mic.7.19). -[Mic. 7:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mic.7.html" \l "Mic.7.18).[Isa. 53:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.6). -[Isa. 53:11,12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.11). -[John 1:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.29).

“The hope which is laid up for you in heaven.” [Colossians 1:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.5)

Our hope in Christ for the future is the mainspring and the mainstay of our joy here. It will animate our hearts to think often of heaven, for all that we can desire is promised there. Here we are weary and toilworn, but yonder is the land of rest where the sweat of labour shall no more bedew the worker’s brow, and fatigue shall be forever banished. To those who are weary and spent, the word “rest” is full of heaven. We are always in the field of battle; we are so tempted within, and so molested by foes without, that we have little or no peace; but in heaven we shall enjoy the victory, when the banner shall be waved aloft in triumph, and the sword shall be sheathed, and we shall hear our Captain say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” We have suffered bereavement after bereavement, but we are going to the land of the immortal where graves are unknown things. Here sin is a constant grief to us, but there we shall be perfectly holy, for there shall by no means enter into that kingdom anything which defileth. Hemlock springs not up in the furrows of celestial fields. Oh! is it not joy, that you are not to be in banishment forever, that you are not to dwell eternally in this wilderness, but shall soon inherit Canaan? Nevertheless let it never be said of us, that we are dreaming about the future and forgetting the present, let the future sanctify the present to highest uses. Through the Spirit of God the hope of heaven is the most potent force for the product of virtue; it is a fountain of joyous effort, it is the corner stone of cheerful holiness. The man who has this hope in him goes about his work with vigour, for the joy of the Lord is his strength. He fights against temptation with ardour, for the hope of the next world repels the fiery darts of the adversary. He can labour without present reward, for he looks for a reward in the world to come.

# Word Live – 10/2/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/2/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/2/20

# Awake, Lord!

### **Read:** [**Psalm 44**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44#fen-NIV-14573a)**]**

#### For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44" \l "fen-NIV-14573b" \o "See footnote b)]

1We have heard it with our ears, O God;  
    our ancestors have told us  
what you did in their days,  
    in days long ago.  
2With your hand you drove out the nations  
    and planted our ancestors;  
you crushed the peoples  
    and made our ancestors flourish.  
3It was not by their sword that they won the land,  
    nor did their arm bring them victory;  
it was your right hand, your arm,  
    and the light of your face, for you loved them.

4You are my King and my God,  
    who decrees[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44#fen-NIV-14576c)] victories for Jacob.  
5Through you we push back our enemies;  
    through your name we trample our foes.  
6I put no trust in my bow,  
    my sword does not bring me victory;  
7but you give us victory over our enemies,  
    you put our adversaries to shame.  
8In God we make our boast all day long,  
    and we will praise your name forever.[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44" \l "fen-NIV-14580d" \o "See footnote d)]

9But now you have rejected and humbled us;  
    you no longer go out with our armies.  
10You made us retreat before the enemy,  
    and our adversaries have plundered us.  
11You gave us up to be devoured like sheep  
    and have scattered us among the nations.  
12You sold your people for a pittance,  
    gaining nothing from their sale.

13You have made us a reproach to our neighbors,  
    the scorn and derision of those around us.  
14You have made us a byword among the nations;  
    the peoples shake their heads at us.  
15I live in disgrace all day long,  
    and my face is covered with shame  
16at the taunts of those who reproach and revile me,  
    because of the enemy, who is bent on revenge.

17All this came upon us,  
    though we had not forgotten you;  
    we had not been false to your covenant.  
18Our hearts had not turned back;  
    our feet had not strayed from your path.  
19But you crushed us and made us a haunt for jackals;  
    you covered us over with deep darkness.

20If we had forgotten the name of our God  
    or spread out our hands to a foreign god,  
21would not God have discovered it,  
    since he knows the secrets of the heart?  
22Yet for your sake we face death all day long;  
    we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

23Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep?  
    Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever.  
24Why do you hide your face  
    and forget our misery and oppression?

25We are brought down to the dust;  
    our bodies cling to the ground.  
26Rise up and help us;  
    rescue us because of your unfailing love.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 44:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44#en-NIV-14573) In Hebrew texts 44:1-26 is numbered 44:2-27.
2. [Psalm 44:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44#en-NIV-14573) Title: Probably a literary or musical term
3. [Psalm 44:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44#en-NIV-14576) Septuagint, Aquila and Syriac; Hebrew King, O God; / command
4. [Psalm 44:8](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+44#en-NIV-14580) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here.

On average, eleven Christians a day were killed for their faith in Jesus last year. In May 2019, the BBC reported that persecution of Christians was reaching “near genocide levels” in some parts of the world. This can lead us to ask “Why?” and “Where is God in the midst of this?”

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? Romans 8:35

In today’s reading, the Psalmist raises similar questions to God. We do not know the exact circumstance in which Psalm 44 was written, but clearly, Israel had suffered a devastating military defeat. Reeling from the loss, the Psalmist begins by recounting what God had done for Israel in the past. He had defeated other nations, especially during the time of Joshua (vv. 1–8). These victories were not accomplished because of the strength of Israel’s army, but because God gave them victory (vv. 6–7).

Verse 9 describes Israel’s current plight. They have been rejected and humbled by God. They have fled before their enemies (v. 10). They have been plundered (v. 11). Worst of all, they have been publicly shamed and disgraced (vv. 13–16). Yet, this defeat was not for any known sin. Israel had not worshiped other gods or forgotten their covenant (vv. 17–21).

Israel thought that if they were faithful to God, God would be faithful to them. They could not understand their current defeat. Their theology did not align with their experience. This did not lead Israel to unbelief, but to their knees. They conclude by begging God to “Awake! ...Rouse yourself! ...Rise up and help us!” (vv. 23–26). In many ways, their request to God is not for an explanation, but for His action.

**Apply the Word**

Like the Psalmist, we can express our bewilderment to God and plead for Him to act. We can cling to God when life doesn’t make sense. Paul quotes this psalm, reminding believers that nothing, not even suffering, can separate us from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:35–39).

### **Pray with Us**

God, we ask for your encouragement today. May Paul’s quote from Psalm 44 encourage us even more: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” (Rom. 8:35). We know the answer: Nobody!

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/2/20

# He Won’t Let Us Go

 **Read:** [**John 10:22–30**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2010.22%E2%80%9330)

### **Further Conflict Over Jesus’ Claims**

22Then came the Festival of Dedication[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+10%3A22%E2%80%9330&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26504a)] at Jerusalem. It was winter, 23and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. 24The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

25Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, 26but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. 27My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+10%3A22%E2%80%9330&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26511b)]; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. 30I and the Father are one.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [John 10:22](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+10%3A22%E2%80%9330&version=NIV#en-NIV-26504) That is, Hanukkah
2. [John 10:29](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+10%3A22%E2%80%9330&version=NIV#en-NIV-26511) Many early manuscripts What my Father has given me is greater than all

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. [John 10:28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2010.28)

Julio was biking across the George Washington Bridge—a busy, double-decked thoroughfare connecting New York City and New Jersey—when he encountered a life-or-death situation. A man was standing on a ledge over the Hudson River preparing to jump. Knowing that the police wouldn’t arrive in time, Julio acted quickly. He recalls getting off his bike and spreading out his arms, saying something like: “Don’t do it. We love you.” Then, like a shepherd with a crook, he grabbed the distraught man, and with the help of another passerby, brought him to safety. According to reports, Julio wouldn’t let go of the man, even after he was safe.

Two millennia earlier, in a life-or-death situation, Jesus, the Good Shepherd, said He would lay down His life to save and never let go of those who believed in Him. He summarized how He would bless His sheep: they would know Him personally, have the gift of eternal life, would never perish, and would be secure in His care. This security didn’t depend on the ability of the frail and feeble sheep, but on the sufficiency of the Shepherd who’ll never let one be snatched “out of [His] hand” ([John 10:28–29](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2010.28%E2%80%9329)).

When we were distraught and feeling hopeless, Jesus rescued us; now we can feel safe and secure in our relationship with Him. He loves us, pursues us, finds us, saves us, and promises to never let us go.

By:  [Marvin Williams](https://odb.org/author/marvinwilliams/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What makes you feel insecure in your relationship with Jesus? How do you feel knowing that your security in Him depends on His sufficiency and not your weakness?

Jesus, when I let go of You because of my sin, You never let go of me because of Your grace.

To learn more about Jesus’ offer of salvation and His resurrection, visit [ChristianUniversity.org/CA206](https://ChristianUniversity.org/CA206).

#### **Insight**

The Festival of Dedication, also known as Hanukkah or the Feast of Lights, celebrates the rededication of the temple in 164 bc after it had been desecrated by the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 167 bc. It’s in this context that Jesus says, “I and the Father are one” ([John 10:30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/John%2010.30)), which recalls the central belief of Judaism known as the shema, “The Lord our God, the Lord is one” ([Deuteronomy 6:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%206.4)). By recalling the shema, Jesus identifies Himself with the God of Israel. For Jesus to be one with the Father is nothing less than a claim to deity.

# God Calling – 10/2/20

# True Meekness

How easy it is to lead and guide when you are responsive to My wish! The hurts of life come only when you, or those about whom you care, endeavor to go your, or their, own way and resist the pressure of My Hand.

But in willing My Will there must be a gladness. Delight to do that Will.

"The meek shall inherit the earth," I said. That is, control others, and the material forces of the earth.

But this exultant state of possession is the result of a yielded will. That was My meaning of the word meek.

So live. So yield. So conquer.

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.  John 5:30

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/3/20

# The Place of Ministry



He said to them, "This kind [of unclean spirit] can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." —[Mark 9:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Mark+9%3A29)

“His disciples asked Him privately, ‘Why could we not cast it out?’ ” ([Mark 9:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+9:28)). The answer lies in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. “This kind can come out by nothing but” concentrating on Him, and then doubling and redoubling that concentration on Him. We can remain powerless forever, as the disciples were in this situation, by trying to do God’s work without concentrating on His power, and by following instead the ideas that we draw from our own nature. We actually slander and dishonor God by our very eagerness to serve Him without knowing Him.

When you are brought face to face with a difficult situation and nothing happens externally, you can still know that freedom and release will be given because of your continued concentration on Jesus Christ. Your duty in service and ministry is to see that there is nothing between Jesus and yourself. Is there anything between you and Jesus even now? If there is, you must get through it, not by ignoring it as an irritation, or by going up and over it, but by facing it and getting through it into the presence of Jesus Christ. Then that very problem itself, and all that you have been through in connection with it, will glorify Jesus Christ in a way that you will never know until you see Him face to face.

We must be able to “mount up with wings like eagles” ([Isaiah 40:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+40:31)), but we must also know how to come down. The power of the saint lies in the coming down and in the living that is done in the valley. Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” ([Philippians 4:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+4:13)) and what he was referring to were mostly humiliating things. And yet it is in our power to refuse to be humiliated and to say, “No, thank you, I much prefer to be on the mountaintop with God.” Can I face things as they actually are in the light of the reality of Jesus Christ, or do things as they really are destroy my faith in Him, and put me into a panic?

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The root of faith is the knowledge of a Person, and one of the biggest snares is the idea that God is sure to lead us to success. My Utmost for His Highest, March 19, 761 L

# CCEL – 10/3/20

**Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.**—[REV. 1:5.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.1.html" \l "Rev.1.5)

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. Love is strong as death.—Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.—In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Ye are washed, . . . ye are sanctified, . . . ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.—Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.—I beseech you . . . brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

[Song 8:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.8.html" \l "Song.8.7),[6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.8.html" \l "Song.8.6). -[John 15:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.15.html#John.15.13).[I Pet. 2:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.24). -[Eph. 1:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.7).[I Cor. 6:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.6.html" \l "iCor.6.11). -[I Pet. 2:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.9). -[Rom. 12:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.12.html" \l "Rom.12.1).

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” [Hebrews 1:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.1.html" \l "Heb.1.14)

Angels are the unseen attendants of the saints of God; they bear us up in their hands, lest we dash our foot against a stone. Loyalty to their Lord leads them to take a deep interest in the children of his love; they rejoice over the return of the prodigal to his father’s house below, and they welcome the advent of the believer to the King’s palace above. In olden times the sons of God were favoured with their visible appearance, and at this day, although unseen by us, heaven is still opened, and the angels of God ascend and descend upon the Son of man, that they may visit the heirs of salvation. Seraphim still fly with live coals from off the altar to touch the lips of men greatly beloved. If our eyes could be opened, we should see horses of fire and chariots of fire about the servants of the Lord; for we have come to an innumerable company of angels, who are all watchers and protectors of the seed-royal. Spenser’s line is no poetic fiction, where he sings—

“How oft do they with golden pinions cleave

The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant

Against foul fiends to aid us militant!”

To what dignity are the chosen elevated when the brilliant courtiers of heaven become their willing servitors! Into what communion are we raised since we have intercourse with spotless celestials! How well are we defended since all the twenty- thousand chariots of God are armed for our deliverance! To whom do we owe all this? Let the Lord Jesus Christ be forever endeared to us, for through him we are made to sit in heavenly places far above principalities and powers. He it is whose camp is round about them that fear him; he is the true Michael whose foot is upon the dragon. All hail, Jesus! thou Angel of Jehovah’s presence, to thee this family offers its morning vows.

# Word Live – 10/3/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/3/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/3/20

# Future Hope

**Read:** [**Psalm 45**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45#fen-NIV-14599a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. To the tune of “Lilies.” Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45" \l "fen-NIV-14599b" \o "See footnote b)] A wedding song.**

1My heart is stirred by a noble theme  
    as I recite my verses for the king;  
    my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

2You are the most excellent of men  
    and your lips have been anointed with grace,  
    since God has blessed you forever.

3Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one;  
    clothe yourself with splendor and majesty.  
4In your majesty ride forth victoriously  
    in the cause of truth, humility and justice;  
    let your right hand achieve awesome deeds.  
5Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king’s enemies;  
    let the nations fall beneath your feet.  
6Your throne, O God,[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45#fen-NIV-14604c)] will last for ever and ever;  
    a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.  
7You love righteousness and hate wickedness;  
    therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions  
    by anointing you with the oil of joy.  
8All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia;  
    from palaces adorned with ivory  
    the music of the strings makes you glad.  
9Daughters of kings are among your honored women;  
    at your right hand is the royal bride in gold of Ophir.

10Listen, daughter, and pay careful attention:  
    Forget your people and your father’s house.  
11Let the king be enthralled by your beauty;  
    honor him, for he is your lord.  
12The city of Tyre will come with a gift,[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45" \l "fen-NIV-14610d" \o "See footnote d)]  
    people of wealth will seek your favor.  
13All glorious is the princess within her chamber;  
    her gown is interwoven with gold.  
14In embroidered garments she is led to the king;  
    her virgin companions follow her—  
    those brought to be with her.  
15Led in with joy and gladness,  
    they enter the palace of the king.

16Your sons will take the place of your fathers;  
    you will make them princes throughout the land.

17I will perpetuate your memory through all generations;  
    therefore the nations will praise you for ever and ever.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 45:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45#en-NIV-14599) In Hebrew texts 45:1-17 is numbered 45:2-18.
2. [Psalm 45:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45#en-NIV-14599) Title: Probably a literary or musical term
3. [Psalm 45:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45#en-NIV-14604) Here the king is addressed as God’s representative.
4. [Psalm 45:12](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+45#en-NIV-14610) Or A Tyrian robe is among the gifts

The Battle of Gettysburg was costly. In just three days of fighting, there were more than 50,000 casualties. The nation was weary of war and wondered if it would ever end. In his famous Gettysburg address, Abraham Lincoln presented a vision for the future: “[T]hat this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.”

Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever. Psalm 45:6

Psalms 42–44 present us with two main problems: separation from God’s presence and military defeat. Psalms 45–49 provide answers to these problems. While Psalm 44 lamented a great military defeat, Psalm 45 presents a vision of a Davidic king who would “ride forth victoriously” and defeat the nations (vv. 4–5). This king is described in lofty terms: “Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever” (v. 6). This description goes beyond any historical king of Israel and is a vision of a future Messiah.

While Psalms 42–43 lamented being cut off from God’s presence (42:1–3; 43:3–4), Psalm 45 describes a bride being led into the presence of this exalted king “with joy and gladness” (v. 15). This psalm looked to a time of future hope for God’s people. The bride described here is a figurative representation of the speaker of Psalm 42–43, who longed to come into God’s presence with “joy” (43:4). This fits with the regular Old Testament image of God’s relationship with Israel as a marriage (Jer. 2:2; 31:32; Isa. 54:5; Hos. 2:16–20). As one commentator explains, “It is best to understand Psalm 45 as speaking figuratively about a wedding between the divine Messiah-King and His people.”

**Apply the Word**

As we look at the state of the world around us, it can be easy to get discouraged. This psalm encourages us to reflect upon our future hope. We have a great wedding feast to anticipate when the Lord will declare, “I am making everything new!” (Rev. 21:5).

### **Pray with Us**

Together, we reflect on our future hope, the wedding feast of the Lamb. We thank you, Lord, that even now your promise from Revelation is true: “I am making everything new!” (Rev. 21:5).

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/3/20

# Removing the Intruder

 **Read:** [**Ephesians 5:25–33**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205.25%E2%80%9333)

25Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26to make her holy, cleansing[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5%3A25%E2%80%9333&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29331a)] her by the washing with water through the word, 27and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30for we are members of his body. 31“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5%3A25%E2%80%9333&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29336b)] 32This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Ephesians 5:26](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5%3A25%E2%80%9333&version=NIV#en-NIV-29331) Or having cleansed
2. [Ephesians 5:31](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5%3A25%E2%80%9333&version=NIV#en-NIV-29336) Gen. 2:24

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. [Ephesians 5:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205.25)

It wasn’t quite dawn when my husband rose from bed and went into the kitchen. I saw the light flip on and off and wondered at his action. Then I recalled that the previous morning I’d yelped at the sight of an “intruder” on our kitchen counter. Translated: an undesirable creature of the six-legged variety. My husband knew my paranoia and immediately arrived to remove it. This morning he’d risen early to ensure our kitchen was bug-free so I could enter without concern. What a guy!

My husband awoke with me on his mind, putting my need before his own. To me, his action illustrates the love Paul describes in [Ephesians 5:25](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205.25), “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” Paul goes on, “Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself” (v. 28). Paul’s comparison of a husband’s love to the love of Christ pivots on how Jesus put our needs before His own. My husband knows I’m afraid of certain intruders, and so he made my concern his priority.

That principle doesn’t apply to husbands only. After the example of Jesus, each of us can lovingly sacrifice to help remove an intruder of stress, fear, shame, or anxiety so that someone can move more freely in the world.

By:  [Elisa Morgan](https://odb.org/author/elisamorgan/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What “intruder” might God be asking you to address to help another? How might you allow someone to help rid your life of certain “intruders”?

Dear God, thank You for the gift of Your Son who’s removed the intruder of sin from my life and reconciled me to You!

#### **Insight**

In [Ephesians 5:26–27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205.26%E2%80%9327) we find an example of a Greek hina clause. This type of clause is used to express purpose. It’s often translated as “in order that” or “so that.” In verses 26–27 (niv) it’s twice translated simply as “to.” A final occurrence appears at the end of verse 27, which translated literally reads: “but that she might be holy and blameless.”

Each of these clauses expresses a purpose for Christ’s sacrificial love for the church. The first purpose is for the church’s sanctification, to be set apart from the sinful world and found in God’s kingdom (v. 26; see [Colossians 1:12–13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.12%E2%80%9313)). The second is that Jesus might present the church, His bride, to Himself. The final purpose is so the church would be “holy and blameless” ([Ephesians 5:27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%205.27)).

Paul uses this example of purposeful love to instruct husbands in how to love their wives. A husband’s love ought to have a purpose—to imitate Christ’s love for the church.

# God Calling – 10/3/20

# Blessed Assurance

And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.  -- Isaiah 32:17.

Be still and know that I am God. Only when a soul attains this calm can there be true work done, and mind and soul and body be strong to conquer and to bear.

The Peace is the work of righteousness -- living the right life, living with Me. Quietness and assurance follow.

Assurance is the calm born of a deep certainty in Me, in My Promise, in My Power to save and keep. Gain this calm, and at all costs keep this calm. Rest in Me. Live in Me. Calm, quiet, assured -- at Peace.

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, ... Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.  1 Peter 1:2

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/4/20

# The Vision and The Reality



…to those who are…called to be saints… —[1 Corinthians 1:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Corinthians+1%3A2)

Thank God for being able to see all that you have not yet been. You have had the vision, but you are not yet to the reality of it by any means. It is when we are in the valley, where we prove whether we will be the choice ones, that most of us turn back. We are not quite prepared for the bumps and bruises that must come if we are going to be turned into the shape of the vision. We have seen what we are not, and what God wants us to be, but are we willing to be battered into the shape of the vision to be used by God? The beatings will always come in the most common, everyday ways and through common, everyday people.

There are times when we do know what God’s purpose is; whether we will let the vision be turned into actual character depends on us, not on God. If we prefer to relax on the mountaintop and live in the memory of the vision, then we will be of no real use in the ordinary things of which human life is made. We have to learn to live in reliance upon what we saw in the vision, not simply live in ecstatic delight and conscious reflection upon God. This means living the realities of our lives in the light of the vision until the truth of the vision is actually realized in us. Every bit of our training is in that direction. Learn to thank God for making His demands known.

Our little “I am” always sulks and pouts when God says do. Let your little “I am” be shriveled up in God’s wrath and indignation— “I AM WHO I AM…has sent me to you” ([Exodus 3:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+3:14)). He must dominate. Isn’t it piercing to realize that God not only knows where we live, but also knows the gutters into which we crawl! He will hunt us down as fast as a flash of lightning. No human being knows human beings as God does.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

To read the Bible according to God’s providential order in your circumstances is the only way to read it, viz., in the blood and passion of personal life. Disciples Indeed, 387 R

# CCEL – 10/4/20

**Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.**—[EXO. 34:29.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Exod.34.html" \l "Exod.34.29)

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.—Lord, when saw we thee a hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?—In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.—Be clothed with humility.

[Jesus] was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.—All that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on Stephen, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.—The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.—We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

[Psa. 115:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.115.html" \l "Ps.115.1). -[Matt. 25:37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.25.html" \l "Matt.25.37). -[Phi. 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html" \l "Phil.2.3). -[I Pet. 5:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.5.html" \l "iPet.5.5).[Matt. 17:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.17.html" \l "Matt.17.2). -[Acts 6:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.6.html" \l "Acts.6.15). -[John 17:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.22). -[II Cor. 3:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.3.html" \l "iiCor.3.18).[Matt. 5:14,15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.5.html" \l "Matt.5.14).

“At evening time it shall be light.” [Zechariah 14:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Zech.14.html" \l "Zech.14.7)

Oftentimes we look forward with forebodings to the time of old age, forgetful that at eventide it shall be light. To many saints, old age is the choicest season in their lives. A balmier air fans the mariner’s cheek as he nears the shore of immortality, fewer waves ruffle his sea, quiet reigns, deep, still and solemn. From the altar of age the flashes of the fire of youth are gone, but the more real flame of earnest feeling remains. The pilgrims have reached the land Beulah, that happy country, whose days are as the days of heaven upon earth. Angels visit it, celestial gales blow over it, flowers of paradise grow in it, and the air is filled with seraphic music. Some dwell here for years, and others come to it but a few hours before their departure, but it is an Eden on earth. We may well long for the time when we shall recline in its shady groves and be satisfied with hope until the time of fruition comes. The setting sun seems larger than when aloft in the sky, and a splendour of glory tinges all the clouds which surround his going down. Pain breaks not the calm of the sweet twilight of age, for strength made perfect in weakness bears up with patience under it all. Ripe fruits of choice experience are gathered as the rare repast of life’s evening, and the soul prepares itself for rest.

The Lord’s people shall also enjoy light in the hour of death. Unbelief laments; the shadows fall, the night is coming, existence is ending. Ah no, crieth faith, the night is far spent, the true day is at hand. Light is come, the light of immortality, the light of a Father’s countenance. Gather up thy feet in the bed, see the waiting bands of spirits! Angels waft thee away. Farewell, beloved one, thou art gone, thou wavest thine hand. Ah, now it is light. The pearly gates are open, the golden streets shine in the jasper light. We cover our eyes, but thou beholdest the unseen; adieu, brother, thou hast light at even-tide, such as we have not yet.

# Word Live – 10/4/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/4/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/4/20

# A Mighty Fortress

### **Read:** [**Psalm 46**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46#fen-NIV-14616a)**]**

#### For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alamoth.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46" \l "fen-NIV-14616b" \o "See footnote b)] A song.

1God is our refuge and strength,  
    an ever-present help in trouble.  
2Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way  
    and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,  
3though its waters roar and foam  
    and the mountains quake with their surging.[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46#fen-NIV-14618c)]

4There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
    the holy place where the Most High dwells.  
5God is within her, she will not fall;  
    God will help her at break of day.  
6Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;  
    he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

7The Lord Almighty is with us;  
    the God of Jacob is our fortress.

8Come and see what the Lord has done,  
    the desolations he has brought on the earth.  
9He makes wars cease  
    to the ends of the earth.  
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
    he burns the shields[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46#fen-NIV-14624d)] with fire.  
10He says, “Be still, and know that I am God;  
    I will be exalted among the nations,  
    I will be exalted in the earth.”

11The Lord Almighty is with us;  
    the God of Jacob is our fortress.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 46:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46#en-NIV-14616) In Hebrew texts 46:1-11 is numbered 46:2-12.
2. [Psalm 46:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46#en-NIV-14616) Title: Probably a musical term
3. [Psalm 46:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46#en-NIV-14618) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verses 7 and 11.
4. [Psalm 46:9](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+46#en-NIV-14624) Or chariots

In October 1527, Martin Luther’s life looked bleak. He had been hiding for years because of his commitment to salvation by faith alone. In August, the bubonic plague swept the area where he lived. It must have felt like the world was falling apart. In response to this situation, he took comfort in Psalm 46 and wrote the hymn “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.”

**A mighty fortress:-** [**https://youtu.be/FY4DCG-nFBI**](https://youtu.be/FY4DCG-nFBI)

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

Psalm 46 presents two terrifying images. First, a natural disaster with the ground shaking and mountains tumbling into the turbulent seas (vv. 2–3). Second, we see the foreign nations in an uproar (v. 6). One can imagine vast armies surrounding Jerusalem and threatening its very existence. Yet in the midst of these chaotic and frightening circumstances, the psalmist was able to proclaim, “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble” (v. 1). Israel was able to take comfort, not in a vast army, or strongly fortified city, but in the presence of a God who is able to help (v. 5).

In verses 8–9, the psalmist addresses the nations directly, inviting them to “Come and see what the Lord has done” (v. 8). They are invited to remember the great victories He achieved in the past: the defeat of Pharaoh’s army at the Red Sea, for example (v. 9). The tone shifts dramatically in verse 10. The Lord Himself addresses the rebellious and threatening nations. He commands them to “be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations” (v. 10). The command to “be still” is not so much an encouragement to silent meditation but a warning to cease fighting and to acknowledge the Lord’s sovereignty.

**Apply the Word**

Terrifying and frightening things happen in the world today. This psalm is a good reminder that God is our refuge and strength. Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He promised, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:20).

### **Pray with Us**

Are you going through difficulties right now? Read Psalm 46 back to the Lord as your prayer, and may its beautiful words strengthen you. Indeed, “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble” (Ps. 46:1).

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/4/20

# Strange Comfort

 **Read:** [**2 Kings 6:15–17**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Kings%206.15%E2%80%9317)

15When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?” the servant asked.

16“Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

17And Elisha prayed, “Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see. [2 Kings 6:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Kings%206.17)

The verse on the card Lisa received didn’t seem to match her situation: “Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha” ([2 Kings 6:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Kings%206.17)). I have cancer! she thought in confusion. I’ve just lost a baby! A verse about angel soldiers doesn’t apply.

Then the “angels” began to show up. Cancer survivors gave her their time and a listening ear. Her husband got released early from an overseas military assignment. Friends prayed with her. But the moment she most felt God’s love was when her friend Patty walked in with two boxes of tissues. Placing them on the table, she started crying. Patty knew. She’d endured miscarriages too.

“That meant more than anything,” Lisa says. “The card made sense now. My ‘angel soldiers’ had been there all along.”

When an army besieged Israel, a host of literal angels protected Elisha. But Elisha’s servant couldn’t see them. “What shall we do?” he cried to the prophet (v. 15). Elisha simply prayed, “Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see” (v. 17).

When we look to God, our crisis will show us what truly matters and that we’re not alone. We learn that God’s comforting presence never leaves us. He shows us His love in infinitely surprising ways.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What’s your first reaction when you receive bad news? When you endured a crisis, how did you view God in new ways?

Loving God, thank You for the complete reliability of Your presence. Open my eyes so that I may see You in a new way today.

#### **Insight**

Elisha had been both a protégé of and a servant to Elijah for some seven to ten years when Elijah departed this world in a whirlwind ([2 Kings 2:9–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Kings%202.9%E2%80%9312)). Once Elisha assumed the role of prophet of Israel, however, his ministry would have a very different nature and character than that of his mentor. While in Elijah’s ministry miracles were often destructive and negative (drought, famine, calling fire from heaven to destroy enemy troops, etc.), Elisha’s ministry was usually positive and helpful. Performing exactly twice as many miracles as his predecessor, Elisha was God’s instrument to purify polluted water, cleanse a poisoned stew, restore a lost axe-head, heal a leper, and more. Although these two men served in the same era and both were instruments in the hands of the God of Israel, the overall tone and spirit of their respective ministries were very different.

# God Calling – 10/4/20

# All You Desire

He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. -- Isaiah 53:2.

My children, in this verse My servant Isaiah spoke of the wonderful illumination given to those who were Spirit-guided.

To those who know Me not, there is in Me nothing to appeal to them, or to attract them.

To those who know Me there is nothing more to be desired. "No beauty they could desire Him."

Oh! My children, draw very near to Me. See Me as I really am, that ever you may have the Joy of finding in Me all you could desire. The fulfillment of all you could desire in Master, Lord, or Friend.

One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the   
house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord...  Psalm 27:4

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/5/20

# The Nature of Degeneration



Just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned… —[Romans 5:12](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+5%3A12)

The Bible does not say that God punished the human race for one man’s sin, but that the nature of sin, namely, my claim to my right to myself, entered into the human race through one man. But it also says that another Man took upon Himself the sin of the human race and put it away— an infinitely more profound revelation (see [Hebrews 9:26](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+9:26)). The nature of sin is not immorality and wrongdoing, but the nature of self-realization which leads us to say, “I am my own god.” This nature may exhibit itself in proper morality or in improper immorality, but it always has a common basis— my claim to my right to myself. When our Lord faced either people with all the forces of evil in them, or people who were clean-living, moral, and upright, He paid no attention to the moral degradation of one, nor any attention to the moral attainment of the other. He looked at something we do not see, namely, the nature of man (see [John 2:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+2:25)).

Sin is something I am born with and cannot touch— only God touches sin through redemption. It is through the Cross of Christ that God redeemed the entire human race from the possibility of damnation through the heredity of sin. God nowhere holds a person responsible for having the heredity of sin, and does not condemn anyone because of it. Condemnation comes when I realize that Jesus Christ came to deliver me from this heredity of sin, and yet I refuse to let Him do so. From that moment I begin to get the seal of damnation. “This is the condemnation [and the critical moment], that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light…” ([John 3:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3:19)).

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

To read the Bible according to God’s providential order in your circumstances is the only way to read it, viz., in the blood and passion of personal life. Disciples Indeed, 387 R

# CCEL – 10/5/20

**Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.**—[PSA. 50:15.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.50.html" \l "Ps.50.15)

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.—Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.—For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Jacob said unto his household, . . . Let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.—Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I on the name of the Lord.

[Psa. 42:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.42.html" \l "Ps.42.11). -[Psa. 10:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.10.html" \l "Ps.10.17). -[Psa. 86:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.86.html" \l "Ps.86.5).[Gen. 35:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.35.html" \l "Gen.35.2). -[Psa. 103:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.103.html" \l "Ps.103.2).[Psa. 116:1-4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.116.html" \l "Ps.116.1).

“He arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights.” [1 Kings 19:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iKgs.19.html" \l "iKgs.19.8)

All the strength supplied to us by our gracious God is meant for service, not for wantonness or boasting. When the prophet Elijah found the cake baked on the coals, and the cruse of water placed at his head, as he lay under the juniper tree, he was no gentleman to be gratified with dainty fare that he might stretch himself at his ease; far otherwise, he was commissioned to go forty days and forty nights in the strength of it, journeying towards Horeb, the mount of God. When the Master invited the disciples to “Come and dine” with him, after the feast was concluded he said to Peter, “Feed my sheep”; further adding, “Follow me.” Even thus it is with us; we eat the bread of heaven, that we may expend our strength in the Master’s service. We come to the passover, and eat of the paschal lamb with loins girt, and staff in hand, so as to start off at once when we have satisfied our hunger. Some Christians are for living on Christ, but are not so anxious to live for Christ. Earth should be a preparation for heaven; and heaven is the place where saints feast most and work most. They sit down at the table of our Lord, and they serve him day and night in his temple. They eat of heavenly food and render perfect service. Believer, in the strength you daily gain from Christ labour for him. Some of us have yet to learn much concerning the design of our Lord in giving us his grace. We are not to retain the precious grains of truth as the Egyptian mummy held the wheat for ages, without giving it an opportunity to grow: we must sow it and water it. Why does the Lord send down the rain upon the thirsty earth, and give the genial sunshine? Is it not that these may all help the fruits of the earth to yield food for man? Even so the Lord feeds and refreshes our souls that we may afterwards use our renewed strength in the promotion of his glory.

# Word Live – 10/5/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/5/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/5/20

# Clap Your Hands

### **Read:** [**Psalm 47**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+47)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+47#fen-NIV-14627a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.**

1Clap your hands, all you nations;  
    shout to God with cries of joy.

2For the Lord Most High is awesome,  
    the great King over all the earth.  
3He subdued nations under us,  
    peoples under our feet.  
4He chose our inheritance for us,  
    the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+47" \l "fen-NIV-14630b" \o "See footnote b)]

5God has ascended amid shouts of joy,  
    the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets.  
6Sing praises to God, sing praises;  
    sing praises to our King, sing praises.  
7For God is the King of all the earth;  
    sing to him a psalm of praise.

8God reigns over the nations;  
    God is seated on his holy throne.  
9The nobles of the nations assemble  
    as the people of the God of Abraham,  
for the kings[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+47#fen-NIV-14635c)] of the earth belong to God;  
    he is greatly exalted.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 47:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+47#en-NIV-14627) In Hebrew texts 47:1-9 is numbered 47:2-10.
2. [Psalm 47:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+47#en-NIV-14630) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here.
3. [Psalm 47:9](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+47#en-NIV-14635) Or shields

C. S. Lewis noticed that when people find something they love, they naturally want other people to join them in praising it. “Isn’t the painting beautiful?” “Wasn’t that play magnificent?” He reflected upon the reason for this: “I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation.”

And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. John 12:32

In today’s psalm, the writer encourages all the nations to “Clap your hands . . . shout to God with cries of joy” (v. 1). He was so delighted in God that he wanted the whole world to join him. God had done great things for Israel. He had subdued the Canaanites under the leadership of Joshua during the period of the Conquest (v. 3). He had fulfilled His promise to Abraham that Israel would dwell in the land of Canaan (v. 4). This demonstrated His love for Israel and His faithfulness to them (v. 4).

God is also to be praised because He is “awesome” (v. 2). He rules over the nations and is “greatly exalted” (vv. 8–9). This psalm envisions God ascending to His heavenly throne and ruling over all people (vv. 5–8). In a final picture of God’s universal rule, the poet describes how “the nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham” (v. 9). Even though this psalm began by celebrating things God had specifically done to help Israel, it ends by presenting a vision of leaders from every nation assembling with Israel in homage to God. This anticipates the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham that through his offspring “all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Gen. 12:3).

**Apply the Word**

One way to think about evangelism is wanting other people to join you in your delight in Jesus and what He has done for you. Today, call others to join you in worship of Him—in anticipation of the time when people from all nations will bow in worship (Phil. 2:9–10).

### **Pray with Us**

We invite you to pray and worship the Lord in a new way. Maybe follow the invitation in today’s psalm to “clap your hands” or to “shout to God with cries of joy” (v.1). The Lord delights in our creativity!

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/5/20

# Begin with the End

**Read:** [**Philippians 1:3–11**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%201.3%E2%80%9311)

### **Thanksgiving and Prayer**

3I thank my God every time I remember you. 4In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

7It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God’s grace with me. 8God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

9And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

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

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” I was often asked that question as a child. And the answers changed like the wind. A doctor. A firefighter. A missionary. A worship leader. A physicist—or actually, MacGyver (a favorite TV character)! Now, as a dad of four kids, I think of how difficult it must be for them to be asked that question. There are times when I want to say, “I know what you’ll be great at!” Parents can sometimes see more in their children than the children can see in themselves.

This resonates with what Paul saw in the Philippian believers—those he loved and prayed for ([Philippians 1:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%201.3)). He could see the end; he knew what they’d be when all was said and done. The Bible gives us a grand vision of the end of the story—resurrection and the renewal of all things (see [1 Corinthians 15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2015) and [Revelation 21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev%2021)). But it also tells us who’s writing the story.

Paul, in the opening lines of a letter he wrote from prison, reminded the Philippian church that “he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” ([Philippians 1:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%201.6)). Jesus started the work and He’ll complete it. The word completion is particularly important—the story doesn’t just end, for God leaves nothing unfinished.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Where are you in your story? How can you trust Jesus to take the “pen” from your hand and to bring your story to completion?

Dear Jesus, You’re in charge of my story. It’s not up to me to make it happen. I surrender my life to You. Help me to trust You.

To learn more about who you are and how you can best serve God, visit [ChristianUniversity.org/SF108.](https://ChristianUniversity.org/SF108.)

#### **Insight**

Paul reminds us that our relationship with God isn’t based on our efforts but on God’s will: “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” ([Philippians 1:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%201.6)). In another of Paul’s letters, he observed how God first draws us to the good news of Jesus. He wrote, “For [God] chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight” ([Ephesians 1:4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Eph%201.4)). God’s Holy Spirit is at work in us so that we may grow to “know [God] better” (v. 17).

We enter into relationship with Him through the death and resurrection of His Son. It’s God Himself who continues the work that characterizes this relationship. Paul calls us to increase in love so that we’re “filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ” ([Philippians 1:9–11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%201.9%E2%80%9311)).

# God Calling – 10/5/20

# No Chance Meetings

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. -- Psalm 121:8.

All your movements, your goings and comings, controlled by Me. Every visit, all blessed by Me. Every walk arranged by Me. A blessing on all you do, on every interview.

Every meeting not a chance meeting, but planned by Me. All blessed.

Not only now, in the hour of your difficulty, but from this time forth and for evermore.

Led by the Spirit, a proof of Sonship. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God," and if children then heirs -- heirs of God.

What a heritage! Heirs -- no prospect of being disinherited. "Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that you suffer with Him that you may be also glorified together."

So your suffering has its purpose. It is a proof of Sonship. It leads to perfection of character (the being glorified), and to Union with Me, God, too. Think of, and dwell upon, the rapture of this.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.  Ephesians 1:4