# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/6/20

# The Nature of Regeneration



When it pleased God…to reveal His Son in me… —[Galatians 1:15-16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Galatians+1%3A15-16)

If Jesus Christ is going to regenerate me, what is the problem He faces? It is simply this— I have a heredity in which I had no say or decision; I am not holy, nor am I likely to be; and if all Jesus Christ can do is tell me that I must be holy, His teaching only causes me to despair. But if Jesus Christ is truly a regenerator, someone who can put His own heredity of holiness into me, then I can begin to see what He means when He says that I have to be holy. Redemption means that Jesus Christ can put into anyone the hereditary nature that was in Himself, and all the standards He gives us are based on that nature— His teaching is meant to be applied to the life which He puts within us. The proper action on my part is simply to agree with God’s verdict on sin as judged on the Cross of Christ.

The New Testament teaching about regeneration is that when a person is hit by his own sense of need, God will put the Holy Spirit into his spirit, and his personal spirit will be energized by the Spirit of the Son of God— “…until Christ is formed in you” ([Galatians 4:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+4:19)). The moral miracle of redemption is that God can put a new nature into me through which I can live a totally new life. When I finally reach the edge of my need and know my own limitations, then Jesus says, “Blessed are you…” ([Matthew 5:11](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5:11)). But I must get to that point. God cannot put into me, the responsible moral person that I am, the nature that was in Jesus Christ unless I am aware of my need for it.

Just as the nature of sin entered into the human race through one man, the Holy Spirit entered into the human race through another Man (see [Romans 5:12-19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5:12-19)). And redemption means that I can be delivered from the heredity of sin, and that through Jesus Christ I can receive a pure and spotless heredity, namely, the Holy Spirit.

**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 – 10/6/20

**The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.**—[REV. 19:6.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.19.html" \l "Rev.19.6)

I know that thou canst do every thing.—The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.—He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?—There is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?—Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee.

Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.—Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean.—The mighty God.—All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.—Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed, . . . there be more with us than with him.

[Job 42:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.42.html" \l "Job.42.2). -[Luke 18:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.18.html" \l "Luke.18.27). -[Dan. 4:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Dan.4.html" \l "Dan.4.35).[Isa. 43:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.43.html" \l "Isa.43.13). -[Mark 14:36](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mark.14.html" \l "Mark.14.36).[Matt. 9:28,29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.9.html" \l "Matt.9.28). -[Matt. 8:2,3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.8.html" \l "Matt.8.2).[Isa. 9:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.9.html" \l "Isa.9.6). -[Matt. 28:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.28.html" \l "Matt.28.18).[Psa. 20:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.20.html" \l "Ps.20.7). -[II Chr. 32:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiChr.32.html" \l "iiChr.32.7).

“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.” [John 4:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.4.html" \l "John.4.14)

He who is a believer in Jesus finds enough in his Lord to satisfy him now, and to content him for evermore. The believer is not the man whose days are weary for want of comfort, and whose nights are long from absence of heart-cheering thought, for he finds in religion such a spring of joy, such a fountain of consolation, that he is content and happy. Put him in a dungeon and he will find good company; place him in a barren wilderness, he will eat the bread of heaven; drive him away from friendship, he will meet the “friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” Blast all his gourds, and he will find shadow beneath the Rock of Ages; sap the foundation of his earthly hopes, but his heart will still be fixed, trusting in the Lord. The heart is as insatiable as the grave till Jesus enters it, and then it is a cup full to overflowing. There is such a fulness in Christ that he alone is the believer’s all. The true saint is so completely satisfied with the all-sufficiency of Jesus that he thirsts no more—except it be for deeper draughts of the living fountain. In that sweet manner, believer, shalt thou thirst; it shall not be a thirst of pain, but of loving desire; thou wilt find it a sweet thing to be panting after a fuller enjoyment of Jesus’ love. One in days of yore said, “I have been sinking my bucket down into the well full often, but now my thirst after Jesus has become so insatiable, that I long to put the well itself to my lips, and drink right on.” Is this the feeling of thine heart now, believer? Dost thou feel that all thy desires are satisfied in Jesus, and that thou hast no want now, but to know more of him, and to have closer fellowship with him? Then come continually to the fountain, and take of the water of life freely. Jesus will never think you take too much, but will ever welcome you, saying, “Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.”

# Word Live – 10/6/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/6/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/6/20

# Great Is Your Faithfulness

### **Read:** [**Psalm 55**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+55)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+55#fen-NIV-14734a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A maskil[**[**b**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+55#fen-NIV-14734b)**] of David.**

1Listen to my prayer, O God,  
    do not ignore my plea;  
2    hear me and answer me.  
My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught  
3    because of what my enemy is saying,  
    because of the threats of the wicked;  
for they bring down suffering on me  
    and assail me in their anger.

4My heart is in anguish within me;  
    the terrors of death have fallen on me.  
5Fear and trembling have beset me;  
    horror has overwhelmed me.  
6I said, “Oh, that I had the wings of a dove!  
    I would fly away and be at rest.  
7I would flee far away  
    and stay in the desert;[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+55" \l "fen-NIV-14740c" \o "See footnote c)]  
8I would hurry to my place of shelter,  
    far from the tempest and storm.”

9Lord, confuse the wicked, confound their words,  
    for I see violence and strife in the city.  
10Day and night they prowl about on its walls;  
    malice and abuse are within it.  
11Destructive forces are at work in the city;  
    threats and lies never leave its streets.

12If an enemy were insulting me,  
    I could endure it;  
if a foe were rising against me,  
    I could hide.  
13But it is you, a man like myself,  
    my companion, my close friend,  
14with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship  
    at the house of God,  
as we walked about  
    among the worshipers.

15Let death take my enemies by surprise;  
    let them go down alive to the realm of the dead,  
    for evil finds lodging among them.

16As for me, I call to God,  
    and the Lord saves me.  
17Evening, morning and noon  
    I cry out in distress,  
    and he hears my voice.  
18He rescues me unharmed  
    from the battle waged against me,  
    even though many oppose me.  
19God, who is enthroned from of old,  
    who does not change—  
he will hear them and humble them,  
    because they have no fear of God.

20My companion attacks his friends;  
    he violates his covenant.  
21His talk is smooth as butter,  
    yet war is in his heart;  
his words are more soothing than oil,  
    yet they are drawn swords.

22Cast your cares on the Lord  
    and he will sustain you;  
he will never let  
    the righteous be shaken.  
23But you, God, will bring down the wicked  
    into the pit of decay;  
the bloodthirsty and deceitful  
    will not live out half their days.

But as for me, I trust in you.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 55:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+55#en-NIV-14734) In Hebrew texts 55:1-23 is numbered 55:2-24.
2. [Psalm 55:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+55#en-NIV-14734) Title: Probably a literary or musical term
3. [Psalm 55:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+55#en-NIV-14740) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and in the middle of verse 19.

When Hezekiah was king of Judah, the powerful nation of Assyria marched into their land and threatened Jerusalem. The commander of the Assyrians taunted the Judean king, even offering to give him 2,000 horses for their upcoming battle (2 Kings 18:23). Hezekiah went into the temple and prayed for God to intervene. That night, the angel of the Lord decimated the Assyrian army, forcing them to head back to their own country (2 Kings 19:35–36).

Great is the LORD, and most worthy of praise, in the city of our God, his holy mountain. Psalm 48:1

This event had a profound impact on the nation of Judah. It is possible that Psalm 48 was written in response to this crisis and God’s miraculous intervention. The Psalmist proclaims, “Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise” (v. 1). That sets the tone for this joyful hymn which celebrates Jerusalem as the place where God dwells as the “Great King” (v. 2). He compares Jerusalem to the “heights of Zaphon” (v. 2). Zaphon was the mountain north of Israel where Canaanites believed their god Baal reigned as king. The Psalmist here declares that the Lord alone is the real King.

Julius Caesar once famously proclaimed, “Veni, Vidi, Vici” (“I came, I saw, I conquered.” The kings described in verses 4–7 “came, saw, and fled!” They surrounded Jerusalem but were dismayed by its secure position. The city was not secure because of its magnificent towers or fortifications, but because it was where God dwelled (v. 8). The Psalmist ends by meditating on the faithfulness of God to protect His people (v. 9). Because of the salvation God has accomplished, the people praise Him “to the ends of the earth” (v. 10). His people want to pass on to their children and grandchildren their testimony of God’s faithfulness.

**Apply the Word**

We need to tell the next generation about God’s work in our lives. Perhaps you have children or grandchildren who have never heard stories about how God met a need in your life, whether physical or spiritual. Today might be a good day to have that conversation.

### **Pray with Us**

Lord, our prayer is that each of us will leave a legacy of faith, telling the next generation about your love and mercy in our lives. May we have the strength and determination to serve you faithfully until the end.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/6/20

# You’ll See Her Again

 **Read:** [**1 Corinthians 15:3–4**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2015.3%E2%80%934)

3For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+15%3A3%E2%80%934+%2C+12%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28722a)]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [1 Corinthians 15:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+15%3A3%E2%80%934+%2C+12%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-28722) Or you at the first

**Read:** [**1 Corinthians 15:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2015.3%E2%80%934)[**12–22**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Corinthians%2015.12%E2%80%9322)

### **The Resurrection of the Dead**

12But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

20But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. [1 Corinthians 15:22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2015.22)

The room was dim and silent as I pulled a chair close to Jacquie’s bed. Before a three-year battle with cancer, my friend had been a vibrant person. I could still picture her laughing—eyes full of life, her face lit with a smile. Now she was quiet and still, and I was visiting her in a special care facility.

Not knowing what to say, I decided to read some Scripture. I pulled my Bible out of my purse and turned to a reference in 1 Corinthians and began to read.

After the visit and an emotional time in the seclusion of my parked car, a thought came to mind that slowed my tears: You’ll see her again. Caught up in sadness, I had forgotten that death is only temporary for believers ([1 Corinthians 15:21–22](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2015.21%E2%80%9322)). I knew I’d see Jacquie again because both of us had trusted in Jesus’ death and resurrection for the forgiveness of our sin (vv. 3–4). When Jesus came back to life after His crucifixion, death lost its ultimate power to separate believers from each other and from God. After we die, we’ll live again in heaven with God and all of our spiritual brothers and sisters—forever.

Because Jesus is alive today, believers in Him have hope in times of loss and sorrow. Death has been swallowed up in the victory of the cross (v. 54).

By:  [Jennifer Benson Schuldt](https://odb.org/author/jenniferbschuldt/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How has God comforted you in times of sorrow? How might He want to use you to comfort someone who’s grieving today?

Dear Jesus, thank You for dying for my sin. I believe that You’re alive today because God raised You from the dead.

Read Life After Loss: Grieving with Hope at [DiscoverySeries.org/CB131](https://DiscoverySeries.org/CB131).

#### **Insight**

When Paul says that “if only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied” ([1 Corinthians 15:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2015.19)), he’s writing in light of the personal sufferings he described earlier in his letter (4:8–13). Though his readers were enjoying the present benefits of knowing Jesus, he’d endured great pain and loss to bring them the good news of everlasting life. While affirming that he’d found in Christ a treasure worth living and dying for, he wanted them to see his suffering as Spirit-enabled evidence of the eternal love and power of God (2:3–5).

# God Calling – 10/6/20

# A Child's Hand

# Dear Lord, we cling to Thee.

Yes, cling. Your faith shall be rewarded. Do you not know what it means to feel a little trusting hand in yours, to know a child's confidence?

Does that not draw out your Love and desire to protect, to care? Think what My Heart feels, when in your helplessness you turn to Me, clinging, desiring My Love and Protection.

Would you fail that child, faulty and weak as you are? Could I fail you? Just know it is not possible. Know all is well. You must not doubt. You must be sure. There is no miracle I cannot perform, nothing I cannot do. No eleventh-hour rescue I cannot accomplish.

And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.  1 Kings 3:7

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/7/20

# The Nature of Reconciliation



He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. —[2 Corinthians 5:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+5%3A21)

Sin is a fundamental relationship— it is not wrongdoing, but wrong being— it is deliberate and determined independence from God. The Christian faith bases everything on the extreme, self-confident nature of sin. Other faiths deal with sins— the Bible alone deals withsin. The first thing Jesus Christ confronted in people was the heredity of sin, and it is because we have ignored this in our presentation of the gospel that the message of the gospel has lost its sting and its explosive power.

The revealed truth of the Bible is not that Jesus Christ took on Himself our fleshly sins, but that He took on Himself the heredity of sin that no man can even touch. God made His own Son “to be sin” that He might make the sinner into a saint. It is revealed throughout the Bible that our Lord took on Himself the sin of the world through identification with us, not through sympathy for us. He deliberately took on His own shoulders, and endured in His own body, the complete, cumulative sin of the human race. “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us…” and by so doing He placed salvation for the entire human race solely on the basis of redemption. Jesus Christ reconciled the human race, putting it back to where God designed it to be. And now anyone can experience that reconciliation, being brought into oneness with God, on the basis of what our Lord has done on the cross.

A man cannot redeem himself— redemption is the work of God, and is absolutely finished and complete. And its application to individual people is a matter of their own individual action or response to it. A distinction must always be made between the revealed truth of redemption and the actual conscious experience of salvation in a person’s life.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

Civilization is based on principles which imply that the passing moment is permanent. The only permanent thing is God, and if I put anything else as permanent, I become atheistic. I must build only on God (John 14:6). The Highest Good—Thy Great Redemption, 565 L

# CCEL – 10/7/20

**The meek will he teach his way.**—[PSA. 25:9.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.25.html" \l "Ps.25.9)

Blessed are the meek.

I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill.—A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon theLord our God.—Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.

[Matt. 5:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.5.html" \l "Matt.5.5).[Eccl. 9:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eccl.9.html" \l "Eccl.9.11). -[Prov. 16:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.16.html" \l "Prov.16.9).[Psa. 123:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.123.html" \l "Ps.123.1). –[Psa.143:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.143.html" \l "Ps.143.8).[II Chr. 20:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiChr.20.html" \l "iiChr.20.12).[Jas. 1:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html" \l "Jas.1.5).[John 16:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html" \l "John.16.13).

“Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant?” [Numbers 11:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Num.11.html" \l "Num.11.11)

Our heavenly Father sends us frequent troubles to try our faith. If our faith be worth anything, it will stand the test. Gilt is afraid of fire, but gold is not: the paste gem dreads to be touched by the diamond, but the true jewel fears no test. It is a poor faith which can only trust God when friends are true, the body full of health, and the business profitable; but that is true faith which holds by the Lord’s faithfulness when friends are gone, when the body is sick, when spirits are depressed, and the light of our Father’s countenance is hidden. A faith which can say, in the direst trouble, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him,” is heaven-born faith. The Lord afflicts his servants to glorify himself, for he is greatly glorified in the graces of his people, which are his own handiwork. When “tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope,” the Lord is honoured by these growing virtues. We should never know the music of the harp if the strings were left untouched; nor enjoy the juice of the grape if it were not trodden in the winepress; nor discover the sweet perfume of cinnamon if it were not pressed and beaten; nor feel the warmth of fire if the coals were not utterly consumed. The wisdom and power of the great Workman are discovered by the trials through which his vessels of mercy are permitted to pass. Present afflictions tend also to heighten future joy. There must be shades in the picture to bring out the beauty of the lights. Could we be so supremely blessed in heaven, if we had not known the curse of sin and the sorrow of earth? Will not peace be sweeter after conflict, and rest more welcome after toil? Will not the recollection of past sufferings enhance the bliss of the glorified? There are many other comfortable answers to the question with which we opened our brief meditation, let us muse upon it all day long.

# Word Live – 10/7/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/7/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/7/20

# Wealth and God

**Read:** [**Psalm 49**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49#fen-NIV-14650a)**]**

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

1Hear this, all you peoples;  
    listen, all who live in this world,  
2both low and high,  
    rich and poor alike:  
3My mouth will speak words of wisdom;  
    the meditation of my heart will give you understanding.  
4I will turn my ear to a proverb;  
    with the harp I will expound my riddle:

5Why should I fear when evil days come,  
    when wicked deceivers surround me—  
6those who trust in their wealth  
    and boast of their great riches?  
7No one can redeem the life of another  
    or give to God a ransom for them—  
8the ransom for a life is costly,  
    no payment is ever enough—  
9so that they should live on forever  
    and not see decay.  
10For all can see that the wise die,  
    that the foolish and the senseless also perish,  
    leaving their wealth to others.  
11Their tombs will remain their houses[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49#fen-NIV-14660b)] forever,  
    their dwellings for endless generations,  
    though they had[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49#fen-NIV-14660c)] named lands after themselves.

12People, despite their wealth, do not endure;  
    they are like the beasts that perish.

13This is the fate of those who trust in themselves,  
    and of their followers, who approve their sayings.[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49#fen-NIV-14662d)]  
14They are like sheep and are destined to die;  
    death will be their shepherd  
    (but the upright will prevail over them in the morning).  
Their forms will decay in the grave,  
    far from their princely mansions.  
15But God will redeem me from the realm of the dead;  
    he will surely take me to himself.  
16Do not be overawed when others grow rich,  
    when the splendor of their houses increases;  
17for they will take nothing with them when they die,  
    their splendor will not descend with them.  
18Though while they live they count themselves blessed—  
    and people praise you when you prosper—  
19they will join those who have gone before them,  
    who will never again see the light of life.

20People who have wealth but lack understanding  
    are like the beasts that perish.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 49:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49#en-NIV-14650) In Hebrew texts 49:1-20 is numbered 49:2-21.
2. [Psalm 49:11](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49#en-NIV-14660) Septuagint and Syriac; Hebrew In their thoughts their houses will remain
3. [Psalm 49:11](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49#en-NIV-14660) Or generations, / for they have
4. [Psalm 49:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+49#en-NIV-14662) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verse 15.

Wellington R. Burt was a lumber baron in the late 19th century and one of the wealthiest men in America. While he was generous with others, he was famously tight-fisted with his own family. He included a “spite clause” in his will that specified that none of his descendants could inherit any of his money until 21 years after the death of his last grandchild. Sure enough, in 2010 his $100 million fortune was divided between his twelve great-great-great-grandchildren.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mark 10:45

Psalm 49 addresses prosperity and the wealthy. The “wicked” in verse 5 are people who “trust in their wealth” (v. 6). They find their value in what they have acquired and look down on those in a more humble position (vv. 6, 13). The psalmist points out that the wealthy are often praised in this life simply because they are wealthy (v. 18). Wealth seems to erase moral distinctions. These wealthy are honored and even had lands named after them (v. 11).

However, we do not have to fear these people or be envious of them (v. 5). Nothing they acquired will last in any significant sense: “Their tombs will remain their houses forever, and their dwellings for endless generations” (v. 11). Their incredible wealth will not be enough to redeem their life from the grave (v. 7). Ultimately, their wealth will be left to others and they will be forgotten (v. 10). The Psalmist is confident that “God will redeem me from the realm of the dead; he will surely take me to himself” (v. 15). He knows that death will not have the ultimate say for him because of his relationship with God. His hope is that he will live with God forever.

**Apply the Word**

This psalm reminds us that no one is able to redeem themselves from death, “no payment is ever enough” (v. 8). Thank the Lord today for the work of Jesus who “did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

### **Pray with Us**

Let’s follow the invitation of today’s devotional to thank the Lord for His gift of eternal life. Praise Christ for His victory on the cross as He gave His life “as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/7/20

# Do We Matter?

 **Read:** [**Psalm 90:1–2**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2090.1%E2%80%932)

#### **A prayer of Moses the man of God.**

1Lord, you have been our dwelling place  
    throughout all generations.  
2Before the mountains were born  
    or you brought forth the whole world,  
    from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

**Read:** [**Psalm 90:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2090.1%E2%80%932)[**10–17**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalm%2090.10%E2%80%9317)

10Our days may come to seventy years,  
    or eighty, if our strength endures;  
yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow,  
    for they quickly pass, and we fly away.  
11If only we knew the power of your anger!  
    Your wrath is as great as the fear that is your due.  
12Teach us to number our days,  
    that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

13Relent, Lord! How long will it be?  
    Have compassion on your servants.  
14Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love,  
    that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.  
15Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,  
    for as many years as we have seen trouble.  
16May your deeds be shown to your servants,  
    your splendor to their children.

17May the favor[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+90%3A1%E2%80%932+%2C+10%E2%80%9317&version=NIV#fen-NIV-15396a)] of the Lord our God rest on us;  
    establish the work of our hands for us—  
    yes, establish the work of our hands.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 90:17](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+90%3A1%E2%80%932+%2C+10%E2%80%9317&version=NIV#en-NIV-15396) Or beauty

Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. [Psalm 90:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2090.14)

For some months now I’ve been corresponding with a young man who’s thinking deeply about faith. On one occasion he wrote, “We’re no more than teeny, tiny, infinitesimal blips on the timeline of history. Do we matter?”

Moses, Israel’s prophet, would agree: “Our days . . . quickly pass, and we fly away” ([Psalm 90:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2090.10)). The brevity of life can worry us and cause us to wonder if we matter.

We do. We matter because we’re deeply, eternally loved by the God who made us. In this poem, Moses prays, “Satisfy us . . . with your unfailing love” (v. 14). We matter because we matter to God.

We also matter because we can show God’s love to others. Though our lives are short, they’re not meaningless if we leave a legacy of God’s love. We’re not here on earth to make money and retire in style, but to “show God” to others by showing them His love.

And finally, though life here on earth is transient, we’re creatures of eternity. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we’ll live forever. That’s what Moses meant when he assured us that God will “satisfy us in the morning with [His] unfailing love.” On that “morning” we’ll rise to live and love and be loved forever. And if that doesn’t create meaning, I don’t know what does.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

When have you struggled with wondering if your life counts? How does [Psalm 90](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2090) help?

I’m grateful, loving God, that I matter to You. Help me to share You with others.

#### **Insight**

More psalms are attributed to David (seventy-three) than any other writer. Asaph, David’s worship leader, comes in second with twelve, followed by the sons of Korah with eleven. Other known writers include Solomon, Ethan, Heman, and Moses. [Psalm 90](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2090) is the only psalm attributed to Moses. Its superscription states: “A prayer of Moses, the man of God.” He wrote this psalm (and some suggest the anonymous psalm that follows) in the wilderness as he led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to freedom in the promised land of Canaan. That makes [Psalm 90](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%2090) the oldest poem in the book. Its theme speaks of the brevity of our life as contrasted with the eternal nature and majesty of God. It’s important to note that Moses also wrote the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, while in the desert.

# God Calling – 10/7/20

# Rejoice at Weakness

**Savior, breathe forgiveness o'er us. All our weakness thou dost know.**

Yes! I know all. Every cry for mercy. Every eye of weariness. Every plea for help. Every sorrow over failure. Every weakness.

I am with you through all. My tender sympathy is yours. My strength is yours.

Rejoice at your weakness, My children. My strength is made perfect in weakness. When you are weak then I am strong. Strong to help, to cure, to protect.

Trust Me, My children. I know all. I am beside you. Strong, strong, strong to save. Lean on My Love, and know that all is well.

Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding.  Isaiah 40:28

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/8/20

# Coming to Jesus



Come to Me… —[Matthew 11:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+11%3A28)

Isn’t it humiliating to be told that we must come to Jesus! Think of the things about which we will not come to Jesus Christ. If you want to know how real you are, test yourself by these words— “Come to Me….” In every dimension in which you are not real, you will argue or evade the issue altogether rather than come; you will go through sorrow rather than come; and you will do anything rather than come the last lap of the race of seemingly unspeakable foolishness and say, “Just as I am, I come.” As long as you have even the least bit of spiritual disrespect, it will always reveal itself in the fact that you are expecting God to tell you to do something very big, and yet all He is telling you to do is to “Come….”

“Come to Me….” When you hear those words, you will know that something must happen in you before you can come. The Holy Spirit will show you what you have to do, and it will involve anything that will uproot whatever is preventing you from getting through to Jesus. And you will never get any further until you are willing to do that very thing. The Holy Spirit will search out that one immovable stronghold within you, but He cannot budge it unless you are willing to let Him do so.

How often have you come to God with your requests and gone away thinking, “I’ve really received what I wanted this time!” And yet you go away with nothing, while all the time God has stood with His hands outstretched not only to take you but also for you to take Him. Just think of the invincible, unconquerable, and untiring patience of Jesus, who lovingly says, “Come to Me….”

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 10/8/20

**I will not fear what man shall do unto me.**—[HEB. 13:6.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html#Heb.13.6)

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.—None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy.—I will speak of thy testimonies . . . before kings, and will not be ashamed.

[Rom. 8:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.35),[37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.37).[Luke 12:4,5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.12.html" \l "Luke.12.4).[Matt. 5:10-12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.5.html" \l "Matt.5.10). -[Acts 20:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Acts.20.html" \l "Acts.20.24). -[Psa. 119:46](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.46).

“Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.” **[Luke 5:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.5.html" \l "Luke.5.4)**

We learn from this narrative, the necessity of human agency. The draught of fishes was miraculous, yet neither the fisherman nor his boat, nor his fishing tackle were ignored; but all were used to take the fishes. So in the saving of souls, God worketh by means; and while the present economy of grace shall stand, God will be pleased by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. When God worketh without instruments, doubtless he is glorified; but he hath himself selected the plan of instrumentality as being that by which he is most magnified in the earth. Means of themselves are utterly unavailing. “Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing.” What was the reason of this? Were they not fishermen plying their special calling? Verily, they were no raw hands; they understood the work. Had they gone about the toil unskilfully? No. Had they lacked industry? No, they had toiled. Had they lacked perseverance? No, they had toiled all the night. Was there a deficiency of fish in the sea? Certainly not, for as soon as the Master came, they swam to the net in shoals. What, then, is the reason? Is it because there is no power in the means of themselves apart from the presence of Jesus? “Without him we can do nothing.” But with Christ we can do all things. Christ’s presence confers success. Jesus sat in Peter’s boat, and his will, by a mysterious influence, drew the fish to the net. When Jesus is lifted up in his Church, his presence is the Church’s power—the shout of a king is in the midst of her. “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” Let us go out this morning on our work of soul fishing, looking up in faith, and around us in solemn anxiety. Let us toil till night comes, and we shall not labour in vain, for he who bids us let down the net, will fill it with fishes.

# Word Live – 10/8/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/8/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/8/20

# Wrong Motives

**Read:** [**Psalm 50**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50)

#### **A psalm of Asaph.**

1The Mighty One, God, the Lord,  
    speaks and summons the earth  
    from the rising of the sun to where it sets.  
2From Zion, perfect in beauty,  
    God shines forth.  
3Our God comes  
    and will not be silent;  
a fire devours before him,  
    and around him a tempest rages.  
4He summons the heavens above,  
    and the earth, that he may judge his people:  
5“Gather to me this consecrated people,  
    who made a covenant with me by sacrifice.”  
6And the heavens proclaim his righteousness,  
    for he is a God of justice.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50" \l "fen-NIV-14675a" \o "See footnote a)][[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50#fen-NIV-14675b)]

7“Listen, my people, and I will speak;  
    I will testify against you, Israel:  
    I am God, your God.  
8I bring no charges against you concerning your sacrifices  
    or concerning your burnt offerings, which are ever before me.  
9I have no need of a bull from your stall  
    or of goats from your pens,  
10for every animal of the forest is mine,  
    and the cattle on a thousand hills.  
11I know every bird in the mountains,  
    and the insects in the fields are mine.  
12If I were hungry I would not tell you,  
    for the world is mine, and all that is in it.  
13Do I eat the flesh of bulls  
    or drink the blood of goats?

14“Sacrifice thank offerings to God,  
    fulfill your vows to the Most High,  
15and call on me in the day of trouble;  
    I will deliver you, and you will honor me.”

16But to the wicked person, God says:

“What right have you to recite my laws  
    or take my covenant on your lips?  
17You hate my instruction  
    and cast my words behind you.  
18When you see a thief, you join with him;  
    you throw in your lot with adulterers.  
19You use your mouth for evil  
    and harness your tongue to deceit.  
20You sit and testify against your brother  
    and slander your own mother’s son.  
21When you did these things and I kept silent,  
    you thought I was exactly[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50#fen-NIV-14690c)] like you.  
But I now arraign you  
    and set my accusations before you.

22“Consider this, you who forget God,  
    or I will tear you to pieces, with no one to rescue you:  
23Those who sacrifice thank offerings honor me,  
    and to the blameless[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50#fen-NIV-14692d)] I will show my salvation.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 50:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50#en-NIV-14675) With a different word division of the Hebrew; Masoretic Text for God himself is judge
2. [Psalm 50:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50#en-NIV-14675) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here.
3. [Psalm 50:21](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50#en-NIV-14690) Or thought the ‘I am’ was
4. [Psalm 50:23](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+50#en-NIV-14692) Probable reading of the original Hebrew text; the meaning of the Masoretic Text for this phrase is uncertain.

Why do you pray? Read your Bible? Tithe? Do you do these things to earn God’s favor? Today’s psalm explores the difference between the things we do that truly honor God and the things we do which are a thinly disguised attempt to impress God with our own righteousness.

For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. Psalm 50:10

In most psalms, Israel addresses God. In today’s reading, God addresses Israel. Verses 1–6 describe God summoning the heavens and the earth “that he may judge his people” (v. 4). God’s message to Israel begins with a reminder. In the ancient world, people offered sacrifices in order to feed the gods. God makes it clear that He does not need their sacrifices in order to satisfy His hunger (v. 12). He owns every animal of the forest and the “cattle on a thousand hills” (v. 10). Furthermore, God does not eat bulls or goats (v. 13).

Sacrifices were intended to teach Israel about the nature of sin and its atonement as well as to express thanks to God. However, the sacrificial system could easily be misunderstood. Israel could have thought that if they just did the right rituals and sacrificed the right offerings, then they would be acceptable. God strongly counters that idea. It is not enough to sacrifice in the right way, the motives of the worshiper matter. God accused some in Israel of stealing, false testimony, and adultery and then coming to sacrifice and reciting the law before God (vv. 16–21). This kind of worship is abhorrent to God who warns, “Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with no one to rescue you” (v. 22). However, to those who honor Him in the right way, He promises, “I will show my salvation” (v. 23).

**Apply the Word**

Our relationship with God impacts our entire life. Faith in Christ should not only determine how we spend our Sunday mornings but also how we live our lives for the rest of the week. We cannot allow the truth that Jesus died for our sin to become justification for sinning (Rom. 6:1–2).

### **Pray with Us**

Our prayers and worship are not limited to Sunday! We are to be consistent and faithful in our walk with Christ every day. Thank you, God, for Your grace and for the sustaining power of the Holy Spirit.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/8/20

# Zax Nature

 **Read:** [**Philippians 4:1–7**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%204.1%E2%80%937)

### **Closing Appeal for Steadfastness and Unity**

4 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

2I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

### **Final Exhortations**

4Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Let your gentleness be evident to all. [Philippians 4:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%204.5)

In one of Dr. Seuss’ whimsical stories, he tells of a “North-Going Zax and a South-Going Zax” crossing the Prairie of Prax. Upon meeting nose to nose, neither Zax will step aside. The first Zax angrily vows to stay put—even if it makes “the whole world stand still.” (Unfazed, the world moves on and builds a highway around them.)

The tale offers an uncomfortably accurate picture of human nature. We possess a reflexive “need” to be right, and we’re prone to stubbornly cling to that instinct in rather destructive ways!

Happily for us, God lovingly chooses to soften stubborn human hearts. The apostle Paul knew this, so when two members of the Philippian church were squabbling, he loved them enough to call them out ([Philippians 4:2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%204.2)). Then, having earlier instructed the believers to have “the same mindset” of self-giving love as Christ (2:5–8), Paul asked them to “help these women,” valued coworkers with him in sharing the gospel (4:3). It seems peacemaking and wise compromise call for team effort.

Of course there are times to take a firm stand, but a Christlike approach will look a lot different than an unyielding Zax! So many things in life aren’t worth fighting over. We can bicker with each other over every trivial concern until we destroy ourselves ([Galatians 5:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%205.15)). Or we can swallow our pride, graciously receive wise counsel, and seek unity with our brothers and sisters.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What are the things you’re fighting over right now? How could wise friends help you resolve your situation?

Soften my hardened, stubborn heart, loving God, so I can truly live in unity. And help me to be open to wise counsel.

#### **Insight**

As Paul winds down his letter to the church at Philippi, the first church he’d planted on European soil, his affection for the people is clearly seen. In [Philippians 4:1–3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Phil%204.1%E2%80%933), the apostle uses terminology that speaks deeply of his affection, care, and concern for his Philippian friends. He calls them “brothers and sisters” whom he loves and longs for. These terms fall into the category of relationship. This is important because kinship and family ties were held in tremendously high regard in the ancient world. As such, to speak of someone as family was to elevate them in worth and status. He also uses terms that may refer to them in regard to his ministry: his “joy and crown,” “dear friends,” and “co-workers” in the gospel (vv. 1, 3). Strong relational ties indeed!

# God Calling – 10/8/20

# The Dark Places

**Jesus, the very thought of Thee with Sweetness fills us.**

Yes. Love Me until just to think of Me means Joy and rapture. Gladness at the thought of One very near and dear.

It is the balm for all sorrows, the thought of Me. Healing for all physical, mental, and spiritual ills you can always find in thinking of Me, and speaking to Me.

Are doubts and fears in your Hearts? Then think of Me, speak to Me. Instead of those fears and doubts there will flow into your hearts and beings such sweet Joy as is beyond any joy of earth.

This is unfailing. Never doubt it. Courage. Courage. Courage. Fear nothing. Rejoice even in the darkest places. Rejoice.

As he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.  Mark 14:3

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/9/20

# Building on the Atonement



…present…your members as instruments of righteousness to God. —[Romans 6:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+6%3A13)

I cannot save and sanctify myself; I cannot make atonement for sin; I cannot redeem the world; I cannot right what is wrong, purify what is impure, or make holy what is unholy. That is all the sovereign work of God. Do I have faith in what Jesus Christ has done? He has made the perfect atonement for sin. Am I in the habit of constantly realizing it? The greatest need we have is not to do things, but to believe things. The redemption of Christ is not an experience, it is the great act of God which He has performed through Christ, and I have to build my faith on it. If I construct my faith on my own experience, I produce the most unscriptural kind of life— an isolated life, with my eyes focused solely on my own holiness. Beware of that human holiness that is not based on the atonement of the Lord. It has no value for anything except a life of isolation— it is useless to God and a nuisance to man. Measure every kind of experience you have by our Lord Himself. We cannot do anything pleasing to God unless we deliberately build on the foundation of the atonement by the Cross of Christ.

The atonement of Jesus must be exhibited in practical, unassuming ways in my life. Every time I obey, the absolute deity of God is on my side, so that the grace of God and my natural obedience are in perfect agreement. Obedience means that I have completely placed my trust in the atonement, and my obedience is immediately met by the delight of the supernatural grace of God.

Beware of the human holiness that denies the reality of the natural life— it is a fraud. Continually bring yourself to the trial or test of the atonement and ask, “Where is the discernment of the atonement in this, and in that?”

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The life of Abraham is an illustration of two things: of unreserved surrender to God, and of God’s complete possession of a child of His for His own highest end. Not Knowing Whither, 901 R

# CCEL – 10/9/20

**Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful.**—[NEH. 9:17.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Neh.9.html" \l "Neh.9.17)

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.—The longsuffering of our Lord is salvation.

For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.—Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?—Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

[II Pet. 3:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.3.html" \l "iiPet.3.9). –[II Pet. 3:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiPet.3.html" \l "iiPet.3.15).[I Tim. 1:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.1.html" \l "iTim.1.16). -[Rom. 15:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.15.html" \l "Rom.15.4).[Rom. 2:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.2.html" \l "Rom.2.4). -[Joel 2:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Joel.2.html" \l "Joel.2.13).

“Able to keep you from falling.” [Jude 24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jude.1.html" \l "Jude.1.24)

In some sense the path to heaven is very safe, but in other respects there is no road so dangerous. It is beset with difficulties. One false step (and how easy it is to take that if grace be absent), and down we go. What a slippery path is that which some of us have to tread! How many times have we to exclaim with the Psalmist, “My feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped.” If we were strong, sure-footed mountaineers, this would not matter so much; but in ourselves, how weak we are! In the best roads we soon falter, in the smoothest paths we quickly stumble. These feeble knees of ours can scarcely support our tottering weight. A straw may throw us, and a pebble can wound us; we are mere children tremblingly taking our first steps in the walk of faith, our heavenly Father holds us by the arms or we should soon be down. Oh, if we are kept from falling, how must we bless the patient power which watches over us day by day! Think, how prone we are to sin, how apt to choose danger, how strong our tendency to cast ourselves down, and these reflections will make us sing more sweetly than we have ever done, “Glory be to him, who is able to keep us from falling.” We have many foes who try to push us down. The road is rough and we are weak, but in addition to this, enemies lurk in ambush, who rush out when we least expect them, and labour to trip us up, or hurl us down the nearest precipice. Only an Almighty arm can preserve us from these unseen foes, who are seeking to destroy us. Such an arm is engaged for our defence. He is faithful that hath promised, and he is able to keep us from falling, so that with a deep sense of our utter weakness, we may cherish a firm belief in our perfect safety, and say, with joyful confidence,

|  |
| --- |
|  |

“Against me earth and hell combine,

But on my side is power divine;

Jesus is all, and he is mine!”

# Word Live – 10/9/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/9/20

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# Today in the Word – 10/9/20

# True Repentance

**Read:** [**Psalm 51**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51#fen-NIV-14693a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.**

1Have mercy on me, O God,  
    according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
    blot out my transgressions.  
2Wash away all my iniquity  
    and cleanse me from my sin.

3For I know my transgressions,  
    and my sin is always before me.  
4Against you, you only, have I sinned  
    and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are right in your verdict  
    and justified when you judge.  
5Surely I was sinful at birth,  
    sinful from the time my mother conceived me.  
6Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;  
    you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

7Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;  
    wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.  
8Let me hear joy and gladness;  
    let the bones you have crushed rejoice.  
9Hide your face from my sins  
    and blot out all my iniquity.

10Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
    and renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
11Do not cast me from your presence  
    or take your Holy Spirit from me.  
12Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
    and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

13Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
    so that sinners will turn back to you.  
14Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,  
    you who are God my Savior,  
    and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.  
15Open my lips, Lord,  
    and my mouth will declare your praise.  
16You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;  
    you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.  
17My sacrifice, O God, is[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51#fen-NIV-14709b)] a broken spirit;  
    a broken and contrite heart  
    you, God, will not despise.

18May it please you to prosper Zion,  
    to build up the walls of Jerusalem.  
19Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous,  
    in burnt offerings offered whole;  
    then bulls will be offered on your altar.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 51:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51#en-NIV-14693) In Hebrew texts 51:1-19 is numbered 51:3-21.
2. [Psalm 51:17](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+51#en-NIV-14709) Or The sacrifices of God are

Seventeenth-century pastor John Donne was also a celebrated poet. In one of his Holy Sonnets reflecting on the Second Coming, he wrote, “When we are there; here on this lowly ground / Teach me how to repent; for that’s as good / As if thou hadst seal’d my pardon with thy blood.” Donne understood the power of repentance.

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

Psalm 51 is one of the most famous chapters in the Psalter. For thousands of years, it has modeled for believers a prayer of repentance. The title of the psalm informs us that it was written after David had been confronted for committing adultery with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12). David’s sin included coveting a neighbor’s wife, adultery, lying, and murder. He begins his prayer by pleading to God for mercy, “Have mercy on me, O God” (Ps. 51:1). He knows that he does not deserve God’s forgiveness. His hope is in the compassion of God (v. 1).

David clearly and honestly acknowledges his sin. He realizes that his sin comes from a deep place within him, “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me” (v. 5). He prays for God not only to forgive him but also to cleanse him and restore him to a state of holiness (v. 7). He prays that God would so work in his heart that it would be transformed (v. 10). He wants to not just be forgiven but also changed. David’s cry is the essence of repentance. Finally, David declares that in his restored state, he will engage in ministry. He will “teach transgressors your ways so that sinners will turn back to you” (v. 13). He desires to use his new life to declare God’s praise (v. 15).

**Apply the Word**

Ultimately, God was able to forgive David on the basis of a future “son of David” who would die for his sins (Rom. 3:25–26). Know today that “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

### **Pray with Us**

Psalm 51 shows the importance of confession and repentance. Lord, we come to you boldly in prayer of confession—just as you mercifully forgave David’s sin, forgive ours today.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/9/20

# A Critical Reaction

 **Read:** [**Proverbs 15:1–2**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2015.1%E2%80%932)

15 A gentle answer turns away wrath,  
    but a harsh word stirs up anger.

2The tongue of the wise adorns knowledge,  
    but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.

**Read:** [**Proverbs 15:**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2015.1%E2%80%932)[**31–33**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Proverbs%2015.31%E2%80%9333)

31Whoever heeds life-giving correction  
    will be at home among the wise.

32Those who disregard discipline despise themselves,  
    but the one who heeds correction gains understanding.

33Wisdom’s instruction is to fear the Lord,  
    and humility comes before honor.

The one who is patient calms a quarrel. [Proverbs 15:18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2015.18)

Tough words hurt. So my friend—an award-winning author—struggled with how to respond to the criticism he received. His new book had earned five-star reviews plus a major award. Then a respected magazine reviewer gave him a backhanded compliment, describing his book as well-written yet still criticizing it harshly. Turning to friends, he asked, “How should I reply?”

One friend advised, “Let it go.” I shared advice from writing magazines, including tips to ignore such criticism or learn from it even while continuing to work and write.

Finally, however, I decided to see what Scripture—which has the best advice of all—has to say about how to react to strong criticism. The book of James advises, “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry” (1:19). The apostle Paul counsels us to “live in harmony with one another” ([Romans 12:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom%2012.16)).

An entire chapter of Proverbs, however, offers extended wisdom on reacting to disputes. “A gentle answer turns away wrath,” says [Proverbs 15:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2015.1). “The one who is patient calms a quarrel” (v. 18). Also, “The one who heeds correction gains understanding” (v. 32). Considering such wisdom, may God help us hold our tongues, as my friend did. More than all, however, wisdom instructs us to “fear the Lord” because “humility comes before honor” (v. 33).

By:  [Patricia Raybon](https://odb.org/author/patriciaraybon/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What’s your typical reaction when you’re criticized? In a dispute, what’s a humble way you can guard your tongue?

Dear God, when criticism strikes or a dispute hurts, guard my tongue in humble honor of You.

#### **Insight**

The wisdom found in the book of Proverbs has similarities to the New Testament book of James, which has been referred to as the “Proverbs of the New Testament.” The words of [Proverbs 15:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2015.1), “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs anger” reflect the wise words of [James 1:19–20](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%201.19%E2%80%9320). From the first to the last chapter of James, allusions to or quotes from the book of Proverbs can’t be missed. Both [Proverbs 2:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%202.6) and [James 1:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%201.5) note that God is the source of wisdom. The wisdom of [Proverbs 10:12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%2010.12) is heard in James’ final words about “cover[ing] over a multitude of sins” (5:20). And, as with many places in the book of Proverbs, [James 3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/James%203) reminds us that wise living includes the careful use of our words.

Visit [ChristianUniversity.org/NT336](https://ChristianUniversity.org/NT336) to learn more about the book of James.

# God Calling – 10/9/20

# Love Me More

**Jesus, our Lord, we Thee adore. Oh, make us love Thee more and more.**

Yes! I would draw you closer and closer to Me by bonds of Love. The Love of the sinner for the Savior, of the rescued for the Rescuer, of the sheep for the Loving Shepherd, of the child for its Father.

So many ties of Love there are to bind you to Me.

Each experience in your life of Joy, and sorrow, of difficulty or success, of hardship or ease, of danger or safety, each makes its own particular demand on Me. Each serves to answer the prayer: "Make me love Thee more and more."

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.  1 Peter 1:8

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/10/20

# How Will I Know?



Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father…that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes." —[Matthew 11:25](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+11%3A25)

We do not grow into a spiritual relationship step by step— we either have a relationship or we do not. God does not continue to cleanse us more and more from sin— “But if we walk in the light,” we are cleansed “from all sin” ([1 John 1:7](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+1:7)). It is a matter of obedience, and once we obey, the relationship is instantly perfected. But if we turn away from obedience for even one second, darkness and death are immediately at work again.

All of God’s revealed truths are sealed until they are opened to us through obedience. You will never open them through philosophy or thinking. But once you obey, a flash of light comes immediately. Let God’s truth work into you by immersing yourself in it, not by worrying into it. The only way you can get to know the truth of God is to stop trying to find out and by being born again. If you obey God in the first thing He shows you, then He instantly opens up the next truth to you. You could read volumes on the work of the Holy Spirit, when five minutes of total, uncompromising obedience would make things as clear as sunlight. Don’t say, “I suppose I will understand these things someday!” You can understand them now. And it is not study that brings understanding to you, but obedience. Even the smallest bit of obedience opens heaven, and the deepest truths of God immediately become yours. Yet God will never reveal more truth about Himself to you, until you have obeyed what you know already. Beware of becoming one of the “wise and prudent.” “If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know…” ([John 7:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7:17)).

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

Defenders of the faith are inclined to be bitter until they learn to walk in the light of the Lord. When you have learned to walk in the light of the Lord, bitterness and contention are impossible.  
Biblical Psychology

# CCEL – 10/10/20

**The whole family in heaven and earth.**—[EPH. 3:15.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.3.html" \l "Eph.3.15)

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.—Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.—That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.

He is not ashamed to call them brethren.—Behold my mother and my brethren! Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.—Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father.

I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: . . . and white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.—That they without us should not be made perfect.

[Eph. 4:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.6). -[Gal. 3:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gal.3.html" \l "Gal.3.26). -[Eph. 1:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.10).[Heb. 2:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.2.html" \l "Heb.2.11). -[Matt. 12:49,50](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.12.html" \l "Matt.12.49). -[John 20:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.20.html" \l "John.20.17).[Rev. 6:9-11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.6.html" \l "Rev.6.9). -[Heb. 11:40](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.11.html" \l "Heb.11.40).

“Faultless before the presence of his glory.” **[Jude 24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jude.1.html" \l "Jude.1.24)**

Revolve in your mind that wondrous word, “faultless!” We are far off from it now; but as our Lord never stops short of perfection in his work of love, we shall reach it one day. The Saviour who will keep his people to the end, will also present them at last to himself, as “a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish.” All the jewels in the Saviour’s crown are of the first water and without a single flaw. All the maids of honour who attend the Lamb’s wife are pure virgins without spot or stain. But how will Jesus make us faultless? He will wash us from our sins in his own blood until we are white and fair as God’s purest angel; and we shall be clothed in his righteousness, that righteousness which makes the saint who wears it positively faultless; yea, perfect in the sight of God. We shall be unblameable and unreproveable even in his eyes. His law will not only have no charge against us, but it will be magnified in us. Moreover, the work of the Holy Spirit within us will be altogether complete. He will make us so perfectly holy, that we shall have no lingering tendency to sin. Judgment, memory, will—every power and passion shall be emancipated from the thraldom of evil. We shall be holy even as God is holy, and in his presence we shall dwell forever. Saints will not be out of place in heaven, their beauty will be as great as that of the place prepared for them. Oh the rapture of that hour when the everlasting doors shall be lifted up, and we, being made meet for the inheritance, shall dwell with the saints in light. Sin gone, Satan shut out, temptation past forever, and ourselves “faultless” before God, this will be heaven indeed! Let us be joyful now as we rehearse the song of eternal praise so soon to roll forth in full chorus from all the blood-washed host; let us copy David’s exultings before the ark as a prelude to our ecstasies before the throne.

# Word Live – 10/10/20

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# Scripture Union – 10/10/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/10/20

# Destructive Words

### **Read:** [**Psalm 52**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+52)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+52#fen-NIV-14712a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. A maskil[**[**b**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+52#fen-NIV-14712b)**] of David. When Doeg the Edomite had gone to Saul and told him: “David has gone to the house of Ahimelek.”**

1Why do you boast of evil, you mighty hero?  
    Why do you boast all day long,  
    you who are a disgrace in the eyes of God?  
2You who practice deceit,  
    your tongue plots destruction;  
    it is like a sharpened razor.  
3You love evil rather than good,  
    falsehood rather than speaking the truth.[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+52#fen-NIV-14714c)]  
4You love every harmful word,  
    you deceitful tongue!

5Surely God will bring you down to everlasting ruin:  
    He will snatch you up and pluck you from your tent;  
    he will uproot you from the land of the living.  
6The righteous will see and fear;  
    they will laugh at you, saying,  
7“Here now is the man  
    who did not make God his stronghold  
but trusted in his great wealth  
    and grew strong by destroying others!”

8But I am like an olive tree  
    flourishing in the house of God;  
I trust in God’s unfailing love  
    for ever and ever.  
9For what you have done I will always praise you  
    in the presence of your faithful people.  
And I will hope in your name,  
    for your name is good.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 52:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+52#en-NIV-14712) In Hebrew texts 52:1-9 is numbered 52:3-11.
2. [Psalm 52:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+52#en-NIV-14712) Title: Probably a literary or musical term
3. [Psalm 52:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+52#en-NIV-14714) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verse 5.

When David was fleeing from King Saul, he came to the sanctuary city of Nob and asked Ahimelek, the priest, for help. Ahimelek assumed David was still working for Saul and assisted him with provisions. One of Saul’s servants, Doeg the Edomite, overheard this and denounced the priest to Saul who ordered that Ahimelek and 85 other priests be put to death (1 Sam. 21:1–8; 22:6–19). Today’s reading represents David’s lament over this tragic turn of events.

The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit. Proverbs 18:21

David addresses Doeg directly in the opening of the psalm, “Why do you boast of evil, you mighty hero?” (v. 1). He denounces Doeg for his deceit. In a vivid image, David describes the deceitful tongue as a razor that brings destruction (v. 2). Words can do incredible damage. These destructive words come out of the heart of a person whose values are skewed. “You love evil rather than good, falsehood rather than speaking the truth” (v. 3).

In verses 5–7, David reminds his adversary that God is aware of what he has done and will bring judgment (v. 5). While it might look like the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer, that would not be the case forever. One day, “the righteous will see and fear; they will laugh at you, saying, ‘Here now is the man who did not make God his stronghold’” (vv. 6–7). David contrasts himself with the wicked. Drawing from the image of the righteous as a flourishing tree in Psalm 1, David declares, “But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God” (v. 8). Instead of putting his faith in his own achievements, David trusts in the Lord’s “unfailing love” (v. 8). Instead of deceit, his lips will pour forth praise to God (v. 9).

**Apply the Word**

Today’s reading describes the power of words. You can boast, deceive, destroy others, or praise God with them. Ask the Lord to help you use the gift of language wisely today. As Paul reminds us, “each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully” (Eph. 4:25).

### **Pray with Us**

Thank you, Lord, for the gift of language. We ask for wisdom to use it for good and not for evil, to build up and encourage others and not destroy. May we use our words to honor the Living Word!

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/10/20

# Fighting Life’s Dragons

 **Read:** [**Colossians 2:9–15**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%202.9%E2%80%9315)

9For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. 11In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A9%E2%80%9315&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29506a)] was put off when you were circumcised by[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A9%E2%80%9315&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29506b)] Christ, 12having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

13When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A9%E2%80%9315&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29508c)] alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A9%E2%80%9315&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-29510d" \o "See footnote d)]

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Colossians 2:11](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A9%E2%80%9315&version=NIV#en-NIV-29506) In contexts like this, the Greek word for flesh (sarx) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit; also in verse 13.
2. [Colossians 2:11](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A9%E2%80%9315&version=NIV#en-NIV-29506) Or put off in the circumcision of
3. [Colossians 2:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A9%E2%80%9315&version=NIV#en-NIV-29508) Some manuscripts us
4. [Colossians 2:15](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A9%E2%80%9315&version=NIV#en-NIV-29510) Or them in him

Having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. [Colossians 2:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%202.15)

Have you ever fought a dragon? If you answered no, author Eugene Peterson disagrees with you. In A Long Obedience in the Same Direction, he wrote, “Dragons are projections of our fears, horrible constructions of all that might hurt us. . . . A peasant confronted by a magnificent dragon is completely outclassed.” Peterson’s point? Life is filled with dragons: the life-threatening health crisis, the sudden job loss, the failed marriage, the estranged prodigal child. These “dragons” are the supersized dangers and frailties of life that we’re inadequate to fight alone.

But in those battles, we have a Champion. Not a fairy tale champion—the ultimate Champion who has fought on our behalf and conquered the dragons that seek to destroy us. Whether they’re dragons of our own failures or the spiritual enemy who desires our destruction, our Champion is greater, allowing Paul to write of Jesus, “Having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross” ([Colossians 2:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%202.15)). The destructive forces of this broken world are no match for Him!

The moment we realize that the dragons of life are too big for us is the moment we can begin to rest in Christ’s rescue. We can confidently say, “But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” ([1 Corinthians 15:57](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2015.57)).

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What “dragons” are you facing in life? How can Christ’s victory on the cross provide encouragement as you deal with them?

Father, thank You for being more than enough for the threats I will face today. Give me the wisdom and strength to walk with You, trusting You for the grace I need.

Read Overcoming Worry at [DiscoverySeries.org/Q0711.](https://www.odb.org/2020/10/10/DiscoverySeries.org/Q0711.)

#### **Insight**

Paul’s letter to the Colossians explains an ancient mystery. How would the wrongful death of a long-awaited Jewish Messiah bring hope not only to Israel but to people of all nations ([Colossians 1:26–27](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%201.26%E2%80%9327))? No one could have guessed. Being full of His Father, the Son bore the sin and shame of all so that He might fill us with Himself (vv. 19–20). As Paul wrote in another letter, if Jesus’ enemies had known what they were doing, they never would “have crucified the Lord of glory” ([1 Corinthians 2:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%202.8)). No one foresaw how the public shame of Christ’s execution would reveal the heart of God while exposing the disgrace of spiritual and political leaders. Yet, as Paul declares to both Jewish and non-Jewish readers, that’s the secret of God’s long-awaited compassionate kingdom ([Colossians 3:12–17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Col%203.12%E2%80%9317)). Such overflowing goodness is what “Christ in you, the hope of glory” looks like (1:27).

# God Calling – 10/10/20

# Extra Work

**Our Lord and our God. Help us through poverty to plenty. Through unrest to rest, through sorrow to Joy, through weakness to Power.**

I am your Helper. At the end of your present path lie all these blessings. So trust and know that I am leading you.

Step with a firm step of confidence in Me into each unknown day. Take every duty and every interruption as of My appointment.

You are My servant. Serve Me as simply, cheerfully, and readily as you expect others to serve you.

Do you blame the servant who avoids extra work, who complains about being called from one task to do one less liked? Do you feel you are ill served by such a one?

Then what of Me? Is not that how you so often serve Me? Think of this. Lay it to heart and view your day's work in this light.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, ... he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.  John 14:26

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/11/20

# God’s Silence— Then What?



When He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. —[John 11:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+11%3A6)

Has God trusted you with His silence— a silence that has great meaning? God’s silences are actually His answers. Just think of those days of absolute silence in the home at Bethany! Is there anything comparable to those days in your life? Can God trust you like that, or are you still asking Him for a visible answer? God will give you the very blessings you ask if you refuse to go any further without them, but His silence is the sign that He is bringing you into an even more wonderful understanding of Himself. Are you mourning before God because you have not had an audible response? When you cannot hear God, you will find that He has trusted you in the most intimate way possible— with absolute silence, not a silence of despair, but one of pleasure, because He saw that you could withstand an even bigger revelation. If God has given you a silence, then praise Him— He is bringing you into the mainstream of His purposes. The actual evidence of the answer in time is simply a matter of God’s sovereignty. Time is nothing to God. For a while you may have said, “I asked God to give me bread, but He gave me a stone instead” (see [Matthew 7:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+7:9)). He did not give you a stone, and today you find that He gave you the “bread of life” ([John 6:35](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+6:35)).

A wonderful thing about God’s silence is that His stillness is contagious— it gets into you, causing you to become perfectly confident so that you can honestly say, “I know that God has heard me.” His silence is the very proof that He has. As long as you have the idea that God will always bless you in answer to prayer, He will do it, but He will never give you the grace of His silence. If Jesus Christ is bringing you into the understanding that prayer is for the glorifying of His Father, then He will give you the first sign of His intimacy— silence.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

God created man to be master of the life in the earth and sea and sky, and the reason he is not is because he took the law into his own hands, and became master of himself, but of nothing else.  The Shadow of an Agony, 1163 L

# CCEL – 10/11/20

**Be not far from me; for trouble is near.**—[PSA. 22:11.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.22.html" \l "Ps.22.11)

How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?—Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.—The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.—Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.—Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.—My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

[Psa. 13:1,2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.13.html" \l "Ps.13.1). -[Psa. 27:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.9).[Psa. 91:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.91.html" \l "Ps.91.15). -[Psa. 145:18,19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.145.html" \l "Ps.145.18).[John 14:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.18). -[Matt. 28:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.28.html" \l "Matt.28.20).[Psa. 46:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.46.html" \l "Ps.46.1). -[Psa. 62:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.62.html" \l "Ps.62.1). -[Psa. 62:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.62.html" \l "Ps.62.5).

“Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.” **[Lamentations 3:41](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lam.3.html" \l "Lam.3.41)**

The act of prayer teaches us our unworthiness, which is a very salutary lesson for such proud beings as we are. If God gave us favours without constraining us to pray for them we should never know how poor we are, but a true prayer is an inventory of wants, a catalogue of necessities, a revelation of hidden poverty. While it is an application to divine wealth, it is a confession of human emptiness. The most healthy state of a Christian is to be always empty in self and constantly depending upon the Lord for supplies; to be always poor in self and rich in Jesus; weak as water personally, but mighty through God to do great exploits; and hence the use of prayer, because, while it adores God, it lays the creature where it should be, in the very dust. Prayer is in itself, apart from the answer which it brings, a great benefit to the Christian. As the runner gains strength for the race by daily exercise, so for the great race of life we acquire energy by the hallowed labour of prayer. Prayer plumes the wings of God’s young eaglets, that they may learn to mount above the clouds. Prayer girds the loins of God’s warriors, and sends them forth to combat with their sinews braced and their muscles firm. An earnest pleader cometh out of his closet, even as the sun ariseth from the chambers of the east, rejoicing like a strong man to run his race. Prayer is that uplifted hand of Moses which routs the Amalekites more than the sword of Joshua; it is the arrow shot from the chamber of the prophet foreboding defeat to the Syrians. Prayer girds human weakness with divine strength, turns human folly into heavenly wisdom, and gives to troubled mortals the peace of God. We know not what prayer cannot do! We thank thee, great God, for the mercy-seat, a choice proof of thy marvellous lovingkindness. Help us to use it aright throughout this day!

# Word Live – 10/11/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/11/20

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# Today in the Word – 10/11/20

# All Have Sinned

### **Read:** [**Psalm 53**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+53)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+53#fen-NIV-14721a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. According to mahalath.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+53" \l "fen-NIV-14721b" \o "See footnote b)] A maskil[**[**c**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+53#fen-NIV-14721c)**] of David.**

1The fool says in his heart,  
    “There is no God.”  
They are corrupt, and their ways are vile;  
    there is no one who does good.

2God looks down from heaven  
    on all mankind  
to see if there are any who understand,  
    any who seek God.  
3Everyone has turned away, all have become corrupt;  
    there is no one who does good,  
    not even one.

4Do all these evildoers know nothing?

They devour my people as though eating bread;  
    they never call on God.  
5But there they are, overwhelmed with dread,  
    where there was nothing to dread.  
God scattered the bones of those who attacked you;  
    you put them to shame, for God despised them.

6Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!  
    When God restores his people,  
    let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 53:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+53#en-NIV-14721) In Hebrew texts 53:1-6 is numbered 53:2-7.
2. [Psalm 53:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+53#en-NIV-14721) Title: Probably a musical term
3. [Psalm 53:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+53#en-NIV-14721) Title: Probably a literary or musical term

According to the Pew Research Center, atheists account for less than 4 percent of the United States population. However, around 25–30 percent are considered “nones,” people who have no religious affiliation. This statistic should arouse our compassion. As Paul reminded the church in Ephesus, they too were once “without hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12).

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23

In today’s reading David declares, “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’ ” (53:1). David is not referring to a philosophical atheist—that kind of person did not likely exist in the ancient world. Rather, this “fool” is a functional atheist—a person who lives as if God does not see or care. There are consequences to this kind of unbelief. The lack of a moral standard or sense of accountability leads to corrupt and destructive actions (v. 1).

Beginning in verse 2, we see God’s view of humanity. The conclusion is sobering: “Everyone has turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one” (v. 3). It is not just a small percent who do not live up to God’s standard, but all of humanity. Living as a functional atheist leads to a life filled with fear. David describes it this way, “[T]here they are, overwhelmed with dread, where there was nothing to dread” (v. 5). Like people who run from shadows, the evildoers in this psalm live in fear and under God’s judgment (v. 5). David expresses a longing for deliverance and salvation, “Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!” (v. 6).

**Apply the Word**

The apostle Paul quoted from this psalm in Romans 3:10–12 as a part of his argument that all people stand under God’s judgment. No one can earn their salvation through good deeds, or keeping the law: “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23)!

### **Pray with Us**

Today’s psalm sends a convicting message of humanity’s total depravity outside of God. There is indeed no one righteous. We praise you, Lord, that you didn’t leave us in this lost state and for salvation in Christ!

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/11/20

# Missing: Wisdom

 **Read:** [**1 Kings 3:5–12**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%203.5%E2%80%9312)

5At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

6Solomon answered, “You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.

7“Now, Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. 8Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. 9So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?”

10The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. 11So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, 12I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be.

Give your servant a discerning heart . . . to distinguish between right and wrong. [1 Kings 3:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%203.9)

Two-year-old Kenneth went missing. Yet within three minutes of his mom’s 9-1-1 call, an emergency worker found him just two blocks from home at the county fair. His mom had promised he could go later that day with his grandpa. But he’d driven his toy tractor there, and parked it at his favorite ride. When the boy was safely home, his dad wisely removed the toy’s battery.

Kenneth was actually rather smart to get where he wanted to go, but two-year-olds are missing another key quality: wisdom. And as adults we sometimes lack it too. Solomon, who’d been appointed king by his father David ([1 Kings 2](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%202)), admitted he felt like a child. God appeared to him in a dream and said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you” (3:5). He replied, “I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. . . . So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong” (vv. 7–9). God gave Solomon “a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore” (4:29).

Where can we get the wisdom we need? Solomon said the beginning of wisdom is a “fear” or awe of God ([Proverbs 9:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Prov%209.10)). So we can start by asking Him to teach us about Himself and to give us wisdom beyond our own.

By:  [Anne Cetas](https://odb.org/author/annecetas/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

In what areas do you need God’s wisdom? What might give you a teachable heart?

I’m always in need of wisdom, God. I want to follow Your ways. Please show me which way to go.

#### **Insight**

King Solomon’s story is complex. In response to Solomon’s request for discernment, God blessed him with great wisdom ([1 Kings 3:9–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Kings%203.9%E2%80%9312)). But the king had trouble applying that wisdom to all of life. Just prior to this passage we see how he was already ignoring God’s plan for Israel. In making “an alliance” with Egypt, he married Pharaoh’s daughter (v. 1), a pattern he would continue in later years (11:1–8). This turned Solomon’s heart to “other gods” (v. 4). The nation thrived under Solomon, but the kingdom would be divided because of his sins (vv. 9–13).

# God Calling – 10/11/20

# Shame and Distress

**I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.            -- Psalm 34:1, 4, 5.**

See, My children, that even in distress, the first step is Praise. Before you cry in your distress, bless the Lord; even when troubles seem to overwhelm you.

That is My Divine order of approach. Observe this always. In the greatest distress, search until you find cause for thankfulness. Then bless and thank.

You have thus established a line of communication between yourself and Me. Along that line to let your cry of distress follow.

Thus you will find I do My part, and deliverance will be sure. Oh! The gladness of heart.

Lightened you will be, the burden rolled away, as the result of looking to Me.

The shame and distress will be lifted too. That is always the second step. First right with Me, and then you will be righted too in the eyes of men.

So will I compass thine altar, O Lord: that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.  Psalm 26:6, 7

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/12/20

# Getting into God’s Stride



Enoch walked with God… —[Genesis 5:24](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Genesis+5%3A24)

The true test of a person’s spiritual life and character is not what he does in the extraordinary moments of life, but what he does during the ordinary times when there is nothing tremendous or exciting happening. A person’s worth is revealed in his attitude toward the ordinary things of life when he is not under the spotlight (see [John 1:35-37](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1:35-37) and [John 3:30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3:30)). It is painful work to get in step with God and to keep pace with Him— it means getting your second wind spiritually. In learning to walk with God, there is always the difficulty of getting into His stride, but once we have done so, the only characteristic that exhibits itself is the very life of God Himself. The individual person is merged into a personal oneness with God, and God’s stride and His power alone are exhibited.

It is difficult to get into stride with God, because as soon as we start walking with Him we find that His pace has surpassed us before we have even taken three steps. He has different ways of doing things, and we have to be trained and disciplined in His ways. It was said of Jesus— “He will not fail nor be discouraged…” ([Isaiah 42:4](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+42:4)) because He never worked from His own individual standpoint, but always worked from the standpoint of His Father. And we must learn to do the same. Spiritual truth is learned through the atmosphere that surrounds us, not through intellectual reasoning. It is God’s Spirit that changes the atmosphere of our way of looking at things, and then things begin to be possible which before were impossible. Getting into God’s stride means nothing less than oneness with Him. It takes a long time to get there, but keep at it. Don’t give up because the pain is intense right now— get on with it, and before long you will find that you have a new vision and a new purpose.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 10/12/20

**God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.**—[II COR. 5:19.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.19)

It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself.—Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil.—Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity?

Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace.—Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

[Col. 1:19,20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Col.1.html" \l "Col.1.19). -[Psa. 85:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.85.html" \l "Ps.85.10).[Jer. 29:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.29.html" \l "Jer.29.11). -[Isa. 1:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.1.html" \l "Isa.1.18).[Mic. 7:18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Mic.7.html" \l "Mic.7.18).[Job 22:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.22.html" \l "Job.22.21). -[Phi. 2:12,13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Phil.2.html" \l "Phil.2.12). -[Isa. 26:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.26.html" \l "Isa.26.12).

“I will meditate in thy precepts.” **[Psalm 119:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.15)**

There are times when solitude is better than society, and silence is wiser than speech. We should be better Christians if we were more alone, waiting upon God, and gathering through meditation on his Word spiritual strength for labour in his service. We ought to muse upon the things of God, because we thus get the real nutriment out of them. Truth is something like the cluster of the vine: if we would have wine from it, we must bruise it; we must press and squeeze it many times. The bruiser’s feet must come down joyfully upon the bunches, or else the juice will not flow; and they must well tread the grapes, or else much of the precious liquid will be wasted. So we must, by meditation, tread the clusters of truth, if we would get the wine of consolation therefrom. Our bodies are not supported by merely taking food into the mouth, but the process which really supplies the muscle, and the nerve, and the sinew, and the bone, is the process of digestion. It is by digestion that the outward food becomes assimilated with the inner life. Our souls are not nourished merely by listening awhile to this, and then to that, and then to the other part of divine truth. Hearing, reading, marking, and learning, all require inwardly digesting to complete their usefulness, and the inward digesting of the truth lies for the most part in meditating upon it. Why is it that some Christians, although they hear many sermons, make but slow advances in the divine life? Because they neglect their closets, and do not thoughtfully meditate on God’s Word. They love the wheat, but they do not grind it; they would have the corn, but they will not go forth into the fields to gather it; the fruit hangs upon the tree, but they will not pluck it; the water flows at their feet, but they will not stoop to drink it. From such folly deliver us, O Lord, and be this our resolve this morning, “I will meditate in thy precepts.”

# Word Live – 10/12/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/12/20

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# Today in the Word – 10/12/20

# Crying for Help

**Read:** [**Psalm 54**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+54)**[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+54#fen-NIV-14727a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A maskil[**[**b**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+54#fen-NIV-14727b)**] of David. When the Ziphites had gone to Saul and said, “Is not David hiding among us?”**

1Save me, O God, by your name;  
    vindicate me by your might.  
2Hear my prayer, O God;  
    listen to the words of my mouth.

3Arrogant foes are attacking me;  
    ruthless people are trying to kill me—  
    people without regard for God.[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+54" \l "fen-NIV-14729c" \o "See footnote c)]

4Surely God is my help;  
    the Lord is the one who sustains me.

5Let evil recoil on those who slander me;  
    in your faithfulness destroy them.

6I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you;  
    I will praise your name, Lord, for it is good.  
7You have delivered me from all my troubles,  
    and my eyes have looked in triumph on my foes.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 54:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+54#en-NIV-14727) In Hebrew texts 54:1-7 is numbered 54:3-9.
2. [Psalm 54:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+54#en-NIV-14727) Title: Probably a literary or musical term
3. [Psalm 54:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+54#en-NIV-14729) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here.

My children often come to me with requests that might seem strange if someone else asked them: “Can you read me a book? Can you make a sandwich for me? Can you play cars with me?” Yet, because I am their father, they know that they have the right to ask those kinds of things. That is often how David approached God. In the Psalms, David makes bold and specific requests of God because he has a relationship with Him.

Surely God is my help; the LORD is the one who sustains me. Psalm 54:4

David penned this lament after being betrayed by the Ziphites (1 Sam. 23:19–20). These were men from his own tribe. David addresses God urgently asking for salvation from these “arrogant foes” (v. 3). These were “people without regard for God” (v. 3), or more literally, men who “have not set God before them.”

David is honest about his sense of betrayal. He expresses his desire for vengeance (v. 5). God invites us to be honest about our anger so we can hand over our desire for revenge to Him (Rom. 12:19). In spite of his imminent danger, David expresses confidence in God. He declares, “Surely God is my help; the Lord is the one who sustains me” (v. 4). His attitude stands in stark contrast to his enemies. His eyes look first to God for help. As one commentator put it, “Placing our gaze fully on God changes the way we see the rest of the world.” David ends this short lament with a vow. When God delivers him, he will not be silent about it (v. 6).

**Apply the Word**

Today’s reading encourages us to fix our eyes on Jesus even in the midst of difficult and trying circumstances. Soak in the words of this classic hymn today: “Turn your eyes upon Jesus / Look full in His wonderful face / And the things of earth will grow strangely dim / In the light of His glory and grace.”

### **Pray with Us**

Following David’s example in Psalm 54, we ask that God will help us grow in our trust and dependence on Him. In any circumstance, may our eyes look to the Lord first.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/12/20

# Loving the Stranger

 **Read:** [**Leviticus 19:33–37**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2019.33%E2%80%9337)

33“‘When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. 34The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

35“‘Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. 36Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+19%3A33%E2%80%9337&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3318a)] and an honest hin.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+19%3A33%E2%80%9337&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-3318b" \o "See footnote b)] I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt.

37“‘Keep all my decrees and all my laws and follow them. I am the Lord.’”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Leviticus 19:36](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+19%3A33%E2%80%9337&version=NIV#en-NIV-3318) An ephah was a dry measure having the capacity of about 3/5 of a bushel or about 22 liters.
2. [Leviticus 19:36](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+19%3A33%E2%80%9337&version=NIV#en-NIV-3318) A hin was a liquid measure having the capacity of about 1 gallon or about 3.8 liters.

Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. [Leviticus 19:34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2019.34)

When I moved to a new country, one of my first experiences left me feeling unwelcome. After finding a seat in the little church where my husband was preaching that day, a gruff older gentleman startled me when he said, “Move along down.” His wife apologized as she explained that I was sitting in the pew they always occupied. Years later I learned that congregations used to rent out pews, which raised money for the church and also ensured no one could take another person’s seat. Apparently some of that mentality carried on through the decades.

Later, I reflected on how God instructed the Israelites to welcome foreigners, in contrast to cultural practices such as I encountered. In setting out the laws that would allow His people to flourish, He reminded them to welcome foreigners because they themselves were once foreigners ([Leviticus 19:34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Lev%2019.34)). Not only were they to treat strangers with kindness (v. 33), but they were also to “love them as [themselves]” (v. 34). God had rescued them from oppression in Egypt, giving them a home in a land “flowing with milk and honey” ([Exodus 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%203.17)). He expected His people to love others who also made their home there.

As you encounter strangers in your midst, ask God to reveal any cultural practices that might keep you from sharing His love with them.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Why is it so important that we welcome people into our homes and churches? What do you find most challenging and most rewarding in this?

Father God, You welcome me with open arms, for You love me day after day. Give me Your love to share with others.

#### **Insight**

The book of Leviticus can be a tremendous challenge for readers. A useful tip for reading it begins with understanding its purpose—a purpose found in its name. In the Hebrew Bible, books were named based on their first few words; while in the West, books of the Bible were often named according to their purpose. In the Hebrew Bible, Leviticus is called Vayikra, which means “And He called” (taken from the opening verse, “the Lord called to Moses”). Our English title, Leviticus, is rooted in what the book presents—the rituals, offerings, and expectations of religious ritual and purity. The name is derived from the fact that these rituals were to be performed by the priests, who were from the tribe of Levi. Understanding that the Levitical priesthood’s responsibilities in leading the people in worship are in view can help place this book in its time, setting, and purpose.

# God Calling – 10/12/20

# You Are My Joy

**Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. -- John 17:6.**

Remember, that just as you thank God for Me, so I thank God for His Gift to Me of you. In that hour of My agony on earth, one note of Joy thrilled through the pain. The thought of the souls, given Me by My Father, who had kept My Word.

They had not done great deeds, as they did later, for, and in, My Name. They were simple doers of My Word, not hearers only. Just in their daily tasks and ways they kept My Word.

You, too, can bring Joy to My Heart by faithful service. Faithful service in the little things. Be faithful.

Do your simple tasks for Me.

Well done, thou good and faithful servant:  thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.  Matthew 25:21