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

# Is God’s Will My Will?



This is the will of God, your sanctification… —[1 Thessalonians 4:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Thessalonians+4%3A3)

Sanctification is not a question of whether God is willing to sanctify me— is it my will? Am I willing to let God do in me everything that has been made possible through the atonement of the Cross of Christ? Am I willing to let Jesus become sanctification to me, and to let His life be exhibited in my human flesh? (see [1 Corinthians 1:30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+1:30)). Beware of saying, “Oh, I am longing to be sanctified.” No, you are not. Recognize your need, but stop longing and make it a matter of action. Receive Jesus Christ to become sanctification for you by absolute, unquestioning faith, and the great miracle of the atonement of Jesus will become real in you.

All that Jesus made possible becomes mine through the free and loving gift of God on the basis of what Christ accomplished on the cross. And my attitude as a saved and sanctified soul is that of profound, humble holiness (there is no such thing as proud holiness). It is a holiness based on agonizing repentance, a sense of inexpressible shame and degradation, and also on the amazing realization that the love of God demonstrated itself to me while I cared nothing about Him (see [Romans 5:8](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5:8)). He completed everything for my salvation and sanctification. No wonder Paul said that nothing “shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” ([Romans 8:39](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8:39)).

Sanctification makes me one with Jesus Christ, and in Him one with God, and it is accomplished only through the magnificent atonement of Christ. Never confuse the effect with the cause. The effect in me is obedience, service, and prayer, and is the outcome of inexpressible thanks and adoration for the miraculous sanctification that has been brought about in me because of the atonement through the Cross of Christ.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The fiery furnaces are there by God’s direct permission. It is misleading to imagine that we are developed in spite of our circumstances; we are developed because of them. It is mastery in circumstances that is needed, not mastery over them. The Love of God—The Message of Invincible Consolation, 674 R

# CCEL – 10/20/20

**I delight in the law of God after the inward man.**—[ROM. 7:22.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.7.html" \l "Rom.7.22)

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.—Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.—I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.—I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.—My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure enlightening the eyes. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.—Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass.

[Psa. 119:97](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.97). -[Jer. 15:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.15.html" \l "Jer.15.16). -[Song 2:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Song.2.html" \l "Song.2.3). -[Job 23:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.23.html" \l "Job.23.12).[Psa. 40:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.40.html" \l "Ps.40.8). -[John 4:34](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.4.html" \l "John.4.34).[Psa. 19:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.19.html" \l "Ps.19.8),[10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.19.html" \l "Ps.19.10). -[Jas. 1:22,23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html" \l "Jas.1.22).

“Grow up into him in all things.” [Ephesians 4:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.4.html" \l "Eph.4.15)

Many Christians remain stunted and dwarfed in spiritual things, so as to present the same appearance year after year. No up-springing of advanced and refined feeling is manifest in them. They exist but do not “grow up into him in all things.” But should we rest content with being in the “green blade,” when we might advance to “the ear,” and eventually ripen into the “full corn in the ear?” Should we be satisfied to believe in Christ, and to say, “I am safe,” without wishing to know in our own experience more of the fulness which is to be found in him. It should not be so; we should, as good traders in heaven’s market, covet to be enriched in the knowledge of Jesus. It is all very well to keep other men’s vineyards, but we must not neglect our own spiritual growth and ripening. Why should it always be winter time in our hearts? We must have our seed time, it is true, but O for a spring time—yea, a summer season, which shall give promise of an early harvest. If we would ripen in grace, we must live near to Jesus—in his presence—ripened by the sunshine of his smiles. We must hold sweet communion with him. We must leave the distant view of his face and come near, as John did, and pillow our head on his breast; then shall we find ourselves advancing in holiness, in love, in faith, in hope—yea, in every precious gift. As the sun rises first on mountain-tops and gilds them with his light, and presents one of the most charming sights to the eye of the traveller; so is it one of the most delightful contemplations in the world to mark the glow of the Spirit’s light on the head of some saint, who has risen up in spiritual stature, like Saul, above his fellows, till, like a mighty Alp, snow-capped, he reflects first among the chosen, the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and bears the sheen of his effulgence high aloft for all to see, and seeing it, to glorify his Father which is in heaven.

# Word Live – 10/20/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/20/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/20/20

# https://www.todayintheword.org//siteassets/header-images/2020/october/titw_october_desktop_1200x400.jpg Rest in God

### **Read:** [**Psalm 62**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+62) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+62#fen-NIV-14829a)**]**

#### For the director of music. For Jeduthun. A psalm of David.

1Truly my soul finds rest in God;  
    my salvation comes from him.  
2Truly he is my rock and my salvation;  
    he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

3How long will you assault me?  
    Would all of you throw me down—  
    this leaning wall, this tottering fence?  
4Surely they intend to topple me  
    from my lofty place;  
    they take delight in lies.  
With their mouths they bless,  
    but in their hearts they curse.[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+62" \l "fen-NIV-14832b" \o "See footnote b)]

5Yes, my soul, find rest in God;  
    my hope comes from him.  
6Truly he is my rock and my salvation;  
    he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.  
7My salvation and my honor depend on God[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+62#fen-NIV-14835c)];  
    he is my mighty rock, my refuge.  
8Trust in him at all times, you people;  
    pour out your hearts to him,  
    for God is our refuge.

9Surely the lowborn are but a breath,  
    the highborn are but a lie.  
If weighed on a balance, they are nothing;  
    together they are only a breath.  
10Do not trust in extortion  
    or put vain hope in stolen goods;  
though your riches increase,  
    do not set your heart on them.

11One thing God has spoken,  
    two things I have heard:  
“Power belongs to you, God,  
12    and with you, Lord, is unfailing love”;  
and, “You reward everyone  
    according to what they have done.”

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 62:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+62#en-NIV-14829) In Hebrew texts 62:1-12 is numbered 62:2-13.
2. [Psalm 62:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+62#en-NIV-14832) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verse 8.
3. [Psalm 62:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+62#en-NIV-14835) Or / God Most High is my salvation and my honor

It is easy to say, “I trust in God,” when things are going well. However, when a crisis hits, our trust is put to the test. We may think that we trust God to supply all our needs until we are faced with a lost job or a sudden downturn in the economy. In that moment, we may find that we have really been trusting in wealth for our security.

Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. Psalm 62:5

In today’s reading, David’s position and security have come under threat. He feels as fragile as a “leaning wall” or a “tottering fence” ready to topple at any moment (v. 3). His enemies are particularly insidious in that they speak well of him to his face, but curse him in their hearts and spread lies about him to others (v. 4).

This situation has caused David to reevaluate what he puts his trust in. He declares that most of the things that people look to for security are not able to provide it. He says, “the lowborn are but a breath, the highborn are but a lie” (v. 9). In other words, your social position will not bring you security. Riches are a vain hope as well. Therefore, you should “not set your heart on them” (v. 10).

True contentment and security are gifts that come from God alone. “Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him” (v. 1). Therefore it only makes sense to “trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge” (v. 8). David concludes the psalm by describing the two primary reasons why God is so trustworthy. He is the only source of true power (v. 11) and He is just (v. 12).

**Apply the Word**

What or who are you putting your trust in? Ask the Lord today to show you if there are any areas of your life that you need to reevaluate so that you can truly place your trust in God and find rest in Him alone.

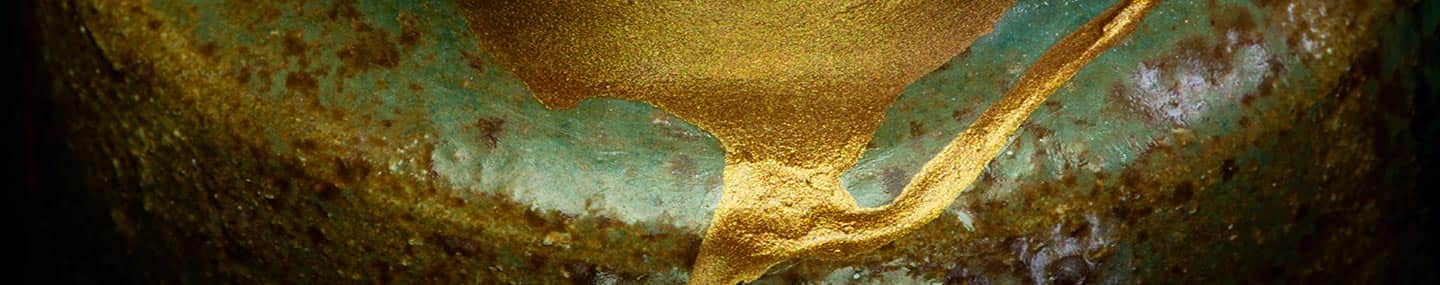
### **Pray with Us**

Do you know how to rest in God? Ask the Lord to help you overcome fear and anxiety. Make David’s words your prayer today: “Truly my soul finds rest in God, my salvation comes from him” (Ps. 62:1).

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/20/20

# Golden Scars

 **Read:** [**2 Corinthians 12:1–10**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%2012.1%E2%80%9310)

### **Paul’s Vision and His Thorn**

12 I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. 2I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. 3And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows— 4was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell. 5I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. 6Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, 7or because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. [2 Corinthians 11:30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%2011.30)

In the Netherlands, a group of fashion designers offer a “Golden Joinery” workshop. Inspired by the Japanese technique Kintsugi, where broken porcelain is visibly repaired with gold, participants collaborate in mending clothes in ways that highlight the mending work rather than trying to mask it. Those who are invited bring “a dear but broken garment and mend it with gold.” As they remake their clothes, the repair becomes ornamental, a “golden scar.”

Articles of clothing are transformed in ways that highlight the places where they were torn or frayed. Perhaps this is something like what Paul meant when he said that he would “boast” in the things that showed his weakness. Although he’d experienced “surpassingly great revelations,” he doesn’t brag about them ([2 Corinthians 12:6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%2012.6)). He is kept from getting proud and overconfident, he says, by a “thorn” in his flesh (v. 7). No one knows exactly what he was referring to—perhaps depression, a form of malaria, persecution from enemies, or something else. Whatever it was, he begged God to take it away. But God said, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (v. 9).

Just as the rips and tears in old clothes can become sights of beauty as they’re remade by designers, the broken and weak places in our lives can become places where God’s power and glory may shine. He holds us together, transforms us, and makes our weaknesses beautiful.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What are some weaknesses you try to keep hidden from the world? How has God revealed His power through your weakness?

God, may all my scars become golden as You heal and repair me in ways that bring glory to Your name.

#### **Insight**

Responding to false teachers who said he wasn’t a genuine apostle because he didn’t have ecstatic spiritual experiences, Paul deliberately boasted about the many visions and surpassingly great revelations he’d received ([2 Corinthians 12:1–7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%2012.1%E2%80%937)). Converted and commissioned to be an apostle through a vision of the resurrected Christ ([Acts 9:1–19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%209.1%E2%80%9319); [22:17–21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2022.17%E2%80%9321)), Paul brought the gospel into Europe led by a vision of “a man of Macedonia” (16:6–10). And Paul, “caught up to paradise,” saw what heaven was like ([2 Corinthians 12:1–4](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/2%20Cor%2012.1%E2%80%934)). Such boasting is uncharacteristic of Paul, for he wouldn’t “boast about [himself], except about [his] weaknesses” (v. 5; see also 11:30; [Galatians 6:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gal%206.14)).

# God Calling – 10/20/20

# No Burden Irks

**Our Lord and our God. Be it done unto us according to Thy Word.**

Simple acceptance of My Will is the Key to Divine Revelation. It will result in both Holiness and Happiness. The way to the Cross may be a way of sorrow, but at its foot the burdens of sin and earth-desire are rolled away.

The yoke of My acceptance of My Father's Will in all things is adjusted to My servants' shoulders, and from that moment on no burden irks or presses.

But not only in the great decisions of life accept and welcome My Will.  Try to see in each interruption, each task, however small, the same fulfillment of Divine intent.

Accept it, say your thanks for it. Do so until this becomes a habit, and the resulting Joy will transfigure and transform your lives.

Walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness  
 and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.  Ephesians 5:8-10

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/21/20

# Impulsiveness or Discipleship?

 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith… —[Jude 20](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Jude+20)

There was nothing of the nature of impulsive or thoughtless action about our Lord, but only a calm strength that never got into a panic. Most of us develop our Christianity along the lines of our own nature, not along the lines of God’s nature. Impulsiveness is a trait of the natural life, and our Lord always ignores it, because it hinders the development of the life of a disciple. Watch how the Spirit of God gives a sense of restraint to impulsiveness, suddenly bringing us a feeling of self-conscious foolishness, which makes us instantly want to vindicate ourselves. Impulsiveness is all right in a child, but is disastrous in a man or woman— an impulsive adult is always a spoiled person. Impulsiveness needs to be trained into intuition through discipline.

Discipleship is built entirely on the supernatural grace of God. Walking on water is easy to someone with impulsive boldness, but walking on dry land as a disciple of Jesus Christ is something altogether different. Peter walked on the water to go to Jesus, but he “followed Him at a distance” on dry land ([Mark 14:54](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14:54)). We do not need the grace of God to withstand crises— human nature and pride are sufficient for us to face the stress and strain magnificently. But it does require the supernatural grace of God to live twenty-four hours of every day as a saint, going through drudgery, and living an ordinary, unnoticed, and ignored existence as a disciple of Jesus. It is ingrained in us that we have to do exceptional things for God— but we do not. We have to be exceptional in the ordinary things of life, and holy on the ordinary streets, among ordinary people— and this is not learned in five minutes.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

We are apt to think that everything that happens to us is to be turned into useful teaching; it is to be turned into something better than teaching, viz. into character. We shall find that the spheres God brings us into are not meant to teach us something but to make us something. The Love of God—The Ministry of the Unnoticed, 664 L

# CCEL – 10/21/20

**Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.**—[JOHN 1:16.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.16)

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.—Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things.—If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

I and my Father are one. The Father is in me, and I in him.—My Father, and your Father; and . . . my God, and your God.—I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.

The Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Having . . . these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

[Matt. 17:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.17.html" \l "Matt.17.5). -[I John 3:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.3.html" \l "iJohn.3.1).[Heb. 1:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.1.html" \l "Heb.1.2). -[Rom. 8:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.17).[John 10:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.30),[38](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.10.html" \l "John.10.38). -[John 20:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.20.html" \l "John.20.17). -[John 17:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.23).[Eph. 1:22,23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.22).[II Cor. 7:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.7.html" \l "iiCor.7.1).

“The love of Christ constraineth us.” [2 Corinthians 5:14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.14)

How much owest thou unto my Lord? Has he ever done anything for thee? Has he forgiven thy sins? Has he covered thee with a robe of righteousness? Has he set thy feet upon a rock? Has he established thy goings? Has he prepared heaven for thee? Has he prepared thee for heaven? Has he written thy name in his book of life? Has he given thee countless blessings? Has he laid up for thee a store of mercies, which eye hath not seen nor ear heard? Then do something for Jesus worthy of his love. Give not a mere wordy offering to a dying Redeemer. How will you feel when your Master comes, if you have to confess that you did nothing for him, but kept your love shut up, like a stagnant pool, neither flowing forth to his poor or to his work. Out on such love as that! What do men think of a love which never shows itself in action? Why, they say, “Open rebuke is better than secret love.” Who will accept a love so weak that it does not actuate you to a single deed of self-denial, of generosity, of heroism, or zeal! Think how he has loved you, and given himself for you! Do you know the power of that love? Then let it be like a rushing mighty wind to your soul to sweep out the clouds of your worldliness, and clear away the mists of sin. “For Christ’s sake” be this the tongue of fire that shall sit upon you: “for Christ’s sake” be this the divine rapture, the heavenly afflatus to bear you aloft from earth, the divine spirit that shall make you bold as lions and swift as eagles in your Lord’s service. Love should give wings to the feet of service, and strength to the arms of labour. Fixed on God with a constancy that is not to be shaken, resolute to honour him with a determination that is not to be turned aside, and pressing on with an ardour never to be wearied, let us manifest the constraints of love to Jesus. May the divine lodestone draw us heavenward towards itself.

# Word Live – 10/21/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/21/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/21/20

# Better Than Life

### **Read:** [**Psalm 63**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+63) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+63#fen-NIV-14841a)**]**

#### **A psalm of David. When he was in the Desert of Judah.**

1You, God, are my God,  
    earnestly I seek you;  
I thirst for you,  
    my whole being longs for you,  
in a dry and parched land  
    where there is no water.

2I have seen you in the sanctuary  
    and beheld your power and your glory.  
3Because your love is better than life,  
    my lips will glorify you.  
4I will praise you as long as I live,  
    and in your name I will lift up my hands.  
5I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods;  
    with singing lips my mouth will praise you.

6On my bed I remember you;  
    I think of you through the watches of the night.  
7Because you are my help,  
    I sing in the shadow of your wings.  
8I cling to you;  
    your right hand upholds me.

9Those who want to kill me will be destroyed;  
    they will go down to the depths of the earth.  
10They will be given over to the sword  
    and become food for jackals.

11But the king will rejoice in God;  
    all who swear by God will glory in him,  
    while the mouths of liars will be silenced.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 63:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+63#en-NIV-14841) In Hebrew texts 63:1-11 is numbered 63:2-12.

The early church father Augustine sought for meaning or fulfillment in his life for years. When he finally came to faith in Christ, he gave thanks to God by saying, “You made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you.”

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you. Psalm 63:1

In today’s reading, David expresses a deep longing for God’s presence. He knows that only God can satisfy. He confesses, “I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you in a dry and parched land where there is no water” (v. 1). As a dry and cracked desert landscape needs water for life to flourish, David knows that he needs intimacy with God in order to survive.

David finds the answer by searching his memory. He looks back on the times when he saw God in the sanctuary and beheld His power and glory (v. 2). He remembers God’s faithful commitment to Him and His people. He declares, “Your love is better than life” (v. 3). The word for love here is hesed. It refers to God’s loyalty to His covenant with Israel. David knows that to be in right relationship with God is more important than life itself.

As David is reminded of God’s faithfulness, he breaks forth in praise, “I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands” (v. 4). David prayed this while in the wilderness. He was likely on the run from Saul or Absalom. In that context, sleep is a time when one would be especially vulnerable to surprise or attack. David declares, “On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night” (v. 6). He knows that God is his shelter. Because of this, he is confident in God’s protection (vv. 9–10). He knows that ultimately the “mouths of liars will be silenced,” but his mouth will be wide open “with singing lips” (vv. 11, 5).

**Apply the Word**

In Christ’s work on the cross, we have seen God’s love powerfully displayed. When we feel like God is distant, like we are in the wilderness, we can remember what God has done. Our longing for God can be transformed into praise.

### **Pray with Us**

David praised God in “a dry and parched land”—the wilderness of Judah. Do you praise God when you’re going through hard and lonely times? Lord, help us see that “your love is better than life” (Ps. 63:3).

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/21/20

# What’s Wrong with the World?

 **Read:** [**1 Timothy 1:12–17**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Tim%201.12%E2%80%9317)

### **The Lord’s Grace to Paul**

12I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. 13Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 14The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

15Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. 16But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. 17Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. [1 Timothy 1:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Tim%201.15)

There is an oft-heard story that The London Times posed a question to readers at the turn of the twentieth century. What’s wrong with the world?

That’s quite the question, isn’t it? Someone might quickly respond, “Well, how much time do you have for me to tell you?” And that would be fair, as there seems to be so much that’s wrong with our world. As the story goes, The Times received a number of responses, but one in particular has endured in its brief brilliance. The English writer, poet, and philosopher G. K. Chesterton penned this four-word response, a refreshing surprise to the usual passing-of-the-buck: “Dear Sirs, I am.”

Whether the story is factual or not is up for debate. But that response? It’s nothing but true. Long before Chesterton came along, there was an apostle named Paul. Far from a lifelong model citizen, Paul confessed his past shortcomings: “I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man” (v. 13). After naming who Jesus came to save (“sinners”), he goes on to make a very Chesterton-like qualification: “of whom I am the worst” (v. 15). Paul knew exactly what was and is wrong with the world. And he further knew the only hope of making things right—“the grace of our Lord” (v. 14). What an amazing reality! This enduring truth lifts our eyes to the light of Christ’s saving love.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What is wrong with the world? Can you own the answer Paul and Chesterton gave? What is one way you can accept that without sliding into self-hatred?

God, thank You for Your immense patience with me, a sinner. To You be honor and glory forever and ever.

To learn about answering questions related to the Christian faith, visit [ChristianUniversity.org/CA101](https://ChristianUniversity.org/CA101).

#### **Insight**

In [1 Timothy 1:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Tim%201.13), Paul recalled how some thirty years earlier he had mercilessly persecuted believers in Jesus, and yet Jesus had mercifully saved him on the Damascus Road ([Acts 9:1–19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%209.1%E2%80%9319); [22:3–21](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2022.3%E2%80%9321); [26:9–18](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2026.9%E2%80%9318)). He considered himself the least qualified and the most undeserving recipient of God’s mercy and grace ([1 Timothy 1:13–14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Tim%201.13%E2%80%9314)). Yet God told Ananias that Paul was to be His “chosen instrument” to take the gospel to the gentiles ([Acts 9:15](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%209.15)). Paul saw another reason God chose to save him: he was “a prime example of [God’s] great patience with even the worst sinners.” Because God saved Paul, “others [would] realize that they, too, can believe in [God] and receive eternal life” ([1 Timothy 1:16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Tim%201.16) nlt). God had us in mind when He saved Paul—an amazing thought! Paul makes it clear that if Jesus could save and use him, the worst of sinners, then no one is beyond God’s mercy and saving grace.

# God Calling – 10/21/20

# A Love Feast

**Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. -- Revelation 3:20.**

See, My children, the knocking rests upon no merit of yours -- though it is in response to the longing of your heart for Me.

Keep, keep that listening ear. "If any man will hear My Voice."  Again no merit of yours. Only the ear bent to catch My tones, and to hear the sound of My gentle knocking.

Then listen: "If any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

What a feast! You think it would have been Joy to have been present at the Marriage Feast of Cana of Galilee, or to have been one of My disciples in the Upper Room, seated with Me at the Last Supper or one of the two at Emmaus, or one of the few for whom I prepared that Lakeside feast!

But oh! at each of these feasts, God-provided and God-championed as they were, you could not have known the rapture you may know as you hear the knocking and the Voice, and, opening, bid Me welcome to My Feast.

A Feast of tenderest companionship, of Divine Sustenance, truly a Love Feast.

Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live.  Isaiah 55:3

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/22/20

# The Witness of the Spirit



The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit… —[Romans 8:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Romans+8%3A16)

We are in danger of getting into a bargaining spirit with God when we come to Him— we want the witness of the Spirit before we have done what God tells us to do.

Why doesn’t God reveal Himself to you? He cannot. It is not that He will not, but He cannot, because you are in the way as long as you won’t abandon yourself to Him in total surrender. Yet once you do, immediately God witnesses to Himself— He cannot witness to you, but He instantly witnesses to His own nature in you. If you received the witness of the Spirit before the reality and truth that comes from obedience, it would simply result in sentimental emotion. But when you act on the basis of redemption, and stop the disrespectfulness of debating with God, He immediately gives His witness. As soon as you abandon your own reasoning and arguing, God witnesses to what He has done, and you are amazed at your total disrespect in having kept Him waiting. If you are debating as to whether or not God can deliver from sin, then either let Him do it or tell Him that He cannot. Do not quote this or that person to Him. Simply obey [Matthew 11:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+11:28), “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden….” Come, if you are weary, and ask, if you know you are evil (see [Luke 11:9-13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+11:9-13)).

The Spirit of God witnesses to the redemption of our Lord, and to nothing else. He cannot witness to our reason. We are inclined to mistake the simplicity that comes from our natural commonsense decisions for the witness of the Spirit, but the Spirit witnesses only to His own nature, and to the work of redemption, never to our reason. If we are trying to make Him witness to our reason, it is no wonder that we are in darkness and uncertainty. Throw it all overboard, trust in Him, and He will give you the witness of the Spirit.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 10/22/20

**O God, my heart is fixed.**—[PSA. 108:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.108.html" \l "Ps.108.1)

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.—He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.—In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy: I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.

The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

[Psa. 27:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.1).[Isa. 26:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.26.html" \l "Isa.26.3). -[Psa. 112:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.112.html" \l "Ps.112.7).[Psa. 56:3](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.56.html" \l "Ps.56.3). -[Psa. 27:5,6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.27.html" \l "Ps.27.5).[I Pet. 5:10,11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.5.html" \l "iPet.5.10).

“I will love them freely.” [Hosea 14:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hos.14.html" \l "Hos.14.4)

This sentence is a body of divinity in miniature. He who understands its meaning is a theologian, and he who can dive into its fulness is a true master in Israel. It is a condensation of the glorious message of salvation which was delivered to us in Christ Jesus our Redeemer. The sense hinges upon the word “freely.” This is the glorious, the suitable, the divine way by which love streams from heaven to earth, a spontaneous love flowing forth to those who neither deserved it, purchased it, nor sought after it. It is, indeed, the only way in which God can love such as we are. The text is a death-blow to all sorts of fitness: “I will love them freely.” Now, if there were any fitness necessary in us, then he would not love us freely; at least, this would be a mitigation and a drawback to the freeness of it. But it stands, “I will love you freely.” We complain, “Lord, my heart is so hard.” “I will love you freely.” “But I do not feel my need of Christ as I could wish.” “I will not love you because you feel your need; I will love you freely.” “But I do not feel that softening of spirit which I could desire.” Remember, the softening of spirit is not a condition, for there are no conditions; the covenant of grace has no conditionality whatever; so that we without any fitness may venture upon the promise of God which was made to us in Christ Jesus, when he said, “He that believeth on him is not condemned.” It is blessed to know that the grace of God is free to us at all times, without preparation, without fitness, without money, and without price! “I will love them freely.” These words invite backsliders to return: indeed, the text was specially written for such—“I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely.” Backslider! surely the generosity of the promise will at once break your heart, and you will return, and seek your injured Father’s face.

# Word Live – 10/22/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/22/20

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# Today in the Word – 10/22/20

# The Hope of the Righteous

### **Read:** [**Psalm 64**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+64) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+64#fen-NIV-14852a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. A psalm of David.**

1Hear me, my God, as I voice my complaint;  
    protect my life from the threat of the enemy.

2Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked,  
    from the plots of evildoers.  
3They sharpen their tongues like swords  
    and aim cruel words like deadly arrows.  
4They shoot from ambush at the innocent;  
    they shoot suddenly, without fear.

5They encourage each other in evil plans,  
    they talk about hiding their snares;  
    they say, “Who will see it[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+64#fen-NIV-14856b)]?”  
6They plot injustice and say,  
    “We have devised a perfect plan!”  
    Surely the human mind and heart are cunning.

7But God will shoot them with his arrows;  
    they will suddenly be struck down.  
8He will turn their own tongues against them  
    and bring them to ruin;  
    all who see them will shake their heads in scorn.  
9All people will fear;  
    they will proclaim the works of God  
    and ponder what he has done.

10The righteous will rejoice in the Lord  
    and take refuge in him;  
    all the upright in heart will glory in him!

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 64:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+64#en-NIV-14852) In Hebrew texts 64:1-10 is numbered 64:2-11.
2. [Psalm 64:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+64#en-NIV-14856) Or us

What is the difference between the righteous and the wicked? Is it simply that the righteous generally do the right thing while the wicked do not? While that is partially true, it’s not the full story. As seen in our study of the second book of Psalms, the primary difference between the righteous and the wicked relates to their understanding of God as a just judge. The righteous believe that God is just and that He will hold all people accountable for what they do. They live in a healthy fear of God. The wicked do not believe that God sees what they do, or that He cares.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7

In today’s reading, David complains about his enemies, saying, “They encourage each other in evil plans, they talk about hiding their snares; they say, ‘Who will see it?’” (v. 5). These enemies work together to slander David to try to bring him down. They are not restrained by any sense that God will judge them for their actions. However, David knows better. In a profound statement of faith in God, David declares that his enemies will be judged for their actions (vv. 7–8).

There is beautiful symmetry in God’s judgment. David’s enemies slandered him and used their words like arrows in order to bring about his destruction (vv. 3–4). But the reality is that God “will shoot them with his arrows; they will suddenly be struck down. He will turn their own tongues against them and bring them to ruin” (vv. 7–8). Like a boomerang, the attacks of the enemy will bounce off David and rebound upon themselves. God’s justice will lead people to both proclaim the glory of God and ponder what He has accomplished (v. 9).

**Apply the Word**

David’s hope in a just God is our hope as well. While in this life the wicked may seem to get away with evil, we know that ultimately justice will be done. Take a moment today to ponder what God has done and proclaim it to others (v. 9).

### **Pray with Us**

We join David’s praise—his hope in a just and loving God is our hope as well. The same God works in our lives, giving us a hope and a future. Praise the Lord!

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/22/20

# Laundry Day

 **Read:** [**Matthew 28:16–20**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2028.16%E2%80%9320)

### **The Great Commission**

16Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples. [Matthew 28:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2028.19) gnt

Driving through a low-income area near his church, Colorado pastor Chad Graham started praying for his “neighbors.” When he noticed a small laundromat, he stopped to take a look inside and found it filled with customers. One asked Graham for a spare coin to operate the clothes dryer. That small request inspired a weekly “Laundry Day” sponsored by Graham’s church. Members donate coins and soap to the laundromat, pray with customers, and support the owner of the laundry facility.

Their neighborhood outreach, which dares to include a laundromat, reflects Jesus’ Great Commission to His disciples. As He said, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” ([Matthew 28:18–19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2028.18%E2%80%9319) gnt).

His Holy Spirit’s powerful presence enables “everywhere” outreach, including even a laundromat. Indeed, we don’t go alone. As Jesus promised, “I will be with you always, to the end of the age” (v. 20 gnt).

Pastor Chad experienced that truth after praying at the laundromat for a customer named Jeff who is battling cancer. As Chad reported, “When we opened our eyes, every customer in the room was praying with us, hands stretched out toward Jeff. It was one of the most sacred moments I have experienced as a pastor.”

The lesson? Let’s go everywhere to proclaim Christ.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

Where can you go in your neighborhood today to proclaim Christ? How could His powerful presence enable you?

Jesus, enable me to proclaim Your good news today—everywhere.

#### **Insight**

Jesus’ command to His disciples to go and make more disciples ([Matthew 28:19](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt%2028.19)) is commonly known as the Great Commission. But tucked in the middle of this scene is a phrase that generally gets little attention. When the disciples met Jesus on the mountain, they responded in worship. Then the text says, “but some doubted” (v. 17). Some commentators suggest there were others in attendance further away, and they were the “some” who doubted. But what did they doubt?

The word translated “doubted” is the Greek word edistasan. Matthew is the only New Testament writer to use this word (it’s also found in 14:31, where it’s translated “doubt”). This word can mean to waver, doubt, or hesitate. It may be that “hesitate” is a better translation. Perhaps the response of those further away from where Jesus was teaching (those on the outskirts who’d perhaps not yet seen the risen Christ) was hesitant and not an immediate response of worship.

# God Calling – 10/22/20

# Home-Building

You are building up an unshakable faith. Be furnishing the quiet places of your souls now.

Fill them with all that is harmonious and good, beautiful, and enduring.

Home-build in the Spirit now, and the waiting time will be well spent.

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.  Jude 1:20

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/23/20

# Nothing of the Old Life!



If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. —[2 Corinthians 5:17](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+5%3A17)

Our Lord never tolerates our prejudices— He is directly opposed to them and puts them to death. We tend to think that God has some special interest in our particular prejudices, and are very sure that He will never deal with us as He has to deal with others. We even say to ourselves, “God has to deal with other people in a very strict way, but of course He knows that my prejudices are all right.” But we must learn that God accepts nothing of the old life! Instead of being on the side of our prejudices, He is deliberately removing them from us. It is part of our moral education to see our prejudices put to death by His providence, and to watch how He does it. God pays no respect to anything we bring to Him. There is only one thing God wants of us, and that is our unconditional surrender.

When we are born again, the Holy Spirit begins to work His new creation in us, and there will come a time when there is nothing remaining of the old life. Our old gloomy outlook disappears, as does our old attitude toward things, and “all things are of God” ([2 Corinthians 5:18](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5:18)). How are we going to get a life that has no lust, no self-interest, and is not sensitive to the ridicule of others? How will we have the type of love that “is kind…is not provoked, [and] thinks no evil”? ([1 Corinthians 13:4-5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+13:4-5)). The only way is by allowing nothing of the old life to remain, and by having only simple, perfect trust in God— such a trust that we no longer want God’s blessings, but only want God Himself. Have we come to the point where God can withdraw His blessings from us without our trust in Him being affected? Once we truly see God at work, we will never be concerned again about the things that happen, because we are actually trusting in our Father in heaven, whom the world cannot see.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 10/23/20

**A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.**—[LUKE 12:15.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.12.html" \l "Luke.12.15)

A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.—Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith.—Godliness with contentment is great gain. Having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.—Give us this day our daily bread.

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?—When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.—Let your conversation be without covetousness: and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

[Psa. 37:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.37.html" \l "Ps.37.16). -[Prov. 15:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.15.html" \l "Prov.15.16). -[I Tim. 6:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.6.html" \l "iTim.6.6),[8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iTim.6.html" \l "iTim.6.8).[Prov. 30:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.30.html" \l "Prov.30.8). -[Matt. 6:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.11).[Matt. 6:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.25). -[Luke 22:35](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.22.html" \l "Luke.22.35). -[Heb. 13:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.5).

“Will ye also go away?” [John 6:67](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.6.html" \l "John.6.67)

Many have forsaken Christ, and have walked no more with him; but what reason have you to make a change? Has there been any reason for it in the past? Has not Jesus proved himself all-sufficient? He appeals to you this morning—“Have I been a wilderness unto you?” When your soul has simply trusted Jesus, have you ever been confounded? Have you not up till now found your Lord to be a compassionate and generous friend to you, and has not simple faith in him given you all the peace your spirit could desire? Can you so much as dream of a better friend than he has been to you? Then change not the old and tried for new and false. As for the present, can that compel you to leave Christ? When we are hard beset with this world, or with the severer trials within the Church, we find it a most blessed thing to pillow our head upon the bosom of our Saviour. This is the joy we have today that we are saved in him; and if this joy be satisfying, wherefore should we think of changing? Who barters gold for dross? We will not forswear the sun till we find a better light, nor leave our Lord until a brighter lover shall appear; and, since this can never be, we will hold him with a grasp immortal, and bind his name as a seal upon our arm. As for the future, can you suggest anything which can arise that shall render it necessary for you to mutiny, or desert the old flag to serve under another captain? We think not. If life be long—he changes not. If we are poor, what better than to have Christ who can make us rich? When we are sick, what more do we want than Jesus to make our bed in our sickness? When we die, is it not written that “neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!” We say with Peter, “Lord, to whom shall we go?”

# Word Live – 10/23/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/23/20

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# Today in the Word – 10/23/20

# Praise God

### **Read:** [**Psalm 65**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65#fen-NIV-14862a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. A psalm of David. A song.**

1Praise awaits[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65#fen-NIV-14862b)] you, our God, in Zion;  
    to you our vows will be fulfilled.  
2You who answer prayer,  
    to you all people will come.  
3When we were overwhelmed by sins,  
    you forgave[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65#fen-NIV-14864c)] our transgressions.  
4Blessed are those you choose  
    and bring near to live in your courts!  
We are filled with the good things of your house,  
    of your holy temple.

5You answer us with awesome and righteous deeds,  
    God our Savior,  
the hope of all the ends of the earth  
    and of the farthest seas,  
6who formed the mountains by your power,  
    having armed yourself with strength,  
7who stilled the roaring of the seas,  
    the roaring of their waves,  
    and the turmoil of the nations.  
8The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders;  
    where morning dawns, where evening fades,  
    you call forth songs of joy.

9You care for the land and water it;  
    you enrich it abundantly.  
The streams of God are filled with water  
    to provide the people with grain,  
    for so you have ordained it.[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65" \l "fen-NIV-14870d" \o "See footnote d)]  
10You drench its furrows and level its ridges;  
    you soften it with showers and bless its crops.  
11You crown the year with your bounty,  
    and your carts overflow with abundance.  
12The grasslands of the wilderness overflow;  
    the hills are clothed with gladness.  
13The meadows are covered with flocks  
    and the valleys are mantled with grain;  
    they shout for joy and sing.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 65:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65#en-NIV-14862) In Hebrew texts 65:1-13 is numbered 65:2-14.
2. [Psalm 65:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65#en-NIV-14862) Or befits; the meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.
3. [Psalm 65:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65#en-NIV-14864) Or made atonement for
4. [Psalm 65:9](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+65#en-NIV-14870) Or for that is how you prepare the land

Have you ever been in a situation where you know you have wronged someone and are anxious for an opportunity to apologize and ask for forgiveness? When you do finally get a chance to say you are sorry and even restore the relationship, it comes with a huge sense of relief.

Blessed are those you choose and bring near to live in your courts! We are filled with the good things of your house, of your holy temple. Psalm 65:4

David had this experience with God. In today’s reading, David praises God because “you forgave us our transgressions” (v. 3). In the Old Testament sins could be forgiven through repentance and participation in animal sacrifice at the temple. Ultimately, Jesus’ death would fulfill the requirement for sacrifice. Because of His death, we too are forgiven. We have all the more reason to declare, “Blessed are those you choose and bring near to live in your courts!” (v. 4).

In verses 5–8 of this psalm, David praises God for His mighty works in creation. God formed the mountains and is able to calm the mighty power of the seas (vv. 6–7). In the ancient world, the sea was viewed as a primeval source of chaos and destruction. Even the gods were afraid of its power. But not the God of Israel. He created the sea and can easily tame it. Creation itself joyfully proclaims God’s glory from morning to night (v. 8).

In the final stanza, David praises God for His bountiful provision of food and water. In the industrialized world, we are often far removed from our sources of food and don’t think much about them. But when David looked at the fertile hills and streams, he recognized God’s goodness and care (vv. 9–13). God is the One who clothes the valleys with grain and the fields with flocks (vv. 12–13).

**Apply the Word**

Even if you don’t regularly pray before your meals, take time today to thank God for His provision. It is because of Him that we have nourishment for each day. “You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly” (v. 9). Honor Him with praise today!

### **Pray with Us**

God is the Creator and sustainer of all life. We pray together with the Psalmist and praise “God our Savior, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas” (Ps. 65:5).

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/23/20

# Nice Shot?

 **Read:** [**Psalm 136:10–26**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20136.10%E2%80%9326)

10to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt  
His love endures forever.  
11and brought Israel out from among them  
His love endures forever.  
12with a mighty hand and outstretched arm;  
His love endures forever.

13to him who divided the Red Sea[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+136%3A10%E2%80%9326&version=NIV#fen-NIV-16210a)] asunder  
His love endures forever.  
14and brought Israel through the midst of it,  
His love endures forever.  
15but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;  
His love endures forever.

16to him who led his people through the wilderness;  
His love endures forever.

17to him who struck down great kings,  
His love endures forever.  
18and killed mighty kings—  
His love endures forever.  
19Sihon king of the Amorites  
His love endures forever.  
20and Og king of Bashan—  
His love endures forever.  
21and gave their land as an inheritance,  
His love endures forever.  
22an inheritance to his servant Israel.  
His love endures forever.

23He remembered us in our low estate  
His love endures forever.  
24and freed us from our enemies.  
His love endures forever.  
25He gives food to every creature.  
His love endures forever.

26Give thanks to the God of heaven.  
His love endures forever.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 136:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+136%3A10%E2%80%9326&version=NIV#en-NIV-16210) Or the Sea of Reeds; also in verse 15

To him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt His love endures forever. [Psalm 136:10](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20136.10)

When Walt Disney’s Bambi was re-released, moms and dads relived childhood memories with their sons and daughters. A young mother, whose husband was an avid outdoorsman with an impressive trophy room, was one of those parents. With her little ones at her side, she experienced with them the gasp and groan of the moment when Bambi lost his mother to a hunter. To this day she’s reminded at family gatherings of her embarrassment when, in all innocence, her little boy shouted out in the theater, “Nice shot!”

In time, we laugh at the embarrassing things our children say. But what are we to say when the people of [Psalm 136](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20136) do something similar? Israel, God’s chosen and rescued people, celebrate a love that endures for all creation and for themselves—but not for their enemies. The psalm sings the praises of “him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt” (v. 10; see also [Exodus 12:29–30](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2012.29%E2%80%9330)).

Doesn’t that sound a bit like a shout of “nice shot” at the expense of someone else’s mother, sister, father, brother?

That’s why we need the rest of the story. Only when the lights come up in the resurrection of Jesus can the whole world be invited into the joy of one family’s stories, tears, and laughter. Only when we receive Jesus as our Savior and are made alive in Him can we share the wonder of a God who loves everyone—at His own expense.

By:  [Mart DeHaan](https://odb.org/author/martdehaan-2/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What reason is given twenty-six times for this song? What lyrics show that the heart of God reaches beyond those who sing the words?

Unseen Father, thank You for giving me reasons to believe that Your vision and love for all are better and wider than my love for myself and my own.

#### **Insight**

[Psalms 135](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20135) and [136](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Psalms%20136) share several similarities. Both praise God for His amazing creation (135:6–7; 136:4–9). Both outline God’s role in preserving His people when the Israelites escaped slavery in Egypt (135:8–9; 136:10–15). And both recall Israel entering the Promised Land and God’s hand in eradicating the pagan kings who opposed the Hebrews (135:10–12; 136:17–22). The overarching theme of these psalms is that God alone is the one true God (135:5, 13; 136:1–3, 26), and He alone merits our praise.

[Psalm 136](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20136) is antiphonal; that is, part of the congregation was to sing the first line while the other half responded with “His love endures forever.” The pattern repeats itself in every verse of the psalm. Singing of God’s goodness to us—especially with other believers—reminds us of His character and inclines our emotions to reflect our gratitude to Him.

# God Calling – 10/23/20

# Hill of Sacrifice

You must trust to the end. You must be ready to go on trusting to the last hour.

You must know even when you cannot see . .  . You must be ready, like My servant Abraham, to climb the very Hill of Sacrifice, to go to the very last moment, before you see My Deliverance.

This final test has to come to all who walk by Faith. You must rely on Me alone.

Look to no other arm, look for no other help. Trust in the Spirit Forces of the Unseen, not in those you see. Trust and fear not.

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.  Matthew 10:22

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/24/20

# The Proper Perspective



Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ… —[2 Corinthians 2:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+2%3A14)

The proper perspective of a servant of God must not simply be as near to the highest as he can get, but it must be the highest. Be careful that you vigorously maintain God’s perspective, and remember that it must be done every day, little by little. Don’t think on a finite level. No outside power can touch the proper perspective.

The proper perspective to maintain is that we are here for only one purpose— to be captives marching in the procession of Christ’s triumphs. We are not on display in God’s showcase— we are here to exhibit only one thing— the “captivity [of our lives] to the obedience of Christ” ([2 Corinthians 10:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+10:5)). How small all the other perspectives are! For example, the ones that say, “I am standing all alone, battling for Jesus,” or, “I have to maintain the cause of Christ and hold down this fort for Him.” But Paul said, in essence, “I am in the procession of a conqueror, and it doesn’t matter what the difficulties are, for I am always led in triumph.” Is this idea being worked out practically in us? Paul’s secret joy was that God took him as a blatant rebel against Jesus Christ, and made him a captive— and that became his purpose. It was Paul’s joy to be a captive of the Lord, and he had no other interest in heaven or on earth. It is a shameful thing for a Christian to talk about getting the victory. We should belong so completely to the Victor that it is always His victory, and “we are more than conquerors through Him…” ([Romans 8:37](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8:37)).

“We are to God the fragrance of Christ…” ([2 Corinthians 2:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+2:15)). We are encompassed with the sweet aroma of Jesus, and wherever we go we are a wonderful refreshment to God.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

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

# CCEL – 10/24/20

**I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.**—[JON. 2:4.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jonah.2.html" \l "Jonah.2.4)

Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

I forgat prosperity. And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord.—Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever.—Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?—In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance.—We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.

[Isa. 49:14,15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.49.html" \l "Isa.49.14).[Lam. 3:17,18](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lam.3.html" \l "Lam.3.17). -[Psa. 44:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.44.html" \l "Ps.44.23). -[Isa. 40:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.40.html" \l "Isa.40.27). -[Isa. 54:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.54.html" \l "Isa.54.8).[Psa. 43:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.43.html" \l "Ps.43.5). -[II Cor. 4:8,9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.4.html" \l "iiCor.4.8).

“The trees of the Lord are full of sap.” [Psalm 104:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.104.html" \l "Ps.104.16)

Without sap the tree cannot flourish or even exist. Vitality is essential to a Christian. There must be life—a vital principle infused into us by God the Holy Ghost, or we cannot be trees of the Lord. The mere name of being a Christian is but a dead thing, we must be filled with the spirit of divine life. This life is mysterious. We do not understand the circulation of the sap, by what force it rises, and by what power it descends again. So the life within us is a sacred mystery. Regeneration is wrought by the Holy Ghost entering into man and becoming man’s life; and this divine life in a believer afterwards feeds upon the flesh and blood of Christ and is thus sustained by divine food, but whence it cometh and whither it goeth who shall explain to us? What a secret thing the sap is! The roots go searching through the soil with their little spongioles, but we cannot see them suck out the various gases, or transmute the mineral into the vegetable; this work is done down in the dark. Our root is Christ Jesus, and our life is hid in him; this is the secret of the Lord. The radix of the Christian life is as secret as the life itself. How permanently active is the sap in the cedar! In the Christian the divine life is always full of energy—not always in fruit-bearing, but in inward operations. The believer’s graces are not every one of them in constant motion, but his life never ceases to palpitate within. He is not always working for God, but his heart is always living upon him. As the sap manifests itself in producing the foliage and fruit of the tree, so with a truly healthy Christian, his grace is externally manifested in his walk and conversation. If you talk with him, he cannot help speaking about Jesus. If you notice his actions you will see that he has been with Jesus. He has so much sap within, that it must fill his conduct and conversation with life.

# Word Live – 10/24/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/24/20

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# Today in the Word – 10/24/20

# Come and See!

**Read:** [**Psalm 66**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+66)

#### **For the director of music. A song. A psalm.**

1Shout for joy to God, all the earth!  
2    Sing the glory of his name;  
    make his praise glorious.  
3Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds!  
    So great is your power  
    that your enemies cringe before you.  
4All the earth bows down to you;  
    they sing praise to you,  
    they sing the praises of your name.”[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+66#fen-NIV-14878a)]

5Come and see what God has done,  
    his awesome deeds for mankind!  
6He turned the sea into dry land,  
    they passed through the waters on foot—  
    come, let us rejoice in him.  
7He rules forever by his power,  
    his eyes watch the nations—  
    let not the rebellious rise up against him.

8Praise our God, all peoples,  
    let the sound of his praise be heard;  
9he has preserved our lives  
    and kept our feet from slipping.  
10For you, God, tested us;  
    you refined us like silver.  
11You brought us into prison  
    and laid burdens on our backs.  
12You let people ride over our heads;  
    we went through fire and water,  
    but you brought us to a place of abundance.

13I will come to your temple with burnt offerings  
    and fulfill my vows to you—  
14vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke  
    when I was in trouble.  
15I will sacrifice fat animals to you  
    and an offering of rams;  
    I will offer bulls and goats.

16Come and hear, all you who fear God;  
    let me tell you what he has done for me.  
17I cried out to him with my mouth;  
    his praise was on my tongue.  
18If I had cherished sin in my heart,  
    the Lord would not have listened;  
19but God has surely listened  
    and has heard my prayer.  
20Praise be to God,  
    who has not rejected my prayer  
    or withheld his love from me!

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 66:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+66#en-NIV-14878) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verses 7 and 15.

Do you know your family’s history? A friend of mine often recounts the story of how and why his family came to Chicago. They were a part of the Great Migration of African-Americans from the South in the early 20th century. This helps him share in the sufferings and joys of his family and community.

Praise our God, all peoples, let the sound of his praise be heard. Psalm 66:8

In today’s reading, the Psalmist celebrates what God has done for Israel by recounting their history. He encourages all people to “Come and see what God has done!” (v. 5). He tells of God’s mighty acts during Israel’s exodus from Egypt and entry into the Promised Land (v. 6). God is to be praised because He rescued Israel and provided for them.

However, God’s care involved more than just miraculous acts. God also disciplined Israel when necessary (vv. 9–11). This was also reason to praise God, as it demonstrated His love. In verse 13, the Psalmist shifts from speaking about the community as a whole to what God had done in his own life. “Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me,” he declares (v. 16). He testifies that God delivered him when he was in trouble (v. 14). It’s important to note that he set his personal testimony in the context of the big story of God’s salvation in the Old Testament. God did not deliver him for his own sake, but so that he could participate in God’s mission to the world. Part of that mission is declaring God’s goodness to all people and calling them to worship.

**Apply the Word**

You probably enjoy telling stories of your family’s history. But how often do you tell your family’s God stories? Take time today to share one thing you saw God do in your family. Thank God for the way He cares for us.

### **Pray with Us**

Lord Jesus, thank you for your faithfulness to all generations! Thank you that your miraculous power works from parents to children to grandchildren. We will tell of your wonderful deeds to those who come after us.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/24/20

# Surviving Drought

 **Read:** [**Jeremiah 17:5–8**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2017.5%E2%80%938)

5This is what the Lord says:

“Cursed is the one who trusts in man,  
    who draws strength from mere flesh  
    and whose heart turns away from the Lord.  
6That person will be like a bush in the wastelands;  
    they will not see prosperity when it comes.  
They will dwell in the parched places of the desert,  
    in a salt land where no one lives.

7“But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,  
    whose confidence is in him.  
8They will be like a tree planted by the water  
    that sends out its roots by the stream.  
It does not fear when heat comes;  
    its leaves are always green.  
It has no worries in a year of drought  
    and never fails to bear fruit.”

The one who trusts in the Lord . . . will be like a tree planted by the water. [Jeremiah 17:7–8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2017.7%E2%80%938)

In April 2019, a suburban neighborhood in Victorville, California, became buried in tumbleweeds. High winds pushed the rolling thistles into the development from the adjacent Mojave Desert where the plant grows. At maturity, the pesky weed can grow to up to six feet in height—a formidable size when it releases itself from its roots to “tumble” with the wind to scatter its seeds.

Tumbleweeds are what I picture when I read Jeremiah’s description of a person “whose heart turns away from the Lord” ([Jeremiah 17:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2017.5)). He says that those who draw their strength from “mere flesh” will be like “a bush in the wastelands” and be unable to “see prosperity when it comes” (vv. 5–6). In sharp contrast are those who put their trust in God instead of people. Like trees, their strong, deep roots draw strength from Him, enabling them to remain full of life, even in the midst of drought-like circumstances.

Tumbleweeds and trees both have roots. Tumbleweeds, however, don’t stay connected to their life-source, causing them to dry out and die. Trees, on the other hand, remain connected to their roots, enabling them to flourish and thrive, anchored to that which will sustain them in times of difficulty. When we hold fast to God, drawing strength and encouragement from the wisdom found in the Bible and talking to Him in prayer, we too can experience the life-giving, life-sustaining nourishment He provides.

By:  [Kirsten Holmberg](https://odb.org/author/kirstenholmberg/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

How has God sustained you in times of drought? What can you do today to drive your roots more deeply into relationship with Him?

Life-giving God, You’re my sustainer. Thank You for giving me what I need to navigate my struggles and hardships.

#### **Insight**

The word cursed in [Jeremiah 17:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2017.5) is a translation of the Hebrew verb 'arar, which means to abhor, detest. The first time we see this word in Scripture is in [Genesis 3:14](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%203.14). “So the Lord God said to the serpent, . . . ‘Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.’ ” In [Genesis 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%203.17) the ground is said to be cursed. Another significant usage of the word is in [Genesis 12:3](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Gen%2012.3) where the Lord told Abram, “whoever curses you I will curse.” Whatever the “cursed” entity may be, it’s devoid of (outside of) favor and the visible and invisible things that accompany it. In [Jeremiah 17:5–6](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Jer%2017.5%E2%80%936), the ambiguity of what it means to be “cursed” fades in view of what is vividly pictured. It’s like being in a waterless, uninhabited place that can’t sustain life.

# God Calling – 10/24/20

# Salt of the Earth

**Our Lord, we bless Thee and thank Thee for Thy Keeping Power.**

Yes! "Kept by the Power of God" is a promise, and an assurance that holds Joy and Beauty for the believing soul.

The keeping that means security, safety, is wonderful. There is, too, the keeping that implies Life, freshness, purity, the being "kept unspotted from the world."

Then there is the keeping that I ensure to those of whom I speak as the salt of the earth.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour it is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

Only in very close contact with Me is the keeping Power realized. That keeping Power which maintains the salt at its freshest and best, and also preserves from corruption that portion of the world in which I place it.

What a work! Not by activity in this case, but simply by its existing, by its quality.

I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.  Isaiah 27:3

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/25/20

# Submitting to God’s Purpose



I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. —[1 Corinthians 9:22](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=1+Corinthians+9%3A22)

A Christian worker has to learn how to be God’s man or woman of great worth and excellence in the midst of a multitude of meager and worthless things. Never protest by saying, “If only I were somewhere else!” All of God’s people are ordinary people who have been made extraordinary by the purpose He has given them. Unless we have the right purpose intellectually in our minds and lovingly in our hearts, we will very quickly be diverted from being useful to God. We are not workers for God by choice. Many people deliberately choose to be workers, but they have no purpose of God’s almighty grace or His mighty Word in them. Paul’s whole heart, mind, and soul were consumed with the great purpose of what Jesus Christ came to do, and he never lost sight of that one thing. We must continually confront ourselves with one central fact— “…Jesus Christ and Him crucified” ([1 Corinthians 2:2](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+2:2)).

“I chose you…” ([John 15:16](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:16)). Keep these words as a wonderful reminder in your theology. It is not that you have gotten God, but that He has gotten you. God is at work bending, breaking, molding, and doing exactly as He chooses. And why is He doing it? He is doing it for only one purpose— that He may be able to say, “This is My man, and this is My woman.” We have to be in God’s hand so that He can place others on the Rock, Jesus Christ, just as He has placed us.

Never choose to be a worker, but once God has placed His call upon you, woe be to you if you “turn aside…to the right or the left…” ([Deuteronomy 28:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Deuteronomy+28:14)). He will do with you what He never did before His call came to you, and He will do with you what He is not doing with other people. Let Him have His way.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

The Christian Church should not be a secret society of specialists, but a public manifestation of believers in Jesus.  Facing Reality, 34 R

# CCEL – 10/25/20

**Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.**—[MATT. 28:20.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.28.html" \l "Matt.28.20)

If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.—He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? . . . If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

[Matt. 18:19,20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.18.html" \l "Matt.18.19). -[John 14:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.21).[John 14:2223](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.14.html" \l "John.14.22).[Jude 24,25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jude.1.html" \l "Jude.1.24).

“For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever.” [2 John 2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiJohn.1.html" \l "iiJohn.1.2)

Once let the truth of God obtain an entrance into the human heart and subdue the whole man unto itself, no power human or infernal can dislodge it. We entertain it not as a guest but as the master of the house—this is a Christian necessity, he is no Christian who doth not thus believe. Those who feel the vital power of the gospel, and know the might of the Holy Ghost as he opens, applies, and seals the Lord’s Word, would sooner be torn to pieces than be rent away from the gospel of their salvation. What a thousand mercies are wrapped up in the assurance that the truth will be with us forever; will be our living support, our dying comfort, our rising song, our eternal glory; this is Christian privilege, without it our faith were little worth. Some truths we outgrow and leave behind, for they are but rudiments and lessons for beginners, but we cannot thus deal with Divine truth, for though it is sweet food for babes, it is in the highest sense strong meat for men. The truth that we are sinners is painfully with us to humble and make us watchful; the more blessed truth that whosoever believeth on the Lord Jesus shall be saved, abides with us as our hope and joy. Experience, so far from loosening our hold of the doctrines of grace, has knit us to them more and more firmly; our grounds and motives for believing are now more strong, more numerous than ever, and we have reason to expect that it will be so till in death we clasp the Saviour in our arms.

Wherever this abiding love of truth can be discovered, we are bound to exercise our love. No narrow circle can contain our gracious sympathies, wide as the election of grace must be our communion of heart. Much of error may be mingled with truth received, let us war with the error but still love the brother for the measure of truth which we see in him; above all let us love and spread the truth ourselves.

# Word Live – 10/25/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/25/20

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# Today in the Word – 10/25/20

# Praying for Blessing

### [**Psalm 67**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+67) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+67#fen-NIV-14895a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.**

1May God be gracious to us and bless us  
    and make his face shine on us—[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+67#fen-NIV-14895b)]  
2so that your ways may be known on earth,  
    your salvation among all nations.

3May the peoples praise you, God;  
    may all the peoples praise you.  
4May the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
    for you rule the peoples with equity  
    and guide the nations of the earth.  
5May the peoples praise you, God;  
    may all the peoples praise you.

6The land yields its harvest;  
    God, our God, blesses us.  
7May God bless us still,  
    so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 67:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+67#en-NIV-14895) In Hebrew texts 67:1-7 is numbered 67:2-8.
2. [Psalm 67:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+67#en-NIV-14895) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verse 4.

Have you ever felt like your prayer was one long wish list? “Help Aunt Katie to heal from her hip surgery. Help my daughter to do well in math this year. Help. Help. Help.” Are these kinds of prayers selfish? Today’s reading will encourage you that bringing your requests to God is not selfish when done from the right perspective.

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us.Psalm 67:1

The Psalmist begins by asking for God’s blessing (v. 1). God’s blessing can be best understood by reading Deuteronomy 28:1–6. In that passage, Moses describes the blessings of obedience to the covenant as resulting in children, abundant crops, large herds, and full pantries. Notice that this is not a prayer for a lavish lifestyle or excess. Rather it is a prayer that there will be plenty of food, healthy relationships, and the peace to enjoy them. We too can pray with the Psalmist, “May God be gracious to us and bless us” (Ps. 67:1).

Beginning in verse 2, with the word so, the Psalmist expresses why God should bless us. “So that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations” (v. 2). The Psalmist’s desire is not merely for his own wellbeing or for Israel, but for the nations around Israel to know God and praise Him (vv. 3–5). God’s promise to Abraham would benefit all people (Gen. 12:3). By witnessing God’s hand of blessing on Israel, others would be drawn to God. True peace and justice would only be possible when all people come under the rule of God (v. 4). The hope of this Psalm will be fulfilled in Jesus. In His death, He “purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9).

### **Pray with Us**

Today’s short psalm (only seven verses) shows how important it is to ask God for His blessing and bless others. Pray a simple prayer of blessing today.

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/25/20

# Strong and Courageous

 **Read:** [**Joshua 1:1–9**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Josh%201.1%E2%80%939)

### **Joshua Installed as Leader**

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ aide: 2“Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. 3I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. 4Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. 5No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. 6Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

7“Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. 8Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. 9Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. [Joshua 1:5](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Josh%201.5)

Each night, as young Caleb closed his eyes, he felt the darkness envelop him. The silence of his room was regularly suspended by the creaking of the wooden house in Costa Rica. Then the bats in the attic became more active. His mother had put a nightlight in his room, but the young boy still feared the dark. One night Caleb’s dad posted a Bible verse on the footboard of his bed. It read: “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; . . . for the Lord your God will be with you” ([Joshua 1:9](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Josh%201.9)). Caleb began to read those words each night—and he left that promise from God on his footboard until he went away to college.

In [Joshua 1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Josh%201), we read of the transition of leadership to Joshua after Moses died. The command to “be strong and courageous” was repeated several times to Joshua and the Israelites to emphasize its importance (vv. 6–7, 9). Surely, they felt trepidation as they faced an uncertain future, but God reassuringly said, “As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you” (v. 5).

It’s natural to have fears, but it’s detrimental to our physical and spiritual health to live in a state of constant fear. Just as God encouraged His servants of old, we too can be strong and courageous because of the One who promises to always be with us.

By:  [Cindy Hess Kasper](https://odb.org/author/cindyhesskasper/)

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What are your deepest and most persistent fears? How can meditating on God’s promises help you overcome your fear and anxiety?

Faithful Father, thank You that You’re always with me. Help me to remember Your promises and to trust in You when I’m afraid.

#### **Insight**

Joshua, a leader from the tribe of Ephraim, was one of the twelve spies Moses sent to survey the land of Canaan. Moses changed his name from Hoshea, meaning “salvation,” to Joshua, meaning “Jehovah is salvation” ([Numbers 13:8](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Num%2013.8), [16](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Numbers%2013.16)). He had been Moses’ aide since his youth ([Exodus 24:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exod%2024.13); [33:11](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Exodus%2033.11); [Numbers 11:28](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Num%2011.28); [Joshua 1:1](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Josh%201.1)). God commended him as one who followed Him wholeheartedly ([Numbers 32:11–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Num%2032.11%E2%80%9312)). Joshua and Caleb were the only two persons who were twenty years old or more when they left Egypt who were permitted to enter the Promised Land ([Numbers 32:11–12](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Num%2032.11%E2%80%9312)). Even Moses wasn’t allowed to enter ([Deuteronomy 3:23–29](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Deut%203.23%E2%80%9329)).

# God Calling – 10/25/20

# No Unemployment

The Way of conquest over the material, the temporal, which all My disciples should know, is learned by the conquest of the physical, the self-life, in each of you.

So seek, in all things, to conquer. Take this as a very definite Guidance. Circumstances are adverse. Temporal power, as money, needs to be forthcoming.

Then seek daily more and more to obtain this self-conquest, and you are gaining surely, though you may not see it, conquest over the temporal forces and powers.

Unemployment would cease if man realized this.

If he has not the work let him make himself a conquering force, beginning with the conquest of all evil in himself, then in his home, then in all round him. He will have become a force that will be needed, and must be employed.

There are no idle hours in My Kingdom. Waiting may seem a time of inactivity, as far as the outer world is concerned, but it can, and should, be a time of great activity in the inner life, and the surrounding material plane.

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their   
testimony: and they loved not their lives unto the death.  Revelation 12:11

# My Utmost for His Highest – 10/26/20

# What is a Missionary?



Jesus said to them again, "…As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." —[John 20:21](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+20%3A21)

A missionary is someone sent by Jesus Christ just as He was sent by God. The great controlling factor is not the needs of people, but the command of Jesus. The source of our inspiration in our service for God is behind us, not ahead of us. The tendency today is to put the inspiration out in front— to sweep everything together in front of us and make it conform to our definition of success. But in the New Testament the inspiration is put behind us, and is the Lord Jesus Himself. The goal is to be true to Him— to carry out His plans.

Personal attachment to the Lord Jesus and to His perspective is the one thing that must not be overlooked. In missionary work the great danger is that God’s call will be replaced by the needs of the people, to the point that human sympathy for those needs will absolutely overwhelm the meaning of being sent by Jesus. The needs are so enormous, and the conditions so difficult, that every power of the mind falters and fails. We tend to forget that the one great reason underneath all missionary work is not primarily the elevation of the people, their education, nor their needs, but is first and foremost the command of Jesus Christ— “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations…” ([Matthew 28:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+28:19)).

When looking back on the lives of men and women of God, the tendency is to say, “What wonderfully keen and intelligent wisdom they had, and how perfectly they understood all that God wanted!” But the keen and intelligent mind behind them was the mind of God, not human wisdom at all. We give credit to human wisdom when we should give credit to the divine guidance of God being exhibited through childlike people who were “foolish” enough to trust God’s wisdom and His supernatural equipment.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Jesus Christ can afford to be misunderstood; we cannot. Our weakness lies in always wanting to vindicate ourselves. The Place of Help

# CCEL – 10/26/20

**The Lord reigneth.**—[PSA. 99:1.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.99.html" \l "Ps.99.1)

Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?—Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

He changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.—Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled.

If God be for us, who can be against us?—Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

[Jer. 5:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.5.html" \l "Jer.5.22). -[Psa. 75:6,7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.75.html" \l "Ps.75.6).[Dan. 2:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Dan.2.html" \l "Dan.2.21). -[Matt. 24:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.24.html" \l "Matt.24.6).[Rom. 8:31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rom.8.html" \l "Rom.8.31). -[Matt. 10:29-31](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.10.html" \l "Matt.10.29).

“Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.” [Haggai 1:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Hag.1.html" \l "Hag.1.9)

Churlish souls stint their contributions to the ministry and missionary operations, and call such saving good economy; little do they dream that they are thus impoverishing themselves. Their excuse is that they must care for their own families, and they forget that to neglect the house of God is the sure way to bring ruin upon their own houses. Our God has a method in providence by which he can succeed our endeavours beyond our expectation, or can defeat our plans to our confusion and dismay; by a turn of his hand he can steer our vessel in a profitable channel, or run it aground in poverty and bankruptcy. It is the teaching of Scripture that the Lord enriches the liberal and leaves the miserly to find out that withholding tendeth to poverty. In a very wide sphere of observation, I have noticed that the most generous Christians of my acquaintance have been always the most happy, and almost invariably the most prosperous. I have seen the liberal giver rise to wealth of which he never dreamed; and I have as often seen the mean, ungenerous churl descend to poverty by the very parsimony by which he thought to rise. Men trust good stewards with larger and larger sums, and so it frequently is with the Lord; he gives by cartloads to those who give by bushels. Where wealth is not bestowed the Lord makes the little much by the contentment which the sanctified heart feels in a portion of which the tithe has been dedicated to the Lord. Selfishness looks first at home, but godliness seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, yet in the long run selfishness is loss, and godliness is great gain. It needs faith to act towards our God with an open hand, but surely he deserves it of us; and all that we can do is a very poor acknowledgment of our amazing indebtedness to his goodness.

# Word Live – 10/26/20

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

# Scripture Union – 10/26/20

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

# Today in the Word – 10/26/20

# Names of God

### **Read:** [**Psalm 68**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68) **[**[**a**](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#fen-NIV-14902a)**]**

#### **For the director of music. Of David. A psalm. A song.**

1May God arise, may his enemies be scattered;  
    may his foes flee before him.  
2May you blow them away like smoke—  
    as wax melts before the fire,  
    may the wicked perish before God.  
3But may the righteous be glad  
    and rejoice before God;  
    may they be happy and joyful.

4Sing to God, sing in praise of his name,  
    extol him who rides on the clouds[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#fen-NIV-14905b)];  
    rejoice before him—his name is the Lord.  
5A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,  
    is God in his holy dwelling.  
6God sets the lonely in families,[[c](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68" \l "fen-NIV-14907c" \o "See footnote c)]  
    he leads out the prisoners with singing;  
    but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

7When you, God, went out before your people,  
    when you marched through the wilderness,[[d](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68" \l "fen-NIV-14908d" \o "See footnote d)]  
8the earth shook, the heavens poured down rain,  
    before God, the One of Sinai,  
    before God, the God of Israel.  
9You gave abundant showers, O God;  
    you refreshed your weary inheritance.  
10Your people settled in it,  
    and from your bounty, God, you provided for the poor.

11The Lord announces the word,  
    and the women who proclaim it are a mighty throng:  
12“Kings and armies flee in haste;  
    the women at home divide the plunder.  
13Even while you sleep among the sheep pens,[[e](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68" \l "fen-NIV-14914e" \o "See footnote e)]  
    the wings of my dove are sheathed with silver,  
    its feathers with shining gold.”  
14When the Almighty[[f](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#fen-NIV-14915f)] scattered the kings in the land,  
    it was like snow fallen on Mount Zalmon.

15Mount Bashan, majestic mountain,  
    Mount Bashan, rugged mountain,  
16why gaze in envy, you rugged mountain,  
    at the mountain where God chooses to reign,  
    where the Lord himself will dwell forever?  
17The chariots of God are tens of thousands  
    and thousands of thousands;  
    the Lord has come from Sinai into his sanctuary.[[g](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#fen-NIV-14918g)]  
18When you ascended on high,  
    you took many captives;  
    you received gifts from people,  
even from[[h](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#fen-NIV-14919h)] the rebellious—  
    that you,[[i](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68" \l "fen-NIV-14919i" \o "See footnote i)] Lord God, might dwell there.

19Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior,  
    who daily bears our burdens.  
20Our God is a God who saves;  
    from the Sovereign Lord comes escape from death.  
21Surely God will crush the heads of his enemies,  
    the hairy crowns of those who go on in their sins.  
22The Lord says, “I will bring them from Bashan;  
    I will bring them from the depths of the sea,  
23that your feet may wade in the blood of your foes,  
    while the tongues of your dogs have their share.”

24Your procession, God, has come into view,  
    the procession of my God and King into the sanctuary.  
25In front are the singers, after them the musicians;  
    with them are the young women playing the timbrels.  
26Praise God in the great congregation;  
    praise the Lord in the assembly of Israel.  
27There is the little tribe of Benjamin, leading them,  
    there the great throng of Judah’s princes,  
    and there the princes of Zebulun and of Naphtali.

28Summon your power, God[[j](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#fen-NIV-14929j)];  
    show us your strength, our God, as you have done before.  
29Because of your temple at Jerusalem  
    kings will bring you gifts.  
30Rebuke the beast among the reeds,  
    the herd of bulls among the calves of the nations.  
Humbled, may the beast bring bars of silver.  
    Scatter the nations who delight in war.  
31Envoys will come from Egypt;  
    Cush[[k](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#fen-NIV-14932k)] will submit herself to God.

32Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth,  
    sing praise to the Lord,  
33to him who rides across the highest heavens, the ancient heavens,  
    who thunders with mighty voice.  
34Proclaim the power of God,  
    whose majesty is over Israel,  
    whose power is in the heavens.  
35You, God, are awesome in your sanctuary;  
    the God of Israel gives power and strength to his people.

Praise be to God!

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 68:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14902) In Hebrew texts 68:1-35 is numbered 68:2-36.
2. [Psalm 68:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14905) Or name, / prepare the way for him who rides through the deserts
3. [Psalm 68:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14907) Or the desolate in a homeland
4. [Psalm 68:7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14908) The Hebrew has Selah (a word of uncertain meaning) here and at the end of verses 19 and 32.
5. [Psalm 68:13](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14914) Or the campfires; or the saddlebags
6. [Psalm 68:14](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14915) Hebrew Shaddai
7. [Psalm 68:17](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14918) Probable reading of the original Hebrew text; Masoretic Text Lord is among them at Sinai in holiness
8. [Psalm 68:18](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14919) Or gifts for people, / even
9. [Psalm 68:18](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14919) Or they
10. [Psalm 68:28](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14929) Many Hebrew manuscripts, Septuagint and Syriac; most Hebrew manuscripts Your God has summoned power for you
11. [Psalm 68:31](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+68#en-NIV-14932) That is, the upper Nile region

Most of us have a number of different roles or titles by which we are known. I have been called a husband, father, son, uncle, professor, and a hapless Detroit Lions fan. Each of those titles gives a little understanding about part of my life. Today’s reading gives insight into who God is by describing His unique characteristics. A majestic and powerful hymn, Psalm 68 begins by celebrating God’s power. The psalmist describes God’s care for Israel in the wilderness (vv. 7–10), His defeat of Israel’s enemies (vv. 12, 18), and His residence on Mt. Zion (vv. 15–18).

Our God is a God who saves. Psalm 68:20

There are many titles used to describe God in this psalm. He is described as the one “who rides on the clouds” (v. 4). This was a title Canaanites used for their storm god, Baal. Here David uses the title for Israel’s God. It’s his way of saying that the Lord is the true God, not Baal. The Lord is described as “a father to the fatherless and a defender of widows” (v. 5). It is important to recognize that God uses His power to help and protect the most vulnerable in society. For many today who do not have a father figure or parent in their life, this verse is a precious reminder of God’s care.

God is also called “the One of Sinai” (v. 8). God revealed Himself to Israel through the giving of the Law. Our God is one who communicates with His people. The Lord is “our Savior, who daily bears our burdens” (v. 19) and a “God who saves” (v. 20). This is most vividly seen and fulfilled in Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension. All these names are reasons to sing praise to the Lord (v. 32)!

**Apply the Word**

Psalm 68 celebrates both God’s transcendent power and His fatherly care for each person. Thank the Lord today that both of these aspects of God are true. We can also look forward to the day when we will experience God’s presence in person (Rev. 21:3).

### **Pray with Us**

If you’ve ever lost a parent or a spouse, may these words from Psalm 68 comfort you: “A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling” (v.5). You are not alone. Praise His holy name!

## BY Ryan Cook

# Our Daily Bread – 10/26/20

# Prayers on La Playa

 **Read:** [**Psalm 14**](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20148)

1Praise the Lord.[[a](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+148&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-16373a" \o "See footnote a)]

Praise the Lord from the heavens;  
    praise him in the heights above.  
2Praise him, all his angels;  
    praise him, all his heavenly hosts.  
3Praise him, sun and moon;  
    praise him, all you shining stars.  
4Praise him, you highest heavens  
    and you waters above the skies.

5Let them praise the name of the Lord,  
    for at his command they were created,  
6and he established them for ever and ever—  
    he issued a decree that will never pass away.

7Praise the Lord from the earth,  
    you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,  
8lightning and hail, snow and clouds,  
    stormy winds that do his bidding,  
9you mountains and all hills,  
    fruit trees and all cedars,  
10wild animals and all cattle,  
    small creatures and flying birds,  
11kings of the earth and all nations,  
    you princes and all rulers on earth,  
12young men and women,  
    old men and children.

13Let them praise the name of the Lord,  
    for his name alone is exalted;  
    his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.  
14And he has raised up for his people a horn,[[b](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+148&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-16386b" \o "See footnote b)]  
    the praise of all his faithful servants,  
    of Israel, the people close to his heart.

Praise the Lord.

#### **Footnotes:**

1. [Psalm 148:1](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+148&version=NIV#en-NIV-16373) Hebrew Hallelu Yah; also in verse 14
2. [Psalm 148:14](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+148&version=NIV#en-NIV-16386) Horn here symbolizes strength.

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted. [Psalm 148:13](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20148.13)

During a trip to celebrate our twenty-fifth anniversary, my husband and I read our Bibles on the beach. As vendors passed and called out the prices of their wares, we thanked each one but didn’t buy anything. One vendor, Fernando, smiled wide at my rejection and insisted we consider buying gifts for friends. After I declined his invitation, Fernando packed up and began walking away . . . still grinning. “I pray God will bless your day,” I said.

Fernando turned toward me and said, “He has! Jesus changed my life.” Fernando knelt between our chairs. “I feel His presence here.” He then shared how God had delivered him from drug and alcohol abuse more than fourteen years earlier.

My tears flowed as he recited entire poems from the book of Psalms and prayed for us. Together, we praised God and rejoiced in His presence . . . on la playa.

[Psalm 148](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20148) is a prayer of praise. The psalmist encourages all of creation to “praise the name of the Lord, for at his command [everything was] created” (v. 5), “for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens” (v. 13).

Though God invites us to bring our needs before Him and trust He hears and cares for us, He also delights in prayers of grateful praise wherever we are. Even on the beach.

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

#### **Reflect & Pray**

What will you praise God for today? How has He inspired you to praise Him after hearing someone else’s story?

Help me praise You with every breath You’ve given me, God.

#### **Insight**

Considering [Psalm 148](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Ps%20148) from the point of view of those in the ancient Near East helps us gain a greater understanding of the context and the call for everything to praise God. For example, some people groups viewed the sun, moon, and stars (v. 3) as gods; however, this psalm reminds readers that these heavenly bodies are to worship God, not to be worshiped.

In verse 4, the “highest heavens” was likely referring to the realm of the gods as well. Earth and “the heavens” were seen as a dome; the heavens being above that dome. The ancient peoples speculated that there was water between the dome of the atmosphere and the heavens. This is where they believed rain came from. So the call for the “waters above the skies” (v. 4) to praise God emphasizes the call for all creation to praise God, even the weather (v. 8).

# God Calling – 10/26/20

# Deserters

You must believe utterly. My Love can bear nothing less. I am so often "wounded in the house of My friends." Do you think the spitting and scorn of My enemies, the mocking and reviling hurt me? No!

"They all forsook Him and fled." "I know not the man." These left their scars.

So now, it is not the unbelief of My enemies that hurts, but that My friends, who love and know Me, cannot walk all the way with Me, and doubt My Power to do all that I have said.

Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.  Psalm 41:9