# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/18/25

# Taking the Initiative Against Despair



Rise, let us be going. —[Matthew 26:46](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+26%3A46)

In the Garden of Gethsemane, the disciples went to sleep when they should have stayed awake, and once they realized what they had done it produced despair. The sense of having done something irreversible tends to make us despair. We say, “Well, it’s all over and ruined now; what’s the point in trying anymore.” If we think this kind of despair is an exception, we are mistaken. It is a very ordinary human experience. Whenever we realize we have not taken advantage of a magnificent opportunity, we are apt to sink into despair. But Jesus comes and lovingly says to us, in essence, “Sleep on now. That opportunity is lost forever and you can’t change that. But get up, and let’s go on to the next thing.” In other words, let the past sleep, but let it sleep in the sweet embrace of Christ, and let us go on into the invincible future with Him.

There will be experiences like this in each of our lives. We will have times of despair caused by real events in our lives, and we will be unable to lift ourselves out of them. The disciples, in this instance, had done a downright unthinkable thing— they had gone to sleep instead of watching with Jesus. But our Lord came to them taking the spiritual initiative against their despair and said, in effect, “Get up, and do the next thing.” If we are inspired by God, what is the next thing? It is to trust Him absolutely and to pray on the basis of His redemption.

Never let the sense of past failure defeat your next step.

**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 – 2/18/25

Thou art my hope in the day of evil.—[JER. 17:17.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.17.html" \l "Jer.17.17)

There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.—I will sing of thy power; yea I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning; for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled. I cried to thee, O Lord: and unto the Lord I made supplication. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth? Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be thou my helper.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Reeemer.—Sorrow shall be turned into joy.—Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

[Psa. 4:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.4.html" \l "Ps.4.6). -[Psa. 59:16](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.59.html" \l "Ps.59.16).[Psa. 30:6-10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.30.html" \l "Ps.30.6).[Isa. 54:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.54.html" \l "Isa.54.7). -[John 16:20](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html" \l "John.16.20). -[Psa. 30:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.30.html" \l "Ps.30.5).

“Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.” [Job 10:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Job.10.html" \l "Job.10.2)

Perhaps, O tried soul, the Lord is doing this to develop thy graces. There are some of thy graces which would never be discovered if it were not for thy trials. Dost thou not know that thy faith never looks so grand in summer weather as it does in winter? Love is too often like a glow-worm, showing but little light except it be in the midst of surrounding darkness. Hope itself is like a star—not to be seen in the sunshine of prosperity, and only to be discovered in the night of adversity. Afflictions are often the black foils in which God doth set the jewels of his children’s graces, to make them shine the better. It was but a little while ago that on thy knees thou wast saying, “Lord, I fear I have no faith: let me know that I have faith.” Was not this really, though perhaps unconsciously, praying for trials?—for how canst thou know that thou hast faith until thy faith is exercised? Depend upon it, God often sends us trials that our graces may be discovered, and that we may be certified of their existence. Besides, it is not merely discovery, real growth in grace is the result of sanctified trials. God often takes away our comforts and our privileges in order to make us better Christians. He trains his soldiers, not in tents of ease and luxury, but by turning them out and using them to forced marches and hard service. He makes them ford through streams, and swim through rivers, and climb mountains, and walk many a long mile with heavy knapsacks of sorrow on their backs. Well, Christian, may not this account for the troubles through which thou art passing? Is not the Lord bringing out your graces, and making them grow? Is not this the reason why he is contending with you?

“Trials make the promise sweet; Trials give new life to prayer; Trials bring me to his feet, Lay me low, and keep me there.”

# Word Live – 2/18/25

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

# Scripture Union – 2/18/25

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

# Today in the Word – 2/18/25

# Obey No Matter What

A ship in the water

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[**Read Genesis 6:9–22**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Genesis+6:9%e2%80%9322)

**Noah and the Flood**

9This is the account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. 10Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

11Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. 12God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. 13So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. 14So make yourself an ark of cypress[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206%3A9%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-152a)] wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. 15This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206%3A9%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-153b)] 16Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206%3A9%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-154c)] high all around.[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206%3A9%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-154d)] Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. 17I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. 18But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons’ wives with you. 19You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. 20Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. 21You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.”

22Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

**Footnotes**

1. [Genesis 6:14](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206%3A9%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-152) The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.
2. [Genesis 6:15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206%3A9%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-153) That is, about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high or about 135 meters long, 23 meters wide and 14 meters high
3. [Genesis 6:16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206%3A9%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-154) That is, about 18 inches or about 45 centimeters
4. [Genesis 6:16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%206%3A9%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-154) The meaning of the Hebrew for this clause is uncertain.

Noah did everything just as God commanded him. [Genesis 6:22](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Gen.6.22)

In Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* (see Day 9), Christian and Faithful one day entered Vanity Fair, a place of many worldly temptations. Offended by their unwillingness to participate, the townspeople threw the pair into prison. They held a mock trial and condemned them to death. Although God allowed Christian to escape, Faithful was tortured and burned at the stake, entering heaven as an honored martyr.

Even when the price is high, we must obey God. Many Bible stories illustrate this principle, including Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac and Daniel in the lions’ den. Noah teaches us this lesson as well. His extreme obedience was rooted in his righteous character and godly lifestyle (v. 9). He lived in stark contrast to the world around him (vv. 11–12).

When God commanded him to build the Ark, Noah may have been tempted to disobey or at least obey halfheartedly. The task appeared ludicrous. The huge size of the boat was bad enough (vv. 14–16). The assertion that the whole earth would be flooded and all life would perish seemed absurd (v. 17). The idea that only Noah and his family, accompanied by pairs of animals, would survive seemed like delusions of grandeur (vv. 18–21). Nonetheless, “Noah did everything just as God commanded him” (v. 22).

How long did it take to build the Ark? Scholars suggest about 75 years, given the ages and births recorded in the genealogies. For example, Ham had not even been born yet when God gave this command to Noah. Over the years, there would have been many opportunities for Noah to leave the path of obedience, but he persisted in faith (Heb. 11:7). Through words and deeds, he preached a message of judgment and righteousness to the world around him (2 Peter 2:5).

**Go Deeper**

What can we learn from Noah’s example of obedience? How are you cultivating this way of life?

**Pray with Us**

Equip us, Lord God. Make us ready to follow and obey You no matter what. As we study today’s Bible passage, may we learn from Noah’s example how to face challenges, trusting You against all odds.

# Our Daily Bread – 2/18/25

NO FAKE RATINGS

A light box with black text

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**Read: EPHESIANS 4:17**

**Instructions for Christian Living**

**17**So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.

**Read: EPHESIANS 4:22-32**

**22**You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; **23**to be made new in the attitude of your minds; **24**and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

**25**Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. **26**“In your anger do not sin”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=EPHESIANS%204%3A17%2C%2022-32&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29299a)]: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27**and do not give the devil a foothold. **28**Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

**29**Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. **30**And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31**Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **32**Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

**Footnotes**

1. [Ephesians 4:26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=EPHESIANS%204%3A17%2C%2022-32&version=NIV#en-NIV-29299) Psalm 4:4 (see Septuagint)

Put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. EPHESIANS 4:25 •

A ride-sharing customer shared that he had endured a driver eating the world's smelliest fruit, another driver who was bickering with a girlfriend, and one who tried to get him to invest money in a Ponzi scheme. In each case, instead of a poor rating, he gave the drivers five stars. He explained, "They all seemed like nice people. I didn't want them to be kicked off the app over my bad rating." He gave false reviews-keeping the truth from the drivers ... and others.

For different reasons, we might withhold the truth from others. But the apostle Paul encouraged the Ephesian believers to lovingly speak the truth to one another as new creatures in Christ. This required cultivating habits of "righteousness and holiness" (EPHESIANS 4:24)-living lives that were set apart for Him and that reflected His ways. They were to replace lying with telling one another the truth because lies divide and disrupt, while truth unites us as believers. He wrote, "Each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body" (V. 25).

Jesus empowers us with the courage to resist lying and giving one another "fake ratings"-things that can disrupt our unity with other believers. Living a life of love, as He guides us, will lead to our sharing "kind and compassionate" expressions of truth (v. 32).

**MARVIN WILLIAMS**

**Reflect and Pray**

When are you tempted to withhold the truth from other believers? Why is it vital to share what's honest and true?

Dear God, please help me to be authentic in my relationships out of love for You and others.

**INSIGHT**

In Ephesians 4:17-32, Paul contrasts the deceptive ways of "the devil" (V. 27) with the truth of God's ways. The "Gentiles" (who don't believe in God) are lost in "the futility of their thinking" (V. 17) and "darkened in their understanding." Paul notes how this "ignorance” is "due to the hardening of their hearts" (V. 18). This reflects their conscious choice to reject God's truth. In contrast, we've been "taught ... the truth that is in Jesus" (V. 21) so that we will "put off [our] old self" and "its deceitful desires" (V. 22). We're to live in God's truth.

**TIM GUSTAFSON**

# God Calling – 2/18/25

# Let Me Do It

Never miss these times. It is not what I reveal to you so much as the linking up of your frail natures with the limitless Divine Powers. Already, forces are set in motion. Only My Will is coming to pass. And now God is blessing you very richly.

You think that there is much to do in a crisis like this. There is only one thing to do. Link your lives onto the Divine Forces, and then, it is as much My work to see those lives and their affairs run in an orderly right manner as to see that tomorrow's Sun rises.

It is not passionate appeal that gains the Divine Ear so much as the quiet placing of the difficulty and worry in the Divine Hands. So trust and be no more afraid than a child would be, who places its tangled skein of wool in the hands of a loving mother, and runs out to play, pleasing the mother more by its unquestioning confidence than if it went down on its knees and implored her help, which would pain her the rather, as it would imply she was not eager to help when help was needed.

"Mary...sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word...Mary hath too chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Luke 10:39, 42

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/19/25

# Taking the Initiative Against Drudgery



Arise, shine… —[Isaiah 60:1](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Isaiah+60%3A1)

When it comes to taking the initiative against drudgery, we have to take the first step as though there were no God. There is no point in waiting for God to help us— He will not. But once we arise, immediately we find He is there. Whenever God gives us His inspiration, suddenly taking the initiative becomes a moral issue— a matter of obedience. Then we must act to be obedient and not continue to lie down doing nothing. If we will arise and shine, drudgery will be divinely transformed.

Drudgery is one of the finest tests to determine the genuineness of our character. Drudgery is work that is far removed from anything we think of as ideal work. It is the utterly hard, menial, tiresome, and dirty work. And when we experience it, our spirituality is instantly tested and we will know whether or not we are spiritually genuine. Read John 13. In this chapter, we see the Incarnate God performing the greatest example of drudgery— washing fishermen’s feet. He then says to them, “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet” ([John 13:14](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+13:14)). The inspiration of God is required if drudgery is to shine with the light of God upon it. In some cases the way a person does a task makes that work sanctified and holy forever. It may be a very common everyday task, but after we have seen it done, it becomes different. When the Lord does something through us, He always transforms it. Our Lord takes our human flesh and transforms it, and now every believer’s body has become “the temple of the Holy Spirit” ([1 Corinthians 6:19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+6:19)).

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

The main characteristic which is the proof of the indwelling Spirit is an amazing tenderness in personal dealing, and a blazing truthfulness with regard to God’s Word. Disciples Indeed, 386 R

# CCEL – 2/19/25

The Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.—[PROV. 2:6.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.2.html" \l "Prov.2.6)

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.—If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbradeth not; and it shall be given him.—The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.—God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. That no flesh should glory in his presence.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.—Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.

All bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.—Never man spake like this man.—Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

[Prov. 3:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Prov.3.html" \l "Prov.3.5). -[Jas. 1:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html#Jas.1.5). -[I Cor. 1:25](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.1.html" \l "iCor.1.25). -[I Cor. 1:27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.1.html" \l "iCor.1.27),[29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.1.html" \l "iCor.1.29).[Psa. 119:130](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.130). -[Psa. 119:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.11).[Luke 4:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.4.html" \l "Luke.4.22). -[John 7:46](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.7.html" \l "John.7.46). -[I Cor. 1:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iCor.1.html" \l "iCor.1.30).

“Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.” [Ezekiel 36:37](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.36.html" \l "Ezek.36.37)

Prayer is the forerunner of mercy. Turn to sacred history, and you will find that scarcely ever did a great mercy come to this world unheralded by supplication. You have found this true in your own personal experience. God has given you many an unsolicited favour, but still great prayer has always been the prelude of great mercy with you. When you first found peace through the blood of the cross, you had been praying much, and earnestly interceding with God that he would remove your doubts, and deliver you from your distresses. Your assurance was the result of prayer. When at any time you have had high and rapturous joys, you have been obliged to look upon them as answers to your prayers. When you have had great deliverances out of sore troubles, and mighty helps in great dangers, you have been able to say, “I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.” Prayer is always the preface to blessing. It goes before the blessing as the blessing's shadow. When the sunlight of God’s mercies rises upon our necessities, it casts the shadow of prayer far down upon the plain. Or, to use another illustration, when God piles up a hill of mercies, he himself shines behind them, and he casts on our spirits the shadow of prayer, so that we may rest certain, if we are much in prayer, our pleadings are the shadows of mercy. Prayer is thus connected with the blessing to show us the value of it. If we had the blessings without asking for them, we should think them common things; but prayer makes our mercies more precious than diamonds. The things we ask for are precious, but we do not realize their preciousness until we have sought for them earnestly.

“Prayer makes the darkened cloud withdraw; Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw; Gives exercise to faith and love; Brings every blessing from above.”

# Word Live – 2/19/25

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

# Scripture Union – 2/19/25

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# Today in the Word – 2/19/25

# Obey Despite Our Feelings

A hand holding a stick

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[**Read Exodus 3:1–14**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Exodus+3:1%e2%80%9314)

**Moses and the Burning Bush**

3 Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. 3So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.”

4When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!”

And Moses said, “Here I am.”

5“Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” 6Then he said, “I am the God of your father,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%203%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-1586a)] the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

7The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. 8So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 9And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. 10So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

11But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

12And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%203%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-1592b)] will worship God on this mountain.”

13Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”

14God said to Moses, “I am who I am.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%203%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#fen-NIV-1594c)] This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I am has sent me to you.’”

**Footnotes**

1. [Exodus 3:6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%203%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-1586) Masoretic Text; Samaritan Pentateuch (see Acts 7:32) *fathers*
2. [Exodus 3:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%203%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-1592) The Hebrew is plural.
3. [Exodus 3:14](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%203%3A1%E2%80%9314&version=NIV#en-NIV-1594) Or *I will be what I will be*

Please send someone else. [Exodus 4:13](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Exod.4.13)

We’re good at rationalizing, aren’t we? It’s so easy to make fear or doubt sound like prudence or being careful. “God knows my strengths and abilities—He wouldn’t ask me to step out in faith in an area of weakness, would He?”

God goes against human expectations in many ways, as Moses discovered in today’s reading. As you’ve doubtless noticed, in our devotional study of strategies for fighting temptation, we’ve looked at some negative examples. We can also learn from people who experienced temptation, but they also resisted and obeyed.

Moses told God that he wasn’t a good leader and not suited for what God had called him to do (v. 11). He would rather remain in a safe place. But God wanted him to do the humanly impossible task of freeing the Israelites from four centuries of slavery to Egypt and taking them to a promised homeland (vv. 7–10).

Moses felt unworthy (v. 11). And he was right! God hadn’t chosen him for his personal awesomeness. The key to his success would be God’s presence and promises (v. 12). Moses also felt fearful for both spoken and unspoken reasons. Forty years had passed, but perhaps he was still wanted for murder. Perhaps he was afraid he was too old for this at age 80. How could he defeat one of the world superpowers of the day? And would the Israelites even listen to or follow him? This is the question behind the name question in verse 13 (see Ex. 4:1). In addition, he had no confidence in his public speaking ability (Ex. 4:10).

The bottom line? He didn’t want to go. “Please send someone else” (Ex. 4:13). But in the end, he trusted God’s answers, resisted the temptation to quit, and instead stepped out in faith.

**Go Deeper**

Why did God choose Moses? Why did Moses resist the appointment? Have you ever been in a position where you were tempted to say “no” to God’s call?

**Pray with Us**

Father, grant us strength to persevere during difficult times. You helped Moses see beyond the immediate difficulties. In the same way, help us to keep faith in Your plan for our lives. We place our trust in You.

# Our Daily Bread – 2/19/25

# FINDING LOVE IN"GOD

A young child standing next to a baby

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**Read: GENESIS 29:28-35**

**28**And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. **29**Laban gave his servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her attendant. **30**Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.

**Jacob’s Children**

**31**When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved, he enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless. **32**Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=GENESIS%2029%3A28-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-828a)] for she said, “It is because the Lord has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now.”

**33**She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “Because the Lord heard that I am not loved, he gave me this one too.” So she named him Simeon.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=GENESIS%2029%3A28-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-829b)]

**34**Again she conceived, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “Now at last my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” So he was named Levi.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=GENESIS%2029%3A28-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-830c)]

**35**She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “This time I will praise the Lord.” So she named him Judah.[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=GENESIS%2029%3A28-35&version=NIV#fen-NIV-831d)] Then she stopped having children.

**Footnotes**

1. [Genesis 29:32](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=GENESIS%2029%3A28-35&version=NIV#en-NIV-828) *Reuben* sounds like the Hebrew for *he has seen my misery*; the name means *see, a son*.
2. [Genesis 29:33](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=GENESIS%2029%3A28-35&version=NIV#en-NIV-829) *Simeon* probably means *one who hears.*
3. [Genesis 29:34](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=GENESIS%2029%3A28-35&version=NIV#en-NIV-830) *Levi* sounds like and may be derived from the Hebrew for *attached.*
4. [Genesis 29:35](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=GENESIS%2029%3A28-35&version=NIV#en-NIV-831) *Judah* sounds like and may be derived from the Hebrew for *praise.*

The LORD saw that Leah was not loved. GENESIS 29:31

As. a child, when asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Ben would say, "I want to be like Dave." Ben's older brother was athletic, sociable, and an honor student. Ben, on the other hand, says, "I was clumsy in sports, timid, and struggled with a learning disability. I'd always wanted a close relationship with Dave, but he didn't. He called me 'the boring one: " Ben spent much of his life pursuing his older brother's love in vain. It was only when Ben became a follower of Jesus that he learned to rest in the love of his Savior instead.

Leah, the first wife of Jacob, spent much of her life pursuing her husband's love (GENESIS 29:32-35). Jacob, however, remained devoted to Rachel. But God saw Leah's plight and made up for the rejection In her life. He blessed her by allowing her to be a mother a great honor in her culture at that time (v. 31). Leah, unseen and unheard by her husband, was lovingly seen and heard by God (vv. 32-33). She gave birth to a daughter and six sons (35:23), one of whom was Judah, a forefather of Jesus Himself. She said at his birth, "This time I will praise the LORO" (29:35). Leah lived a long life in Canaan and was buried in a place of honor-with Jacob's family (49:29-32).

When we experience rejection, let's find comfort in Leah's story. We can rest in the love of God, who makes up for what we lack.

**KAREN HUANG**

**Reflect and Pray**

How can you rest in God's love when you're rejected? How might you entrust your pain to Him?

Dear God, thank You that Your love heals me in all the places where I've been rejected.

**INSIGHT**

Genesis 29:31-30:24 and 35:16-26 tell of the births of the twelve sons of Jacob, whose name means "deceiver.” His name was later changed by God to Israel, which means, he "struggled with God" (32:28). Jacob’s life was characterized by favoritism (29:18.30), spousal neglect, jealousy, and rivalry (29:31-30:1). That God would name His chosen nation after Jacob and use his twelve sons to become the ancestral heads of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel points to His covenantal love and unmerited grace (SEE ROMANS 9:10-18). Equally noteworthy in Leah's sad story is that two crucial institutions of the nation Israel-the Aaronic-levitical priesthood (NUMBERS 18:1-7) and the kingship (GENESIS 49:10)-come from her third and fourth sons, Levi and Judah (29:14-35). These two sons were from a marriage in which she was unwanted and unloved. Yet God honored Leah and graciously looked after her (vv. 31-35; 30:17-21).

**K. T. SIM**

# God Calling – 2/19/25

# Endure

Do not forget to meet all your difficulties with love and laughter. Be assured that I am with you. Remember, remember it is the last few yards that tell. Do not fail Me. I cannot fail you. Rest in My love.

How many of the world's prayers have gone unanswered because My children who prayed did not endure to the end. They thought it was too late, and that they must act for themselves, that I was not going to act for them. Remember My words: "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

Can you endure to the end? If so, you shall be saved. But endure with courage, with Love and laughter. Oh! My children, is My training too hard?

For you, My children, I will unlock the secret treasures hidden from so many. Not one of your cries is unheard. I am with you indeed to aid you. Go through all I have said to you, and live in every detail as I have enjoined you. As you follow implicitly all I say, success -- spiritual, mental, and physical -- shall be yours. Wait in silence awhile, conscious of My presence, in which you must live to have rest unto your souls, and Power and Joy and Peace.

"And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, and the God of Israel." Isaiah 45:3

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/20/25

# Taking the Initiative Against Daydreaming



Arise, let us go from here. —[John 14:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=John+14%3A31)

Daydreaming about something in order to do it properly is right, but daydreaming about it when we should be doing it is wrong. In this passage, after having said these wonderful things to His disciples, we might have expected our Lord to tell them to go away and meditate over them all. But Jesus never allowed idle daydreaming. When our purpose is to seek God and to discover His will for us, daydreaming is right and acceptable. But when our inclination is to spend time daydreaming over what we have already been told to do, it is unacceptable and God’s blessing is never on it. God will take the initiative against this kind of daydreaming by prodding us to action. His instructions to us will be along the lines of this: “Don’t sit or stand there, just go!”

If we are quietly waiting before God after He has said to us, “Come aside by yourselves…” then that is meditation before Him to seek His will ([Mark 6:31](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+6:31)). Beware, however, of giving in to mere daydreaming once God has spoken. Allow Him to be the source of all your dreams, joys, and delights, and be careful to go and obey what He has said. If you are in love with someone, you don’t sit and daydream about that person all the time— you go and do something for him. That is what Jesus Christ expects us to do. Daydreaming after God has spoken is an indication that we do not trust Him.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 2/20/25

He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.—[ISA. 53:11.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.53.html" \l "Isa.53.11)

Jesus . . . said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.—He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.—To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which be purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.—That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.—Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

[John 19:30](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.19.html" \l "John.19.30). -[II Cor. 5:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.5.html" \l "iiCor.5.21).[Isa. 43:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.43.html" \l "Isa.43.21). -[Eph. 3:10,11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.3.html" \l "Eph.3.10). -[Eph. 2:7](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.2.html" \l "Eph.2.7).[Eph. 1:13](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.1.html" \l "Eph.1.13). -[I Pet.2:9](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.2.html" \l "iPet.2.9).

“God, that comforteth those that are cast down.” [2 Corinthians 7:6](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iiCor.7.html" \l "iiCor.7.6)

And who comforteth like him? Go to some poor, melancholy, distressed child of God; tell him sweet promises, and whisper in his ear choice words of comfort; he is like the deaf adder, he listens not to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. He is drinking gall and wormwood, and comfort him as you may, it will be only a note or two of mournful resignation that you will get from him; you will bring forth no psalms of praise, no hallelujahs, no joyful sonnets. But let God come to his child, let him lift up his countenance, and the mourner’s eyes glisten with hope. Do you not hear him sing —

“'Tis paradise, if thou art here; If thou depart, 'tis hell?”

You could not have cheered him: but the Lord has done it; “He is the God of all comfort.” There is no balm in Gilead, but there is balm in God. There is no physician among the creatures, but the Creator is Jehovah-rophi. It is marvellous how one sweet word of God will make whole songs for Christians. One word of God is like a piece of gold, and the Christian is the gold beater, and can hammer that promise out for whole weeks. So, then, poor Christian, thou needest not sit down in despair. Go to the Comforter, and ask him to give thee consolation. Thou art a poor dry well. You have heard it said, that when a pump is dry, you must pour water down it first of all, and then you will get water, and so, Christian, when thou art dry, go to God, ask him to shed abroad his joy in thy heart, and then thy joy shall be full. Do not go to earthly acquaintances, for you will find them Job’s comforters after all; but go first and foremost to thy “God, that comforteth those that are cast down,” and you will soon say, “In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.”

# Word Live – 2/20/25

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

# Scripture Union – 2/20/25

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# Today in the Word – 2/20/25

# Don’t Follow the Majority

A sunflower in a field of tulips

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[**Read Numbers 13:26–14:10**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Numbers+13:26%e2%80%9314:10)

**Report on the Exploration**

26They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. 27They gave Moses this account: “We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. 28But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. 29The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.”

30Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.”

31But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” 32And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.”

**The People Rebel**

14 That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. 2All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! 3Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” 4And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

5Then Moses and Aaron fell facedown in front of the whole Israelite assembly gathered there. 6Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes 7and said to the entire Israelite assembly, “The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. 8If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. 9Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them.”

10But the whole assembly talked about stoning them. Then the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the Israelites.

The LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them. [Numbers 14:9](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Num.14.9)

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” is one of my favorite choruses. The title statement is firm and filled with faith. “No turning back, no turning back.” For me, the highlight is the uncompromising third verse: “Though none go with me, still I will follow… No turning back, no turning back.”

I have always associated this song with Joshua and Caleb. Out of 12 spies, the majority recommended against obeying God and entering Canaan. Their evidence and arguments sounded rational: The enemy had stronger armies, fortified cities, and physically impressive warriors (13:27–29, 31–33).

But disobeying God is always the foolish choice. That’s why Joshua and Caleb urged the people to obey and move forward (13:30; 14:6–9). How did they frame their counterargument? First, based on God’s commands, and second, on His promises. God had already promised success—the land would be theirs. It made no difference how powerful the enemy was.

When the feelings and choices of the majority oppose God’s commands and promises, they’re part of the temptation to be resisted. The majority was responding in fear, whereas Caleb and Joshua spoke in faith. The majority was so afraid that they absurdly thought they’d be better off dead or returning to slavery (14:2–3). Faith, by contrast, often swims against the mainstream. This is why Joshua and Caleb boldly proclaimed: “Do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us” (14:9). “We will devour them” is literally “they are bread for us,” or reframed for today, “we’ll eat them for lunch because God is with us.”

**Go Deeper**

Many temptations in our lives come down to the issue of faith versus fear. What do you fear? How can you overcome the temptation to recede when you should move forward?

**Pray with Us**

How do we overcome fear? Joshua and Caleb in today’s reading showed us how— by obeying God’s commands and relying on His promises. Lord, guide us along this path we pray! Your faithfulness and loyalty to us is the antidote to our fear.

# Our Daily Bread – 2/20/25

THE SIMPLE TRUTH

THURSDAY I FEBRUARY 20

A black and white digital clock

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**Read: ROMANS 10:9-11**

**9**If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **10**For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. **11**As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ROMANS%2010%3A9-11&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28200a)]

**Footnotes**

1. [Romans 10:11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ROMANS%2010%3A9-11&version=NIV#en-NIV-28200) Isaiah 28:16 (see Septuagint)

Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved. ACTS 16:31

When my wife and I go biking, we like to know how many miles we've pedaled. So, I went to a bike shop to buy an odometer and came home with a minicomputer that I discovered was a bit too complicated for me to program.

I headed back to the bike shop, where the person who had sold it to me had it working in no time. I realized it wasn't as difficult to understand as I thought.

In life, new things and new ideas can seem complicated. Think about salvation, for instance. Some people might think becoming a child of God is complicated.

Yet, the Bible spells it out in simple terms: " Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" {ACTS 16:31}. No set of rules to follow. No mysteries to solve.

Here's the simple truth: We've all sinned (ROMANS 3:23). Jesus came to earth to save us from the penalty of our sin-death and eternal separation from Him (MATTHEW 1:21; 1 PETER 2:24). He arose from the dead (ROMANS 10:9). And we're saved from spiritual death to eternal life by trusting in what He did for us (JOHN 3:16).

Consider what it will mean for you to simply trust and believe in Jesus. Let Him give you "life ... to the full" (JOHN 10:10).

**DAVE BRANON**

**Reflect and Pray**

What will it mean for you to receive salvation in Jesus? If you've been saved, what difference has faith in Him made in your life?

Loving God, I realize that I'm a sinner-I do things that are wrong in Your eyes. I also realize that You sent Jesus to earth to die on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and redeem me. Thank You for the salvation You've provided!

Learn more here: ODB.org/personal-relationship-with-God.

**INSIGHT**

The context of the promise in Romans 10 that "if you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (V. 9) is the full inclusion of gentiles-non-Jewish people-into God's people and into a saving relationship with Him. Before Christ came, gentiles could only become part of God's people by converting to Judaism and following Jewish law. But Paul argued that gentiles were no longer required to follow Jewish law to be considered righteous before God. Instead, “Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes" (v. 4). This means that a relationship with God is accessible to all-"there is no difference between Jew and Gentile-the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him" (v. 12).

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

# God Calling – 2/20/25

# Claim Your Rights

"In everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God."

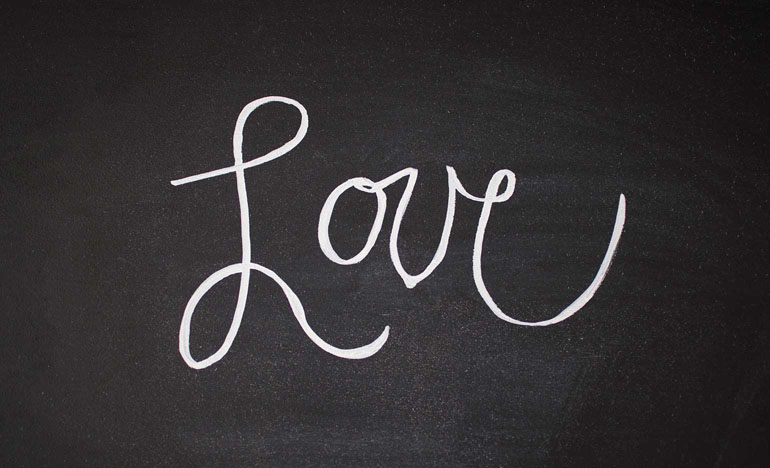
But do not beg. Rather come just as a business manager bringing to the owner the needs, checks to be signed, etc., and knowing that to lay the matter before him means immediate supply.

I long to supply, but the asking -- or the faith-assurance from you, is necessary, because to you that contact with Me is vital.

"If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." 1 John 5:14, 15

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/21/25

# Do You Really Love Him?



She has done a good work for Me. —[Mark 14:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Mark+14%3A6)

If what we call love doesn’t take us beyond ourselves, it is not really love. If we have the idea that love is characterized as cautious, wise, sensible, shrewd, and never taken to extremes, we have missed the true meaning. This may describe affection and it may bring us a warm feeling, but it is not a true and accurate description of love.

Have you ever been driven to do something for God not because you felt that it was useful or your duty to do so, or that there was anything in it for you, but simply because you love Him? Have you ever realized that you can give things to God that are of value to Him? Or are you just sitting around daydreaming about the greatness of His redemption, while neglecting all the things you could be doing for Him? I’m not referring to works which could be regarded as divine and miraculous, but ordinary, simple human things— things which would be evidence to God that you are totally surrendered to Him. Have you ever created what Mary of Bethany created in the heart of the Lord Jesus? “She has done a good work for Me.”

There are times when it seems as if God watches to see if we will give Him even small gifts of surrender, just to show how genuine our love is for Him. To be surrendered to God is of more value than our personal holiness. Concern over our personal holiness causes us to focus our eyes on ourselves, and we become overly concerned about the way we walk and talk and look, out of fear of offending God. “…but perfect love casts out fear…” once we are surrendered to God ([1 John 4:18](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+4:18)). We should quit asking ourselves, “Am I of any use?” and accept the truth that we really are not of much use to Him. The issue is never of being of use, but of being of value to God Himself. Once we are totally surrendered to God, He will work through us all the time.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

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

# CCEL – 2/21/25

I am the Lord which sanctify you.—[LEV. 20:8.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.20.html" \l "Lev.20.8)

I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

Sanctified by God the Father.—Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.—The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus . . . that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.—Our Saviour Jesus Christ . . . gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.—Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.—For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.—Through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

[Lev. 20:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.20.html" \l "Lev.20.24),[26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Lev.20.html" \l "Lev.20.26).[Jude 1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jude.1.html" \l "Jude.1.1). -[John 17:17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.17). -[I Thes. 5:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iThess.5.html" \l "iThess.5.23).[Heb. 13:12](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.12). -[Tit. 2:13.14](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Titus.2.html" \l "Titus.2.13). -[Heb. 2:11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.2.html" \l "Heb.2.11). -[John 17:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.17.html" \l "John.17.19). -[I Pet. 1:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iPet.1.html" \l "iPet.1.2).

“He hath said.” [Hebrews 13:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.5)

If we can only grasp these words by faith, we have an all-conquering weapon in our hand. What doubt will not be slain by this two-edged sword? What fear is there which shall not fall smitten with a deadly wound before this arrow from the bow of God’s covenant? Will not the distresses of life and the pangs of death; will not the corruptions within, and the snares without; will not the trials from above, and the temptations from beneath, all seem but light afflictions, when we can hide ourselves beneath the bulwark of “He hath said”? Yes; whether for delight in our quietude, or for strength in our conflict, “He hath said” must be our daily resort. And this may teach us the extreme value of searching the Scriptures. There may be a promise in the Word which would exactly fit your case, but you may not know of it, and therefore you miss its comfort. You are like prisoners in a dungeon, and there may be one key in the bunch which would unlock the door, and you might be free; but if you will not look for it, you may remain a prisoner still, though liberty is so near at hand. There may be a potent medicine in the great pharmacopoeia of Scripture, and you may yet continue sick unless you will examine and search the Scriptures to discover what “He hath said.” Should you not, besides reading the Bible, store your memories richly with the promises of God? You can recollect the sayings of great men; you treasure up the verses of renowned poets; ought you not to be profound in your knowledge of the words of God, so that you may be able to quote them readily when you would solve a difficulty, or overthrow a doubt? Since “He hath said” is the source of all wisdom, and the fountain of all comfort, let it dwell in you richly, as “A well of water, springing up unto everlasting life.” So shall you grow healthy, strong, and happy in the divine life.

# Word Live – 2/21/25

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

# Scripture Union – 2/21/25

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

# Today in the Word – 2/21/25

# Leave Behind Comfort

A field of wheat with a sunset in the background

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

[**Read Ruth 1:6–22**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Ruth+1:6%e2%80%9322)

**Naomi and Ruth Return to Bethlehem**

6When Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. 7With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

8Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home. May the Lord show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me. 9May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband.”

Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud 10and said to her, “We will go back with you to your people.”

11But Naomi said, “Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? 12Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons— 13would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord’s hand has turned against me!”

14At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

15“Look,” said Naomi, “your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.”

16But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. 17Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.” 18When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

19So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?”

20“Don’t call me Naomi,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth%201%3A6%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-7148a)]” she told them. “Call me Mara,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth%201%3A6%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-7148b)] because the Almighty[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth%201%3A6%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-7148c)] has made my life very bitter. 21I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth%201%3A6%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#fen-NIV-7149d)] me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.”

22So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

**Footnotes**

1. [Ruth 1:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth%201%3A6%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-7148) *Naomi* means *pleasant.*
2. [Ruth 1:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth%201%3A6%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-7148) *Mara* means *bitter.*
3. [Ruth 1:20](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth%201%3A6%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-7148) Hebrew *Shaddai*; also in verse 21
4. [Ruth 1:21](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ruth%201%3A6%E2%80%9322&version=NIV#en-NIV-7149) Or *has testified against*

Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you.[Ruth 1:16](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Ruth.1.16)

Pastor and author John Piper called Ruth “God’s ideal woman” in *A Sweet and Bitter Providence*. Why? “Faith in God that sees beyond present bitter setbacks. Freedom from the securities and comforts of the world. Courage to venture into the unknown and the strange. Radical commitment in the relationships appointed by God. This is the woman of Proverbs 31:25 who looks into the future with confidence in God and laughs at the coming troubles... It is a beautiful thing to watch a woman like this serve Christ with courage.”

Following Ruth’s example is another way to fight and win against temptation. She could have stayed in her comfort zone and done the culturally expected thing, as Naomi advised her to do (vv. 8–9). But she must have seen something of the one true God in the lives of her in-laws. She’d become His follower. There was no going back (see also Luke 9:62). So she chose the more difficult but more faith-filled option: “Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God” (v. 16).

Naomi’s offer to release her two Moabite daughters-in-law from their family obligations to her as a widow was logical and generous in one sense, but also bitter and self-pitying. “The LORD ’s hand has turned against me!” she lamented (v. 13). Even when she arrived back home, she complained, “The Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty” (vv. 20–21).

God, though, had remembered Naomi by providing Ruth to come with her, just as He would later remember Ruth’s need for a husband and provide Boaz. Ruth’s character quickly earned a positive reputation in Bethlehem, and she became an ancestor of the Messiah (Matt. 1:5).

**Go Deeper**

How did Ruth go against the cultural norm? In what way(s) might God be calling you to move forward in faith?

**Pray with Us**

Jesus, we long to follow You, but the temptations and distractions of this world often pull us back. Thank You for the life of Ruth who came to You empty-handed, leaving everything behind. Instill in us her faith and fearlessness!

# Our Daily Bread – 2/21/25

# GETTING BACK UP

A person on ice skating

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**Read: PROVERBS 24:15-21**

**Saying 27**

**15**Do not lurk like a thief near the house of the righteous,  
    do not plunder their dwelling place;  
**16**for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again,  
    but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes.

**Saying 28**

**17**Do not gloat when your enemy falls;  
    when they stumble, do not let your heart rejoice,  
**18**or the Lord will see and disapprove  
    and turn his wrath away from them.

**Saying 29**

**19**Do not fret because of evildoers  
    or be envious of the wicked,  
**20**for the evildoer has no future hope,  
    and the lamp of the wicked will be snuffed out.

**Saying 30**

**21**Fear the Lord and the king, my son,  
    and do not join with rebellious officials,

For though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again, but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes. PROVERBS 24:16

As a teen, I was enthralled with the sport of figure skating. I loved the blend of artistry and athleticism on ice, with the fast spins, high jumps, and perfect poses. After watching many professional skaters perform, I finally got the opportunity to go ice skating and be part of a group lesson. Along with learning how to glide and stop, we learned some of the most important skills for a skater at any level-how to fall and get back up quickly. Later, I learned many spins and jumps in private lessons, but always had to rely on the basics of how to get up after a fall.

We don't have to be athletes to know that "falling" is part of life. Perhaps we fall because we've sinned, we stumble due to a mistake, or we get knocked down by an overwhelming circumstance. Maybe we find ourselves being attacked by the devil one way or another. “We are, . . persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 CORINTHIANS 4:8-9). No matter the reason, we all fall and experience failure in life.

But we're not meant to live in defeat, shame, or regret. When the enemy is lurking nearby and trying to plunder from us (PROVERBS 24:15), we need to remember that God is fighting for us and will help us get back up, "for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again" (v. 16).

When we fall, let's quickly turn to God and fix our eyes on Him who gives us the strength to get back up.

**NANCY GAVII.ANES**

**Reflect and Pray**

How do you handle the falls in life? How has God helped you get back up?

Dear God, thank You for helping me get up after a fall.

**INSIGHT**

Proverbs 22:17-24:22 includes the heading "Thirty Sayings of the Wise." This section is a collection of wise words "of counsel and knowledge" (22:20) to encourage the reader to trust in God and live honest and God-honoring lives (vv. 19-21).

Each saying in this section of Proverbs encourages the reader to adopt or avoid certain behaviors and uses the characteristic injunction "Do not ... " followed by the reason or consequence of obedience or disobedience (SEE 22:22-23; 23:3, 4-5; 24:1-2). Proverbs 24:15-22 focuses primarily on our attitude toward evildoers. We're not to imitate their evil deeds, gloat over their downfall (vv 17-18), or envy their successes (vv. 19-20). Instead, we're to fear both God and his agent, the governing authorities, for they will punish evildoers (vv. 21-22).

**K. T. SIM**

# God Calling – 2/21/25

# Nothing Can Hurt

The way is plain.

You do not need to see far ahead. Just one step at a time with Me. The same light to guide you as the Hosts of Heaven know -- the Son of Righteousness Himself.

Only self can cast a shadow on the way. Be more afraid of Spirit-unrest, of soul-disturbance, of any ruffling of the Spirit, than of earthquake or fire or any outside forces.

When you feel the absolute calm has been broken -- away alone with Me until your heart sings, and all is strong and calm.

These are the only times when evil can find an entrance. The forces of the evil surround the city of man-soul, and are keenly alert for one such unguarded spot, through which an arrow can pierce and do havoc.

Remember all that you have to do is to keep calm and happy. God does the rest. No evil force can hinder My Power -- only you yourself have power to do that. Think when all God's mighty forces are arrayed to aid you -- and your poor, puny self impedes their onward march.

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow...Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matthew 6:34

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/22/25

# The Discipline of Spiritual Perseverance



Be still, and know that I am God… —[Psalm 46:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Psalm+46%3A10)

Perseverance is more than endurance. It is endurance combined with absolute assurance and certainty that what we are looking for is going to happen. Perseverance means more than just hanging on, which may be only exposing our fear of letting go and falling. Perseverance is our supreme effort of refusing to believe that our hero is going to be conquered. Our greatest fear is not that we will be damned, but that somehow Jesus Christ will be defeated. Also, our fear is that the very things our Lord stood for— love, justice, forgiveness, and kindness among men— will not win out in the end and will represent an unattainable goal for us. Then there is the call to spiritual perseverance. A call not to hang on and do nothing, but to work deliberately, knowing with certainty that God will never be defeated.

If our hopes seem to be experiencing disappointment right now, it simply means that they are being purified. Every hope or dream of the human mind will be fulfilled if it is noble and of God. But one of the greatest stresses in life is the stress of waiting for God. He brings fulfillment, “because you have kept My command to persevere…” ([Revelation 3:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+3:10)).

Continue to persevere spiritually.

**WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS**

It is in the middle that human choices are made; the beginning and the end remain with God. The decrees of God are birth and death, and in between those limits man makes his own distress or joy. Shade of His Hand, 1223 L

# CCEL – 2/22/25

What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.—[PSA. 25:12.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.25.html" \l "Ps.25.12)

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light.

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

O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

[Matt. 6:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.6.html" \l "Matt.6.22).[Psa. 119:105](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.119.html" \l "Ps.119.105). -[Isa. 30:21](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Isa.30.html" \l "Isa.30.21). -[Psa. 32:8-11](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.32.html" \l "Ps.32.8).[Jer. 10:23](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jer.10.html" \l "Jer.10.23).

“His bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.” [Genesis 49:24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.49.html" \l "Gen.49.24)

That strength which God gives to his Josephs is real strength; it is not a boasted valour, a fiction, a thing of which men talk, but which ends in smoke; it is true—divine strength. Why does Joseph stand against temptation? Because God gives him aid. There is nought that we can do without the power of God. All true strength comes from “the mighty God of Jacob.” Notice in what a blessedly familiar way God gives this strength to Joseph—“The arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.” Thus God is represented as putting his hands on Joseph’s hands, placing his arms on Joseph’s arms. Like as a father teaches his children, so the Lord teaches them that fear him. He puts his arms upon them. Marvellous condescension! God Almighty, Eternal, Omnipotent, stoops from his throne and lays his hand upon the child’s hand, stretching his arm upon the arm of Joseph, that he may be made strong! This strength was also covenant strength, for it is ascribed to “the mighty God of Jacob.” Now, wherever you read of the God of Jacob in the Bible, you should remember the covenant with Jacob. Christians love to think of God’s covenant. All the power, all the grace, all the blessings, all the mercies, all the comforts, all the things we have, flow to us from the well-head, through the covenant. If there were no covenant, then we should fail indeed; for all grace proceeds from it, as light and heat from the sun. No angels ascend or descend, save upon that ladder which Jacob saw, at the top of which stood a covenant God. Christian, it may be that the archers have sorely grieved you, and shot at you, and wounded you, but still your bow abides in strength; be sure, then, to ascribe all the glory to Jacob’s God.

# Word Live – 2/22/25

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

# Scripture Union – 2/22/25

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

# Today in the Word – 2/22/25

# Do Not Compromise

A person standing in a field

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[**Read Daniel 6**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Daniel+6)

**Daniel in the Den of Lions**

6 [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-21907a)]It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, 2with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. 3Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. 4At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. 5Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”

6So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: “May King Darius live forever! 7The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. 8Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” 9So King Darius put the decree in writing.

10Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. 11Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. 12So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions’ den?”

The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

13Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.” 14When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

15Then the men went as a group to King Darius and said to him, “Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.”

16So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”

17A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed. 18Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

19At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den. 20When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?”

21Daniel answered, “May the king live forever! 22My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty.”

23The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

24At the king’s command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions’ den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

25Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth:

“May you prosper greatly!

26“I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel.

“For he is the living God  
    and he endures forever;  
his kingdom will not be destroyed,  
    his dominion will never end.  
27He rescues and he saves;  
    he performs signs and wonders  
    in the heavens and on the earth.  
He has rescued Daniel  
    from the power of the lions.”

28So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel%206&version=NIV#fen-NIV-21934b)] the Persian.

**Footnotes**

1. [Daniel 6:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel%206&version=NIV#en-NIV-21907) In Aramaic texts 6:1-28 is numbered 6:2-29.
2. [Daniel 6:28](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel%206&version=NIV#en-NIV-21934) Or *Darius, that is, the reign of Cyrus*

Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed...just as he had done before. [Daniel 6:10](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Dan.6.10)

Doctor Faustus, in Christopher Marlowe’s Renaissance drama, wanted power at any cost. After considering his options, he decided that magic could make him a “mighty god.” To make sure his magic would be the strongest, he made a deal with the devil—his soul in exchange for the power he craved. As one might expect, that bargain was a bad one with hellish consequences.

God had put Daniel in a position of power near the top of the Babylonian Empire. That fact, plus his identity as a Jewish exile, plus his incorruptible integrity (v. 4), made him some enemies—122 jealous imperial officials, to be exact. Looking to take him down, they found his only “weakness” to be his faith in his God (v. 5). So they plotted to pass a temporary law against praying to any god other than King Darius (v. 6).

The temptation for Daniel was to compromise. He was in the habit of praying three times daily at open windows facing Jerusalem (v. 10). There was no biblical command to do so. Why not suspend the practice temporarily? Or pray in a more secret place? Why hand evil a victory? But Daniel chose to act on faith, not fear. Godly wisdom makes choices that the world doesn’t always understand.

The results: God protected Daniel from the lions (vv. 21–23). The conspirators paid with their lives (v. 24). God’s name—to which Daniel had already been bearing clear witness (vv. 11, 16)—was glorified even more than it had been before (vv. 26–27).

What was Daniel’s strategy against temptation? He unreservedly “trusted in his God” (v. 23). Drawing near to the Lord is a sure defense against temptations to wrongdoing. The apparent appeal of sin vanishes, its lies are unmasked, and the power of God strengthens us to choose rightly.

**Go Deeper**

What example does Daniel give about how to obey God without compromise? What is one way you might be tempted to hide your faith in the public forum?

Pray with Us

Dear God, we praise You for not leaving us in our isolation and hopelessness but drawing near to us in Christ. By the power of Your Spirit, we turn to You in faith, as we learn from Your Word how to follow You without compromise.

# Our Daily Bread – 2/22/25

# LEGACY OF LOVE IN JESUS

A poster with text overlay

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**Read: JOHN 13:31-36**

**Jesus Predicts Peter’s Denial**

**31**When he was gone, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him. **32**If God is glorified in him,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=JOHN%2013%3A31-36&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26663a)] God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

**33**“My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

**34**“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. **35**By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

**36**Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?”

Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.”

**Footnotes**

1. [John 13:32](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=JOHN%2013%3A31-36&version=NIV#en-NIV-26663) Many early manuscripts do not have *If God is glorified in him.*

As I have loved you, so you must love one another. JOHN 13:34

In Sweden, there's a concept known as Döstädning. It literally means "death cleaning." The idea is that as we grow older, we should stop accumulating "stuff” and begin to cut out the clutter we have amassed throughout our lives. "Swedish death cleaning" is actually a gift of love to children and friends, for it simplifies for them the task of wading through what we leave behind.

As believers in Jesus, at a certain age we think about our legacy-what survives us. This is often framed in terms of money, inheritance, or charitable giving-and there's much to be said for that. But it might be helpful to look at Jesus in His final hours with His disciples: "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later" (JOHN 13:36). In two verses (vv 34-35), He uses the word love or loved four times-His legacy was love. He told them: "As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (v. 34).

It may be good to do some "Swedish death cleaning" in our lives, removing clutter to leave behind only the most important things. But it really isn't about things or money. The most important legacy you can leave behind is your love for Jesus. When children and friends remember you as one who loved Jesus, that's the best gift of all. It gives new meaning to the phrase "left behind."

**KENNETH PETERSEN**

**Reflect and Pray**

How do your family and friends see your love for Jesus demonstrated? How might you share that love more openly?

Dear God, thank You for Your love and for the gift of Jesus in my life. Please help me to show Your love to those around me.

**INSIGHT**

John's words which close the section preceding John 13:31-36 are elegant and laden with meaning: “And it was night" (v. 30). Here John implies much more than the mere passage of daylight. Judas has been possessed by Satan himself (v. 27) and has left the company of the disciples (v. 30). At this pivotal point, Jesus says, "Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him" (V.31). It may seem odd that Christ speaks triumphant words at such a dark time. Judas has left to betray Him, Peter will deny Him (V. 38), and the disciples (except John) will abandon Him (MATTHEW 26:56). Yet Jesus prayed, "I have brought you (His Father) glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do" (JOHN 17:4). In Christ's death and resurrection, the Father revealed the full scope of His love for us.

**TIM GUSTAFSON**

# God Calling – 2/22/25

# You Must Trust

You must trust Me wholly. This lesson has to be learnt. You shall be helped, you shall be led, guided, continually. The children of Israel would long before have entered the Promised Land -- only their doubts and fears continually drove them back into the wilderness. Remember always, doubts delay. Are you trusting all to Me or not?

I have told you how to live and you must do it. My children, I love you. Trust My tender Love. It will never fail you, but you must learn not to fail it.

Oh! could you see, you would understand. You have much to learn in turning out fear and being at peace. All your doubts arrest My work. You must not doubt. I died to save you from sin and doubt and worry. You must believe in Me absolutely.

"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." Psalm 91:4

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/23/25

# The Determination to Serve



The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve… —[Matthew 20:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=Matthew+20%3A28)

Jesus also said, “Yet I am among you as the One who serves” ([Luke 22:27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+22:27)). Paul’s idea of service was the same as our Lord’s— “…ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake” ([2 Corinthians 4:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+4:5)). We somehow have the idea that a person called to the ministry is called to be different and above other people. But according to Jesus Christ, he is called to be a “doormat” for others— called to be their spiritual leader, but never their superior. Paul said, “I know how to be abased…” ([Philippians 4:12](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+4:12)). Paul’s idea of service was to pour his life out to the last drop for others. And whether he received praise or blame made no difference. As long as there was one human being who did not know Jesus, Paul felt a debt of service to that person until he did come to know Him. But the chief motivation behind Paul’s service was not love for others but love for his Lord. If our devotion is to the cause of humanity, we will be quickly defeated and broken-hearted, since we will often be confronted with a great deal of ingratitude from other people. But if we are motivated by our love for God, no amount of ingratitude will be able to hinder us from serving one another.

Paul’s understanding of how Christ had dealt with him is the secret behind his determination to serve others. “I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man…” ([1 Timothy 1:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Timothy+1:13)). In other words, no matter how badly others may have treated Paul, they could never have treated him with the same degree of spite and hatred with which he had treated Jesus Christ. Once we realize that Jesus has served us even to the depths of our meagerness, our selfishness, and our sin, nothing we encounter from others will be able to exhaust our determination to serve others for His sake.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

To those who have had no agony Jesus says, “I have nothing for you; stand on your own feet, square your own shoulders. I have come for the man who knows he has a bigger handful than he can cope with, who knows there are forces he cannot touch; I will do everything for him if he will let Me. Only let a man grant he needs it, and I will do it for him.” The Shadow of an Agony

# CCEL – 2/23/25

The blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.—[HEB. 12:24.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.12.html" \l "Heb.12.24)

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.—The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.—It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Abel, . . . brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof . . . The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.—Christ . . . hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.—Having . . . boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

[John 1:29](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.1.html" \l "John.1.29). -[Rev. 13:8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Rev.13.html" \l "Rev.13.8). -[Heb. 10:4,5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.4),[10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.10).[Gen. 4:4](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Gen.4.html" \l "Gen.4.4). -[Eph. 5:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Eph.5.html#Eph.5.2).[Heb. 10:22](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.22). -[Heb. 10:19](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.10.html" \l "Heb.10.19).

“I will never leave thee.” [Hebrews 13:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Heb.13.html" \l "Heb.13.5)

No promise is of private interpretation. Whatever God has said to any one saint, he has said to all. When he opens a well for one, it is that all may drink. When he openeth a granary-door to give out food, there may be some one starving man who is the occasion of its being opened, but all hungry saints may come and feed too. Whether he gave the word to Abraham or to Moses, matters not, O believer; he has given it to thee as one of the covenanted seed. There is not a high blessing too lofty for thee, nor a wide mercy too extensive for thee. Lift up now thine eyes to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west, for all this is thine. Climb to Pisgah’s top, and view the utmost limit of the divine promise, for the land is all thine own. There is not a brook of living water of which thou mayst not drink. If the land floweth with milk and honey, eat the honey and drink the milk, for both are thine. Be thou bold to believe, for he hath said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”In this promise, God gives to his people everything. “I will never leave thee.” Then no attribute of God can cease to be engaged for us. Is he mighty? He will show himself strong on the behalf of them that trust him. Is he love? Then with lovingkindness will he have mercy upon us. Whatever attributes may compose the character of Deity, every one of them to its fullest extent shall be engaged on our side. To put everything in one, there is nothing you can want, there is nothing you can ask for, there is nothing you can need in time or in eternity, there is nothing living, nothing dying, there is nothing in this world, nothing in the next world, there is nothing now, nothing at the resurrection-morning, nothing in heaven which is not contained in this text—“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

# Word Live – 2/23/25

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

# Scripture Union – 2/23/25

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

# Today in the Word – 2/23/25

# Trust in God’s Sovereignty

A silver crown with purple stones

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

[**Read Esther 4**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Esther+4)

**Mordecai Persuades Esther to Help**

4 When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly. 2But he went only as far as the king’s gate, because no one clothed in sackcloth was allowed to enter it. 3In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4When Esther’s eunuchs and female attendants came and told her about Mordecai, she was in great distress. She sent clothes for him to put on instead of his sackcloth, but he would not accept them. 5Then Esther summoned Hathak, one of the king’s eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why.

6So Hathak went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king’s gate. 7Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. 8He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to instruct her to go into the king’s presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.

9Hathak went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said. 10Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai, 11“All the king’s officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that they be put to death unless the king extends the gold scepter to them and spares their lives. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king.”

12When Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai, 13he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. 14For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

15Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: 16“Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

17So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther’s instructions.

Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this? [Esther 4:14](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Esth.4.14)

The Jewish holiday of Purim, commemorating the events recorded in the Book of Esther, is celebrated to this day. Presents are given. Food and donations for the poor are collected. Plays are performed. Children are given rattles so that when the story is read aloud, the name of evil Haman (v. 7) can be drowned out with noise.

In today’s reading, Esther wondered whether going to the king was a risk that would get her killed for nothing (v. 11). The temptation was to do nothing, keep her head down, deny her identity, and stay safe. Mordecai, however, helped her realize that this wrong choice would be the most dangerous of all. God would rescue His people in any case, but her silence would bring His judgment on her and her family (vv. 12–14). She had been placed where she was by God “for such a time as this.”

While she may have been tempted to keep quiet, Esther chose faith over fear. Courageously, she risked death to approach the king on behalf of her people. Prayer and fasting (see Matt. 6:16–18) were an important part of her spiritual preparation to do so, in which she and her attendants were joined by Mordecai and all the Jews in Susa (vv. 15–16). “If I perish, I perish” did not signify stoicism or resignation, but calm trust in God’s love and sovereignty. She knew that she and her people were safe in His hands. This didn’t guarantee a particular outcome. Like Daniel’s friends, she made the righteous choice no matter the result (see Dan. 3:17–18).

Notice in Esther’s story how resisting temptation called for a nexus of spiritual virtues, including faith, courage, and prayer. Giving in, by contrast, would have empowered vices such as fear and self-centeredness. Winning against temptation is never about just one thing.

**Go Deeper**

Would doing nothing have been a real sin for Esther? Have you experi- enced that kind of temptation? What did you do?

**Pray with Us**

God, thank You for the rescue of Jewish people through courage and determination of one woman, Ruth. Give us determination to pray for the spiritual salvation of Israel and courage to oppose the rise of anti-Semitism in the world today.

# Our Daily Bread – 2/23/25

# PLANTED BY THE STREAM

A bench by a river

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**Read: PSALM 1**

**1**Blessed is the one  
    who does not walk in step with the wicked  
or stand in the way that sinners take  
    or sit in the company of mockers,  
**2**but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,  
    and who meditates on his law day and night.  
**3**That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
    which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither—  
    whatever they do prospers.

**4**Not so the wicked!  
    They are like chaff  
    that the wind blows away.  
**5**Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
    nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

**6**For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,  
    but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

That person is like a tree planted by streams of water. PSALM 1:3

Bill is an older retired gentleman who lives alone and recently had to give up driving. He needs help to pick up groceries, prescriptions, and get to church on Sundays. "But you know what," says Bill, "I love my days at home. I enjoy free worship music online and Bible teaching on the TV all day long." Bill spends his days surrounded by Scripture, prayer, and praise. The habits we keep influence where our hearts are planted.

Psalm 1 describes the habits of someone who has found favor in God: they delight in His truth, meditate on it often, and therefore do not follow the rebellious pattern of the world (vv. 1-2). Hardship will come to everyone, but a life established in the ways of God "is like a tree planted by streams of water . .. whose leaf does not wither" (V. 3).

Depending on our season of life, we might not be able to spend hours a day in Bible study. However, Jesus said He satisfies anyone who is thirsty that comes to Him, and the Holy Spirit fills His followers like a river (JOHN 7:37-39). We can steep our hearts in living water through praise and Scripture, and also through caring for others, talking to God while we work, and asking for forgiveness when we mess up.

Following the wisdom of God plants our hearts in fertile soil. That life gets called righteous, and God watches over it (PSALM 1:6).

**KAREN PIMPO**

**Reflect and Pray**

What habits keep you planted by the life-giving water of Jesus? How does that change depending on what season of life you're in?

Dear Jesus may I come to You when I feel thirsty and dry.

**INSIGHT**

Psalm 1, which introduces the book of Psalms, contrasts the way of the "blessed" with the self-destructive path of "the wicked" (V. 1). The psalm depicts a primary way of seeking God's path: through continual meditation on God's revelation in "the law" (v. 2). In this way, someone can experience being rooted in and sustained by God's wisdom "like a tree planted by streams of water" (v. 3).

God's ultimate revelation of Himself is Christ, God's Word (JOHN 1:1). In Ephesians 3, Paul uses similar imagery of being "rooted" (V.l7) to describe the believer's bond with Christ, praying that God would "strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being" (V. 16). Through being "rooted and established" in Christ's love (V.l7)-"that surpasses knowledge"-we can be "filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" (v. 19).

**MONICA LA ROSE**

# God Calling – 2/23/25

# Secret Of Healing

Love the busy life. It is a joy-filled life. I love you both and bid you be of good cheer. Take your fill of joy in the Spring.

Live outside whenever possible. Sun and air are My great healing forces, and that inward Joy that changes poisoned blood to a pure healthy life-giving flow.

Never forget that real healing of body, mind, and Spirit comes from within, from the close loving contact of your spirit with My Spirit.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

# My Utmost for His Highest – 2/24/25

# The Delight of Sacrifice



I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls… —[2 Corinthians 12:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=31&search=2+Corinthians+12%3A15)

Once “the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,” we deliberately begin to identify ourselves with Jesus Christ’s interests and purposes in others’ lives ([Romans 5:5](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5:5)). And Jesus has an interest in every individual person. We have no right in Christian service to be guided by our own interests and desires. In fact, this is one of the greatest tests of our relationship with Jesus Christ. The delight of sacrifice is that I lay down my life for my Friend, Jesus (see [John 15:13](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+15:13)). I don’t throw my life away, but I willingly and deliberately lay it down for Him and His interests in other people. And I do this for no cause or purpose of my own. Paul spent his life for only one purpose— that he might win people to Jesus Christ. Paul always attracted people to his Lord, but never to himself. He said, “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/?search=1+Corinthians+9:22)).

When someone thinks that to develop a holy life he must always be alone with God, he is no longer of any use to others. This is like putting himself on a pedestal and isolating himself from the rest of society. Paul was a holy person, but wherever he went Jesus Christ was always allowed to help Himself to his life. Many of us are interested only in our own goals, and Jesus cannot help Himself to our lives. But if we are totally surrendered to Him, we have no goals of our own to serve. Paul said that he knew how to be a “doormat” without resenting it, because the motivation of his life was devotion to Jesus. We tend to be devoted, not to Jesus Christ, but to the things which allow us more spiritual freedom than total surrender to Him would allow. Freedom was not Paul’s motive at all. In fact, he stated, “I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren…” ([Romans 9:3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+9:3)). Had Paul lost his ability to reason? Not at all! For someone who is in love, this is not an overstatement. And Paul was in love with Jesus Christ.

**Wisdom From Oswald Chambers**

Is He going to help Himself to your life, or are you taken up with your conception of what you are going to do? God is responsible for our lives, and the one great keynote is reckless reliance upon Him. Approved Unto God, 10 R

# CCEL – 2/24/25

Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of.—[EZEK. 36:37.](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.36.html" \l "Ezek.36.37)

Ye have not, because ye ask not.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.—This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.—If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.—Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.—Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.—Ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

[Jas. 4:2](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.4.html" \l "Jas.4.2).[Matt. 7:7,8](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Matt.7.html" \l "Matt.7.7). -[I John 5:14,15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.iJohn.5.html" \l "iJohn.5.14). -[Jas. 1:5](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Jas.1.html" \l "Jas.1.5). -[Psa. 81:10](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.81.html" \l "Ps.81.10). -[Luke 18:1](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Luke.18.html" \l "Luke.18.1).[Psa. 34:15](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.15),[17](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ps.34.html" \l "Ps.34.17). -[John 16:26,27](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html" \l "John.16.26),[24](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.John.16.html" \l "John.16.24).

“I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.” [Ezekiel 34:26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/bible/asv.Ezek.34.html" \l "Ezek.34.26)

Here is sovereign mercy—“I will give them the shower in its season.” Is it not sovereign, divine mercy?—for who can say, “I will give them showers,” except God? There is only one voice which can speak to the clouds, and bid them beget the rain. Who sendeth down the rain upon the earth? Who scattereth the showers upon the green herb? Do not I, the Lord? So grace is the gift of God, and is not to be created by man. It is also needed grace. What would the ground do without showers? You may break the clods, you may sow your seeds, but what can you do without the rain? As absolutely needful is the divine blessing. In vain you labour, until God the plenteous shower bestows, and sends salvation down. Then, it is plenteous grace. “I will send them showers.” It does not say, “I will send them drops,” but “showers.” So it is with grace. If God gives a blessing, he usually gives it in such a measure that there is not room enough to receive it. Plenteous grace! Ah! we want plenteous grace to keep us humble, to make us prayerful, to make us holy; plenteous grace to make us zealous, to preserve us through this life, and at last to land us in heaven. We cannot do without saturating showers of grace. Again, it is seasonable grace. “I will cause the shower to come down in his season.” What is thy season this morning? Is it the season of drought? Then that is the season for showers. Is it a season of great heaviness and black clouds? Then that is the season for showers. “As thy days so shall thy strength be.” And here is a varied blessing. “I will give thee showers of blessing.” The word is in the plural. All kinds of blessings God will send. All God’s blessings go together, like links in a golden chain. If he gives converting grace, he will also give comforting grace. He will send “showers of blessing.” Look up today, O parched plant, and open thy leaves and flowers for a heavenly watering.

# Word Live – 2/24/25

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

# Scripture Union – 2/24/25

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

# Today in the Word – 2/24/25

# Leave Behind Security

A close up of a net

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[**Read Luke 5:1–11**](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible/?pas=Luke+5:1%e2%80%9311)

**Jesus Calls His First Disciples**

5 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%205%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25109a)] the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. 2He saw at the water’s edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. 3He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

4When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”

5Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”

6When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

8When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” 9For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon’s partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.” 11So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

**Footnotes**

1. [Luke 5:1](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%205%3A1%E2%80%9311&version=NIV#en-NIV-25109) That is, the Sea of Galilee

They pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. [Luke 5:11](https://www.todayintheword.org/bible-verses/verse/?pas=Luke.5.11)

From seatbelts to home surveillance systems to all types of insurance, we place a high priority on our security and safety. We work hard so we can have enough money in the bank for retirement. We want to be ready for any eventuality in any situation.

Good stewardship is one thing, but obsessive worrying about our future is another. Jesus did not call His disciples to a life of guaranteed security. Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, and John had everything to lose—not only their livelihoods as fishermen but also their freedom and perhaps even their lives if Rome saw the Messiah as a political threat. They also risked being cast out of the Jewish community if the Sanhedrin labeled Jesus as a false teacher. Nonetheless, “they left everything and followed him” (v. 11). This is the essence of discipleship (Luke 9:57–62).

As with Esther, the temptation was to take the safe route. The miraculous catch of fish helped to encourage their faith and to confirm Jesus’ identity as Messiah. “From now on,” He told them, “you will fish for people” (v. 10). This humorous image brings bait and lures to our modern minds, but Jesus was referring to fishing with nets. This takes persistence, hard work, and time, with no guaranteed results, as Simon admitted to Jesus (v. 5). So the miracle also showed the new disciples that the ministry of bringing people into God’s kingdom must ultimately be God’s work done with God’s power.

The disciples chose to leave behind what, in God’s view, was a lesser security—their jobs and personal safety—for a greater one—a place in His kingdom. This is why Paul, too, counted everything else as “loss” or “garbage” compared to knowing Christ (Phil. 3:7–9).

**Go Deeper**

Might there be an area of life in which you’re playing it safe? Doing nothing when God is calling you to act? Pray to see this for what it is—a temptation to be a less than fully committed disciple.

**Pray with Us**

Show me, Lord Jesus, any area in my life where I worry too much, display a lack of faith, and cling to false security. Make me a fully committed disciple. May my security rest only in You.

# Our Daily Bread – 2/24/25

# RAINBOWS AND GOD'S PROMISES

A rainbow over a river

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**Read: GENESIS 9:8-17**

**8**Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: **9**“I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you **10**and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. **11**I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

**12**And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: **13**I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. **14**Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, **15**I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. **16**Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”

**17**So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. GENESIS 9:13

While I stood watching the amazing power of Niagara Falls, I noticed that other tourists suddenly began taking photos. looking in the same direction, I saw a rainbow had appeared-arching across the river. It seemed to begin at the base of the Horseshoe Falls, ending at the base of the American Falls.

In reality, there's no end to a rainbow. A rainbow is a full circle, something I've seen only once. I was gazing out an airplane window when the sun-shining in just the right direction-revealed a full circle rainbow in the distance above the clouds. I sat enthralled with the sight until the plane turned and the circle disappeared.

That rainbow gave me much to consider-how God has no beginning or end, and that He reveals His promises to us no matter where we are. Our never-ending, eternal God “set [His] rainbow in the clouds" (GENESIS 9:13) as a promise to never flood the earth again "to destroy all life" (v. 15). Even today, our Creator shares His reminder of that promise with us, His creation (vv.13-16).

Isaiah 40:28 says, "The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth .... No one can measure the depths of his understanding" (NLT). What an amazing thought! We will have eternity to learn about our promise keeper, and we'll never reach the ultimate depth of His understanding.

**BRENT HACKETT**

What attributes of God do you think about when you see a rainbow? How do His promises encourage you?

Thank You, Father, for creating rainbows and revealing them to me as confirmation of Your promise to me.

**INSIGHT**

The word covenant first appears in Genesis 6:18 when God says to Noah, “I will establish my covenant with you." Though the context in which this word is used determines its specific meaning, broadly speaking, the word covenant refers to a "formal agreement between two or more parties." Sometimes, as with God's covenant with Noah (9:8-17) and Abraham (17:9-14), a sign is associated with it. In addition to the Noahic and Abrahamic covenants, other covenants found in the Old Testament include the Mosaic (EXODUS 19-24), Davidic (2 SAMUEL 7), and the New Covenants (JEREMIAH 31:31-34).

**ARTHUR JACKSON**

# God Calling – 2/24/25

# Share Everything

**Silently the work of the Spirit is done.**

Already Love is drawing others to you. Take all who come as sent by Me, and give them a royal welcome. It will surprise you, all that I have planned for you.

Welcome all who come with the love of both your hearts. You may not see the work. Today they may not need you. Tomorrow they may need you. I may send you strange visitors. Make each desire to return. Nobody must come and feel unwanted.

Share your Love, your Joy, your Happiness, your time, your food, gladly with all. Such wonders will unfold. You see it all but in bud now -- the glory of the open flower is beyond all your telling. Love, Joy, Peace, in richest abundance -- only believe. Give out Love and all you can with a glad free heart and hand. Use all you can for others, and back will come such countless stores and blessings.

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ,  
 and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." 2 Corinthians 5:18