

LIGHT FROM THE WORD

SEPTEMBER–NOVEMBER 2026

volume 76 • number 1

inside

Light from God's Word

Daily Devotionals

Daily Bible Readings

Meet the Writers

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Published by Wesleyan Publishing House

13300 Olivo Road, Suite 100

Fishers, Indiana 46037 USA

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ISBN: 978-1-63257-691-0

This quarter's Scriptures follow the Scope and Sequence found in *Wesley Bible Student* or Daily Bible Readings in *Wesley Bible Lesson Commentary*, Volume 5, Unit 1.

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Light from God's Word

Dear Reader,

Can you imagine a life without cars, air-conditioning, or even microwave ovens? Our lives today are much better than the labor-intensive "old days." Life is far better, too, for post-Calvary believers than it was for those who lived in Old Testament times.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews begins by appealing to those who were drifting away from the Christian faith, preferring the old covenant form of Judaism. He urged faithfulness, explaining that Jesus—God's risen Son and our Lord—is a *better* high priest. Through him, we can approach the throne of grace at any time and lay all requests or burdens there.

Before Christ, the old covenant required priests to offer sacrifices for sin. But by offering his own blood on the cross, Jesus, a *better* sacrifice, removed our sins forever. The old covenant could never make people holy, it only showed the desperate need for a *better* covenant. Today all who have trusted in Jesus for salvation have the new covenant written on their hearts.

While studying Hebrews, marvel at the privileges that God's redeemed children enjoy. But with privilege comes responsibility, so let us pursue holiness, live by faith, and follow Jesus loyally all the way home!

Wesleyan Publishing House Editorial Team

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*When God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,
"Let all God's angels worship him." (Heb. 1:6)*

Success in America is mostly about money and fame. As a little girl, my American dream was to become a famous writer, have a luxurious marriage, and obtain lots of wealth. I dreamed of one day owning all my heart desired, including the praise of others. I longed to win awards and perhaps even have one of my works made into a movie. I would become rich and famous. My name would flow from the mouths of others. That, for me, was the ultimate level of success. What I didn't realize was that I was asking to be God.

See, the Bible tells us there is only One who deserves this type of praise. The Bible does not instruct Christ followers to work harder or do more until they are applauded and recognized by their peers, nor does it instruct us to praise and honor those around in that way. In fact, the Bible is very specific in that only God deserves ultimate praise. He, through his unconditional love, mercy, and grace, deserves all praise for the gift of unmerited salvation.

Yet, yielding the spotlight is no easy task. Our egos crave attention. What matters most is not the attention our actions bring, nor the financial reward earned. What matters most is the intent of the heart. All that we do must come from a place of worship.

—Tara Klein

Hebrews 1:5–6

REPLACE A WORLDLY DREAM OF YOURS WITH GIVING PRAISE TO GOD.

*"Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever."
(Heb. 1:8)*

As a child, death is extremely hard to understand. When my father died, it was devastating. I could not understand why he was taken away from me. Despite assurances he would always be with me and adults explaining how he was not really gone, I knew it was not true. I saw him at the funeral home in the casket and I watched as he was physically lowered into the ground. He was gone! The experience caused me to wonder if there was anything I could depend on without the fear of one day having it taken away.

When Jesus died on the cross, he overcame the world we live in and established his eternal throne. Thus, for those who love God, life continues eternally with him. He transcends time. The physical death of our loved ones is not indicative of the ending of his reign. Rather, if we choose personal salvation through him, our lives continue forever. There are no additional battles or wars he must overcome. There are no additional demons he must defeat. It is done.

Sometimes my focus on the world overtakes my knowledge of the finality of Jesus' sacrifice. It is imperative to always know Jesus is enough. God reigns over his kingdom and he cannot be overthrown. Eternal life through salvation is an eternal gift available to all.

—Tara Klein

Hebrews 1:7-9

**PAUSE TODAY AND GIVE THANKS FOR A SALVATION UNEARNED,
UNDENIABLE, AND UNCHANGEABLE.**

*"You remain the same, and your years will never end."
(Heb. 1:12)*

As a new mom, there is nothing more precious than holding your newborn baby. Yet, those moments fade away just as quickly as they occur. When I had my son, it was a life-changing moment. I remember just sitting and staring at him in wonder. Yet, before I realized it, my newborn baby was walking, talking, and developing relationships apart from me. He grew. He changed. And the reality of his pending independence was hard to ignore. As much as I wanted to keep him small and in my arms, that's not how the world works. Mentally, we grow and mature based on the experiences we have in life, while physically, we grow and mature based on our genes and behaviors.

God, however, is unchanging. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. And, while this is a concept that is somewhat difficult for us to understand, it provides a level of assurance otherwise unattainable. We do not have to worry that our salvation has an expiration date or that his promises will run dry.

As parents, we know our babies will one day grow up. They will create their own families and live their own lives. However, as Christ followers we can rest in the knowledge that our *Abba*, Father, will remain the same. We can lean into God knowing he will always be exactly who he is right now.

—Tara Klein

Hebrews 1:10–12

**REPLACE AN UNPREDICTABLE WORRY WITH A THOUGHT
OF GOD'S PREDICTABLE LOVE.**

*"Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet." (Heb. 1:13)*

I was teased as a child. And, after several years of enduring harsh words, I developed a defensive spirit. They were hurting me and I wanted to hurt them in return. I wanted to make them pay. I wanted to lash out at the individuals who were taunting me. In my eyes, they were my enemies. However, as a shy and timid child, speaking out against them was not an option. Instead, I chose to avoid my perpetrators. Rather than confront them, I found it easier to become friends with the teachers and spend my time socializing with them. At their side, I felt safe.

As Christ followers we have the ultimate friend to run to when someone is mistreating us. We don't have to seek revenge on those who hurt us mentally, physically, or spiritually. We can stand in community with the One who sits at the right hand of God. He can intercede for us against our enemies and defeat them.

As a teased child, I sat next to my teachers for comfort. Now, I can find comfort in knowing Jesus is sitting next to God. And that he intercedes for those who know and love him, protecting them and placing enemies under his feet. Jesus will remain at God's right hand, interceding, until he returns to earth to claim his followers.

—Tara Klein

Hebrews 1:13-14

SURRENDER AN ENEMY TO THE ONE WHO HAS THE POWER TO SUBDUCE.

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (Heb. 1:14)

Serving others brings me joy. I led a team of approximately fifteen real estate agents several years ago. And, as the team leader, I recognized the team was only as successful as our poorest performing agent. Thus, I spent more time helping the agents who performed poorly rather than focusing on the agents who were already successful and profitable. This did not go over well. The norm is to follow the 80/20 rule. Since 20 percent of the agents bring in 80 percent of the income, team leaders should focus on improving the productivity of the performing 20 percent even more. However, I felt that despite its theoretical accuracy in business, it was spiritually incorrect. It's important to serve and encourage the 80 percent who are struggling to perform. Rather than serve up the profitability scale, as most do, I decided to serve down and raise the performance levels of the 80 percent.

As disciples of Christ, we are called to follow Jesus' example and go after the lost sheep. It is not our primary focus to serve those who are already saved. That responsibility belongs to God's army—his angels are called to watch over us. They will protect us as we go forth to protect those outside of the family.

Spiritually, God's kingdom is designed to serve downward. When leaders learn to serve those who follow them, then God's kingdom profits from raising everyone up.

—Tara Klein

Hebrews 1:1–14

LOOK FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE A SERVANT LEADER.

*I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices
in your salvation. (Ps. 13:5)*

Our feelings often lie and try to control us. And with the introduction of social media, we find ourselves experiencing the ups and downs of our feelings more than ever before. Many of us spend a significant amount of time on our phones checking to see what our friends are posting. We also spend quite a bit of time examining the responses to our own posts. Research shows that when we receive positive responses, such as likes on a post, it triggers the production of dopamine, a chemical associated with pleasure. The production of this chemical causes us to feel happy and experience an emotional high. When the dopamine leaves our body, our emotional high and happiness often do the same. Rather than basing our joy on objective truth, we allow our feelings to determine when we are happy.

The Word tells us to place our joy and happiness in the unchanging truth of God's unconditional love and gift of salvation. And when we allow ourselves to find joy in the things of God, then we will experience never-ending joy that exists even when our feelings don't align.

The world and all it has to offer cannot provide a joy that transcends feelings. True joy and happiness that transcends comes from the objective truth of God's unfailing love.

—Tara Klein

Psalm 13:1-6

**FIND JOY IN GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU
WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES STEAL YOUR HAPPINESS.**



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DAILY BIBLE READINGS

By reading for fifteen minutes each day, you can read every chapter of the Bible in one year. Begin anytime!

september

1. Psalms 103–105
2. Psalms 106–108
3. Psalms 109–115
4. Psalms 116—119:64
5. Psalm 119:65–176
6. Psalms 120–131
7. Psalms 132–138
8. Psalms 139–144
9. Psalms 145–150
10. Proverbs 1–3
11. Proverbs 4–7
12. Proverbs 8–10
13. Proverbs 11–13
14. Proverbs 14–16
15. Proverbs 17–19
16. Proverbs 20–22
17. Proverbs 23–25
18. Proverbs 26–28
19. Proverbs 29–31
20. Titus & Philemon
21. Ecclesiastes 1–4
22. Ecclesiastes 5–8
23. Ecclesiastes 9–12
24. Song of Songs 1–4
25. Song of Songs 5–8
26. Hebrews 1–4
27. Hebrews 5–7
28. Hebrews 8–10
29. Hebrews 11–13
30. Isaiah 1–3

october

1. Isaiah 4–6
2. Isaiah 7–9
3. Isaiah 10–13
4. Isaiah 14–16
5. Isaiah 17–21
6. Isaiah 22–25
7. Isaiah 26–28
8. Isaiah 29–31
9. Isaiah 32–34
10. Isaiah 35–37
11. Isaiah 38–40
12. Isaiah 41–42
13. Isaiah 43–44
14. Isaiah 45–47
15. Isaiah 48–50
16. Isaiah 51–53
17. Isaiah 54–57
18. Isaiah 58–60
19. Isaiah 61–64
20. Isaiah 65–66
21. James 1–5
22. Jeremiah 1–3
23. Jeremiah 4–5
24. Jeremiah 6–8
25. Jeremiah 9–11
26. Jeremiah 12–14
27. Jeremiah 15–17
28. Jeremiah 18–21
29. Jeremiah 22–23
30. Jeremiah 24–26
31. Jeremiah 27–29

november

1. Jeremiah 30–31
2. Jeremiah 32–34
3. Jeremiah 35–37
4. Jeremiah 38–41
5. Jeremiah 42–45
6. Jeremiah 46–48
7. Jeremiah 49
8. Jeremiah 50
9. Jeremiah 51–52
10. Lamentations 1–2
11. Lamentations 3–5
12. 1 Peter 1–2
13. 1 Peter 3–5
14. Ezekiel 1–4
15. Ezekiel 5–9
16. Ezekiel 10–13
17. Ezekiel 14–16
18. Ezekiel 17–19
19. Ezekiel 20–21
20. Ezekiel 22–23
21. Ezekiel 24–26
22. Ezekiel 27–28
23. Ezekiel 29–31
24. Ezekiel 32–33
25. Ezekiel 34–36
26. Ezekiel 37–39
27. Ezekiel 40–42
28. Ezekiel 43–45
29. Ezekiel 46–48
30. 2 Peter 1–3

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GROW

But the Israelites were exceedingly
greatly, increased in number
that the land was full

In the mailbox of our new
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to multiply.

With all they were facing
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encounter life's challenges
is so easy to give up, give
if some challenges are the

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