

STEVENS CREEK CHURCH

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GUIDED PRAYER JOURNAL

“

PRAYER

is the way we know God, the way we finally treat God as God. Prayer is the key to everything we need to do and be in life. We must learn to pray. We have to.”

— TIM KELLER

WELCOME

Prayer is a natural human instinct—it tunes the heart to God. Prayer is awe, intimacy, struggle—yet it is the way to reality. There is nothing more important than learning how to converse with God. There is nothing so great as prayer. Prayer, at its core, is communion with God, and this Prayer Journal equips you with the necessary tools to do just that—commune with God. Our goal in prayer is a genuine, personal connection with God; therefore, we will learn to pray by immersing ourselves in the language of the Bible. The reading of Scripture and the offering of prayer anchor your life down in the true, living God. This booklet's goal is to equip you with the means for both. These prayers are found in Scripture. Pray them as you would an individual prayer, training your soul in the language of God.

PRINCIPLES OF PRAYER:

Books have been written, classes taught, and seminars have been built around the “how to” of prayer. This Journal leans into three simple principles for prayer. Think of them as heart postures we must assume before we approach God and as we are in conversation with God. These principles will help strengthen your approach to God.

- 1. Reverence of God:** We must have a sense of the seriousness and magnitude of prayer. It is a personal audience and conversation with the Almighty God, and there is weight to that. The very fact that we have access to God's attention and presence should concentrate our thoughts and elevate our hearts.

Approach prayer with profound respect, recognizing the magnitude of having a direct audience with the Almighty Creator.

- 2. Dependence on God:** Dependence on God involves a sense of spiritual insufficiency and a readiness to recognize our own faults. Crucial to true prayer is confession and repentance, acknowledging our shortcomings. The awareness of our deep dependence drives us to seek God even more intensely. Prayer both requires and empowers the abandonment of self-justification, blame shifting, self-pity, and spiritual pride.

Embrace your spiritual insufficiency, confess shortcomings, and abandon self-justification, allowing your need for God to drive deeper connection

- 3. Confidence in God:** We must trust God even when things are not going as we wish. This practice says, "Here's what I need God, but you know best." The posture of confidence leaves all our needs and desires in His hands in a way that is possible only through prayer. We should pray confidently for the answer to our prayers, but we should also pray confidently because He won't give us everything we want. God will not give us anything contrary to His will, which will always include what is best for us in the long run.

Trust God's wisdom completely, submitting your desires while believing He provides what's truly best according to His perfect will.

HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

Prayer is both an art and a discipline—a sacred conversation with the Creator that transforms us from the inside out. This journal is designed to guide you on a 21-day journey through prayers found directly in Scripture. Each day will help you develop deeper communion with God and establish patterns that will enrich your spiritual life long after these pages are filled.

Why are we praying Scripture? Praying Scripture helps us align our hearts with God's Word and His will. It gives us words when we don't know what to pray and deepens our trust in God's promises. Scripture teaches us to pray with truth, faith, and confidence. When you can't find the words for what you're feeling—*pray Scripture*.

THE JOURNEY STRUCTURE

This journal takes you through three weekly focuses of prayer:

1. **Loving God (Week One):** Prayers that deepen your understanding of God's character and cultivate intimate communion with Him.
2. **Bearing His Image (Week Two):** Prayers focused on transformation, repentance, and becoming more like Jesus through God's refining work.
3. **Living on Mission (Week Three):** Prayers that align your heart with God's purposes and empower you to participate in His redemptive work.

DAILY PRAYER FORMAT

Each day follows a consistent format to help you engage meaningfully with Scripture:

Context: Background information about the prayer's original setting and purpose, connecting it to your own experience.

Read and Pray: Start by reading the Scripture passage aloud, allowing the inspired words to become your own prayer.

Make it Personal: Apply the three principles of prayer:

- **Reverence:** acknowledge God's majesty and holiness
- **Dependence:** recognize your need for God's grace and guidance
- **Confidence:** trust in God's character and promises as you pray

Go Deeper: Reflective questions and insights to enhance your understanding of the prayer's themes and implications.

Daily Challenge: A practical application to carry the prayer beyond your quiet time into everyday life.

5 STEPS TO MAXIMIZE THIS PRAYER JOURNAL

1. **Be consistent:** Set aside the same time each day, if possible—establishing rhythm strengthens prayer habits.
2. **Create space:** Find a quiet place free from distractions where you can focus entirely on communion with God.
3. **Write freely:** Use the journal pages to record insights, questions, and how God is speaking to you through each prayer..
4. **Pray physically:** Don't hesitate to kneel, raise hands, or adopt postures that express your heart's attitude in prayer.
5. **Expect transformation:** These aren't just exercises—they're encounters with the living God who shapes us through prayer.

DAY 22 AND BEYOND

After completing this journal, you'll find suggestions for continuing your prayer journey and integrating what you've learned into your ongoing spiritual disciplines. The Appendix offers a collection of psalms categorized by need, providing ongoing resources for praying Scripture.

Remember that prayer isn't about perfect words or flawless technique—it's about authentic connection with God. Prayer is the way we know God. Through these pages, may you discover the joy and the power of conversing with your Creator.

WEEK 1

Loving God

“

Prayer is the place of
refuge for every worry, a
foundation for cheerfulness,
a source of constant
happiness, a protection
against sadness.”

— ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

In Psalm 1:1-4, the term “law” (Torah) primarily refers to the instruction of God, centered in the first five books of Moses. However, in Hebrew thought, Torah is not merely legal code; it is God’s whole instruction and teaching, encompassing His will, character, and covenantal ways. Over time, faithful Jews and later Christians came to see that God’s instruction is not confined to just the first five books of the Bible, but unfolds through the Prophets, the Writings, and in the fullness of time, the words and person of Christ—the Word made flesh (John 1:14). Thus, “to delight in the law of the Lord” (Psalm 1:2), is to delight in the entirety of God’s revealed Word. For the Christian, Psalm 1 invites us to meditate on the full story of God—from creation and covenant to Christ and the Church. The one who delights in God’s Word, who chews on it day and night, becomes rooted like a tree by streams of water: nourished, fruitful, and resilient. The law is the living voice of God, calling us to abide in Christ, to follow His way, and to be shaped by the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. There is no better way to draw near to God than praying His own words back to Him. Chew on these words, meditate on them, and dwell in His presence by offering up Scripture to our Father.

DAY 1

PSALM 63:1-8

*O God, you are my God;
I earnestly search for you.
My soul thirsts for you;
my whole body longs for you
in this parched and weary land
where there is no water.
I've seen you in your sanctuary
and gazed upon your power and glory.*

*Your unfailing love is better than life itself;
how I praise you!*

*I will praise you as long as I live,
lifting up my hands to you in prayer.*

*You satisfy me more than the richest feast.
I will praise you with songs of joy.*

*I lie awake thinking of you,
meditating on you through the night.*

*Because you are my helper,
I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings.*

*I cling to you;
your strong right hand holds me securely.*

- **Context:** David wrote this psalm while in the wilderness of Judah, physically parched and spiritually hungry for God's presence. His desperate circumstances heightened his spiritual longing. This prayer is for you if you find your soul thirsting for God in a dry season.
- **Read and Pray through Psalm 63:1-8**



MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** As you pray, consider what it means that God is worthy of earnest seeking. How does David's language—*"O God, you are my God"* (v. 1)—reflect intimacy and reverence? In your prayers, acknowledge God's glory that David witnesses in the sanctuary (v. 2).
- **Dependence:** Identify where your soul feels *"dry and weary"* (v. 1) today. Express your thirst for God as honestly as David did. Where have you been seeking satisfaction apart from God? As you pray, confess these diversions as you turn your longing toward Him alone.
- **Confidence:** Reflect on David's certainty that God's *"steadfast love is better than life"* (v. 3). Despite his wilderness circumstances, he trusts in God's protection—*"in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy"* (v. 7). What specific hope can you express today in your prayers, knowing God's right hand upholds you (v. 8)?

- **Go Deeper** David's experience in the wilderness parallels Israel's years of desert wandering—both learned that physical deprivation can lead to deeper spiritual awareness. Consider how your own "wilderness seasons" have revealed God's presence in unique ways. Brainstorm in your prayer journal how current difficulties might actually be creating space for greater intimacy with God.
- **Daily Challenge** Throughout today, transform moments of physical thirst into reminders of spiritual thirst. Each time you reach for water, pause to whisper a line from Psalm 63 to God. Notice how this practice makes you more aware of your dependence on God throughout the day.

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DAY 2

JONAH 2:1-9

Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from inside the fish. He said,

*"I cried out to the Lord in my great trouble,
and he answered me.*

*I called to you from the land of the dead,^[b]
and Lord, you heard me!*

*You threw me into the ocean depths,
and I sank down to the heart of the sea.*

*The mighty waters engulfed me;
I was buried beneath your wild and stormy waves.*

*Then I said, 'O Lord, you have driven me from your presence.
Yet I will look once more toward your holy Temple.'*

*"I sank beneath the waves,
and the waters closed over me.
Seaweed wrapped itself around my head.*

*I sank down to the very roots of the mountains.
I was imprisoned in the earth,
whose gates lock shut forever.
But you, O Lord my God,
snatched me from the jaws of death!*

*As my life was slipping away,
I remembered the Lord.
And my earnest prayer went out to you
in your holy Temple.
Those who worship false gods
turn their backs on all God's mercies.*

*But I will offer sacrifices to you with songs of praise,
and I will fulfill all my vows.
For my salvation comes from the Lord alone."*

2

- **Context:** This prayer occurs inside the belly of a fish after Jonah fled from God's calling. His desperate situation becomes the birthplace of renewed faith and surrender. If you've ever run from God's voice or found yourself in circumstances of your own making, Jonah's prayer speaks to you today.
- **Read and Pray through Jonah 2:1-9**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Jonah acknowledges God's sovereignty even from *"the belly of Sheol"* (v. 2). Consider how God remains enthroned regardless of your circumstances. How might acknowledging God's holiness—*"I shall again look upon your holy temple"* (v. 4)—reorient your perspective amid difficulty? Pray through a lens that recognizes the holiness of your Creator.
 - **Dependence:** Jonah confesses, *"I am driven away from your sight"* (v. 4). How have you fled from God's presence of calling? Did it leave you empty? What are some *"weeds wrapped around your head"* (v. 5)—entanglements threatening to drown your faith? Pray, acknowledging your need for divine rescue from these entanglements.
 - **Confidence:** Notice Jonah's declaration of thanksgiving even before his deliverance: *"Salvation belongs to the Lord!"* (v. 9). He proclaims this from inside the fish. What would it look like for you to trust God's salvation before seeing your circumstances change? Pray in confidence as Jonah did—that even amid a storm, you can trust in the Salvation of the Lord.
- **Go Deeper** Jonah's experience creates a vivid metaphor for death and resurrection that Jesus himself references (cf. Matthew 12:40). Consider how your own spiritual journey has included "death" to self-will and "resurrection" to new obedience. Where might God be calling you to die to your preferences to fulfill His purposes? Be honest in your self-reflection as you write down answers in your prayer journal.
 - **Daily Challenge** When faced with difficult choices today, ask yourself, "Am I running toward God or away from Him?" Remember Jonah's experience when tempted to flee from God's direction. Choose one small act of obedience in an area where you've been resistant.

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DAY 3

2 SAMUEL 7:18–29

Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and prayed,

“Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? And now, Sovereign Lord, in addition to everything else, you speak of giving your servant a lasting dynasty! Do you deal with everyone this way, O Sovereign Lord?[a]

“What more can I say to you? You know what your servant is really like, Sovereign Lord. Because of your promise and according to your will, you have done all these great things and have made them known to your servant.

“How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you. We have never even heard of another God like you! What other nation on earth is like your people Israel? What other nation, O God, have you redeemed from slavery to be your own people? You made a great name for yourself when you redeemed your people from Egypt. You performed awesome miracles and drove out the nations and gods that stood in their way.[b] You made Israel your very own people forever, and you, O Lord, became their God.

“And now, O Lord God, I am your servant; do as you have promised concerning me and my family. Confirm it as a promise that will last forever. And may your name be honored forever so that everyone will say, ‘The Lord of Heaven’s Armies is God over Israel!’ And may the house of your servant David continue before you forever.

“O Lord of Heaven’s Armies, God of Israel, I have been bold enough to pray this prayer to you because you have revealed all this to your servant, saying, ‘I will build a house for you—a dynasty of kings!’ For you are God, O Sovereign Lord. Your words are truth, and you have promised these good things to your servant. And now, may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you have spoken, and when you grant a blessing to your servant, O Sovereign Lord, it is an eternal blessing!”

3

- **Context:** King David wanted to build God a temple, but God promised to make David a “house”—a dynasty. This prayer is David’s humble, awestruck response to God’s covenant promises. If you’ve ever been humbled by God’s goodness or surprised by His plans that differ from yours, David’s prayer resonates with your experience.
- **Read and Pray through 2 Samuel 7:18–29**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** David sits “*before the Lord*” (v. 18) in wonder, asking, “*Who am I, O Lord God?*” Pause to consider the vast difference between God’s greatness and your own position. Pray with this difference at the forefront of your mind. How does God’s promise to establish His purposes through generations inspire your worship and prayers?
 - **Dependence:** Notice David’s acknowledgement that everything he has comes from God’s hand. “*You know your servant, O Lord God!*” (v. 20) reflects his transparency before God. What areas of your life do you need to surrender more completely to God’s sovereign purposes? Pray knowing that God already sees the depths of your heart and desires. Ask Him for the strength to come to Him in honesty and trust, fully dependent on His grace.
 - **Confidence:** David prays with assurance because God himself has spoken: “*For you, O Lord God, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever*” (v. 29). Pray with the confidence that God’s promises still hold true today.
- **Go Deeper** The reversal in the passage is striking—David wanted to build something for God, but God promised to make something greater for David. Consider areas where your own plans for serving God may differ from His plans for you. How might surrendering your agenda lead to something more significant than you originally envisioned? Self-reflect in your prayer journal.
 - **Daily Challenge** Take time today to write down one specific promise from Scripture that speaks to your current situation. Place it somewhere visible and return to it throughout the day, declaring like David, “*Your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant*” (v. 28).

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DAY 4

LUKE 2:29-32

*"Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace,
as you have promised.*

*I have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared for all people.*

*He is a light to reveal God to the nations,
and he is the glory of your people Israel!"*

- **Context:** Simeon was an elderly man who had waited his entire life to see the Messiah. The Holy Spirit promised that Simeon wouldn't die before seeing *"the Lord's Christ"* (Luke 2:26). When Mary and Joseph brought baby Jesus to the temple, Simeon's long wait came to an end. If you've been waiting on God to fulfill a promise or searching for a meaningful purpose, Simeon's prayer can speak to you.
- **Read and Pray through Luke 2:29-32**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Simeon recognizes the infant Jesus as the embodiment of God's salvation. Reflect on the wonder of God becoming human. How does Simeon's reverence for this seemingly ordinary baby challenge your own perception of where and how God reveals Himself? Pray, knowing God can reveal His power wherever and however He sees fit.
- **Dependence:** *"Now you are letting your servant depart in peace"* (v. 29). This reflects Simeon's understanding that his life's purposes found fulfillment in Christ. Where have you sought meaning and purpose apart from God's plan? Surrender these self-directed pursuits as you pray this prayer throughout the day.
- **Confidence:** Simeon declares that Jesus will be a *"light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel"* (v. 32). In your prayers, express confidence in God's salvation plan that embraces all people. How does this universal scope of redemption give you hope?

- **Go Deeper** Simeon's long wait cultivated a spiritual sensitivity that allowed him to recognize God's presence when others saw just another baby. As you reflect in your prayer journals, consider how patience in your own spiritual journey might be developing a deeper capacity to perceive God's activity in unexpected forms and places.
- **Daily Challenge** Practice looking for Christ in three unexpected places today. Pause when you find Him and pray, *"My eyes have seen your salvation"* (v. 30). This might include seeing Christ in your co-workers, in the natural world, listening for His voice in wise counsel, or silence.

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DAY 5

2 CHRONICLES 6:18–21

“But will God really live on earth among people? Why, even the highest heavens cannot contain you. How much less this Temple I have built! Nevertheless, listen to my prayer and my plea, O Lord my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is making to you. May you watch over this Temple day and night, this place where you have said you would put your name. May you always hear the prayers I make toward this place. May you hear the humble and earnest requests from me and your people Israel when we pray toward this place. Yes, hear us from heaven where you live, and when you hear, forgive.”

- **Context:** This prayer is part of Solomon’s dedication of the newly built temple. Despite creating this magnificent structure, Solomon recognizes that no earthly building can contain the infinite God. If you struggle with feeling God’s presence or wonder how the infinite God relates to finite humans, Solomon’s prayer offers profound insight.
- **Read and Pray through 2 Chronicles 6:18–21**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Solomon begins with a cosmic perspective: *“But will God indeed dwell with man on earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you”* (v. 18). There is power in recognizing God’s transcendence—His vastness beyond all creation. As you pray, acknowledge God’s immense power and reflect on how it deepens your worship today.
- **Dependence:** *“Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O LORD my God”* (v. 19). Despite building the greatest temple of his time, Solomon approaches God with humility—dependence. Where do accomplishments or status tempt you toward self-sufficiency rather than dependence? Pray today, wary of the dangerous posture of self-sufficiency.
- **Confidence:** Solomon trusts that God’s *“eyes may be open day and night toward this house”* (v. 20). Through Christ, you have become God’s temple (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19). In your prayer, express confidence that God attends constantly to you as His dwelling place.

- **Go Deeper** Solomon’s temple represented God’s presence among His people, yet Solomon understood its limitations. Consider the tension between God’s transcendence—Him being beyond all creation—and God’s immanence—Him being intimately present with us. Write in your prayer journal, answering this question: How does Christ perfectly resolve this tension by being fully God and fully present with humanity?
- **Daily Challenge** Throughout today, view your body as God’s temple. When choosing what you consume, how you speak, or where you go, pause to ask, “Am I treating God’s temple with reverence?” Allow this awareness to guide your decisions.

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DAY 6

PSALM 27:4–9

*The one thing I ask of the Lord—
the thing I seek most—
is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
delighting in the Lord's perfections
and meditating in his Temple.*

*For he will conceal me there when troubles come;
he will hide me in his sanctuary.
He will place me out of reach on a high rock.*

*Then I will hold my head high
above my enemies who surround me.
At his sanctuary I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy,
singing and praising the Lord with music.*

*Hear me as I pray, O Lord.
Be merciful and answer me!*

*My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me."
And my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming."*

*Do not turn your back on me.
Do not reject your servant in anger.
You have always been my helper.
Don't leave me now; don't abandon me,
O God of my salvation!*

- **Context** David wrote this amid threats and hostility, yet rather than focusing on his enemies, he focuses on his singular desire: dwelling in God's presence. If external pressures or distractions distract your attention from what matters most, David's focused prayer offers a recalibration for your soul.

- **Read and Pray through Psalm 27:4-9**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** *"One thing have I asked of the LORD...to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD"* (v. 4). Despite his responsibilities as king, David prioritizes seeking God's face above all else. What competes with God for your attention and devotion? Be honest with these priorities in your prayers today, recommitting to making God your *"one thing"* (v. 4).
- **Dependence:** David asks God to *"hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble"* (v. 5). Identify specific troubles that drive you to seek God's protection today. Acknowledge and pray on these particular areas where you feel vulnerable and need divine covering rather than self-protection.
- **Confidence:** *"And now my head shall be lifted up...I will sing and make melody to the Lord"* (v. 6). Despite current troubles, David expresses certainty in God's goodness breaking into his present reality. In what areas do you need to declare similar confidence today? Pray for and with the confidence that God is your *"very present help in trouble"* (Psalm 46:1).

- **Go Deeper** David's language of seeking God's "face" suggests an intimate relationship rather than mere religious practice. In Ancient Near Eastern culture, seeing someone's face meant you had their full attention and favor. Consider how your prayers might move beyond presenting requests to seeking God's very presence—His "face" turned toward you. Reflect on how seeking this communion might benefit your spiritual life in your prayer journal.
- **Daily Challenge** Set aside 10 minutes today for "seeking God's face" without any agenda other than being in His presence. Don't speak; simply gaze upon His beauty through contemplation. Notice how this practice differs from your usual prayer approach.

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DAY 7

1 SAMUEL 2:1-10

*"My heart rejoices in the Lord! The Lord has made me strong.
Now I have an answer for my enemies; I rejoice because you rescued me.*

*No one is holy like the Lord! There is no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God*

*"Stop acting so proud and haughty! Don't speak with such arrogance!
For the Lord is a God who knows what you have done;
he will judge your actions.*

*The bow of the mighty is now broken,
and those who stumbled are now strong.
Those who were well fed are now starving,
and those who were starving are now full.
The childless woman now has seven children,
and the woman with many children wastes away.*

*The Lord gives both death and life;
he brings some down to the grave but raises others up.*

*The Lord makes some poor and others rich;
he brings some down and lifts others up.*

*He lifts the poor from the dust and the needy from the garbage dump.
He sets them among princes, placing them in seats of honor.
For all the earth is the Lord's, and he has set the world in order.*

*"He will protect his faithful ones,
but the wicked will disappear in darkness.
No one will succeed by strength alone.*

*Those who fight against the Lord will be shattered.
He thunders against them from heaven;
the Lord judges throughout the earth.
He gives power to his king;
he increases the strength of his anointed one."*

- **Context:** Hannah had been barren and mocked for years before God answered her prayer for a son. After weaning Samuel, she fulfilled her vow by dedicating him to temple service. This triumphant prayer celebrates God's faithfulness. Hannah's praise will resonate with your journey if you've experienced the pain of waiting or the joy of seeing God work in seemingly impossible situations.
- **Read and Pray through 1 Samuel 2:1-10**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** *"There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none beside you; there is no rock like our God"* (v. 2). Hannah begins in exclusive worship, acknowledging God's unique holiness. How does recognizing God's incomparable nature change your approach to Him today? Pray with the language of Hannah—exclusive worship.
 - **Dependence:** Hannah acknowledges God's sovereignty over circumstances: *"The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts"* (v. 7). Where do you need to release control and trust God's authority over your situation? Surrender these specific outcomes to Him in your prayers today.
 - **Confidence:** *"He will guard the feet of his faithful ones... the LORD will judge the ends of the earth"* (vv. 9-10). Pray, expressing confidence in God's ultimate justice and protection. How does Hannah's assurance that God will fulfill His promises strengthen your faith in current uncertainties?
- **Go Deeper** Hannah's prayer reveals dramatic reversals—the strong broken, the weak strengthened; the full hiring themselves out for bread, the hungry ceasing to hunger. These themes reappear in "Mary's Magnificat" in Luke 1:46-55 ("magnificat" comes from the first word of the Latin: *Magnificat anima mea Dominum*—"my soul magnifies the Lord"). The prayer shows God's consistent pattern of exalting the humble. In your prayer journal, consider how this significant reversal challenges worldly values and comforts that society overlooks.
 - **Daily Challenge** Identify someone experiencing Hannah's pain of unfulfilled longing. Pray for them using Hannah's words of hope and divine reversal. If appropriate, reach out to encourage them with the reminder that God *"raises up the poor from the dust"* (v. 8).

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WEEK 2

Bearing His Image

“

Prayer is the raising of the mind and heart to God...not to merely ask for things, but to become like Him.”

— ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA

Jeremiah was a prophet during a time of national crisis. Judah was in moral and spiritual decline, on the brink of judgment and exile. In Jeremiah 18:1-6, God sends Jeremiah to a potter's house—not just to give him an object lesson, but to give the nation a visual parable of God's relationship with His people. In the potter's house, Jeremiah saw a lump of clay being shaped on the wheel, but it became misshapen, imperfect. The potter didn't throw it out. He reworked it, shaping it into something new. Then God spoke: "Can I not do with you as this potter has done?" (v. 5). God was talking to a nation, but He's also speaking to us. We are the clay. Sometimes stubborn. Sometimes cracked. Sometimes shaped by fear or pride. But the Potter doesn't give up. He reshapes, renews, and starts again. To become like Christ and bear His image is to be formed by the Potter's hands—to yield to His work in our hearts. It's not about polishing the outside but letting Him transform the inside. The process can be slow and uncomfortable, but it's never aimless. The Potter sees what we cannot: the image of His Son being formed in us. Pray these prayers, imagining yourself on the wheel—not finished, but in process. Offer your hardened places.

DAY 8

EPHESIANS 3:14–19

When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

- **Context:** Paul writes this prayer from prison, yet it overflows with spiritual richness. He prays for the Ephesian believers to be strengthened, rooted, and filled with Christ's love. If you long for deeper spiritual strength or a more profound experience of Christ's love, Paul's prayer offers a powerful blueprint for transformation.
- **Read and Pray through Ephesians 3:14–19**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Paul begins on his knees—*“I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named”* (vv. 14–15). Consider how your physical posture reflects your spiritual reverence. How does recognizing God as the Father of all creation shape your approach to Him? Try praying in a posture that physically recognizes God as the Father of the universe.
- **Dependence:** *“To be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being”* (v. 16). This verse acknowledges our need for supernatural empowerment. Where do you feel particularly weak or insufficient today? In your prayers, name these areas specifically, surrendering your inadequacy to God’s strength.
- **Confidence:** Paul prays with certainty that believers can *“comprehend...the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge”* (vv. 18–19). In your prayers, express confidence that God desires you to experience His love beyond intellectual understanding. How might being *“filled with all the fullness of God”* (v. 19) transform your daily life?

- **Go Deeper** This prayer’s progression reveals the actual order of spiritual formation: Christ dwelling in our hearts leads to being rooted in love, which enables us to comprehend Christ’s love, and results in being filled with God’s fullness. In your prayer journal, write how this pathway from Paul differs from mere behavior modification or spiritual self-improvement.
- **Daily Challenge** Set three alarms on your phone today. When each alarm sounds, pause to pray a portion of this prayer for yourself and someone else. Focus primarily on experiencing Christ’s love *“that surpasses knowledge”* (v. 19) in practical ways throughout your day.

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DAY 9

PSALM 51:1-12

*Have mercy on me, O God,
because of your unfailing love.
Because of your great compassion,
blot out the stain of my sins.*

*Wash me clean from my guilt.
Purify me from my sin.*

*For I recognize my rebellion;
it haunts me day and night.*

*Against you, and you alone, have I sinned;
I have done what is evil in your sight.*

*You will be proved right in what you say,
and your judgment against me is just.*

*For I was born a sinner—
yes, from the moment my mother conceived me.
But you desire honesty from the womb,
teaching me wisdom even there.*

*Purify me from my sins,[c] and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.*

*Oh, give me back my joy again;
you have broken me—
now let me rejoice.*

*Don't keep looking at my sins.
Remove the stain of my guilt.*

*Create in me a clean heart, O God.
Renew a loyal spirit within me.*

*Do not banish me from your presence,
and don't take your Holy Spirit[d] from me.*

*Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and make me willing to obey you.*

9

- **Context:** David wrote this Psalm after Nathan confronted him about his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. It's a raw prayer of repentance from someone who had fallen grievously. If you carry the burden of grave sin or struggle to believe God can restore you after failure, David's prayer offers a pathway to spiritual health.
- **Read and Pray through Psalm 51:1-12**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** David appeals to God's *"steadfast love"* (v. 1) and *"abundant mercy"* (v. 1)—divine attributes that remain unchanging despite human failure. How does recognizing God's consistent character, rather than your performance, inspire worship even amid confession? In your prayer today, focus on these powerful characteristics of God.
 - **Dependence:** *"Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight"* (v. 4). David takes full responsibility without excuses or blame-shifting. What sins do you need to confess with similar honesty? In your prayer, acknowledge your inability to cleanse yourself: *"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow"* (v. 7).
 - **Confidence:** David prays for renewal—*"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me"* (v. 10)—trusting that God can transform him internally. Pray today with the confidence that God desires to restore your *"joy of salvation"* (v. 12).
- **Go Deeper** David recognizes sin's depth: *"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity"* (v. 5). This doesn't excuse his actions but acknowledges sin's pervasive nature. Consider how this perspective balances personal responsibility with humanity's universal condition. Answer this question in your prayer journal: *"How does Christ's redemption address both our individual sins and our inherited sinful nature?"*
 - **Daily Challenge** Write down a specific sin that has hindered your spiritual growth. Confess it thoroughly using David's language. Then, physically destroy the paper to symbolize God's complete forgiveness. Throughout the day, counter guilt with prayer: *"Restore to me the joy of your salvation"* (v. 12).

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DAY 10

EZRA 9:5-15

At the time of the sacrifice, I stood up from where I had sat in mourning with my clothes torn. I fell to my knees and lifted my hands to the Lord my God. I prayed,

“O my God, I am utterly ashamed; I blush to lift up my face to you. For our sins are piled higher than our heads, and our guilt has reached to the heavens. From the days of our ancestors until now, we have been steeped in sin. That is why we and our kings and our priests have been at the mercy of the pagan kings of the land. We have been killed, captured, robbed, and disgraced, just as we are today.

“But now we have been given a brief moment of grace, for the Lord our God has allowed a few of us to survive as a remnant. He has given us security in this holy place. Our God has brightened our eyes and granted us some relief from our slavery. For we were slaves, but in his unfailing love our God did not abandon us in our slavery. Instead, he caused the kings of Persia to treat us favorably. He revived us so we could rebuild the Temple of our God and repair its ruins. He has given us a protective wall in Judah and Jerusalem.

“And now, O our God, what can we say after all of this? For once again we have abandoned your commands! Your servants the prophets warned us when they said, ‘The land you are entering to possess is totally defiled by the detestable practices of the people living there. From one end to the other, the land is filled with corruption. Don’t let your daughters marry their sons! Don’t take their daughters as wives for your sons. Don’t ever promote the peace and prosperity of those nations. If you follow these instructions, you will be strong and will enjoy the good things the land produces, and you will leave this prosperity to your children forever.’

“Now we are being punished because of our wickedness and our great guilt. But we have actually been punished far less than we deserve, for you, our God, have allowed some of us to survive as a remnant. But even so, we are again breaking your commands and intermarrying with people who do these detestable things. Won’t your anger be enough to destroy us, so that even this little remnant no longer survives? O Lord, God of Israel, you are just. We come before you in our guilt as nothing but an escaped remnant, though in such a condition none of us can stand in your presence.”

10

- **Context:** Ezra returned from exile to find the Israelites had intermarried with idolatrous nations, violating God's commands. This prayer models corporate confession—taking responsibility for community sin. If you recognize patterns of compromise in your workplace, family, or nation—or if you feel the weight of shared cultural sins—Ezra's prayer provides a template for honest intercession.
- **Read and Pray through Ezra 9:5-15**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Ezra approaches God with physical demonstration of humility—torn garments, on his knees, hands spread out. How might your physical posture enhance reverence during prayer? Pray with a posture that reveres God's holiness—a holiness before which sin becomes profoundly serious.
 - **Dependence:** *"O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift my face to you"* (v. 6). Ezra identifies with his community's sin even if he personally avoided some behaviors. What corporate sins (family, workplace, nation) might you need to confess? Pray, admitting specific ways you've benefited from or participated in these wrongs.
 - **Confidence:** Ezra trusts God's character despite Israel's unfaithfulness: *"You, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved"* (v. 13). God's mercy always softens His judgment. Pray, confronting serious sin while being reassured of this balance in God's character.
- **Go Deeper** Ezra's prayer reveals the tension between God's mercy and the consequences of sin. Even though the people were still *"slaves"* (v. 9), God had shown them great kindness through the kings of Persia (v. 9). This same struggle is evident in our own lives: we are forgiven, yet we sometimes still face the consequences of our choices. We are free from sin's penalty, yet God continues to refine us through discipline. Write in your prayer journal times in your life when it was clear God shaped your character through His discipline.
 - **Daily Challenge** Research one issue of social or corporate sin that affects our nation. Spend time in confession for this issue using Ezra's language of corporate responsibility. Is there a tangible action you can take to address this issue as evidence of genuine repentance?

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DAY 11

MATTHEW 26:36–46

Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, “Sit here while I go over there to pray.” He took Peter and Zebedee’s two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. He told them, “My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, “My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.”

Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Couldn’t you watch with me even one hour? Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!”

Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, “My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away[a] unless I drink it, your will be done.” When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn’t keep their eyes open.

So he went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. Then he came to the disciples and said, “Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But look—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Up, let’s be going. Look, my betrayer is here!”

- **Context:** Jesus prays in Gethsemane hours before His arrest and crucifixion. This prayer reveals His human struggle to accept the Father’s will and His disciples’ failure to support Him in His darkest hour. If you face difficult choices between your will and God’s, Jesus’ prayer offers profound guidance.
- **Read and Pray through Matthew 26:36–46**



MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Jesus addresses God intimately yet respectfully—“*My Father*” (v. 39). His reverence is demonstrated through submission: “*Not as I will, but as you will*” (v. 39). As you pray today, make a conscious attempt to balance loving intimacy with appropriate reverence for God’s sovereignty.
 - **Dependence:** “*My soul is very sorrowful, even to death*” (v. 38). Jesus expresses His human emotions honestly to God. What feelings have you considered too harmful or inappropriate to express in prayer? As you pray, bring these emotions honestly before God, acknowledging your dependency on His understanding.
 - **Confidence:** Jesus returns three times to the same prayer, demonstrating persistent trust in the Father’s goodness despite His request not being granted as desired. Are there prayers you stopped praying because you felt that God had left them unattended? Return to these prayers with persistence and confidence, just as Christ did.
-
- **Go Deeper** The disciples’ failure—“*Could you not watch with me one hour?*” (v. 40)—contrasts sharply with Jesus’ vigilant prayer. Consider the spiritual battle dimension of prayer that Jesus emphasizes: “*Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation*” (v. 41). How might viewing prayer as spiritual warfare rather than mere conversation transform your approach to persistent prayer? Write your thoughts down in your prayer journal.
 - **Daily Challenge** Set aside three distinct prayer times today, returning to the same request each time but concluding, “*Nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will*” (v. 39). Notice how this repetition with submission affects your perspective on the situation by day’s end.

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DAY 12

COLOSSIANS 1:9-14

So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.

We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, always thanking the Father. He has enabled you to share in the inheritance that belongs to his people, who live in the light. For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom[b] and forgave our sins.

- **Context:** Paul writes to the Colossian church, which he had never visited. His prayer emphasizes spiritual knowledge, fruitful living, and thanksgiving for redemption. If you desire a deeper understanding of God's will or long to connect knowledge with practical obedience, Paul's prayer offers a comprehensive vision for spiritual maturity.
- **Read and Pray through Colossians 1:9-14**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Paul's prayer acknowledges God as the source of all spiritual wisdom and understanding. Consider how seeking God's will requires divine revelation rather than merely human reasoning. In your prayers, recognize God's superior wisdom—a wisdom that inspires reverent trust in His guidance.
- **Dependence:** The prayer requests strength "*according to his glorious might*" (v. 11), acknowledging human inadequacy for spiritual endurance. Where do you need supernatural empowerment beyond your natural abilities? As you pray, confess these specific areas where self-reliance has proven insufficient.
- **Confidence:** Paul expresses certainty in believers' inheritance—God has "*qualified you*" (v. 12), "*delivered us*" (v. 13), and "*transferred us*" (v. 13). Thank God with confidence for these completed actions. How does knowing these spiritual realities are already accomplished, not dependent on your performance, affect your approach to spiritual growth? Pray today in the certainty of God's goodness.

- **Go Deeper** This prayer connects knowledge with action—being filled with knowledge of God's will leads to walking worthy of the Lord. Consider how intellectual understanding of Scripture must translate into transformed living. In your prayer journal, respond to the following question: "Where has growth in knowledge outpaced growth in obedience in your spiritual life?"
- **Daily Challenge** Identify one area where you need a greater understanding of God's will. Research relevant Scripture passages and pray specifically for wisdom in this area. Then, identify one concrete action step to apply this understanding, connecting knowledge with obedience.

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DAY 13

JUDGES 16:28 – 30

Then Samson prayed to the Lord, “Sovereign Lord, remember me again. O God, please strengthen me just one more time. With one blow let me pay back the Philistines for the loss of my two eyes.” Then Samson put his hands on the two center pillars that held up the temple. Pushing against them with both hands, he prayed, “Let me die with the Philistines.” And the temple crashed down on the Philistine rulers and all the people. So he killed more people when he died than he had during his entire lifetime.

- **Context:** This is Samson’s final prayer after a life of squandered potential. Blinded and humiliated by the Philistines, he asks for strength one last time to fulfill his purpose as Israel’s deliverer. If past failures make you question your usefulness to God or if you need assurance that God can work through imperfect vessels, Samson’s prayer offers surprising hope.
- **Read and Pray through Judges 16:28–30**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Despite his failures, Samson addresses God formally and respectfully: *"O Lord GOD"* (v. 28). His prayer acknowledges God's sovereignty over his strength. How does recognizing God as the source of your abilities inspire proper reverence rather than self-congratulation? In your prayers, thank God for the abilities and gifts He has bestowed upon you, recognizing that it is all from Him.
 - **Dependence:** Samson's prayer, *"Remember me and please strengthen me only this once"* (v. 28), reveals his complete reliance on God's power. What area of weakness needs divine strengthening today? In prayer, confess past failures and express your need for the strength of God alone.
 - **Confidence:** Samson prays with certainty that God can grant his request, despite his history of disobedience. Express similar confidence in your prayers today—that God's purposes can prevail even through imperfect vessels. How does this assurance free you from paralysis over past mistakes?
-
- **Go Deeper** Samson's life demonstrates how God can work through deeply flawed individuals. His momentary return to dependence on God resulted in his most outstanding achievement, ironically through his death. In your prayer journal, consider areas where relinquishing personal ambition—a "death of self"—might fulfill God's purposes more effectively than your ongoing striving.
 - **Daily Challenge** Identify one area of weakness or failure that you've been hiding from God. Regarding this specific area, Pray Samson's prayer: *"Please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God"* (v. 28). Take one step of obedience, trusting God's strength rather than your own ability.

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DAY 14

DANIEL 9:4-10

I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: “O Lord, you are a great and awesome God! You always fulfill your covenant and keep your promises of unfailing love to those who love you and obey your commands. But we have sinned and done wrong. We have rebelled against you and scorned your commands and regulations. We have refused to listen to your servants the prophets, who spoke on your authority to our kings and princes and ancestors and to all the people of the land.

“Lord, you are in the right; but as you see, our faces are covered with shame. This is true of all of us, including the people of Judah and Jerusalem and all Israel, scattered near and far, wherever you have driven us because of our disloyalty to you. O Lord, we and our kings, princes, and ancestors are covered with shame because we have sinned against you. But the Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him. We have not obeyed the Lord our God, for we have not followed the instructions he gave us through his servants the prophets.

- **Context:** Daniel prays this confession during Israel's Babylonian exile after studying Jeremiah's prophecy about the 70-year duration of their captivity. It's a model of corporate confession and covenant faithfulness. Daniel's prayer provides exceptional guidance if you desire to pray with historical awareness and deep honesty about communal sin.
- **Read and Pray through Daniel 9:4-10**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Daniel begins with adoration: *“O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love”* (v. 4). Consider how God’s faithfulness to His promises—even amid Israel’s exile—reveals His unchanging character. Today, let your prayers include heartfelt praise and a clear recognition of God’s faithfulness, regardless of the season of life you’re in.
 - **Dependence:** *“We have sinned and done wrong...we have not listened to your servants the prophets”* (vv. 5–6). Daniel honestly confesses national disobedience without excuse. What patterns of resistance to God’s Word need confession in your life? In prayer, acknowledge specific ways you’ve ignored divine guidance.
 - **Confidence:** Daniel approaches God based on divine character: *“To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame...To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness”* (vv. 7–9). Today, express confidence not in your worthiness but in God’s consistency. How does focusing on God’s character rather than your performance give you freedom to approach Him honestly? Approach Him with that deep honesty today in prayer.
-
- **Go Deeper** Daniel studied Scripture (Jeremiah’s prophecy), which prompted his confession prayer. Consider the connection between Bible study and effective prayer. How might deeper engagement with Scripture reveal areas needing confession or transformation in your own life? How does God’s Word inform and shape authentic prayer? Write some ideas down in your prayer journal.
 - **Daily Challenge** Choose one specific command or principle from Scripture that you’ve been neglecting. Confess this specifically using Daniel’s prayer language. Then create a practical plan for obedience, asking God for the strength to follow through on your commitment.

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WEEK 3

Living on Mission

“

We do not pray to instruct
God, but to be made
instruments of His will.”

— ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA

- *Isaiah 61 was written to a people devastated by exile and oppression. Having returned from Babylonian captivity, the Israelites rebuilt their broken lives and cities. But the land and their spirits were still in ruins. Isaiah's words were a prophetic announcement of hope: a Servant anointed by God would bring good news to the poor, bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim freedom for the captives. Centuries later, Jesus stood in a synagogue, read these very words, and said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). In doing so, He made it clear: this is His mission—to restore, to heal, to liberate. But the mission doesn't stop with Jesus. It continues through His people. The anointing now rests on the Church, filled with His Spirit, sent into the world. When we pray, we don't escape the world—we enter deeper into God's purpose for it. Prayer is how we receive God's heart for the broken and become willing to be His hands and feet. As you pray through this theme, listen closely. Where is there mourning that needs comfort? Ashes that need beauty? Captivity that longs for freedom? These are not just things to pray about—they are invitations to pray into. These prayers are not for the sidelines. They are for the field. Because prayer isn't only communion—it's commission.*

DAY 15

NEHEMIAH 1:4-11

When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. Then I said,

“O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses.

“Please remember what you told your servant Moses: ‘If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth,[a] I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.’

“The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me.[b] Put it into his heart to be kind to me.”

In those days I was the king’s cup-bearer.

- **Context:** Nehemiah was a Jewish cupbearer to the Persian king when he received devastating news about Jerusalem—its walls remained broken down, leaving the people vulnerable and disgraced. This prayer launched his mission to rebuild. If circumstances around you seem broken beyond repair or if you sense God calling you to rebuild what others have abandoned, Nehemiah’s prayer offers a starting point for action.
- **Read and Pray through Nehemiah 1:4-11**

15

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Nehemiah was intentional in praying *“day and night for the people of Israel”* (v. 6). In his consistency, he still acknowledged the Lord as *“the great and awesome God”* (v. 4). In your prayers, use language that consistently exalts God without becoming numb to His greatness.
- **Dependence:** *“Even I and my father’s house have sinned. We have acted very corruptly...”* (vv. 6–7). Nehemiah personally identifies with the sins that led to Jerusalem’s destruction. What corporate patterns of sin might hinder God’s work in your community? Pray in confession of these sins with the humility of Nehemiah, realizing that dependence on God applies to the community, not just the person.
- **Confidence:** Nehemiah recalls God’s promises: *“Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses...”* (v. 8). He then asks for specific success before the king. Identify promises in Scripture relevant to the calling God has placed on your life. Pray confidently that God will provide specific opportunities to participate in His redemptive work.

- **Go Deeper** Nehemiah’s prayer moves from mourning to mission. His broken heart over Jerusalem’s condition became the catalyst for action. Consider how genuine compassion—feeling another’s pain—precedes effective mission. Write in your prayer journal where you think God might be leading you to serve. Where might God be breaking your heart as preparation for your participation in His redemptive work?
- **Daily Challenge** Identify one broken situation in your community/family/workplace that stirs your heart. Spend time in Nehemiah-like prayer—mourning, confessing any complicity, and asking for specific favor to take action. Write down one concrete step you can take this week toward addressing this need.

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DAY 16

PSALM 67

*May God be merciful and bless us.
May his face smile with favor on us.*

*May your ways be known throughout the earth,
your saving power among people everywhere.*

*May the nations praise you, O God.
Yes, may all the nations praise you.*

*Let the whole world sing for joy,
because you govern the nations with justice
and guide the people of the whole world. Interlude*

*May the nations praise you, O God.
Yes, may all the nations praise you.*

*Then the earth will yield its harvests,
and God, our God, will richly bless us.*

*Yes, God will bless us,
and people all over the world will fear him.*

- **Context:** This psalm is a prayer for God's blessing on Israel, specifically so that God's salvation would extend to all nations. It embodies God's original purpose for Israel—to be a light to the Gentiles. If you've focused primarily on personal blessing or desire a broader vision of God's global purposes, this psalm will expand your prayer horizons.
- **Read and Pray through Psalm 67**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** *"Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!"* (v. 3). This prayer envisions worldwide worship of the one true God. How does considering God's worthiness to receive global praise expand your perspective beyond personal or national concerns? Pray through a lens that focuses on the magnitude of God's worthiness and holiness.
- **Dependence:** *"May God be gracious to use and bless us and make his face shine upon us, that your way may be known on earth"* (vv. 1-2). This acknowledges that God's blessing isn't primarily for our comfort but for His mission. Where have you treated God's blessings as personal possessions rather than Kingdom resources? In prayer, be honest and tell God how you will use His blessings to further His mission.
- **Confidence:** *"God, our God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear him!"* (vv. 6-7). Express confidence in God's desire and ability to make Himself known globally. Pray in the certainty that even when local circumstances seem discouraging, there is hope in the worldwide purposes of God.

- **Go Deeper** This psalm connects God's blessing with a global mission—Israel is blessed specifically so all nations might know God. How might your prayers for blessing become aligned with God's mission to the nations? Write in your prayer journal specific prayers of blessing for five people in your life.
- **Daily Challenge** Research one unreached people group or international mission effort today. Pray specifically for this group using Psalm 67's language. Consider a practical step toward global mission involvement—whether through giving, going, or focused prayer.

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DAY 17

ACTS 4:24–31

When they heard the report, all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God: “O Sovereign Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them— you spoke long ago by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant, saying,

*‘Why were the nations so angry?
Why did they waste their time with futile plans?*

*The kings of the earth prepared for battle;
the rulers gathered together
against the Lord
and against his Messiah.’*

In fact, this has happened here in this very city! For Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate the governor, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were all united against Jesus, your holy servant, whom you anointed. But everything they did was determined beforehand according to your will. And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.

- **Context:** The early Christians prayed this after Peter and John were threatened by religious authorities for preaching about Jesus. Rather than praying for safety, they prayed for greater boldness to continue the mission. If you face opposition to your faith or are tempted to retreat from witness when challenged, this apostolic prayer provides a radically different response.
- **Read and Pray through Acts 4:24–31**

17

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** “Sovereign Lord, who made heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them...” (v. 24). The believers acknowledge God’s ultimate authority over every power structure. How does recognizing God’s sovereignty over earthly authorities give you confidence when facing opposition to Kingdom work? Before you begin asking God for specific needs, exalt His name with His attributes and the ways He has blessed you as a way to express your love to God.
- **Dependence:** The disciples quote Scripture (Psalm 2) and ask for divine power—“*while you stretch out your hand to heal...*” (v. 30). Where do you need supernatural empowerment beyond your human capacity? In prayer, confess situations where you’ve relied on strategy or skill rather than spiritual power.
- **Confidence:** “*Grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness*” (v. 29). Rather than requesting the removal of opposition, they ask for courage within it. As you pray, express confidence that God’s purposes advance through difficulty, not despite it. Where do you need similar boldness today?

- **Go Deeper** The disciples’ prayer resulted in being “*filled with the Holy Spirit*” (v. 31) and speaking God’s word boldly. Consider the relationship between prayer, Spirit-filling, and missional courage. How might your prayer life become more directly connected to Spirit-empowered witness in your daily contexts? Be honest in your prayer journal—how can a more consistent prayer life result in your alignment with God’s global, divine mission?
- **Daily Challenge** Identify a specific situation where fear has prevented you from witnessing for Christ. Pray specifically for boldness in this situation. Take one small step of obedience today—talk with that person, invite them to church, and trust the Holy Spirit to empower you beyond your natural courage.

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DAY 18

2 KINGS 19:14–19

After Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it, he went up to the Lord's Temple and spread it out before the Lord. And Hezekiah prayed this prayer before the Lord: "O Lord, God of Israel, you are enthroned between the mighty cherubim! You alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You alone created the heavens and the earth. Bend down, O Lord, and listen! Open your eyes, O Lord, and see! Listen to Sennacherib's words of defiance against the living God.

"It is true, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all these nations. And they have thrown the gods of these nations into the fire and burned them. But of course the Assyrians could destroy them! They were not gods at all—only idols of wood and stone shaped by human hands. Now, O Lord our God, rescue us from his power; then all the kingdoms of the earth will know that you alone, O Lord, are God."

- **Context:** King Hezekiah prayed this when Jerusalem faced imminent destruction by the Assyrian army. The Assyrian king had blasphemed God and threatened complete annihilation, prompting Hezekiah's desperate but faith-filled prayer. If you face seemingly insurmountable opposition or forces arrayed against God's work appear overwhelming, Hezekiah's prayer demonstrates how to appeal to God's ultimate sovereignty.
- **Read and Pray through 2 Kings 19:14–19**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** *"O LORD, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth..."* (v. 15). Hezekiah begins by establishing God's supreme authority over earthly power. How does acknowledging God's cosmic throne transform your view of seemingly overwhelming challenges? As you pray, envision the God of the universe in His throne room, listening to the requests of his son or daughter.
- **Dependence:** Hezekiah physically spreads the threatening letter before the Lord, demonstrating complete reliance on God rather than military strategy. What specific threat to God's work must be *"spread before the LORD"* (v. 14) in your prayers today? As you pray, admit the reality of the challenge you're facing while placing it under God's authority.
- **Confidence:** *"So now, O LORD our God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O LORD, are God alone"* (v. 19). Pray with confidence that God's response to your situation can demonstrate His glory and power to watching eyes who might not know Him. How might your current challenge become a platform to show God's glory?

- **Go Deeper** Hezekiah's prayer focuses on God's reputation—*"that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you...are God alone"* (v. 19). Consider how praying for God's name to be honored differs from your prayers that are primarily focused on personal comfort or safety. Have you ever prayed a prayer that solely blesses God's name? Or a prayer that only shows God gratitude? Reflect in your prayer journal on how setting time aside in your prayers to thank God for who He is can realign your heart with God's.
- **Daily Challenge** Identify a situation that feels overwhelming or impossible in your sphere of influence. Write it down and physically *"spread it before the LORD"* as Hezekiah did. Throughout today, whenever anxiety about this situation arises, return to Hezekiah's declaration: *"You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth"* (v. 15).

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DAY 19

ISAIAH 64:1-4, 8-9

*Oh, that you would burst from the heavens and come down!
How the mountains would quake in your presence!*

*As fire causes wood to burn
and water to boil,*

*your coming would make the nations tremble.
Then your enemies would learn the reason for your fame!*

*When you came down long ago,
you did awesome deeds beyond our highest expectations.
And oh, how the mountains quaked!*

*For since the world began,
no ear has heard*

*and no eye has seen a God like you,
who works for those who wait for him!*

*And yet, O Lord, you are our Father.
We are the clay, and you are the potter.
We all are formed by your hand.*

*Don't be so angry with us, Lord.
Please don't remember our sins forever.*

*Look at us, we pray,
and see that we are all your people.*

- **Context:** Isaiah prayed this during a time of national spiritual decline. It expresses longing for God to dramatically intervene as He had done in the past, while acknowledging the people's sinful condition. If you're discouraged by spiritual apathy in your culture or long for revival that seems distant, Isaiah's urgent yet patient prayer offers guidance.

19

- **Read and Pray through Isaiah 64:1–4, 8–9**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** “Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence...” (v. 1). Isaiah longs for dramatic divine manifestation. How can a holy discontent with routine or stagnant faith stir deeper, more expectant prayer? In your prayers, ask God to renew your awe at His power to intervene.
 - **Dependence:** “Behold, you were angry, and we sinned... we are all the work of your hand” (vv. 5–8). Isaiah acknowledges human failure while appealing to God’s relationship with His people. Where do patterns of sin hinder revival in your life? As you pray, name these specifically in confession. Remember: though you are fully dependent on God, you are also His handiwork—created with purpose and love.
 - **Confidence:** “No eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him” (v. 4). Pray confidently in God’s incomparable ability to work beyond human imagination for those who wait expectantly. How does this assurance sustain you when revival seems distant or delayed?
- **Go Deeper** Isaiah’s prayer balances an urgent plea (“rend the heavens” [v. 1]) with patient waiting (“acts for those who wait for him” [v. 4]). Consider the tension between passionate intercession and patient endurance in prayer for spiritual awakening. Answer this question in your prayer journal: “How might both intensity and perseverance characterize your prayers for revival?”
 - **Daily Challenge** Set aside 15 minutes today for “waiting prayer.” Begin with Isaiah’s urgent plea for God to “rend the heavens” (v. 1), then transition to silent waiting, not speaking but expecting God’s response. Notice how this practice differs from both passive resignation and anxious petition.

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DAY 20

EXODUS 32: 11-14

But Moses tried to pacify the Lord his God. "O Lord!" he said. "Why are you so angry with your own people whom you brought from the land of Egypt with such great power and such a strong hand? Why let the Egyptians say, 'Their God rescued them with the evil intention of slaughtering them in the mountains and wiping them from the face of the earth'? Turn away from your fierce anger. Change your mind about this terrible disaster you have threatened against your people! Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.[a] You bound yourself with an oath to them, saying, 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven. And I will give them all of this land that I have promised to your descendants, and they will possess it forever.'"

So the Lord changed his mind about the terrible disaster he had threatened to bring on his people.

- **Context:** Moses intercedes for Israel after they worship the golden calf. God had threatened to destroy them entirely, but Moses appeals to God's reputation, promises, and character. You might know someone who deserves judgment for something they have done, and you might feel called to stand in the gap for this person. Or, you might wonder how divine justice and mercy interact. If either of these is the case, Moses' bold intercession provides significant insight.
- **Read and Pray through Exodus 32:11-14**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** Moses addresses God directly yet respectfully: *"O LORD"* (v. 11). His reverence is evident in his concern for God's reputation among the nations. How might deeper reverence for God's name and character strengthen your intercessory prayer for those who have strayed from Him? As you pray, be intentional about revering God when you pray on behalf of someone else.
- **Dependence:** Moses doesn't defend Israel's worthiness but appeals entirely to God's covenant promises: *"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self..."* (v. 13). Where do you need to rely entirely on God's promises rather than human deservingness when interceding? In your prayers, intercede for others not by telling God who they are and what they need—name God's promises back to Him, just as Moses did.
- **Confidence:** Moses prays with holy boldness: *"Why should the Egyptians say, 'With evil intent did he bring them out...?'"* (v. 12). Pray with similar confidence, approaching God with the redemptive reasoning of Moses. How might understanding God's ultimate purposes give you greater boldness in intercessory prayer?

- **Go Deeper** Moses stands *"in the breach"* between God's righteous judgment and the people's sin (cf. Psalm 106:23). Consider the unique role of the intercessor—not excusing sin but appealing for mercy based on God's character and promises. How might Christ's perfect intercession (cf. Romans 8:34) inform and empower your own intercession for others? Name three attributes of Christ you will try to emulate in your intercessory prayers for the next week in your prayer journal.
- **Daily Challenge** Identify someone who seems far from God or facing divine discipline. Instead of judging them, stand *"in the breach"* (cf. Psalm 106:23) through focused intercession. Appeal to God's covenant promises and redemptive character on their behalf. Notice how this changes your heart toward the person.

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DAY 21

GENESIS 24:12–14

“O Lord, God of my master, Abraham,” he prayed. “Please give me success today, and show unfailing love to my master, Abraham. See, I am standing here beside this spring, and the young women of the town are coming out to draw water. This is my request. I will ask one of them, ‘Please give me a drink from your jug.’ If she says, ‘Yes, have a drink, and I will water your camels, too!’—let her be the one you have selected as Isaac’s wife. This is how I will know that you have shown unfailing love to my master.”

- **Context:** Abraham’s servant prays for guidance when seeking a wife for Isaac. His prayer shows practical faith—asking for a clear sign while actively pursuing his mission. If you need divine direction for specific decisions or wonder how to balance initiative with dependence, this practical prayer offers wisdom for faithful action.
- **Read and Pray through Genesis 24:12–14**

MAKE IT PERSONAL

- **Reverence:** *"O LORD, God of my master Abraham..."* (v. 12). The servant begins by acknowledging his place in God's covenant story. How does recognizing your part in God's larger narrative inspire reverent participation in His ongoing work? In your prayers, make a point to thank God for including you in His redemptive purposes.
- **Dependence:** The servant requests a specific sign—*"Let the young woman to whom I shall say, 'Please let down your jar'..."* (v. 14)—acknowledging his need for divine guidance. Where do you need clear direction for advancing God's Kingdom purposes? As you begin your prayers, admit your inability to discern the best path without God's wisdom.
- **Confidence:** *"Please show steadfast love to my master Abraham"* (v. 12). The servant prays with certainty in God's covenant faithfulness. Pray confidently that God desires to guide you in fulfilling His mission. How does trusting God's faithfulness free you from anxiety about finding His perfect will?

- **Go Deeper** The servant's prayer combines active engagement with dependent waiting. He traveled to the right location, positioned himself by the spring, and then watched for God's confirmation. Consider how this balanced approach differs from both passive waiting ("God will drop opportunities in my lap") and self-reliant striving ("It's all up to my effort"). Are there times in your life when you can pinpoint where you've been passive? And when you've been too reliant on the self? Be honest as you reflect in your prayer journal.
- **Daily Challenge** Identify one specific decision related to your participation in God's mission. Pray for clear guidance, then take one active step forward today while remaining attentive to confirming signs of God's direction. Notice how action and dependence work together in discovering God's will.

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DAY 22

& beyond

DAY 22 & BEYOND

“Prayer does not mean simply to pour out one’s heart. It means rather to find the way to God and to speak with Him, whether the heart is full or empty.” – Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Congratulations, you have completed 21 days of prayer through Scripture! You’ve established patterns of reverence, dependence, and confidence in approaching God. “Loving God, Bearing His Image, and Living on Mission” aren’t meant to be temporary experiences but lifelong disciplines. This final reflection helps transition from a structured prayer journal to an ongoing and personal communion with God.

Reflect on Your Journey

1. Review your prayer journal entries from the past 21 days. What patterns do you notice in how God has spoken to you?
2. Which prayers resonated most deeply with you? Consider making these regular companions in your ongoing prayer life.
3. What has changed in your approach to prayer? How has praying Scripture shaped your communication with God?

Continue the Practice

- *Regular Scripture Prayer:* Select one psalm or prayer from Scripture each week to pray through repeatedly, allowing its words to become your own.
- *The Principles for Prayer:* Continue approaching God with reverence (acknowledging His majesty), dependence (recognizing your need), and confidence (trusting His character and promises).

- *Physical Posture*: Remember how various biblical prayers incorporated physical elements—kneeling, lifting hands. How might your body participate in prayer?
- *Community Connection*: It's Day 22. Share insights from your Prayer Journal experience with others. Seeing how others have grown in their prayer life can influence your own.

Maintain Momentum – What now?

1. Set aside a specific prayer time each day, even if brief. Consistency matters more than duration.
2. Create prayer triggers in your environment—objects, alarms, or activities that remind you to pause and communicate with God.
3. Return to Psalm 1's image of being "*like a tree planted by streams of water*" (v. 3). Regular prayer keeps your roots in God's nourishing presence.

A PSALM FOR EVERYTHING

"When we do not know what to pray, the Psalms teach us how to pray." — Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Prayer of Thanksgiving	Psalm 100
Prayer of Rejoicing	Psalm 150
Prayer of Praise	Psalm 145
Prayer of Lament	Psalm 13
Prayer of Anguish	Psalm 88
Prayer of Deliverance from Fear	Psalm 34:4-7
Prayer in Distress	Psalm 18:4-19
Prayer for Courage	Psalm 27
Prayer of Confession	Psalm 51
Prayer of Repentance	Psalm 32
Prayer of Complaint	Psalm 10
Prayer for Patience	Psalm 37:7-9
Prayer when Lonely	Psalm 22:1-11
Prayer for God's Presence	Psalm 139
Prayer of Hope	Psalm 42
Prayer in Waiting	Psalm 130
Prayer of Love for God	Psalm 18:1-6
Prayer for Others	Psalm 122:6-9
Prayer for Enemies	Psalm 35:11-17
Prayer in Uncertainty	Psalm 77
Prayer for Wisdom	Psalm 119:33-40
Prayer of Trust	Psalm 23
Prayer for Peace	Psalm 4

