EAT · BREATHE · & PRAY

JOURNAL

Prioritise your day around God's word and His presence

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EAT · BREATHE · & PRAY
JOURNAL
Prioritise your day around God's word and His presence

VOLUME 1

This Journal Belongs To....

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"This book of the Law shall not department from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:8-9

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Welcome

To your Thematic Journey Through The Bible In One Year Journal!

I'm so excited to be bringing this Eat Breathe & Pray Journal to you!
You are about to embark on an exciting journey into a much greater understanding of, and familiarity with the Word of God, and a deeper awareness of His presence, both with you and in you.
I've designed this journal to help you prioritise the time You spend in God's Word and in His presence, as you read through God's Word in one year; and to help you keep a record of the focus of your prayer life from day to day, and throughout the year, so you can see how that focus changes as you spend more time in His word and in His presence; and begin to co-labour with Abba Father in prayer.

I love and appreciate you so much!
Be blessed, and be a blessing!

Jenner

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How To Use

Undated Planner

This planner has been left undated so that you can start your Thematic Journey Through The Bible In One Year at any time. You can pick up wherever we're at with the live broadcasts, or start from the beginning, and listen along with the recordings.
The year is broken up into 4 quarters of 3 Journals: 31 days, 30 days and 30 days; Journal 12 will have 30 days +1 to make up 365 calendar days.
When starting at the beginning, the date that you start your journey on becomes Day 1 in your journal.

There are five **The Week Of** pages at the end of each journal; these give you the week-in-view on one side and an I Get To Do list on the other, and can be place at the beginning of each calendar week throughout the journal.

Day 1 - Genesis 1-3

Daily Planner Saturday: July 19

You will need to fill in the **Year**-in View and **Month**-in-View based on the Year and month that you start.

Month July Year 2026

Many of the journals will need to incorporate dates from two months, either starting with a few days from the previous month, or ending with days from the next month.

Start your thematic journey through the Bible whenever you are ready!

How To Use

24-Hour Planner

The 24-Hour Day Planner is to help you prioritize your day around spending time in God's Word and in His presence; and to provide a place for you to record the times God calls you to pray with Him, no matter what the time, day or night.

Use your planner to schedule the journal elements you want to include in your day.
Start slowly with as many as you're comfortable with, and build from there.
The more time you spend in God's word and in His presence, the more elements you will want to incorporate into your day.

Prayer Focus

A Prayer Focus is the conversation that is going on throughout the day between your spirit and the Spirit of God. This conversation occurs in the background as we go about our day, but by intentionally bringing that conversation to the forefront of our attention, we start to actively co-labor with Yahweh to pray what is on His heart for that day.
There are two pages at the end of each day to record the focus of your prayers, so that over the year, as you spend more time in God's word and His presence, you can see how the focus of your prayers change from being needs/requests focused to praying from the heart of the Father God.

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Bible Reading

This is a daily thematic journey through the Bible in one year. These readings are divided up into seven themed groups; the books of the Law, The books of History, the Psalms, The Books of Poetry, The books of Prophecy, the Gospels, and The Epistles. Read the daily passages from Scripture in your own time or join us online on the Eat Breathe & Pray Journal YouTube Channel, Facebook page, or Podcast.

Memory Verse

There is a memory verse provided for each day; You choose how many you want to memorize. One per week equals 52 verses by the end of the year; one per day will be 364 verses. You choose what works for you.

Bible Study

These Bible studies are not designed to spoon-feed you what we want you to know about the Word of God, but rather to stimulate a hunger for the Word, and encourage you to delve into the study of the Word for yourself. Each Bible study gives you the opportunity to delve deeper into the readings for that day. Please give yourself time to make notes of what Yahweh highlights to you, and to read the verses that are mentioned in each study, as well as researching and answering the questions for each day.

Daily Devotion

Make time for the Devotional when you can still yourself in God's presence and meditate on His word. There are scripture references in each devotion that you will need to look up and read for yourself; these are key verses for gaining understanding in each devotion.

Year At

January

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February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

March

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April

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May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

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A Glance

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

August

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

Month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday

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Year:

Thursday	Friday	Saturday

My Focus:

Monthly Notes

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This Month

Personal Goals

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Health Goals

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Important Dates

To Do List

Day 1 - Genesis 1-3

Daily Planner ..... day: .....

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"How do you know when you've entered the presence of the Lord? Joy is a good barometer. "In the presence of the Lord is fullness of joy." Psalm 16:11

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all His work that He had done in creation."

Genesis 2:3 (ESV)

Daily Devotion

"And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked... " Genesis 3:7a

From the moment they were created, Adam and Eve spent their life with each other and with God, naked and unashamed. They saw their nakedness but perceived only good. After eating from the tree of the knowledge of God and evil, their state hadn't changed but their perception of themselves had. They saw themselves through the lens of evil, and it was the perception of their nakedness that became evil and caused them to be ashamed. Our perception changes the way we see things (Titus 1:15); this is why we are told in Philippians 4:8, "...whatever is true, whatever is dignified, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, and if anything worthy of praise, consider these things."

Prayer:

Abba Father, purify our hearts and minds today, help us to look for the good, the pure and the lovely in the world around us, so that we can see ourselves and others through Your eyes, through the lens of Your goodness and love. Amen.

Bible Study

Getting to know God

Over the next few days we will be looking at how God is revealed to us in the Scriptures. We'll be taking a deeper dive into the readings we are doing each day to see how God describes Himself, the names He gives Himself, and His attributes.
Geneis, as it's name implies, is a book of firsts. In these first three chapters of Genesis it's the first time we are introduced to God, His title, and His name. It's the first time we see some of His attributes, His works, and His character. We are going to look at just one of each of these as they appear in this passage, although each one could have a whole book written on it.

The attribute of God that we will look at first is, God is. "In the beginning God… " (Genesis 1:1a). Before anything was created, God is. Before there was form or function, God is. He was not created and He did not come into being. He is and He was and He is to come (Revelation 4:8; Hebrews 13:8). From eternity to eternity, God is. This attribute of God is one of the hardest for us to wrap our heads around because we try to define everything from our own perspective, which is bound by time and defined by beginnings and endings. But God is, without beginning or ending, and exists outside of time in the eternal now. The Creator of all things was not created, He is the one constant in this changing universe, always and forever.

The work of God that I want to look at first is that God speaks! God spoke and things came into existence. God speaks and all creation is blessed. God speaks and holiness is defined. God still speaks and the power to create, to bless and to define holiness remains in His word. Jesus himself said, "The Father Himself who sent me has given me a commandment – what to say and what to speak" (John 12:49). We, as Christ's ambassadors, are called to do likewise but to do that we need to be in His word, and in His presence. They need to be the food we eat and and the air we breathe so that we, like Jesus, can speak according to what we see God doing. Then our words will have power because they will be God's words. God speaks, and He desires to speak through you.
The aspect of God's character I want to look at first is this: God gives authority to His creation, to us! God, who has all authority, gives authority to us, and He is not diminished in doing so. Knowing beforehand that we would fall, He still entrusted us with authority to have dominion over His creation that He had blessed and

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declared to be very good (Genesis 1:26-28). Knowing that He couldn't trust us, He still loved us enough to give us the opportunity to show ourselves trustworthy. We forfeited the authority that God gave us for a bite of the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, just as Esau gave up His birthright for a bowl of red lentil soup (Genesis 3:1-7, 25:27-34). Knowing this, God still gave us authority, believing for the best and preparing for the worst, knowing that His authority is not diminished by giving us that opportunity (Matthew 18:18-20, 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-18).

Discuss:

Questions:

Questions:As I was reading through this passage I was able to list five of God's attributes, six examples that show His character, and nine examples of the things that God does. We have looked at 1 of each of these.

1. What are the other four attributes of God, five aspects of His character, and eight examples of His works that we see in Genesis 1-3?
2. What is the Hebrew title that we see in Genesis, and what does it mean? It is translated into English as 'God". And what is His name that is translated LORD in English?

Reread this passage using His title and/or it's meaning, and His name; see how this transforms your reading.

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 2 – Joshua 1–5

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Why do we still ourselves in the presence of God?
Because it is then that we can hear what's on His heart and pray accordingly.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not be in dread or be dismayed, for YHWH your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

Daily Devotion

"Every place on which the soul of your foot treads, I have given to you, just as I spoke to Moses". Joshua 1:3

In this passage, God is commanding Joshua and the people of Israel to cross the Jordan and go in and take possession of the land. We, as believers in Jesus (Yeshuah), have been grafted into the promises of God to Israel. That means that we not only have the authority but that we are commanded to take possession of the land on which the sole of our foot treads. Now don't get me wrong, this does not mean I can claim ownership of the coffee shop where I'm sitting to write this, but it does mean that I have the authority in the spiritual realm to change the atmosphere around me, wherever I am. To bring the kingdom of God to bear wherever we place the sole of our feet. We see this being walked out in the lives of the apostles Peter and John, as even their shadow passing over someone would cause them to be healed (Acts 5:12-16); and Kathryn Kuhlman, who was banned from walking through the main concourse of certain airports because her presence had been linked to inexplicable phenomena that occurred whenever she passed through.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to remember who I am in You; and as I cultivate an awareness of Your presence both with me and in me, help me to be strong and courageous, as I take possession of the land wherever the soles of my feet tread. To recognise that I walk as a conduit through which Your will and Your kingdom come to earth. Amen.

Bible Study

Getting to know God

As we continue this Bible study, I hope that during today's reading you were listening for examples of the attributes, character, and works of God. The ones we will look at today are:
God is faithful. We see this attribute of God in Joshua 1-5 as we see Joshua inheriting the promises of God that He gave to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3, 13:14-17), then to Isaac (Genesis 26:3-5), and then to Jacob, who He renamed Israel (Genesis 28:13-15). Then they were entrusted to Moses (Exodus 3:7-10), and now are passed to Moses' servant Joshua (Joshua 1:1-7). After about 700 years, the promise God gave to Abraham is being fulfilled, and it is still the foundation of the people of Israel's claim to the land of Israel to this day, some 4,000 years later.

God is an encourager. Three times in the first half of Joshua chapter 1, God says to Joshua, "be strong and courageous" , and the chapter ends with the people repeating the phrase to Joshua, "be strong and courageous" . God encourages Joshua with His words (Joshua 1:1-9), and the people's response (Joshua 1:16-18). He encourages the people of Israel with favour; we see this expressed by the words of Rahab (Joshua 2:8-11) and those of the two spies (Joshua 2:24). And finally, God encourages Joshua with His presence (Joshua 5:13-15).

God provides. We see this as an outworking of His character in that God provides encouragement to Joshua as an individual and to the people as a nation, as we just saw. God also provides clear instructions to Joshua as he leads the people (Joshua 3:7-8, 4:2-3, 15-16, 5:2), and He provides food for the people, a sign that they have taken possession of the land even before Jericho falls (Joshua 5:10-12). God provides backup; He calls Joshua to lead the people to enter and take the land, and the people have been obedient to do what God has commanded them through Joshua; now He shows up in power as the commander of YHWH's army (Joshua 5:13-15).

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What does Rahab declare about God's attributes, character and works, and why does she declare it?
2. How does God define holiness, based on what we've read in Genesis 2:1-3 and Joshua 5:13-15?
3. What is the name of God that is hinted at in Genesis 2:1 and Joshua

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 3- Psalms 1-2

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What is it to take refuge in God? In medieval times when there were times of trouble, the people of the kingdom would come to the castle and take refuge within its walls. They took refuge in the king by entering His courts, to dwell there. You can enter the courts of YHWH at any time, to take refuge in Him and dwell there in times of trouble.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of YHWH, and in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers." Psalms 1:1-3

Daily Devotion

"Serve YHWH with fear reverence and rejoice with trembling. " Psalm 2:11

Many find it hard to understand why the Scriptures say that we have not been given a spirit of fear (2 Timothy 1:7), but also say to fear YHWH (Psalms 33:8; Joshua 4:24). When we're called to fear YHWH, it is a call to worship Him with reverence and rejoice with trembling; it's a state of joy and excitement in His presence as we are made aware of His holiness, righteousness and judgement, compassion, and love. It is the opposite of the spirit of fear, which is a spirit of timidity and cowardice. To enter the presence of the Living God, to worship Him with reverence and rejoice with trembling takes the courage and boldness of knowing that you are a son or daughter of the King.

Prayer: Abba Father, I come to You today in a spirit of reverent worship, rejoicing with trembling at the awesome gift of entering into Your very presence. Fill me full to overflowing with Your perfect love so that all timidity and cowardice will flee from me, and I will walk in the boldness of Your Spirit that cries out, "Abba Father". Amen.

Bible Study

Getting to know God

Today as we read through Psalms 1 & 2, we are exposed for the first time in our readings to the anger of YHWH. It is also the first time we come across the YHWH's Anointed. We also see a continuation of the theme we saw in Joshua 1:8-9.

The attribute of God that we see here is that God is plural. In Psalm 2, we see the nations and their kings setting themselves against YHWH and against His Anointed (Psalm 2:1-2). In verse 6, He is described as God's King, in verse 7, as God's begotten Son, and in verse 12, He is described as quick to anger but a blessing to those who take refuge in Him. As a prophet, David is speaking of the incarnation of God, the Messiah, who is God become flesh. In Genesis 1:2, we saw God, the Creator of all things, and the Spirit of God; here we have the third person of the Trinity, the Son, the Anointed One, the coming King.

The work of God that we see here is one that we see repeated throughout Scripture - the blessings and curses of God. In Joshua 1:8, God commands Joshua saying, "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success". Here in Psalms 1:1-2, David reiterates this by saying, "Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of YHWH and in His Law he meditates day and night" . And in verse 4, "The wicked are not so... " . In this case, the blessing of YHWH comes when we are obedient to meditate on the Law (or Word) of YHWH day and night. But the curse comes through disobedience and seeking after our own desires, the counsel of the wicked, the way of sinners and the seat of scoffers. The blessings of YHWH are contingent upon our obedience.

The aspect of God's character that we are looking at in these Psalms is: His wrath and anger. Let me preface this by saying that Scripture tells us that God is slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness (Exodus 34:6-7; Psalms 103:8). But when His anger comes, it comes quickly and brings an end to the wicked and their wickedness (Psalms 1:6, 2:12). What arouses God's anger? "*The raging of the nations and the plotting of the peoples to cast God and His Law away from them. But those who delight in His Law and meditate on it day and night are like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that they do, they prosper" (Psalms 1:3).*

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. Who is the Anointed One? What is His name in the Hebrew, and what does it mean?
2. What does it mean in Psalm 2:12 when the kings and rulers of the earth are told to "Kiss the Son"
3. In Deuteronomy 6:4, what is the Hebrew word for "one" that we see at the end of the verse, and what does it mean?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 4 - Job 1-2

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Sometimes being still before the LORD is about sitting in silence in His presence and sharing in His grief. Grief for those who are lost, grief for all that is happening in the nations.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"And he (Job) said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there. YHWH gave and YHWH has taken away. Blessed be the name of YHWH." Job 1:21

Daily Devotion

"Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and fell to the ground and worshiped." Job 1:20

In our society, we are taught that grief is something that should be hidden, it is something uncomfortable that we should not inflict on others, that it should be gotten over as quickly as possible so that we can go back to being productive members of society. What we are not taught is that grief can be an expression of worship (Isaiah 53:3-5). Job's grief was extreme but he didn't hide it; he expressed his grief for all to see, and then fell to the ground and worshiped. He was unable to stand under the weight of his grief but it led him to the feet of God in an attitude of extreme worship. Even when his wife told him, "...curse God and die!" (Job 2:9b), he refused and continued to worship God with his heart and his words (Job 2:10). In the same way, we see David regularly express his grief before God as an act of worship in the Psalms (Psalms 56:8-11, 147:1-3).

Prayer: Abba Father, help me in times of grief to come into Your presence, to fully express my grief as an act of worship to You. To not give way to the temptation to curse You in my heart or with my words, but to declare as Job did, "...YHWH gave and YHWH has taken away. Blessed be the name of YHWH". Amen.

Bible Study

Getting to know God

Job can be a difficult book to study. It's uncomfortable in the rawness of Job's grief, but it's also uncomfortable because of the seeming injustice of God allowing Job to go through what he does. But the attribute that we see of God in Job is that God is Lord over all:

This attribute of God is seen in that even Satan has to present himself before God and give an accounting of what he has been doing (Job 1:6-7, 2:1-2). Nothing can happen in heaven or on earth before being passed before God, and this is where we in our humanity can fall into the trap of considering God to be unjust, or even cruel for allowing certain things to happen. Especially when we see bad things happen to good people. We need to remember that God is righteous and just, and that our perspective is incomplete. Job knew this very well, which is why he declares, "...YHWH gives and YHWH takes away. Blessed be the name of YHWH" (Job 1:21b), and later, "...Shall we indeed receive good from God, and not accept calamity?" Job 2:10b

First, let's look at the work of God. It is God that sets bounda
ries; Satan can do only so much and no more. In Chapter 1, we see that God allows Satan to touch all that Job has but cannot touch Job himself (Job 1:12). Then the next time Satan comes before God, he is allowed to touch Job but not take his life (Job 2:6). These may seem like small mercies but they are for a purpose.

The aspect of God's character that we see in Job is that God takes pride and has faith in His people. God knows that Job will not sin against Him with his words or charge God with doing wrong. And He is proud to show Job off before the angels of heaven. Sometimes God allows His people to go through difficult things to show off their character before the hosts of heaven. To give them the opportunity to glorify His name in the midst of their difficulty so that their reward will be all the greater.

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What is the sin that Job resists twice in this reading, even though Job's wife urges him to commit it?
2. What does that tell you about the importance of our words?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 5 – Isaiah 1–6

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Even Jesus would often slip away to the wilderness to pray (Luke 5:16). How much more do we need to take time out to be with God?

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and understanding in their own sight!" Isaiah 5:20-21

Daily Devotion

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for YHWH speaks... " Isaiah 1:2a

Even the heavens and the earth hear God's voice and declare His word (Psalms 19:1, 66:4)! Yet I hear over and over believers asking, "How can I hear the voice of YHWH?" John 10:27a says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them..." The problem isn't that God is not speaking, but that we are not able to hear because we are either filling our ears with constant audio input or we are spending our time in His presence telling Him again and again about our needs, and cares, and problems, to the point where He "can't get a word in edge-wise", as the saying goes. To hear His voice we need to turn off the outside stimulus, even if it is worship music, and quiet our internal monologue for long enough to listen for His voice. To declare, "Speak, for your servant is listening. " (1 Samuel 3:10b, NASB95).

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to disconnect from outside stimuli and audio input, and quiet the internal voice that cries out about my needs and wants, so that I can be still before You, even if it means I need to go out into the wilderness to do so. So I can remove every distraction that would keep me from hearing Your voice; for YHWH, I know that You speak, and my desire is to join all of creation in hearing Your voice and speaking Your word. I declare today, "Speak LORD for Your servant is listening." Amen.

Bible Study

Getting to know God

There is so much contained in these first six chapters of Isaiah that it is impossible to cover it all in detail, but there is an overall picture that we can get.

In Isaiah, God is seen as holy (Isaiah 5:16). This attribute of God is first shown in what He considers acceptable and unacceptable for His people (Isaiah 1:1-17, 21-23, 2:6-8, 3:16-17, 5:20-23); then in what He is preparing for the righteous (Isaiah 2:1-5, 4:2-6), and unrighteous (Isaiah 2:12-22, 3:1-4:1, 5:24, 6:9-13); and finally His holiness is declared with a shout, 'And one called to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy is YHWH of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory'" (Isaiah 6:3)! Also in Isaiah's response, 'Then I said; "Woe is me, for I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, YHWH of hosts'" (Isaiah 6:5).

We see that the work of God is to judge justly. God's judgements on His people are based on His holiness, and on the obedience of His people and the work of their hands (Isaiah 1:18-20, 27, 1:25-26, 2:4, 2:12-22). And because they have refused to listen to His voice through the prophets and despised His word as written in the Law, His judgement is that they will not be able to hear or see and their hearts will become dull (Isaiah 5:24-25, 6:8-13).

But God repeatedly shows His character by calling His people to reason together with Him (Isaiah 1:5, 9-17). "'Come now, and let us reason together, ' says YHWH, 'though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool'" (Isaiah 1:18), and by preserving a remnant in the land (Isaiah 6:13). "Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of YHWH" (Isaiah 2:5). God continually calls His people to reason together with Him, His judgment comes only when they refuse to see Him as holy and hear His voice.

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What are the two declarations of Isaiah?
2. What is God's response to those declarations?
3. What are the names God gives Himself in Isaiah 1-6?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 6 – Matthew 1-2

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Why do we still our body, mind, soul, and spirit when we seek God's presence? Jeremiah 29:13 says, "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the One who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:20-21

Daily Devotion

"And Joseph got up from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him... " Matthew 1:24a

How many times have you received a Word from YHWH and quickly acted on what has been spoken to you, pursuing the fulfillment of that word, and co-labouring with God to bring it to pass? So often in prophetic ministry we see people coming back for one word after another, but there is no evidence that they have been obedient to any of the previous words they have received. When God speaks, whether it be through His angels, His prophets or in dreams, visions, or His word, we are required to act, to obey quickly and with authority. God spoke to Joseph in dreams several times, and each time he acted immediately to do what God had spoken, not just for himself but for Mary and the baby Jesus (Matthew 1:20-25, 2:13-15, 19-23). If he had not, he would have endangered all their lives. I'll say it again - when God speaks, we are required to act, quickly and with authority; be mindful that procrastination is a form of rebellion.

Prayer: Abba Father, forgive me for taking lightly the words that You have spoken to me in the past. Bring back to my remembrance any words that I have not acted upon and show me how I can do so now. My desire is to co-labour with You to bring Your word to pass in and through my life. I want to hear and obey, to be both a hearer and a doer of the word! Amen.

Bible Study

Getting to know God

In the first chapter of the gospel of Matthew, we find the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Many people find the genealogies tedious, boring even, and will skip over them. But to God they are very important, to the point that there are whole books of Scripture dedicated just to genealogies. This tells us something of the attributes, works, and character of God. The genealogy of Jesus contains the stories of five remarkable women, and I could write a whole book about them, but here we must cover their stories only briefly.

God is precise, exact, detail-oriented, meticulous, punctilious, scrupulous; I find it hard to find a single English word to describe this attribute of God. Here in the genealogy of Jesus Christ, we see several entries that must surely be mistakes, but for God there is no mistake, there is no "oops" moment. The genealogy of Jesus is exactly as God intended it, meticulous in its timing, and purposeful in its inclusions.

God's character is seen in that He honours the faithfulness and courage of women, especially those that others might dismiss. And as we have seen previously God's character and His works go hand in hand.
God redeems: God's redemption of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary (Mariam), and their inclusion in the genealogy of Jesus Christ is extraordinary in the extreme. Tamar's was considered cursed of God and was rejected by her father-in-law, then accused of harlotry before being found innocent and more righteous than Judah, who became the father of her sons (Genesis 38). Rahab was a prostitute, but she saved herself and her family by hiding the Israelite spies and giving them information (Joshua 2:1-5). She later became the wife of Salmon and the mother of Boaz. Ruth was a Moabitess and according to the Law, the sons of Israel were not to intermarry with the daughters of Moab, but Ruth renounced her people and her gods to follow her mother-in-law back to the land of Israel, and was redeemed by Boaz, the kinsman redeemer, and a type of Christ (the book of Ruth). Bathsheba's reputation was tainted by the sin of David when he had relations with her while she was married to Uriah the Hittite (2 Samuel 11). David later had Uriah killed and the child that was conceived in sin died (2 Samuel 12:15-19), but God rewarded Bathsheba's

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righteousness by promising her, through David, that her son Solomon would inherit the throne of David (1 Chronicles 28:5-6). Mary's reputation was threatened when she became pregnant out of wedlock, but God redeemed her reputation by telling her fiancé Joseph that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit and that the Child would save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:20-21).

Discuss:

Questions:

1. How would you describe the attribute of God that we see in the genealogies of Matthew chapter 1?
2. What was the method God used to speak to Joseph in chapter 2? And how does that change your attitude toward your dreams?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 7 – Romans 1-2

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"But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother like a weaned child is my soul within me."
Psalm 131:2 (ESV)

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Romans 1:16

Daily Devotion

"Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?" Romans 2:4

How often do we find ourselves pointing out the sin of others but fail to see our own sins? We forget that it was God's kindness that led us to repentance, and that we should therefore extend that same kindness to others. We store up for ourselves the great riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience but are stingy with them when it comes to handing them out to other people, often holding them to a higher standard than we are willing to walk in ourselves. Even Jesus said, "If anyone hears My words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world" (John 12:47). Let us act with kindness toward one another, particularly to those who are ensnared by sin; who knows if the kindness you show them is not the very thing that leads them to the love and forgiveness of God.

Prayer: Abba Father, I thank You for the riches of Your kindness and tolerance and patience towards me. Help me to be just as generous with these riches in my dealings with others. Remind me that it is Your kindness that led me to repentance when I am tempted to pass judgement on others. Amen.

Bible Study

The Fruit of the Spirit

"*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law.* "
Galatians 5:22-23

Over the next few days we're goint o be looking at the fruit of the Spirit. We will be looking to see athe fruit of the Spirit being worked out in the passages of scripture we are reading each day. When we study Scripture, it's important not to study a verse or passage in isolation. By doing so, we can inadvertently impose our own filters, ideologies or perceptions on the verse we're studying. Rather, if we compare Scripture with Scripture, we end up allowing our own perceptions to be shaped by Scripture, which is ultimately more beneficial.

In Romans 1 & 2, the fruit of the Spirit is conspicuous by its absence in the activities of those Paul is describing, by both those who God has given over to sin and those who would condemn them. But right in the midst of this, Paul is exhorting his readers to display patience in doing good and rebuking them for their lack of kindness. So, let's look at these three parts of the fruit of the Spirit: kindness, goodness and patience. When we read Romans 1:18-31, we could be reading about the US today, or the UK, Europe or Australia. And there are many in the church who see the things going on in our societies and feel they need to speak out, to condemn sin and the sinner. Paul's response to those in his day that were doing the same thing is found in Romans 2:1-3. By judging others, they bring judgement on themselves for they are not without sin. So, what is the fruit of the Spirit that Paul is, in no uncertain terms, telling them that they should be displaying instead of judgement? Let's look at Romans 2:4-5. Here we see that the antidote to a judgmental spirit is to exercise the fruit of kindness. Paul goes on to say in Romans 2:6-7 that those who are patient in doing good will be rewarded. So here's the scenario we are seeing: Paul is saying to his readers, 'Yes, there is a lot of sin in the world, and it seems to be getting out of control, but you're not helping by being judgmental. In fact, you're actually making things worse because, although you rely on the kindness of God and store it up for yourself, you're forgetting that it was His

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kindness that led you to repentance. So why aren't you showing that same kindness to those who are caught in sin, so that they too might repent. And by the way, that kindness to others has to keep on coming and you need to patiently walk in goodness as you continue to show kindness, so that you don't ended up being judged for judging others. You guys need to be patiently walking out kindness and goodness.' This is the Jenner paraphrase, but I think you get the point.

Discuss:

Questions:

1. Sometimes the fruit of the Spirit is conspicuous by it's absence. What part of the fruit of the Spirit is conspicuously absent in the actions described in Romans 1:18-31?
2. How can you apply the fruit of the Spirit in your own life when it comes to the way you think about, and act towards, those who are caught in persistent sin and rebellion?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 8 - Genesis 4-7

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We come into God's presence to hear His words so that we can then be sent out, to speak His words to whoever He has given us responsibility for.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Don't you know that as long as you do what is right, then I accept you? But if you do not do what is right, watch out, because sin is crouching at the door, ready to pounce on you! You must master it before it masters you."

Genesis 4:7 (The Voice)

Daily Devotion

"When Adam had lived 130 years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. " Genesis 5:3

Adam had another son "...in his own image, according to his likeness..." This was not said about Cain and Abel. The first time we see this phrase is in Genesis 1:26-27, when God said, "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...", and again in Genesis 5:1. Adam was made in the image of God, in His likeness, and Seth was born in the image of Adam; therefore Seth also bore the image and likeness of God. We, as believers, are being transformed into the image of God's Son (Romans 8:29) and He is perfecting that work in us until the day we see Jesus face to face (2 Corinthians 3:18, Philippians 1:6). Jesus was to be the firstborn among many, He bore the image of the Father, and showed us how we ought to walk and live. We are called to be like Him, and when we are born again by the Spirit of God, God begins that work in us, of transforming us into His image, transforming our very DNA. This is what it means when it says, "If anyone is in Christ he is a new creature, the old has passed away; behold, new things have come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Prayer: Abba Father, yes, we cry out Abba Father, for You have made us Your children and are remaking us in Your own image and likeness, in the image of Your Son, the firstborn among many. Abba, help us to remember that we are Your children, born again into Your image, and that we carry Your likeness to the world. Help us to walk in the newness of life that You have given us, no longer bound by sin and death. Amen.

Bible Study

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law. "
Galatians 5:22-23

Today we're in Genesis, and the state of mankind is such that they have filled the whole world with sin and corruption (Genesis 6:5-7), to the point that God is unwilling to persevere with mankind any longer. But Noah found favour in the eyes of God (Genesis 6:8).

There are three things we are told about Noah: Noah was a righteous man, Noah was blameless in his generation, and Noah walked with God. There are many aspects of the fruit of the Spirit that we could ascribe to these descriptions, but the one that exemplifies all three is faithfulness. Noah walked with God, he was faithful in his relationship with God, and did not follow the way of the world, making him blameless in the midst of a corrupt generation. And he's described as righteous, but we know from the example of Abraham that it is faith that is accounted as righteousness (Genesis 15:6 Romans 4:3). Noah's faithfulness was why he found favour with God. It is also why he and his family were saved. God tasked Noah with building a boat large enough to hold him and his family, and all the animals that God would bring to Noah, to protect them from the flood, plus all the food and supplies they would need for just over a year. The time between God telling Noah to build the ark and the rain starting was about 100 years. In all that time, Noah had never seen rain but he kept working on the ark. He was faithful to do the work, and even though he probably didn't understand fully what it was for or how it would work, he was faithful to build according to God's design (Genesis 6:14-16, 22). He was faithful in his heart toward God, he was faithful in his thoughts and actions in the midst of a corrupt generation, and his faithfulness was accounted to him as righteousness. He really does exemplify faithfulness, and he is an excellent person example to us in how we can conduct our lives amid a corrupt generation.

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What aspects of the fruit of the Spirit would Noah and his family have had to draw on as they spent almost 400 days confined in the ark?
2. How is Noah's faithfulness an example to you, and how can you apply it to your life?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 9 – Joshua 6–10

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Sometimes it feels like we're caught in a whirlwind of demands on our time, attention and emotions. The place of stillness in God's presence is when we step into the eye of the storm. It may still be raging around us but we can see and hear clearly there.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Then Joshua built an altar to YHWH, the God of Israel…And He wrote there on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written, in the presence of Israel…Then afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse…before all the assembly of Israel with the women and the little ones and the sojourners who were going among them." (Joshua 8:30a, 32, 34a, 35b)

Daily Devotion

"So the men of Israel took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the command of YHWH. " Joshua 9:14

The people of Israel were deceived by the people of Gibeon and tricked into making a covenant with them because they trusted the evidence of their eyes and therefore believed the words that were spoken to them (Joshua 9:1-17). They did not seek the counsel of the Lord (verse 14). How often do we make decisions based on the words we hear and the things we see, and enter into covenant relationship with people that God did not intend for us? Sometimes what we see and hear around us seems good and right but does not align with what God has told us or what we see in His word. At times like this, we have a choice to make - do we trust the word that God has spoken and walk in obedience to Him, or do we trust the evidence of our eyes and ears. This is not always an easy decision but we can ask for the counsel of YHWH. We, like the people of Israel, have the privilege of knowing that God goes with us wherever we go (Joshua 1:9b), so we can call on Him for counsel, even when the evidence before us causes us to think His command is not needed, "for we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Prayer: Abba Father, thank You for being with me wherever I go, and that You will never leave me or forsake me. I choose today to trust in You with my whole heart and to not lean on my own understanding, but to seek Your counsel in in all my ways so that You will make my path clear before me. Amen.

Bible Study

The Fruit of the Spirit

"*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law.* "
Galatians 5:22-23

Today we are in the book of Joshua, so my choice of the aspect of the fruit of the Spirit to focus on may seem strange because the book of Joshua is an account of war; yet in the midst of war, we see examples of kindness. We have seen two specific accounts of kindness in Joshua so far. The first came in our reading from last week - when we saw the two spies enter the land and they were taken in and hidden by a prostitute named Rahab (Joshua 2:1-6). She made a deal with the spies to spare her father's household in return for her kindness (Joshua 2:12-14). In today's reading, we see that kindness returned. Before the attack on Jericho, Joshua remembers the bargain that the two spies made with Rahab and commands that she and her household are not to be touched (Joshua 6:17); but he doesn't leave it there - when they enter the city, he calls the two men and tells them to go get Rahab and everyone who is in her house, and bring them out to a place of safety (Joshua 6:22-23).

The second account of a great kindness that we see during the people of Israel's battles comes in Joshua 9, when the people of Israel are deceived by the people of Gibeon into entering into a covenant with them. Joshua and the leaders of Israel could have quite truthfully said to God, "We were deceived and we ask You to release us from this covenant we have made with Gibeon", but they didn't. When they discovered the deception, they confronted the people of Gibeon but acted kindly toward them when they learned the truth (Joshua 9:14-26). And when Gibeon was attacked by the five kings, Israel came to their defence and rescued them from the hands of their enemies (Joshua 10:1-7). They could have seen this as a way to be released from their covenant with Gibeon but instead, they showed kindness to them and God gave them a great victory (Joshua 10:8-13).

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What other parts of the fruit of the Spirit do you see being displayed in the account of Rahab and the two spies?
2. What other parts of the fruit of the Spirit do you see being displayed in the account of the deception of Gibeon?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 10 - Psalms 3-5

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Many times in Scripture, we are told to seek YHWH. But seeking Him is not about striving; in fact, we are commanded to "Cease striving and know that I am God..."

Psalm 46:10a

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O YHWH, make me to abide in safety." Psalm 4:8

Daily Devotion

"Tremble and do not sin; meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. " Psalm 4:4 (NASB95)

This word meditate literally means, speak! We are to speak to ourselves, our heart, while we lie on our bed. Speak the word of YHWH and His promises to us. To encourage ourselves in YHWH as David did (1 Samuel 30:6). This will calm the trembling of our body, whether from fear or anger, and cause us to be still. When we quiet ourselves before YHWH, it becomes an open invitation for Him to enter our situation and move in power on our behalf (Psalm 46:8-11). Another way that we can speak to ourselves is to declare the word of God over ourselves. To speak aloud the Scriptures that tell us who we are in Him. "I am a new creation!" (2 Corinthians 5:17), "I am redeemed by the blood of the Lamb!" (Ephesians 1:7), " I am born again by the word of God" (1 Peter 1:23). To build ourselves up in our faith, as faith comes through hearing, and hearing through the Word of God (Romans 10:17).

Prayer: Abba Father, I come before You in the midst of all that is going on in my life, and in the world around me, that would cause me to tremble with fear or anger. I ask You to bring back to my memory Your word and Your promises to me, and to Your people Israel, so I can speak those words to my heart and encourage myself in You. So then I will come to the place of stillness in Your presence where You will act mightily on my behalf. Amen.

Bible Study

The Fruit of the Spirit

"*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law.* "
Galatians 5:22-23

In Psalms 3-5, we read as the Psalmist brings all the concerns of his life before God, crying out to God about the injustice, about those who have risen up as his enemies, calling out to God to hear him and relieve his distress, to protect him. He declares who God is to him, and all that God does for him. And in the midst of all that he's going through, he says, "You have put gladness in my heart, more than when their grain and new wine abound. In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O YHWH, make me to abide in safety" (Psalm 4:7-8).

Amid all of his distress, as adversaries come against him and he's crying out to God, joy wells up and peace overflows. Just as war seems an unlikely place to find kindness, so we don't often expect to see joy and peace in the midst of troubles, but that is exactly where they are most needed and their influence is most powerful.

When we cry out to God in the midst of our trouble, as the Psalmist does, we invite Him to move in power on our behalf. And when joy and peace arise in us, that is when the victory is won, no matter what happens with our circumstances, because "...the joy of YHWH is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10b), and His peace surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7).

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. How do the joy and peace amid our troubles give us victory?
2. What other parts of the fruit of the Spirit do we see being walked out in these three Psalms?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 11 - Job 3-4

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How do the sheep know the voice of the shepherd? By hearing it all day, every day, as they live in His presence.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Surely you have instructed many, and you have strengthened weak hands. Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, and you have strengthened the feeble knees". Job 4:3-4 (NKJV)

Daily Devotion

"Now a word was secretly brought to me, and my ear received a whisper of it. " Job 4:12 (NKJV)

Job was a righteous man (Job 1:7, 2:3) who worked to help and support others. The evidence of his life spoke for itself (Job 4:3-4) but Satan is the accuser of the brethren. God gave Satan permission to touch everything of Job's, only not to take his life (Job 1:12, 2:6). So after taking everything that belonged to Job and then inflicting him bodily, Satan went after Job's reputation. He whispered in Eliphaz' ear, 'look at all the good deeds of Job, he's just too good to be true, it must be a front, a pretense to cover up his sin; only a truly sinful man would be afflicted the way Job is.' This same thing happens in the church today, where a person's reputation or character are attacked based on "a word of knowledge" or "discernment', when there is no evidence to back up the accusation. Discernment is not standing in agreement with the enemy when he whispers in our ear accusations against a brother or sister in the LORD. Rather, true discernment is recognizing the voice of the of the accuser of the brethren when he whispers in our ear, and praying for and supporting that brother or sister who is under the enemy's attack.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to know Your voice so well that when the enemy whispers accusations against a brother or sister, I will know it's not Your voice I'm hearing. That I will not fall into the trap of 'discerning' sin in another's life without any evidence. Rather, help me to discern the ploys of the enemy so they can be thwarted before they do any harm. Amen.

Bible Study

The Fruit of the Spirit

"*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law.* "
Galatians 5:22-23

Here in Job 3 & 4, we're not seeing much in the way of joy or peace; kindness is in short supply from Job's friends, and the goodness that he has walked in previously is now being used against Job. What we do see is that Job's love for God does not diminish.

Despite all that Job has been through, he continues to love God and will not speak against Him. Instead he turns against himself, lamenting, "Why was I ever born!" (Job 3:1-26). Even in the midst of the deepest depression, when everything looks black and we feel like we would have been better off had we'd never been born, our love for God can sustain us. It can keep us from sinning with our mouth or in our hearts, because the love of God undergirds everything else.

When the enemy comes at us, tempting us to curse God and die, our very being is repulsed by the idea of speaking evil of the One we love, and as in Job's case, we will choose to curse ourselves instead. The fruit of the Spirit, expressed as love, is first and foremost our love for God, and then loving our neighbour as ourselves (Mark 12:30-31).

At this time, Job is unable to love himself and has nothing to give his neighbour, but his love for God does not waiver.

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. How has your love for God sustained you through difficult times?
2. What other part of the fruit of the Spirit does Job display?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 12 - Isaiah 7-11

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Give yourself permission to to do absolutely nothing, even if it's only for a minute or two. To put aside all action and thought and simply be. Close your eyes and breathe.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14

Daily Devotion

"...and a little child shall lead them. " (Isaiah 11:6b, ESV)

When the Lord highlighted this verse to me as the focus for today's devotion, I really wasn't sure what He meant. The passage this is in the centre of is talking about the restoration of the stump of Jesse, and a return to a state like that of the garden of Eden, where there is no longer any predator or prey, no longer any violence or harm, and a little child shall lead them. Then I remembered that Jesus, the root of Jesse, had said to his disciples that unless you become like a little child, you cannot enter the kingdom of God. So here I need to touch on something that isn't spoken of much in the church. That we can be saved but never enter into the kingdom of God. When we give our life to the Lord, He begins a work in us to transform us into the image of His Son, who knew no sin, to restore in us innocence and purity of heart and mind. But we have to co-labor with Him by focusing our attention on what is good, and pure and lovely, feeding our ear gates and eye gates with what is of good repute. So that we can once again look on the world with the wonder and awe of a little child! In the parable of the wedding feast, when guests were brought in from the highways and byways, there was one guest who was found to be without his wedding clothes, and was cast out into the outer darkness. There is no way he got into the wedding without being given wedding clothes to wear but he chose not to put them on; he chose not to put on Christ.

Prayer: Abba Father, my desire is to enter fully into Your kingdom, to really know what it means to be a child of the King. Help me to choose wisely what I allow to enter through my eyes and ears, to keep my focus on You, and on what is good and pure and lovely, so I can live from a place of purity, innocence, wonder and awe. Amen.

Bible Study

The Fruit of the Spirit

"*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law.* "
Galatians 5:22-23

One of the key things about the fruit of the Spirit, that we can draw on and use in our lives whenever we need, is that they are the very attributes of God.
It is the Spirit of God that dwells in us and Who gives us access to that fruit as we need it. So it is not surprising that the fruit of the Spirit is being worked out in Isaiah 7-11, as God sends His prophet to His people over and over, constantly saying, "This is what I will do for you if you return to Me, but this is the judgment that will come upon you if you continue to rebel", is God showing self-control. The people of Israel continually provoked God to anger, and again and again He sends His servant, the prophet, to warn them. God's self-control with His people is abundantly evident as we recognise the length of time He has been setting before His people the blessing and the curse, and admonishing them to choose blessing. From before they entered the land to possess it until Isaiah's prophecies has been about 560 years. In that time, the people of Israel have turned away from God and rebelled against Him, they have provoked Him repeatedly; but God has persevered with them all that time, and continues to do so, some 3,500 years later. God's self-control in dealing with His people Israel is our blessing, because we know that if He can show such self-control for so long in bringing about his promises to Israel, we can know that He can certainly persevere with us when we are rebellious toward Him.

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What is the other part of the fruit of the Spirit that God displays when He deals with His people?
2. When have you experienced God's self-control and patience in your life?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 13 – Matthew 3–4

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Peace is not something that is caused by external circumstances; peace comes from within, not of your own making, but as a part of the fruit of the Spirit of the living God, who dwells within you.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." Matthew 3:11

Daily Devotion

John comes proclaiming that *"the kingdom of God is about to appear"* (Matthew 3:2) but Jesus begins by preaching, *"the kingdom of God is now accessible"* (Matthew 4:17).

There was a transition that occurred between John's preaching and that of Jesus. For many of us, we haven't yet made that transition, we've become stuck in our thinking that the kingdom of God is about to appear, living our lives in the hope of a kingdom that we will enter after we die or at Jesus' return, bringing His kingdom with Him. When Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray, He said to pray, '...Your Kingdom come" (Luke 11:2b). This was not a pleading with God to bring His kingdom soon, because Jesus had preached from the beginning of His public ministry that the kingdom of God is now accessible. This was to be a declaration that God's kingdom has come! So how do we make the transition from being disciples of John, living in the hope of a kingdom that is yet to come, to walking as disciples of Christ in the assurance of His kingdom that is here and now? In Matthew, there were three major things that Jesus went through during that transition period. He made a public declaration of His faith, He set Himself apart for God, and He resisted the temptation to doubt what God really said.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to make the transition from hoping that Your kingdom will one day happen to me, to actively co-labouring with You to bring Your kingdom to bear right here and now. In my life, my home and family, my community, my nation, and in all the nations of the earth. Wherever You send me, there I will go, as an ambassador of Your kingdom. Amen.

Bible Study

The Fruit of the Spirit

"*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law.* "
Galatians 5:22-23

When John introduces the One who will come after him, he paints Him in quite a fierce way (Matthew 3:11-12). But when Jesus comes to John to be baptised, His actions and speech are gentle (Matthew 3:14-15) and the Spirit of God rests upon Him in the form of the gentlest of birds, a dove (Matthew 3:16).
Jesus then leaves Nazareth and settles in Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee, where His ministry starts in the same way that it continued - He proclaims the kingdom of God is now accessible in the synagogue and heals people; and as word gets out, people with all sorts of diseases and illness are being brought to Him and He heals them all. Jesus' dealings with people are almost always marked by gentleness and compassion. There are times when Jesus does not appear to be gentle, but they are usually when he's dealing with the Sadducees and Pharisees, whom John called a brood of vipers. These were the teachers of the Law, who loaded people down with rules and regulations that they themselves were not willing or able to keep. Which brings us back to our core verse.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law. "
Galatians 5:22-23

The reason Jesus upset the Pharisees and Sadducees so much was because He walked in the fruit of the Spirit, against which there is no law, so no matter how hard they tried, they could not get Jesus on a legal point.
The fruit of the Spirit is one fruit, with many aspects, or flavours. We have taken a look at how those different flavours have been expressed throughout Scripture. So now, "Go and be fruity, and flavourful"

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. Of the nine aspects of the fruit of the Spirit, which ones do you need to draw on most in your life?
2. We like to focus on the first three parts of the fruit of the Spirit, but it is one fruit that we need to be producing in our lives. How can you start to apply the last five parts of the fruit in your daily life?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 14 – Romans 3–4

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Mellow, instrumental music can sometimes help you to calm your body and mind, and focus your attention on God's presence.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, His faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever He promises." Romans 4:20-21 (NLT)

Daily Devotion

"God distinguished the Jews from all other people by entrusting them with the revelation of His prophetic promises. " Romans 3:2

How is it that we as Christians have come to the place where our faith is no longer discernible as a Jewish faith? Our God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Our Scriptures are written predominantly by Jews and for Jews. Our Messiah is the Jewish Messiah. And yet, the Jesus we worship today is not recognisably Jewish. He's become a reflection of our own culture and ideology. We've even fallen into the fallacy of thinking that the Jews need to convert to Christianity. But the truth is that the most Jewish thing anyone can do is to believe in the Jewish Messiah. So how do we change our perception of Jesus so that we are able to see Him as He is - a Law-keeping Jewish man who quotes Moses and who fulfilled, and will fulfill, the prophetic promises of God that were entrusted to the Jews? We can start by celebrating the feasts and festivals set down in Scripture. The first time I celebrated a Passover Seder, I was blown away by how every part of the Seder was a picture of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, even though my Jewish hosts were unable to see it. That experience started to open my eyes to the rich heritage and Jewishness of my faith, and was the beginning of my prayers that the eyes of the Jews would be opened to see Jesus their Messiah (Yeshuah ha Mashiach) in the midst of their rituals.

Prayer: Abba Father, create in me a hunger for and a delight in Your Law and the prophets. Help me to see them in the light of the risen Messiah. Lord, I ask for opportunities to meet with my Jewish brothers and sisters, and celebrate Your feasts and festivals, so that I can start to see my faith through a Jewish lens. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Over the next few weeks wea are going to be focusing on faith, hope, and love. We're going to be looking for them in the scripture passages we read each day, and comparing verses with other scripture; with the hope of stimulating thouoght and discussion. We will be looking at each seperately and then the three together as those that abide.

Righteousness By Faith:

In Romans 3:21-22 we read, *"But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction. "*
Faith abides because righteousness is by faith, faith in Jesus Christ (Yeshua Hamashiach). The Scriptures tells us that only the righteous will enter the kingdom of God, the holy city of the new Jerusalem, or the highway of holiness that leads to it. But we cannot attain righteousness by our own actions or works, neither through works of the Law, or our own "good" works. There is no one righteous, not even one (Psalm 14:1-3, Romans 3:10). The only way we can enter God's presence is through faith, because righteousness is by faith. Why is this? Why aren't we made righteous by our works? So that there is no room for boastfulness or pride, pride in our works, or pride in our birth nationality, or in our religious beliefs (Romans 3:27-30). Abraham is the father of all who believe, whether Jew or Gentile, because he believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness (Romans 3:31-4:3, 4:9-22).
Faith continues to be the only way to be credited with righteousness because the God of Abraham is one God, over both Jew and Gentile, and He does not change. The Law and the Prophets pointed to the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the One in whom we believe, and by Whom we are made righteous (Romans 4:23-25). And having been made righteous by faith, we are t hen justified by faith and have peace (shalom) with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 4:25-5:2).

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What is the difference between being made righteousness and justification?
2. If Abraham is the father of our faith, for both Jews and Christians, what is the distinction between the two?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 15 – Genesis 8–11

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"I am humbled and quieted in Your presence. Like a contented child who rests on its mother's lap." Psalm 131:2a (TPT)

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Indeed I establish my covenant with you: and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, and shall there never again be a flood to destroy the earth." Genesis 9:11

Daily Devotion

"...I will never again curse the ground because of man... " Genesis 8:21b

On several occasions, I have heard Christians declare that it is the height of arrogance for humans to think that they have the power to affect the course of nature. And yet Scripture tells us from the very beginning that mankind does have a profound effect on the rest of creation. Twice, God cursed the ground because of the sin of man (Genesis 3:17-19, Genesis 6-8), which ended with God's declaration that He will never again curse the ground on account of mankind (Genesis 8:21). The effect we have on the natural world is directly connected to the stewardship God gave us over the earth. To say that human actions do not or cannot affect the rest of creation is to be ignorant of the authority God gave mankind in the very beginning (Genesis 1:28, Psalm 8:6-8). The first stewardship God gave to mankind was the stewardship to rule the earth and all it contained. It seems that not only have we in the church abandoned that stewardship, but we have forgotten that it was ours in the first place. Knowing how seriously God takes the issue of stewardship (Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 12:42-48), we as the church should be at the forefront of the environmental movement, rather than detractors of it. How are we going to fare on the day we are called to account for that stewardship?

Prayer: Abba Father, thank You for the incredible gift You have given me, of this earth and the charge to care for it. Father, I want to be a good steward of all Your gifts, first in the natural and also the spiritual. Teach me to be a good steward of Your creation. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Faith Is Action:

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not yet seen. " Hebrewa 11:1

In Genesis 6-9, we see the account of Noah and the flood. Noah is one of the great heroes of faith in the Scriptures because he believed what God told him and acted upon His words.
God spoke to Noah and told him that He was going to destroy all flesh from the earth by flooding it with water, but that he and his family, and every creature that God sends to Noah would be saved in the ark that God commands him to build (Genesis 6:13-21). And this is where we see Noah's faith in action, "Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did" (Genesis 6:22). This one verse covers all that Noah did throughout the hundred years between God speaking to him and the rain starting. In these hundred years, Noah works on building the ark according to the plans God gave him, in full assurance that it is how God will save him and his family from the destruction to come, and fully convinced that the rain and the floods will come. A hundred years is a long time to work a project of such enormity without ever seeing even a hint of what God said He was going to do. One of the weapons that the enemy uses to try to bring the work of God to a standstill is doubt. You can pretty much guarantee that the enemy was whispering in Noah's ear that whole time, his favourite refrain, "Did God really say?" (Genesis 3:1-5), but Noah was unwavering in his actions because his faith in God assured him that what God said He would do, and convinced him that even though he had never seen rain or flooding of any sort before, that he needed to be prepared for it to come.

Discuss:

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Question:

1. What is one thing that God has put on your heart to do that requires you to act in faith?

Answer:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 16 – Joshia 11–15

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One of the ways we can know that we've entered God's presence is a sense of contentment. "I'm Your resting child, and my soul is content in You." Psalm 131:2b (TPT)

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Then YHWH said to Joshua, 'Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow at this time I will give all of them over, slain, before Israel…'" (Joshua 11:6a)

Daily Devotion

"Then Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor…for Hazor formerly was the head of all these kingdoms." Joshua 11:10

Hazor had sent word to all the kings around them and they had all gone to fight Israel with their armies, "…as many people as the sand that is on the seashore…" (Joshua 11:4b), and God delivered them all into Israel's hand (Joshua 11:8), as He said He would (Joshua 11:6). Then Joshua turned back and captured Hazor. How often do we, as believers, have battles with issues in our lives, we fight the battle and we think we've overcome it, only to find it coming up again from a different direction or in a different way? This happens because we have never dealt with the source of the issue, never removed the head. There comes a time when we need to turn back, to seek out the cause of the issue and where it originates from, and deal with it at the source. We can only do this at the right time and with God's help, and very often with Godly counsel and inner healing.

Prayer: Abba Father, I thank You, that You have said in Your word that in You, I have the victory! Help me to fight my daily battles by the power of Your Word, and Your Spirit that dwells in me. And show me clearly when the time is right to turn back and deal with the head, the source of the issue. Surround me with the people who will support and help me to gain the victory in my life. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Faith Is Our Inheritance:

"So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that YHWH had spoken to Moses, and Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes, Thus the land was quiet from war. " Joshua 11:23

In Joshua 11-15, we see Joshua and the people of Israel at war, fighting to take the land that God had promised to their forefather, Abraham, that He would give them. We see them divide the land and apportion it as an inheritance to the tribes of Israel, according to the word of Moses. But the inheritance they received from Abraham was far greater than that of the land itself and has sustained the people of Israel through the millennia, even when they have been removed from the land of their inheritance for a time. That inheritance is faith. Abraham is the father of faith; he believed God's promises, and it was accounted to him as righteousness; that faith spurred him to action, and he passed that faith to his son Isaac. The promises Isaac received from his father were confirmed by God after Abraham's death and he passed his faith in the promises of God to his son Jacob (God confirmed the promises again), who passed it to his twelve sons. For four hundred years as the sons of Israel (Jacob) dwelt in the land of Egypt, that faith in the promises of God was passed from generation to generation until the time when Moses was raised up to lead God's people out of Egypt and to the promised land. Faith in the promises of God, that God confirmed again to Moses, sustained them through forty years in the wilderness until Joshua receives those same promises from Moses and leads the people into the land, and gave them the courage and strength to fight the war that was before them until the land was divided as an inheritance to all the tribes of Israel. And finally, the land had rest from war. But the story doesn't end there - that same faith continued to be passed on and sustain the people of Israel until the day when, at the appointed time, Jesus made the way for all mankind to enter into faith,

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and promises that God gave to Abraham, so that now we who believe are called heirs of the promise, and faith, of Abraham our father. We have been grafted into the inheritance of Israel, that inheritance is not the land but the faith.

Discuss:

Question:

1. In what ways is your faith the Jewish faith inherited from Father Abraham?

Answer:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 17 - Psalms 6-8

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When an athlete is getting ready to compete, they come to a place of complete stillness before starting. In this place, a moment can seem like an eternity and they can centre and focus themselves for the race ahead. Stillness dos not mean inactivity.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

O, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just: for the righteous God tests the hearts and minds. Psalms 7:9 (NKJV)

Daily Devotion

"Yet You have made him a little lower than God... " Psalm 8:5a (NASB95)

We often ask ourselves, "Why am I here? What is my purpose?" And Psalm 8 answers both of those questions, gloriously and succinctly. I encourage you to read it over and over, until the incredible beauty and enormity of what it's saying sinks in. In summary: YHWH Elohim, the Creator of all things, whose glory can be seen in the work of His hands, made mankind just a little lower than Himself, and makes us rulers over the work of His hands, the earth and everything in it. Now, this does not mean that we have the God-given right to do whatever we want to or rule over without consequence or accountability. Historically, there have been kings who thought that way, but they tended to come to a rather sticky end. It does mean that we are to maintain peace on the earth, to administer justice, and uphold the law of the land; to govern, to manage, and to have authority (sounds a bit like a steward, right)? But this must be done in the midst of standing in awe of God and wonder at His glory as it is expressed through His creation (Psalm 8:1, 3, 9). The moment we stop doing so, our perception of this role becomes perverted by the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life; tainted by the system of the world (1 John 2:16). Man is created by God to rule His earthly creation from a place of awe, wonder and humility as we gaze upon His majesty, and His glory as it is expressed by the work of His fingers.

Prayer: Abba, Father, I stand in awe of You and Your great majesty. I look with wonder at Your heavenly creation, and I'm humbled that You would give me authority over Your creation that is under my feet. Help me to steward well the work of Your hands. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love.* " *1 Corinthians 13:13*

Faith Defeats Our Adversaries:

In Psalms 6 & 7, David is crying out to God to deliver him from his adversaries (Psalms 7:6).

His faith in God as his Father allows him to cry out from his heart, holding nothing back (Psalms 6:4). His faith in God as his Deliverer allowed him to cry out to God to defeat his enemies for him (Psalms 7:1). His faith in God as the Righteous Judge allowed him to give thanks to God and praise His name in the midst of his difficulties (7:6-11). Even before he sees his adversaries defeated in the natural realm, he is giving thanks to God for the defeat by faith (Psalms 7:17).

This sort of faith opens the door for God to enter into our situation and work in power on our behalf. It is our faith in God that defeats our adversaries, whatever or whoever they may be. *'Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, "This is the word of YHWH to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, ' says YHWH of hosts. What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"" (Zechariah 4:6-7).*

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What great mountain do you need God to defeat on your behalf?
2. What area of your faith do you need to grow in to allow God the freedom to act in power on your behalf?

Answers:

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Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 18 – Job 5–6

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When our grief is too great to be still before God, that is when we need to bring a sacrifice of praise, to pour out praise for God amid our grief, until our tears have abated and we receive the stillness that comes after the storm.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"For the despairing man lovingkindness should be from his friend; but he forsakes the fear of the Almighty." Job 6:14

Daily Devotion

"For the despairing man lovingkindness should be from his friend; but he forsakes the fear of the Almighty. " Job 6:14

How often do we see a friend who is grieving or hurting and feel at a loss to know how to comfort them? Or even look at their struggle and think, "Maybe they did something to deserve what they're going through". And we can even justify our attitude with Scripture. But only God sees the heart of men. We need to be careful that we do not call evil what is good or ascribe to God the work of the accuser. So, what can we do? We can start by sitting in silence with those who are grieving; just be there for them, touch them, love on them, bring them food and drink, a tissue, or a whole box of tissues. Acts of kindness don't need to come with advice or even words. Be available to listen, just listen and allow them the opportunity to express their grief without judgment or comment, and without trying to give a "solution" or solve the problem for them. Even if you are sure that they have brought their situation on themselves, remember that it is the kindness of the Lord that leads to repentance. Be the kindness of the Lord for them.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to be a friend in someone's time of grief, to be willing to sit with them in silence and show kindness to them. Give me creative ways to express Your love for them that they can receive amid their grief, so that they may be encouraged in their reverent worship of You. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Faith Is A Mirror:

In Job chapter 5, we see Job's character under attack from those who call themselves his friends. After everything that he has already been through and is going through, this new attack touches right at the core of his being, his integrity before God. It is Job's faith that allows him to continue to see himself as he is in God. It could be very easy for him to allow doubt to enter in, to start to question his own intentions, to question the motive for all the good deeds that he was renowned for. To give credence to the arguments of his "friends" who should have known him better than anyone else.

It is faith that allows us to see ourselves through God's eyes, to recognise that we are a new creation in Christ Jesus, that we are the righteousness of Christ in Him. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:12, *"For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known"* . Our faith allows us to see ourself as we are in Christ, but how clearly we see is according to our faith. When we see Christ face to face, we will see clearly, for our faith will be complete and we will be able to know ourselves fully even as we are fully known by God. So how do we build up our faith so that we can see ourselves in Christ more clearly? James gives us a clue in James 1:22-25, *"But become doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is an hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in the mirror; for once he looked at himself and has gone away, he immediately forgot what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of freedom, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man will be blessed in what he does".*

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. How clear is your image of who you are in Christ?
2. How can you see yourself more clearly, according to James?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 19 – Isaiah 12–17

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"His tracks take me to an oasis of peace, the quiet brook of bliss. That's where He restores and revives my life."

Psalm 23: 2b-3a (TPT)

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for Yah - YHWH Himself - is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation."

Isaiah 12:2

Daily Devotion

"Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation. "
Isaiah 12:3

What does that even mean? Let's look at springs, what are they, and what are the attributes of water that comes from a spring? Springs are created when groundwater springs up through openings in the earth's crust, either above ground or under water in streams, rivers, lakes, or in the ocean. As a hiker, I can relate to this verse. It is always a delight to come across spring water along the trail, as it is almost always pure, fresh, and cold. I have joyously drawn water from springs, drinking in the refreshing cold water, and soaking my hot and tired feet in the continuous flow. Then, filling my water bottles before heading off on the trail again. Likewise, Jesus said, "... If anyone one is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water'" (John 7:37b-38). Jesus is referring to Himself here as the springs of salvation. And again, with the woman at the well (John 4:10-14). How often do you think of your salvation as a water source springing up within you? How often do you joyously draw water from those springs, to quench your own thirst or the thirst of others?

Prayer: Abba Father, cause the joy of Your salvation to bubble up in me like a spring of water bursting through the dry ground. That I might joyously draw water from Jesus, the spring of salvation, water from the rock, to refresh those who are thirsty and look on with joy as rivers of living water burst forth from them also. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Salvation By Faith:

"Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not dread; for Yah - YHWH Himself - is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. " Isaiah 12:2

Salvation by faith is not a new concept to the writers of the Brit Hadasha (The New Testament). The prophetic writings of Scripture are full of salvation from God through the coming Messiah. Their faith was in a coming Messiah, ours is in the risen Messiah.

From the very beginning, salvation has been by faith and not by works. In Genesis 4:3-5, we see Cain and Abel bringing their offerings before YHWH; God has regard for Abel's offering but Cain's He does not. Why? Because Cain presented an offering of the work of his hands (Genesis 3:17b-19). By his own work, he was trying to be acceptable before God. The Psalms are full of the theme of salvation by faith; in fact, the Hebrew root word for salvation or one of its derivations is found in almost every Psalm. Salvation by faith is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, as recounted in the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, so that no one may boast. " Ephesians 2:8-9

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. According to Scripture, why was Cain's offering unacceptable to God?
2. How do we receive salvation?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 20 - Matthew 5-7

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"I overflow with praise when I come before You, for the anointing of Your presence satisfies me like nothing else. You are such rich banquet of pleasure to my soul." Psalm 63:5 (TPT)

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matthew 5:6 (NKJV)

Daily Devotion

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. " Matthew 5:16

I see so many posts on social media these days of people recording themselves doing good deeds for those less fortunate than themselves. Many of them are obviously staged and merely "click bait"; and while others are genuinely helping people in need, the motivation is still to gain followers and to pat themselves on the back - "Aren't I a good person!" or, "look how grateful they are!" These people have forfeited any heavenly reward for their good deeds, they have received their reward in full already (Matthew 6:1-2). But Jesus says to let our light shine in such a way that they see our good works and glorify your Father in heaven. To do that, our light must shine in such a way that we are not seen. He goes on to say, "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you" (Matthew 6:3-4). This runs contrary to the American ethos, claiming charitable giving and even tithing, as a tax deduction.

Prayer: Abba Father, show me how to give in such a way that I remain hidden and You receive ALL the glory. Help me to navigate this in our society, where everything is recorded and accounted for. Give me creative strategies to be able to let my light shine in such a way that I remain unseen, but my good works point directly to You and Your name is glorified. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Matthew 5-7 would have to be one of my favourite passages of Scripture. This is where Jesus gives us the blueprint for kingdom living, and there is so much in here I really didn't know what the focus should be. Faith defeats worry? Faith brings provision? Faith leads to wisdom? It was getting late so I put it aside and headed to bed, and as I was lying there waiting for sleep, it came to me:

Live by Faith:

The whole of the Sermon on the Mount is about how we are to live and walk by faith. Living by faith is the kingdom paradigm we are to walk out here on earth. Living our lives in the assurance of our hope in the promises of God, and the conviction that His kingdom realm, although we cannot see it with our earthly eyes, is the realm in which we live and move daily, by the power of the Spirit of God who dwells in us. Setting aside all our earthly cares because we know that He cares for us, we can focus our whole attention on Him and the things of His kingdom. We know that our righteousness is by faith; the next step is that the righteous live by faith (Galatians 2:20, 3:10-14, Hebrews 10:38). But what does that look like?

Jesus gives some very specific examples in this passage: Those who live by faith know they are blessed (Matthew 5:3-12) despite their earthly circumstances. Those who live by faith are salt and light in the world (Matthew 5:13-16). Those who live by faith are called to a higher standard than that set by the Law (Matthew 5:17-48). Those who live by faith are to look to God for the reward of their actions, not to man (Matthew 6:1-18). Those who walk by faith are to have their sights and their heart set on the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 6:19-23). Those who walk by faith are to work for the glory of God and His kingdom, not to attain wealth or worry or be concerned about earthly needs like food, drink, and clothing (6:24-34). T hose who live by faith do not judge others but are wise in their dealings with people (Matthew 7:1-6, 12, 15-23).

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Those who walk by faith are seekers of wisdom, seekers of the ways of the kingdom (Matthew 7:7-11, 24-27).

Discuss:

Question:

1. We know that the Law was given to show us that we are unable to attain righteousness through our own works, but in this passage, Jesus is holding us to a higher standard than that set by the Law. How is it possible to walk according to the standard Jesus has set for us?

Answer:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 21 - Romans 5-6

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Shalom - A favorable, intact, circumstance of well-being that is full to overflowing. This is the peace that passes all understanding that Jesus gives to his disciples in John 14:27.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5:1

Daily Devotion

"For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. " Romans 6:14

The first time we see this concept of mastery over sin is in Genesis 4:6-8. This is where God tells Cain that sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for him, but he must master it. If sin is not master over you, then you have the mastery over it, by the grace of God. I want you to re-read that last sentence and let it sink in. By the grace of God, you have mastery over sin. That means you have the authority to walk in righteousness and not give way to sin. Therefore the only time sin masters us is when we choose to let it, whether consciously or subconsciously. Paul writes in Romans 6:11-12, *"Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts"* . The enemy of your soul will try to tell you that you can't help but sin, that you don't have the self-control to master it. I want you to recognise this as the lie that it is and speak to yourself the truth of the word of God. The following prayer is a personalisation of Romans 6:10-12, 14:

Prayer: Abba Father, thank you that by Christ's death and resurrection, He died to sin once for all, and that the life He now lives He lives to You. Even so, I consider myself to be dead to sin but alive to You in Christ Jesus. Therefore, by Your grace, I will not allow sin to reign in my mortal body so that I obey its lusts, and sin shall not be master over me, for I am not under law but under grace. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love.* "
1 Corinthians 13:13

Exulting In Hope:

Have you ever exulted in hope? This phrase seems counterintuitive to most of us; our idea of hope is one that comes from a place of lack or need and doesn't sit well with the idea of exultation. We hope that we'll be able to cover the bills this month. We hope we'll be able to feed our family today. We hope that nothing unexpected comes up this week, or we'll be in over our head. Have you ever stood in the check out line with a tight knot in your stomach just hoping that you're not going to have to put something back, because you need everything you have in your cart? That is the place that most people come from when they think about hope. So how do we move from there to the place of exulting in hope? To do that, we need to change our idea of what hope is.

The words that are translated as hope in both the Old (Hebrew) and New (Greek) Testaments have a very similar meaning. They both refer to the idea of waiting with joyful, excited anticipation, knowing that what you wait for will occur. If you've ever planted seeds and spent the next several days checking on them every day for the first hint of a green shoot pushing up through the earth, and the ensuing "happy dance" that occurs when they do, then you know what it means to hope. This is the excited anticipation Paul is referring to when he writes, "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we boast in the hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1-2).

The really interesting thing about the Greek word is that it is predicated on the One you hope in. Which means that for that change of thinking to occur, we need to get to know God, the One we hope in, so that our confidence is based on His history of keeping His word, doing what He says He's going to do. So our idea of hope goes from, "O God, I hope I make it!" to "O God, I'm so excited to see what You're going to do!" Knowing that what we are waiting for will come to pass because we know Who it is that we are hoping in. This change is so important if the next part of what Paul writes is going to make any sense - "And not only this, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction brings about perseverance; and perseverance proven character; and proven character,

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hope" (Romans 5:3-4). If our idea of hope comes from that place of gut-clenching need, then these verses are not very comforting. In fact, it could read like a never-ending loop of misery. But if hope is the excited anticipation of what you know is going to come to pass because the One you believe in is faithful, it becomes a delight where even our tribulations become something to exult in because we know the end result is coming to that place of excited, joyful, anticipation of what God is going to do on our behalf as He takes us from glory to glory. The key difference is one of belief, belief in God Himself and His goodness, "and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. " (Romans 5:5 NASB).

Discuss:

Questions:

1. How has your idea of what hope is changed over the years, and why did it change?
2. How do tribulations lead to hope?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 22 - Genesis 12-15

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"Be still, and know I am God..."
Psalm 46:10a (NKJV)

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the nations of the earth will be blessed." Genesis 12:3

Daily Devotion

When I think about Abram leaving his father's house to go to a land that God will show him, the image I immediately see is of a man and his wife with packs on their backs leading a few sheep and goats into the desert. In our western society, we don't usually equate a nomadic lifestyle with wealth, let alone extreme wealth. And yet, Abram is described as being very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold (Genesis 13:2). Not only Abram but Lot, his nephew, who travelled with him; between them their possessions were so great that the land could not sustain them when they traveled together (Genesis 13:5-6). Later, when Abram goes to rescue Lot it says, he led out his trained men (they would have been between the ages of 20-40 years old based on other Scriptural accounts), "...born in his house, 318 in number, and went in pursuit... " (Genesis 14:14b). Now when you consider that each of these men was likely to have a wife and at least a couple of kids, plus each couple had parents of their own, we're looking at a conservative estimate of around 2,000 servants traveling with Abram. That's the population of a small town and a very different picture. How often do we limit what we receive from YHWH based on our own limited expectations of what we are worth? I know I have many times. In Isaiah 54:2 it says, "Enlarge the place of your tent; stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your pegs" . This enlarging needs to happen first in our own hearts and minds, in our expectations. We need to start expecting big things from God. Not from a sense of greed or striving after wealth, but from a recognition of just who God is!

Prayer: Abba Father, when You call me to great things in You, help me not to look at how small I am or how little I have, but to look at You and to know that You are able to provide for all my needs. And that it is Your desire to bless me. You blessed Abram and made him great, long before he became Abraham, the father of our faith. Thank You that Your blessing and provision is not based on my achievements, but upon who You are. Reveal more of Yourself to me as I walk in faith with You. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love.* " *1 Corinthians 13:13*

Hope Moves Us:

We all know that faith is the assurance of things hoped for (Hebrews 11:1), but what does that really mean? Just this - that our faith in God and in His word is the thing that convinces us that what God has spoken, He will bring to pass. So why do we need hope? Because our hope in who God is and in what He has promised is what moves us to act. To co-labor with Him to bring His word to pass. Now don't get me wrong, this does not mean trying to make God's will happen by our own strength.

"And YHWH said to Abram, 'Go forth from your land, and from your kin and from your father's house to the land which I will show you'" (Genesis 12:1). Abram's faith in God and in His word convinced him that God would do what He said. It was his hope in who God is and what God promised that caused him to get up and move (Genesis 12:4). This is why faith and hope go hand in hand, because faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26). Faith causes us to believe the promises of God, and hope causes us to act upon those promises in obedience to the command of God.

In Genesis 12, Abram acts on the promise about the land that God would show him by being obedient to God's command to go. It is a simple act of faith - God says go and I will show you the land, and Abram goes. However, the example we just read in James is a bit more complex and requires both more faith and a whole lot more hope. Abraham acts on the promise that God would establish His covenant with Isaac (Genesis 17:21) by being obedient to the command of God to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22:1-14).

Faith causes us to believe, hope causes us to act upon what we believe in obedience to God's command, even if that command seems to contradict the promise.

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What is the difference between faith and hope?
2. How has hope moved you?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 23 - Joshua 16-20

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"I am my beloved's, and His desire is for me" (Song of Songs 7:10). God's desire is for you. He wants you to be with Him in a place of intimacy.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Then the whole congregation of the sons of Israel assembled themselves at Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting there; and the land was subdued before them." Joshua 18:1

Daily Devotion

"...How long will you put off entering to take possession of the land which YHWH, the God of your fathers, has given you?" Joshua 18:3b

We, as the children of God, His church, have a great inheritance made up of the many promises of God that we have been grafted into. But how many of those promises are we walking in on a daily basis? How often do we miss out on a promise, not because it's unavailable to us, but because we have not entered in to take possession of what God has already given to us? I can tell you that for way too long in my life it was too many times. Often, we don't enter in because of our own self-perception, just like the house of Joseph in Joshua 17:14-18. The only way to change our self-perception is to see ourselves through God's eyes, and to do that we need to be spending time daily in His presence and in His word. As we get to know Him in His word and through close proximity to Him, we will start to see ourselves differently. The other reason why we may not enter in is that we fail to act. We're waiting for God to move on our behalf but we need to put our foot in the river before we'll see the waters parted so we can cross on dry ground.

Prayer: Abba Father, I thank You for all Your promises that I have been grafted into in Christ Jesus. Help me to see myself through Your eyes, as acceptable in the Beloved, help me to receive Your promises for myself, and give me the courage to take what action is needed by faith, to see You act in power on my behalf. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Hope Is Not Passive:

In Joshua 17:3-6, we read about the account of the daughters of Zelophehad. These were five women who walked in the hope of the promise of God, and that hope made them bold. They lived in the midst of a patriarchal society, where inheritance went to the sons. But they came before Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun and the leaders of Israel and declared the word of God that had been spoken to them through Moses and to claim an inheritance in the land among their father's brothers.

This was not the first time they had stood before the leaders of Israel. Before the people of Israel entered the land that God had promised them, these five women came before Moses and Eleazar and all the leaders to bring their case before God - that their father's name should not be withdrawn from amongst his family because he had no sons and they demanded an inheritance in the land. The hope of the promise of God caused them to stand up and be counted, not once but twice, and because they were willing to stand up and claim the promise of God for their family, God ruled in their favour. He declared them right, and said, "...You shall surely give them a hereditary possession among their fathers brothers... " (Numbers 27:7b). Not only that, but God also ruled in favour of any daughter whose father had no sons (Numbers 27:1-8).

The daughters of Zelophehad were not willing that the hope of the promise of God would pass them by because of the circumstances of their birth. They were born women in a society where women had no inheritance, but they were not willing to remain passive and allow their father's name to pass away with him. The hope of the promises of God caused them to take action.

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. In what way is hope spurring you to take action?
2. If hope does not spur you to actions it really hope, and if not, what is it?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 24 - Psalms 9-11

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God dwells in the praises of His people (Psalms 22:3). When we praise His name, God enters into our praise and dwells there.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"But YHWH abides forever: He has established His throne for judgement, and He will judge the world in righteousness: He will render justice for the peoples with equity." Psalms 9:7-8

Daily Devotion

"Arise, O YHWH, O God, lift up Your hand. Do not forget the afflicted. " Psalms 10:12

The Psalmist says many times, "...I cry to the LORD with my voice!" (Psalm 142:1). It is a constant refrain throughout the Psalms. He cries out for the needy, the afflicted, the orphan, the widow, for those who are oppressed. He cries out for the nation, and for himself in times of need. We have the privilege of coming before the very throne of God, to bring our case or the case of others, before Him, to call for righteous judgment, and justice. To cry out with our voice, "Arise, O YHWH, O God!" Because YHWH hears the desire of the afflicted; He strengthens their heart; and inclines His ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth will strike terror no more (Psalms 10:17-18).

Prayer:

Abba Father, help me to start using my voice to cry out for those who have no voice - for the poor, the orphan, the widow, the aged, the afflicted, the oppressed, and the captives. Help me to remember them before Your throne, for righteous judgement of the wicked and justice for the needy. And give me the words to speak on their behalf when I see injustice in the land. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Hope Remembers:

"For the needy shall not always be forgotten, and the hope of the poor shall not perish forever. " Psalms 9:18 (ESV)

During our most difficult times, when everything seems to be going wrong and our need is most great, hope remembers.
When we are being stretched seemingly beyond our limits, hope remembers.
When we are feeling isolated and alone, hope remembers.

Hope brings back to our memory ALL the things that God has done for us, and for His people.

Hope brings back to our memory the attributes of God that are declared to us by His creation, and in His word.

Hope brings back to our memory the words and promises of God that He has spoken over us through His word and the prophets.

Hope remembers who God is, what He has done, and what He has said.
Psalm 77

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What is the Scripture that hope reminds you of when things get tough?
2. What is the promise of God the hope brings back to your memory when you start to doubt?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 25 - Job 7-8

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Sometimes to still our mind and body, we need to give our hands something to do - something as simple as folding clothes or doing the dishes can become an opportunity to draw near to God.

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"What is man that You magnify him, and that You set Your heart upon him?" Job 7:17

Daily Devotion

"Indeed I will not hold back my mouth; I will speak in the distress of my spirit... " Job 7:11a

Sometimes all that we have is our anguish and bitterness of soul. We don't have it within us to praise God's name or worship Him in the way we are used to. But did you know that God wants whatever you've got? If you are willing to give God whatever you have within you, even if it is anguish and bitterness of soul, if you are willing to pour that out before Him from your heart, it becomes an act of worship. The act of pouring our anguish and bitterness before YHWH gives Him permission to bless it and transform it. So, like Job, let's not restrain our mouth in His presence, but speak before Him our anguish of spirit and the bitterness of our soul. Knowing that He who hears our words is faithful.

Prayer: Abba Father, thank You that we can pour out our grief, our anguish and our bitterness of soul before You as an act of worship. Thank You that when we have nothing else to give, You receive what we do have and are willing to give You. You bless it and transform it, and receive the weariness of our soul into the midst of Your wrap-around presence. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Hope Persists:

In Job 7, Job is crying out to God in his misery. He's declaring to God his brokenness, in body, mind and soul; and his hopelessness (Job 7:1-6). But despite his words, his actions declare that he still hopes in God, and his own just cause. He says that his days end in hopelessness but he cries out to God to remember him (Job 7:7-11). He asked God to turn His face from him but continues to bring his case before God (Job 7:17-21). Even during seeming hopelessness, hope persists, often in spite of our intentions or circumstances. Hope is like the autonomic system of the spirit. Just as when we hold our breath and determine not to breathe, there is a persistent part of our being that is determined that we will breathe, no matter what we want. And even if we are successful in holding our breath until we pass out, as soon as we do, that autonomic response takes over and we breathe again. We can't help but breathe. Hope is just like that. We can believe that our situation is hopeless, we can decide that we don't want to hope any longer, we can even declare that we have no hope. But that autonomic system of our spirit kicks in without us even being aware of it, and we find ourselves hoping in who God is, what He has done, and what He has spoken. And that hope does not disappoint (Romans 5:1-5). If you are looking for an overarching Scripture to understand the book of Job, Romans 5:3-5 is it.

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. How are the book of Job and Romans 5:3-5 alike?
2. When has persistent hope overruled your own desires or intentions?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 26 – Isaiah 18–22

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I consecrate myself to God to do His will where I am Watchman Nee

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"In that day Israel will be the third party with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom YHWH of hosts has blessed, saying, 'Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.' Isaiah 19:24-25

Daily Devotion

"...O Lord, I stand continually by day on the watchtower, and I am stationed every night at my guard post. " Isaiah 21:8b

We, as new covenant believers, have the privilege of entering into the presence of God at any time. In that place we hear His voice. Those who have the gift of prophecy are very often called as watchmen on the walls to declare what God is speaking or showing them in the Spirit realm to those around them. But we all have the ability to hear His voice. The question I put to you is this - what are you doing with what you hear from God? Are you like Isaiah, who said, "...What I have heard from YHWH of hosts, The God of Israel, I have declared to you" (Isaiah 21:10b)? To whom much is given, much is expected (Luke 12:48). Ask YHWH what He expects of you regarding the revelation of Himself that He has given you.

Prayer: Abba Father, I thank You for the wonderful privilege of entering Your very presence, of hearing Your voice. YHWH, show me what You would have me do with what I see and hear in Your presence. Help me to be a good steward of the revelation of You and Your son Jesus Christ You have given to me. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Hope Surprises:

Sometimes in our hope for God to act in justice on our behalf, or on behalf of His people, He does or says something that completely surprises us. Some of the most surprising things are when God, in His righteous judgement, brings about redemption and restoration from an unexpected source or to an unexpected recipient.

This is what happens in Isaiah 19:16-25. In the middle of the prophesies of Isaiah, the judgments on the nations around Israel, on Assyria, Moab, Damascus and Egypt, we find this passage. It is totally surprising and is the true hope for peace in the Middle East. This passage starts with Egypt trembling and in dread because of the waving of God's hand over them, and in terror of the land of Judah because of the purpose of God that He is purposing against them (Isaiah 19:16-17). This fits with what we've come to expect of the prophecies of Isaiah from God. But then it takes a surprising turn. Suddenly we're reading that in that day, five cities in Egypt will be speaking Hebrew, and will swear allegiance to YHWH Tza'vaot, YHWH of hosts. That there will be an altar to YHWH in the middle of Egypt and a pillar to YHWH at its border, and that when Egypt cries to YHWH, He will send them a Champion and Saviour to deliver them (Isaiah 19:18-21). And here's the biggest surprise - "And YHWH will smite Egypt, striking but healing; so they will return to YHWH and He will be moved by their entreaty and will heal them" (Isaiah 19:22, emphasis added). I can only assume that in the time of Joseph, when he was second only to Pharaoh, the nation of Egypt worshiped YHWH. It does not say so explicitly in Scripture so this is just my supposition, but if the nation of Egypt is going to return to YHWH, they must have once worshiped Him.

And the surprises just keep coming. As we read God's plan for peace in the Middle East, it indicates that the land governed by Israel will expand to include both Egypt and Assyria. "In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan [Hebrew] and swearing

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allegiance to YHWH of hosts;, one will be called the City of Destruction [the Sun] (Isaiah 19:18). The city of the Sun was the ancient city of Heliopolis, which is now a part of Cairo. If Cairo is one of the five cities in Egypt that speaks Hebrew, that tells us that the governing body in Egypt will be Hebrew speakers. It goes on to tell us that a highway will run between Egypt and Assyria (modern day Turkey and northern Iraq), and that Egyptians and Assyrians will travel back and forth between the two nations. What lies between Egypt and Assyria is Israel. What this is saying is that these three nations will be united by language (Hebrew), a highway through Israel, which suggests it is with Israel's consent and blessing, and most likely their planning and engineering, and by the worship of YHWH, the one true and living God (Isaiah 19:23). And that together, they will be a blessing in the midst of the earth (Isaiah 19:24-25).

This is the surprising hope for peace in the Middle East!

Discuss

Questions:

1. Who is the Champion and Savior spoken of in Isaiah 19:18-21, that God will send to deliver Egypt when they cry out to Him?
2. Have you ever been surprised by hope? Explain.

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 27 – Matthew 8–10

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"He (God) has bestowed on you, In the midst of your troubles to take solace in Him as often as you can." Brother Lawrence (The Practice of the Presence of God)

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!" Matthew 7:11

Daily Devotion

"And seeing the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd. " Matthew 9:36

I was at a Christian conference once and the question was asked, "Why aren't we seeing more healings and miracles in our churches?", and the usual thoughts were trotted out – "We need more faith", or, "We need more prayer". But what struck me was that many times in the gospels when Jesus heals, it says, "He was moved with compassion". I stood up in that conference and shared this, and suggested that maybe what we need is more compassion. My suggestion got only a lukewarm reception, and then went back to the same old tune. In this passage, Jesus' compassion moves Him to turn to His disciples and say, "...The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest" (Matthew 9:37b-38b). He then goes on to give them authority over unclean spirits to cast them out and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness (Matthew 10:1). I submit to you that the authority to heal the sick and cast out demons that Jesus gives His disciples comes out of HIs compassion.

Prayer: Abba Father, fill me with Your compassion, the compassion that moved Jesus, so I can be a willing vessel for Your Spirit, to see You heal the sick and deliver the oppressed in spirit through me. Let my motivation for moving in the authority You give Your disciples be a heart of compassion. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love. " 1 Corinthians 13:13

Hope Makes Us Bold:

In our reading today, we heard many examples of people made bold by their hope in Jesus, and in the miracles they had seen and heard about Him performing.

It starts with the leper, who is made so bold by his hope that he comes close enough to Jesus that Jesus can reach out and touch him. Even though lepers were required by law to keep themselves separate from other people (Matthew 8:1-4, Leviticus 13:45-46).

Next is the centurion - his hope made him bold enough to tell Jesus not to come to his house, for he was unworthy of such an honour. But just to speak the word and it would be done. This may seem presumptuous, but it came from a place of humility and hope in who Jesus was and what Jesus could do (Matthew 8:5-13).

After this, we see the two demon-possessed men. In this case, it was the demons who were made bold by their hope in who Jesus was. The demons knew better than anyone who Jesus was and what He was capable of. That hope in who Jesus was made them bold enough to ask Him for mercy and compassion by sending them into a herd of pigs instead of to the torment that they knew awaited them (Matthew 8:28-32).

Shortly after this, we see the friends of the paralytic man. We know from the account in Mark 2:1-12 that it is the hope of his friends that gives them the boldness to dig a hole in the roof of the house where Jesus is staying so they can let him down in front of Him (Matthew 9:1-7).

The next person we see is a synagogue official, or ruler. This man's hope in who Jesus was and what He could do that gave him the boldness to ask Jesus to come to his house and heal his daughter. Jesus was not popular among the religious elite, and he risked his position in the synagogue by making this request of Jesus in front of the Pharisees (Matthew 9:9-13, 18-19).

While Jesus is heading to the temple official's house, a woman with an

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issue of blood allows her hope to make her bold enough to touch the fringe of Jesus' garment. According to the Law, her condition made her unclean and anything she touched became unclean. Knowing this, hope made her bold enough to risk touching Jesus (Matthew 9:20-22).

Another account we see in this passage is the two blind men - their hope in who Jesus was made them bold enough to follow Jesus, calling out to him, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" (Matthew 9:27b)

And finally we see the mute, demon-possessed man. Again, it was those who brought the man to Jesus that hoped in who Jesus was and what He could. This hope gave them the boldness bring the man, despite the fact that the Pharisees were saying that Jesus cast out demons by the ruler of the demons (Matthew 9:32-35).

In each case, hope did not disappoint.

Discuss:

Questions:

1. When has hope in who God is and what He has done made you bold enough to go against the flow to receive from God?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 28 - Romans 7-8

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"But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." Acts 7:55

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death" (Romans 8:1-2)

Daily Devotion

"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. " Romans 8:11

Just think about that for a moment. Now think about it some more.
The requirements of the Law are fulfilled in us when we walk by the Spirit and not by the flesh (Romans 8:3-4). By dying to the flesh and its desires, we become alive by the Spirit of Christ Jesus to the things of the Spirit. *"If by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. "*
(Romans 8:13b-14, NASB95)
We are wanted by God, dead to the law of sin and death but alive to the law of life and peace in Christ by the power of His Spirit that dwells in us.

Prayer: Abba Father, I thank You that what the Law could not do because of the weakness of my flesh, You did by sending Your Son in the flesh as an offering for sin and fulfilling the requirement of the Law in me. Cause me to walk according to the Spirit and not the flesh as I am made alive by Your Spirit that dwells in me. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love.* " *1 Corinthians 13:13*

Love Is For Us:

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us" (Romans 8:31)?
The love of God is for you! Not just as a gift given to you, but it is for you in the sense that the love of God is actively working on your behalf at all times and in all circumstances:
There is no length to which the love of God will not go for you (Romans 8:32).
There is no accusation the enemy can bring against you that the love of God has not already answered on your behalf (Romas 8:33-34).
There is nothing that the enemy can do to you that can separate you from the love of God (Romans 8:35-36, 38-39).

"But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).

Discuss:

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Question:

1. If nothing that is created can separate us from the love of God, why do we feel separated from the love of God?

Answer:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 29 - Genesis 16-19

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"Do you not know that you are a sanctuary of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" 1 Corinthians 3:16

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"Now YHWH said, 'Shall I conceal from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?'" Genesis 18:17-18

Daily Devotion

"I am God Almighty [El Shaddai]; walk before Me and be blameless [complete, perfect, having integrity]. " Genesis 17:1b

Imagine being Abram, at the age of 99, having God Himself appear to you and giving you this command. The Messiah had not yet come and paid the price for his sin, the Law hadn't yet been given, the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out at Pentecost [Shavuot, the festival celebrating the giving of the Torah, the books of the Law]. And yet God expected Abram to do as He commanded.

How? By faith in the God who commanded Him.

How much more are we who have the assurance of the forgiveness of sins (Hebrews 10:19-22), the Law of God written on our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 10:16, Romans 2:15), and the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in us (2 Timothy 1:14, 1 Corinthians 3:16), required to be obedient to this command? Even Jesus said, *"...unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven" (*Matthew 5:20). Far too often, we allow the grace of God to be an excuse to not walk by faith in the righteousness of Christ that has been credited to us (1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 3:21-22).

How do we do this? As it was then, so it is now! By faith in the God who commands us!

Prayer: Abba Father, my desire is to walk by faith and not by sight. To walk according to the righteousness of Christ that you have imparted to me by faith, rather than using my own perception of my failings and weaknesses as an excuse to walk in sin. Amen

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love.* " *1 Corinthians 13:13*

Love Sees:

"Then she called the name of YHWH who spoke to her, [El Roi], You are a God who sees… " Genesis 16:13a

God, in His love and compassion, sees you. His love is not just for all mankind. He loves you as an individual and He sees you.
In Genesis 16, we read the account of Hagar, Sarai's Egyptian maid. When Hagar encounters God, she is in distress, having run away from Sarai (Genesis 16:1-6). The first thing we see is that the angel of YHWH was pursuing or searching for her. How do we know that? Because in verse 7, we read that the angel of YHWH found her. Now maybe it was that, "…the eyes of YHWH move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is wholly devoted to Him" (2 Chronicles 16:9a), but I don't believe that is the case here. God loved Hagar enough to see her, to heed her affliction, and to pursue her into the wilderness to speak to her.
The first thing that the angel did was to call her by name, and declare her title, or role in life. He wasn't looking for just anyone to help, he was searching specifically for "Hagar, Sarai's servant-woman… " (verse 8a). He then asks her about herself, and gives her the opportunity to tell him about her situation (verse 8b). I can't help but note the similarity between the questions the angel of YHWH asks Hagar and the question God asked Adam in Genesis 3:9. In both cases, the question was not asked because God didn't know the answer. They were asked to give the person God was seeking an opportunity to respond to His love and presence.
Because of Hagar's honest response, in that she takes responsibility for her own actions and doesn't blame anyone else for the situation she is in, the angel of God does two things. He gives her a command, and then a promise for herself (verses 9-10). And then he goes on to give her a command and a promise for her son (verses 11-12). He gives her clear

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directions and speaks into her concerns for herself and her son. In doing so, YHWH shows Hagar that He loves her enough to see every aspect of her life, even the secret things of her heart. There is nothing about her that His love does not see.

Discuss:

Questions:

1. In Genesis 16:1-6 both Sarai and Hagar sin. What were their sins?
2. What is the New Testament parable that reminds us of God's search for Hagar in the wilderness?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 30 - Joshua 21-24

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"There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved." John 13:23

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"So now, fear YHWH and serve Him in integrity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and YHWH."

Joshua 24:14

Daily Devotion

"Not one promise of the good promises which YHWH had promised to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass. " Joshua 21:45

Why do we trust God to fulfill His promises to us as believers? What is the basis of our trust in Him to do as He has said He will do?
It is this verse right here - *"Not one of the good promises which YHWH had promised to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass"* (Joshua 21:45). We read this Scripture passage and know that God has a history of fulfilling His promises. We know that He is not subject to change (Malachi 3:6), and is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).
If God has spoken a word of promise to you, it will not fail. You can trust Him in this!

Prayer: Abba Father, thank You! Thank You that You are faithful to fulfill every word that You have spoken. Not one of Your good promises fail; all come to pass. Thank You that I can be confident that if You have spoken it, it will come to pass. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love.* " *1 Corinthians 13:13*

Love Is Commanded:

Unlike how love is so often portrayed in our society today, love is not just a feeling. It is not a fleeting passion that we have no control over. In Scripture, love is commanded (Deuteronomy 6:5, Joshua 22:5, Mark 12:30, Luke 10:27). And if it is commanded, it is not subject to whim but to our will.
Joshua instructs the people, *"Only keep yourselves very carefully to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of YHWH commanded you, to love YHWH your God and walk in all His ways and keep His commandments and cling to Him and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul"* (Joshua 22:5).

There are three things that we notice in this verse:
Firstly, as we've already seen, love is commanded. Joshua tells the people again, "So keep your souls very carefully to love YHWH your God" (Joshua 23:11, emphasis added). We are to take diligent heed and to be careful to observe. To love God, our neighbour and ourselves is an act of will and awareness.
Secondly, we are to love God and cling to Him with all our heart and all our soul. That sounds like there's a lot of emotion and passion involved. If you believe the world, you can't choose to feel strong emotions or be passionate about something or someone. But this Scripture passage indicates that if you choose to love as an act of will and awareness, the feeling and passion will follow.
Thirdly, the outworking of that love and passion for God is to walk in His ways and keep His commandments (John 14:15). This is where ...all our mind, and with all your strength (Mark 12:30b), comes in. The expression of our passionate love for God is to be obedient to His word.

"So keep your souls very carefully to love YHWH your God" (Joshua 23:11).

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What do you think "to love is an act of will and awareness" means?
2. How is obedience to God the outworking of our love for Him?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

Day 31 - Psalms 12-14

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Mary then took a litra of perfume of very costly pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. John 12:3

Notes:

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Memory Verse:

"The words of YHWH are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace on the ground, refined seven times." Psalm 12:6

Daily Devotion

"But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. " Psalm 13:5

How often is this the cry of your heart? Is it just when things are going well? Or do you cry this from your heart during your most difficult times? This is the declaration of the Psalmist when he is at his lowest, when he feels that if God doesn't intervene soon, he will die. This is when he declares his trust in God's lovingkindness and rejoices in God's salvation. He finishes by saying, *"I will sing to YHWH, because He has dealt bountifully with me"* (Psalm 13:6). This is what it means to bring a sacrifice of praise to YHWH, when it costs you something emotionally and/or psychologically, to sing His praises as you pour out your tears and concerns before Him (2 Samuel 24:24). And this is where you find the victory over your circumstances.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me in the midst of my difficulties to declare my trust in You and to rejoice in Your salvation. Help me to pour out a sacrifice of praise, singing Your praises as tears pour down my cheeks. Declaring Your great love and faithfulness no matter what my circumstances may be. Amen.

Bible Study

These Three Remain

"*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three: but the greatest of these is love.* " *1 Corinthians 13:13*

Love Hopes:

As I was reading through these Psalms, I was wondering what they have to do with love. Psalm 13 briefly touches on the lovingkindness of God, but trying to make anything of that was like trying to fit a size 12 foot into a size 10 shoe. I didn't want to force the issue. As I sought His face for what He wanted me to write, I heard clearly, "Love hopes!"
It is David's love for God that causes him to declare the goodness of God in all his Psalms, even when he is crying out for help or asking, *"How long, O YHWH"* (Psalm 13:1a)? It is his love for God and his knowledge of God's love for him that causes him to hope in God, and to declare His goodness (Psalm 12:5-7, 13:5-6, 14:5b-7).
We have seen previously that faith is the assurance of things hoped for; hope causes us to act on our faith; and this is where they all come together - *"love hopes all things"* (1 Corinthians 13:7).
Faith, Hope and Love abide (together), these three!

Discuss:

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Questions:

1. What is an example of love hoping all things that you can see in these Psalms?
2. What is an example of "love hopes" from your life?
3. Can you see how faith, hope and love worked together in that situation?

Answers:

date:

Prayer Focus

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Prayer Focus date:

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Notes

I Get To Do List

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The Week Of:

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- [ ] Wednesday

- [ ] Thursday

- [ ] Friday

- [ ] Saturday

Notes

I Get To Do List

No.	To Do		Y/N

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The Week Of:

- [ ] Sunday

- [ ] Monday

- [ ] Tuesday

- [ ] Wednesday

- [ ] Thursday

- [ ] Friday

- [ ] Saturday

Notes

I Get To Do List

No.	To Do		Y/N

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The Week Of:

- [ ] Sunday

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