

Daily Practices

Week of 2/22/21 - 2/26/21

DAY 1 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Please help me to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Nahum 1:1-3

¹An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh. ²The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies. ³The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

DEVOTIONAL: Nahum powerfully portrays the pride, greed, self-centeredness, idolatry, violence, lack of mercy, and false security of Nineveh. Nahum is not expressing some personal feeling of vindication over some hurt by the oppressor, nor even a nationalistic chauvinism that pagan nations must be punished. Rather, God is applying his universal standard against evil, no matter who is responsible. How can God do this and why does God do this? To help us answer the question, we have to go back to the beginning. Genesis 1 tells us that God created everything. As the creator of everything, the world is God's possession. We also learn that God is perfectly good and just. This meant that everything that God created was intended to live in a perfectly good and just world. But when sin entered the world, it fractured everything and led to the ultimate consequence of death.

RESPONSE: Take two minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.

DAY 2 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Please help me to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Nahum 1:5-10

⁵The mountains quake before him; the hills melt; the earth heaves before him, the world and all who dwell in it. ⁶Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him. ⁷The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him. ⁸But with an overflowing flood he will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness. ⁹What do you plot against the Lord? He will make a complete end; trouble will not rise up a second time.

DEVOTIONAL: Nahum clearly teaches us that there are consequences to our sin. He described God in classic Hebrew terms. God is slow to anger yet judges the guilty. He avenges the oppressed and comforts the powerless. God is our advocate. He will take care of sin because he is just. We can count on God always repaying sin, whether in this life or the next. Nahum's message brought hope to a people without hope, announcing the victory of the Lord over the wicked ones. His word encouraged Judah because they had been oppressed by Ninevah. We can count on a God who delivers the oppressed. He punishes the oppressor and comforts the oppressed.

RESPONSE: Take two minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.

DAY 3 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Please help me to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 11:16-28

¹⁶ Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them; ¹⁷ then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the Lord is giving you... ²⁶ "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷ the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, ²⁸ and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God.

DEVOTIONAL: The best thing for us is to live our life serving God. Yet, we are constantly tempted to serve other gods instead. We are tempted to serve money and power. But all of those gods actually deceive our hearts. God knows this and warns us that there are consequences of living a life that is far from him. Life with God is a life that is blessed. It is not blessed in a way that receives more resources to spend on the gods of our passion. The life that serves God is blessed because they have all that they could ever need in God. As a follower of Jesus, everything could be taken away from you, but you are still blessed because Jesus promises to fulfill you for all eternity.

RESPONSE: Take a few minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.

DAY 4 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Please help me to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Romans 1:18-21

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. **19** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. **20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **21** For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened

DEVOTIONAL: Some people accuse God of being angry in the Old Testament and contrasting his anger with love in the New Testament. In today's passage, the apostle Paul is making it clear that the character of God never changes. He is always fully just and fully loving. His justice takes on different expressions, but he is always just. In the Old Testament, God was incredibly patient, but he had to avenge sin in order to be just. But that judgment doesn't always look like God punishing a nation for their oppression. Paul shows us a different way that God can judge sin: he gives people over to their fully sinful desires. Those desires ultimately end in their ruin. The way out of judgment is always to turn to the loving forgiveness that God offers.

RESPONSE: Take two minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.

DAY 5 // DAILY PRACTICES

PRAYER: O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Please help me to slow down enough in this moment to be fully present to myself and to you.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to the presence of God with you right now.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 10:42-43

⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that [Jesus] is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

DEVOTIONAL: God will judge sin—always! This should comfort us to know that God is just. But just because God is just, we cannot forget God's patience and mercy. If anyone disbelieves God's mercy after reading the Old Testament, then they should look no further than Jesus. God's mercy was poured out on us when God's judgment for sin was poured out on Jesus. God judged all people and put their sin on his own Son. Through one righteous person, all people can experience the fullness of life found in that righteousness. Wherever you are today, you can know that you will never experience the judgment of God if you have turned your life over to Jesus. God takes sin seriously, but he seriously has poured his mercy out on you through Jesus. Don't fall prey to the temptation to find your fulfillment outside of the mercy of Christ. But if you do, then you can always turn back to your merciful Savior.

RESPONSE: Take two minutes to respond to the scripture, devotional, or the Holy Spirit's prompting. Respond by writing in a journal, by meditating on a specific thought, or by talking with God.

SILENCE: Set a timer for two minutes. Sit in silence and bring your attention to what God is speaking to you.