

My Prayer Journal

Use this weekly prayer to help you begin your time with God each day.

Prayer of Confession:

Holy and loving God, we give You thanks that You are the God of salvation. Give us hearts to proclaim Your love to the world, so that we might live in a perpetual state of praise and thanksgiving. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Salvation. Amen.

My Prayers this Week:

Family Time:

Do you have Thanksgiving Day traditions? Have you ever been asked to make a list of what you are thankful for, or even to say out loud what you are thankful for before a Thanksgiving Day dinner? The Bible teaches us to think about what we are thankful for all the time, not just on one special day of the year! Some of the things the Bible says we should thank God for are our homes, our families, our food, God's love, and Jesus. What things are you most thankful for right now? Will you take time today to say a prayer to God thanking God for all those things?

MONDAY 6.8.20

Leviticus 7:11-15

It's fascinating that among all the laws prescribed in the Old Testament for how to worship God, there are laws about how exactly a "fellowship offering for expressing thanksgiving" should be made. Thanksgiving offerings were completely voluntary, but what was acceptable was still prescribed by God. Leviticus 3 prescribed an offering of "an unblemished animal from the herd" for fellowship offerings, and today's reading indicates that if it was for the purpose of thanksgiving, it was to be accompanied by two cakes—one leavened, and one not. The point for us today is not the sacrificial system per se, but to recognize that from the very beginnings of Jewish worship, rituals were included for the specific purpose of giving thanks to God. It is as if God recognized that His people would want a way to express their thanks to God for His blessings. But how can we ever express enough thanks for all God does for us? Because God said "here's how!" the people did not have to worry about whether they had thanked God sufficiently.

- Have you ever worried that your prayers of thanksgiving are sufficient? Does today's reading help alleviate that worry? What are you most thankful for?

TUESDAY 6.9.20

1 Chronicles 16:1-36

Before David united the twelve tribes of Israel and became king, Israel had been at war with the Philistines for many years. Throughout that time, the ark of the covenant, which had held the tablets of the Ten Commandments since the time of Moses, was kept in various places throughout the Promised Land. When David set up Jerusalem as his capital, he brought the ark to what was to be its new, temporary home in a tent in Jerusalem, until the Temple, its permanent home, could be constructed. Today's reading is the prayer that David proclaimed in the hearing of all the people, thanking God for this great accomplishment. Notice how the primary theme is God's faithfulness. What David is most thankful for is that God has kept His covenant with Israel—the people have finally inherited the Promised Land just as God said. David gives thanks not only for his immediate successes, but for the long history of all God has done for Israel.

- When you give thanks to God, do you only give thanks for recent things, or do you remember to give thanks for everything God has ever done for God's people?
- How will thanking God for His faithfulness help you to grow spiritually?

WEDNESDAY 6.10.20

Luke 2:21-40

In the weeks following Jesus' birth, Mary and Joseph would have been required to go to the Temple for three different Jewish rituals. At eight days old, Jesus would have been presented for circumcision. At one month old, Jesus would have been presented for the rite of "redemption of the firstborn." When forty days had passed since the birth, Mary would have participated in a purification ritual. While Mary and Joseph were at the Temple during this time, an amazing thing happened. Two elderly Jews named Simeon and Anna recognized, through the power of the Holy Spirit, that this baby was the long-anticipated Messiah. Both of them then offered prayers to God, giving thanks for Jesus. They gave thanks because they knew that with the coming of Jesus, the promised day when people from throughout the world would come to worship God was finally at hand.

- Simeon's prayer has a name in Latin—it is called the "Nunc Dimittis," which means "Now Dismiss." How might Simeon's prayer serve as a model prayer for you?
- When you pray, does it ever occur to you to offer God thanks for Jesus? How might you thank God for "seeing His salvation"?

THURSDAY 6.11.20

Matthew 26:17-29

The story of the Last Supper is familiar to most Christians, who participate in the remembrance of it each time they share in the sacrament of Holy Communion. Within the sharing of this Passover meal, both when it was time to break the bread, and when it was time to share the wine, Jesus paused to give thanks to God for the gifts of bread and wine. Saying prayers of thanksgiving whenever a meal was shared was standard practice in the Jewish way of life. In fact, the sharing of any meal in community, not just a special meal like the Passover, was a sacred happening for them. To share a meal was to share life, since food and drink are God's way of sustaining human life. Jesus' followers extended this metaphor in the practice of Holy Communion, such that the prayer of thanksgiving over the bread and the cup also signifies the giving of thanks for Jesus' body and blood, our source of ETERNAL life.

- Is "saying grace" standard practice in your home? Do you give thanks to God every time you partake of the food that sustains your life?
- The community is often lead in a prayer of thanksgiving after sharing Holy Communion. Do you give thanks for this gift?

