

## **The Biblical Perspective of the Daniel Fast**

This three week partial fast requires the elimination of certain foods as an act of worship and commitment to God. In chapters 1 and 10 of Daniel, we discover how Daniel's passion for God caused him to long for spiritual food more than physical food, which is the basis of this endeavor. Read chapters 1 and 10 for a full understanding on this biblical perspective.

Just as Daniel experienced trials in following the Lord, you undoubtedly will encounter challenges as well. The devil is outraged that you have committed to this spiritual discipline, and will find ways to place temptation in your path (1 Cor. 16:13-NLT).

Before we begin this fast, take a look within your heart and ask yourself. "What do I really want from this fast, what do I really hunger for personally and corporately for God's church and kingdom? Is it direction for a job situation, healing from a devastating illness, or relationship, wisdom in a relationship, freedom from an addiction, discernment for an important decision? As a family of faith, we are corporately seeking God's will, direction and resources to erect a new sanctuary to replace our current dated building and add much needed classrooms for Christian Education development as we "grow disciples" for Christ. Whatever the concern, know that God will satisfy our needs as we step out in faith, and trust Him to provide.

It is extremely important that you do all that you can to immerse yourself in the Word during your fast, and cling to God's promises. This is a unique opportunity for you to hunger for the Lord and His will in your life and feast on the truth of His Word.

May God's richest blessings be yours!

Dr. Derek A. Arnold  
Pastor

## DANIEL FAST

### *When does the fast begin?*

*The fast begins on the morning of Sunday, October 30, 2016, and will break on Saturday evening, November 19, 2016.*

DURING THIS FASTING PERIOD, PASTOR ARNOLD IS ENCOURAGING EACH MEMBER TO PARTNER WITH OTHER MEMBERS FOR PRAYER, MARRIED INDIVIDUALS WITH THEIR SPOUSES, AND SINGLE MEMBERS, TO CONNECT WITH OTHER SINGLES OF THE SAME SEX, FOR PRAYER.

### *Who should fast?*

*If you need to hear from God regarding your future and are experiencing spiritual resistance, then this fast is a powerful way to receive breakthrough and hear from heaven.*

*This is what the angel of the Lord said to Daniel at the end of the 21 days: "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard and I have come in response to your words."*

*--Daniel 10:12*

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

### Daniel 10:3

"All that time I had eaten no rich food, no meat or wine crossed my lips, and I used no fragrant lotions until three weeks had passed."

### I Corinthians 9:27

"I discipline my body and bring it under strict control, so that after preaching to others, I myself will not be disqualified."

## DANIEL'S DIET: PULSE AND WATER

### Daniel 1:12-16

What is Pulse which was a chief part of Daniel's Diet? Dan. 1:12. Pulse comes from the Hebrew word Hazeero\* lynt meaning, seed or grain, such as barley, wheat; rye, and peas, etc (Adam Clarke's Commentary.) Barnes says, the word "pulse" means leguminous plants with thin seeds; that is... the legume" which is called a "pod;" as a "pea-pod," or "bean-pod," and the word is commonly applied to peas or beans. The Hebrew word (zero\* lym) would properly have reference to seeds of any kind. Then, it would refer to plants that bear seeds of all kinds, and would be by no means limited to pulse-as peas or beans. Seeds-herbs, greens and vegetables can also be included.

There will be a booklet available to you with more than 20 Daniel Fast recipes to help you. You can also create your own based on the Four Food Groups below. Daniel's Diet would include items from the following four food groups.

### THE FOUR FOOD GROUPS

1. ***The Whole Grain Group***: This group includes brown rice, oats, barley, millet, and products made from whole grain. Grains are filling with little fat and no cholesterol.
2. ***The Legume Group***: This category includes peas, beans and lentils. Legumes are hearty, high protein foods with low glycemic index. They are rich in calcium, iron, and cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber. These will drive down your weight, blood sugar, and cholesterol.
3. ***The Vegetable Group***: The green vegetables: asparagus, broccoli, spinach, kale, collards, and many others are packed with iron and, except for spinach, high in absorbable calcium. Orange colored vegetables are loaded with beta-carotene, a cancer fighter. For example, carrots and yams. These foods are loaded with vitamins and minerals, and are very low in fats. Like all plants mods, they have no cholesterol and have a low glycemic index, except baking potatoes.
4. ***The Fruit Group***: Fruits are loaded with vitamins and they have no fats or cholesterol. Nearly all fruits: apples, bananas, blue berries, cherries, oranges, peaches, and most others have a low glycemic index. The exceptions are watermelon and pineapple.

\*\*\*\*Note the similarity between these groups and God's original Diet. Grains, Fruits, Nuts, and Vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible.

## **The Daniel Fast Food List:**

- \***All Fruit** – fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, or canned.
- \***All Vegetables** – fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, or canned.
- \***All Whole Grains** – brown rice, barley, oats, quinoa, millet, and whole wheat.
- \***All Nuts & Seeds** – almonds, cashews, macadamia, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, and sunflower seeds; unsweetened almond milk. Nut butters are also included.
- \***All Legumes** – canned or dried, black beans, black eyed peas, cannellini beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), great northern beans, kidney beans, lentils, pinto beans, and split peas.
- \***All Quality Oils** – avocado, coconut, grapeseed, sesame, and walnut.
- \***Beverages** – distilled water, filtered water, and spring water.
- \***Other** – unsweetened almond milk, coconut milk, rice milk, or soy milk; herbs, spices, salt, pepper, unsweetened coconut flakes, seasonings, Bragg’s Liquid Aminos, soy products, and tofu.

## **Foods to Avoid on the Daniel Fast:**

- \***All Meat/Animal Products** – beef, buffalo, fish, lamb, poultry, and pork.
- \***All Dairy Products** – butter, cheese, cream, eggs, and milk.
- \***All Sweeteners** – agave nectar, artificial sweeteners, cane juice, honey, molasses, raw sugar, syrups, stevia, and sugar.
- \***All Leavened Bread & Yeast** – baked goods and Ezekiel bread (If it contains yeast and honey).
- \***All Refined & Processed Food Products** – artificial flavorings, chemicals, food additives, preservatives, white flour, and white rice.
- \***All Deep-Fried Foods** – corn chips, French fries, and potato chips.
- \***All Solid Fats** – lard, margarine, and shortening.
- \***Beverages** – alcohol, carbonated drinks, coffee, energy drinks, herbal tea, and tea.

## **Daniel 21-Day Fast – Devotional**

Day 1 – October 30/Daily Devotion: “The Vision”

Daniel 10

**1** In the third year of the reign of King Cyrus of Persia, Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar) had another vision. He understood that the vision concerned events certain to happen in the future—times of war and great hardship. **2** When this vision came to me, I, Daniel, had been in mourning for three whole weeks. **3** All that time I had eaten no rich food. No meat or wine crossed my lips, and I used no fragrant lotions until those three weeks had passed. **4** On April 23, as I was standing on the bank of the great Tigris River, **5** I looked up and saw a man dressed in linen clothing, with a belt of pure gold around his waist. **6** His body looked like a precious gem. His face flashed like lightning, and his eyes flamed like torches. His arms and feet shone like polished bronze, and his voice roared like a vast multitude of people. **7** Only I, Daniel, saw this vision. The men with me saw nothing, but they were suddenly terrified and ran away to hide. **8** So I was left there all alone to see this amazing vision. My strength left me, my face grew deathly pale, and I felt very weak. **9** Then I heard the man speak, and when I heard the sound of his voice, I fainted and lay there with my face to the ground. **10** Just then a hand touched me and lifted me, still trembling, to my hands and knees. **11** And the man said to me, “Daniel, you are very precious to God, so listen carefully to what I have to say to you. Stand up, for I have been sent to you.” When he said this to me, I stood up, still trembling. **12** Then he said, “Don’t be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. **13** But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia. **14** Now I am here to explain what will happen to your people in the future, for this vision concerns a time yet to come.” **15** While he was speaking to me, I looked down at the ground, unable to say a word. **16** Then the one who looked like a man<sup>f</sup> touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing in front of me, “I am filled with anguish because of the vision I have seen, my lord, and I am very weak. **17** How can someone like me, your servant, talk to you, my lord? My strength is gone, and I can hardly breathe.” **18** Then the one who looked like a man touched me again, and I felt my strength returning. **19** “Don’t be afraid,” he said, “for you are very precious to God. Peace! Be encouraged! Be strong!” As he spoke these words to me, I suddenly felt stronger and said to him, “Please speak to me, my lord, for you have strengthened me.” **20** He replied, “Do you know why I have come? Soon I must return to fight against the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia, and after that the spirit prince of the kingdom of Greece will come. **21** Meanwhile, I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one helps me against these spirit princes except Michael, your spirit prince.)

Day 2 – October 31/Daily Devotional: “Restoration”

I Chronicles 21:18-27

**18** Then the angel of the Lord told Gad to instruct David to go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. **19** So David went up to do what the Lord had commanded him through Gad. **20** Araunah, who was busy threshing wheat at the time, turned and saw the angel there. His four sons, who were with him, ran away and hid. **21** When Araunah saw David approaching, he left his threshing floor and bowed before David with his face to the ground. **22** David said to Araunah, “Let me buy this threshing floor from you at its full price. Then I will build an altar to the Lord there, so that he will stop the plague.” **23** “Take it, my lord the king, and use it as you wish,” Araunah said to David. “I will give the oxen for the burnt offerings, and the threshing boards for wood to build a fire on the altar, and the wheat for the grain offering. I will give it all to you.” **24** But King David replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on buying it for the full price. I will not take what is yours and give it to the Lord. I will not present burnt offerings that have cost me nothing!” **25** So David gave Araunah 600 pieces of gold in payment for the threshing floor. **26** David built an altar there to the Lord and sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings. And when David prayed, the Lord answered him by sending fire from heaven to burn up the offering on the altar. **27** Then the Lord spoke to the angel, who put the sword back into its sheath.

Day 3 – November 1/Daily Devotional: “Inner Resolve”

Daniel 1

**1** During the third year of King Jehoiakim’s reign in Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. **2** The Lord gave him victory over King Jehoiakim of Judah and permitted him to take some of the sacred objects from the Temple of God. So Nebuchadnezzar took them back to the land of Babylonia and placed them in the treasure-house of his god. **3** Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief of staff, to bring to the palace some of the young men of Judah’s royal family and other noble families, who had been brought to Babylon as captives. **4** “Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men,” he said. “Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good judgment, and are suited to serve in the royal palace. Train these young men in the language and literature of Babylon.” **5** The king assigned them a daily ration of food and wine from his own kitchens. They were to be trained for three years, and then they would enter the royal service. **6** Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four of the young men chosen, all from the tribe of Judah. **7** The chief of staff renamed them with these Babylonian names:

Daniel was called Belteshazzar.

Hananiah was called Shadrach.

Mishael was called Meshach.

Azariah was called Abednego.

**8** But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief of staff for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods. **9** Now God had given the chief of staff both respect and affection for Daniel. **10** But he responded, “I am afraid of my lord the king, who has ordered that you eat this food and wine. If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded.” **11** Daniel spoke with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief of staff to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. **12** “Please test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water,” Daniel said. **13** “At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king’s food. Then make your decision in light of what you see.” **14** The attendant agreed to Daniel’s suggestion and tested them for ten days. **15** At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. **16** So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others. **17** God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for understanding every aspect of literature and wisdom. And God gave Daniel the special ability to interpret the meanings of visions and dreams. **18** When the training period ordered by the king was completed, the chief of staff brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar. **19** The king talked with them, and no one impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they entered the royal service. **20** Whenever the king consulted them in any matter requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, he found them ten times more capable than any of the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom. **21** Daniel remained in the royal service until the first year of the reign of King Cyrus.

Day 4 – November 2/Daily Devotional: “The Word of God is All-Sufficient”  
Psalms 119

### **Aleph**

**1** Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the Lord. **2** Joyful are those who obey his laws and search for him with all their hearts. **3** They do not compromise with evil, and they walk only in his paths. **4** You have charged us to keep your commandments carefully. **5** Oh, that my actions would consistently reflect your decrees! **6** Then I will not be ashamed when I compare my life with your commands. **7** As I learn your righteous regulations, I will thank you by living as I should! **8** I will obey your decrees. Please don’t give up on me!

### **Beth**

**9** How can a young person stay pure? By obeying your word. **10** I have tried hard to find you—don’t let me wander from your commands. **11** I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. **12** I praise you, O Lord; teach me your decrees. **13** I have recited aloud all the regulations you have given us. **14** I have rejoiced in your laws as much as in riches. **15** I will study your commandments and reflect on your ways. **16** I will delight in your decrees and not forget your word.

## Gimel

**17** Be good to your servant, that I may live and obey your word. **18** Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions. **19** I am only a foreigner in the land. Don't hide your commands from me! **20** I am always overwhelmed with a desire for your regulations. **21** You rebuke the arrogant; those who wander from your commands are cursed. **22** Don't let them scorn and insult me, for I have obeyed your laws. **23** Even princes sit and speak against me, but I will meditate on your decrees. **24** Your laws please me; they give me wise advice.

## Daleth

**25** I lie in the dust; revive me by your word. **26** I told you my plans, and you answered. Now teach me your decrees. **27** Help me understand the meaning of your commandments, and I will meditate on your wonderful deeds. **28** I weep with sorrow; encourage me by your word. **29** Keep me from lying to myself; give me the privilege of knowing your instructions. **30** I have chosen to be faithful; I have determined to live by your regulations. **31** I cling to your laws. Lord, don't let me be put to shame! **32** I will pursue your commands, for you expand my understanding.

## He

**33** Teach me your decrees, O Lord; I will keep them to the end. **34** Give me understanding and I will obey your instructions; I will put them into practice with all my heart. **35** Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found. **36** Give me an eagerness for your laws rather than a love for money! **37** Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your word. **38** Reassure me of your promise, made to those who fear you. **39** Help me abandon my shameful ways; for your regulations are good. **40** I long to obey your commandments! Renew my life with your goodness.

## Waw

**41** Lord, give me your unfailing love, the salvation that you promised me. **42** Then I can answer those who taunt me, for I trust in your word. **43** Do not snatch your word of truth from me, for your regulations are my only hope. **44** I will keep on obeying your instructions forever and ever. **45** I will walk in freedom, for I have devoted myself to your commandments. **46** I will speak to kings about your laws, and I will not be ashamed. **47** How I delight in your commands! How I love them! **48** I honor and love your commands. I meditate on your decrees.

## Zayin

**49** Remember your promise to me; it is my only hope. **50** Your promise revives me; it comforts me in all my troubles. **51** The proud hold me in utter contempt, but I do not turn away from your instructions. **52** I meditate on your age-old regulations; O Lord, they comfort me. **53** I become furious with the wicked, because they reject your instructions. **54** Your decrees have been the theme of my songs wherever I have lived. **55** I reflect at night on who you are, O Lord; therefore, I obey your instructions. **56** This is how I spend my life: obeying your commandments.

## **Heth**

**57** Lord, you are mine! I promise to obey your words! **58** With all my heart I want your blessings. Be merciful as you promised. **59** I pondered the direction of my life, and I turned to follow your laws. **60** I will hurry, without delay, to obey your commands. **61** Evil people try to drag me into sin, but I am firmly anchored to your instructions. **62** I rise at midnight to thank you for your just regulations. **63** I am a friend to anyone who fears you— anyone who obeys your commandments. **64** O Lord, your unfailing love fills the earth; teach me your decrees.

## **Teth**

**65** You have done many good things for me, Lord, just as you promised. **66** I believe in your commands; now teach me good judgment and knowledge. **67** I used to wander off until you disciplined me; but now I closely follow your word. **68** You are good and do only good; teach me your decrees. **69** Arrogant people smear me with lies, but in truth I obey your commandments with all my heart. **70** Their hearts are dull and stupid, but I delight in your instructions. **71** My suffering was good for me, for it taught me to pay attention to your decrees. **72** Your instructions are more valuable to me than millions in gold and silver.

## **Yodh**

**73** You made me; you created me. Now give me the sense to follow your commands. **74** May all who fear you find in me a cause for joy, for I have put my hope in your word. **75** I know, O Lord, that your regulations are fair; you disciplined me because I needed it. **76** Now let your unfailing love comfort me, just as you promised me, your servant. **77** Surround me with your tender mercies so I may live, for your instructions are my delight. **78** Bring disgrace upon the arrogant people who lied about me; meanwhile, I will concentrate on your commandments. **79** Let me be united with all who fear you, with those who know your laws. **80** May I be blameless in keeping your decrees; then I will never be ashamed.

## **Kaph**

**81** I am worn out waiting for your rescue, but I have put my hope in your word. **82** My eyes are straining to see your promises come true. When will you comfort me? **83** I am shriveled like a wineskin in the smoke, but I have not forgotten to obey your decrees. **84** How long must I wait? When will you punish those who persecute me? **85** These arrogant people who hate your instructions have dug deep pits to trap me. **86** All your commands are trustworthy. Protect me from those who hunt me down without cause. **87** They almost finished me off, but I refused to abandon your commandments. **88** In your unfailing love, spare my life; then I can continue to obey your laws.

## **Lamedh**

**89** Your eternal word, O Lord, stands firm in heaven. **90** Your faithfulness extends to every generation, as enduring as the earth you created. **91** Your regulations remain true to this day, for everything serves your plans. **92** If your instructions hadn't sustained me with joy, I would have died in my misery. **93** I will never forget your commandments, for by them you give me life. **94** I

am yours; rescue me! For I have worked hard at obeying your commandments. **95** Though the wicked hide along the way to kill me, I will quietly keep my mind on your laws. **96** Even perfection has its limits, but your commands have no limit.

### **Mem**

**97** Oh, how I love your instructions! I think about them all day long. **98** Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are my constant guide. **99** Yes, I have more insight than my teachers, for I am always thinking of your laws. **100** I am even wiser than my elders, for I have kept your commandments. **101** I have refused to walk on any evil path, so that I may remain obedient to your word. **102** I haven't turned away from your regulations, for you have taught me well. **103** How sweet your words taste to me; they are sweeter than honey. **104** Your commandments give me understanding; no wonder I hate every false way of life.

### **Nun**

**105** Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. **106** I've promised it once, and I'll promise it again: I will obey your righteous regulations. **107** I have suffered much, O Lord; restore my life again as you promised. **108** Lord, accept my offering of praise, and teach me your regulations. **109** My life constantly hangs in the balance, but I will not stop obeying your instructions. **110** The wicked have set their traps for me, but I will not turn from your commandments. **111** Your laws are my treasure; they are my heart's delight. **112** I am determined to keep your decrees to the very end.

### **Samekh**

**113** I hate those with divided loyalties, but I love your instructions. **114** You are my refuge and my shield; your word is my source of hope. **115** Get out of my life, you evil-minded people, for I intend to obey the commands of my God. **116** Lord, sustain me as you promised, that I may live! Do not let my hope be crushed. **117** Sustain me, and I will be rescued; then I will meditate continually on your decrees. **118** But you have rejected all who stray from your decrees. They are only fooling themselves. **119** You skim off the wicked of the earth like scum; no wonder I love to obey your laws! **120** I tremble in fear of you; I stand in awe of your regulations.

### **Ayin**

**121** Don't leave me to the mercy of my enemies, for I have done what is just and right. **122** Please guarantee a blessing for me. Don't let the arrogant oppress me! **123** My eyes strain to see your rescue, to see the truth of your promise fulfilled. **124** I am your servant; deal with me in unfailing love, and teach me your decrees. **125** Give discernment to me, your servant; then I will understand your laws. **126** Lord, it is time for you to act, for these evil people have violated your instructions. **127** Truly, I love your commands more than gold, even the finest gold. **128** Each of your commandments is right. That is why I hate every false way.

## Pe

**129** Your laws are wonderful. No wonder I obey them! **130** The teaching of your word gives light, so even the simple can understand. **131** I pant with expectation, longing for your commands. **132** Come and show me your mercy, as you do for all who love your name. **133** Guide my steps by your word, so I will not be overcome by evil. **134** Ransom me from the oppression of evil people; then I can obey your commandments. **135** Look upon me with love; teach me your decrees. **136** Rivers of tears gush from my eyes because people disobey your instructions.

## Tsadhe

**137** O Lord, you are righteous, and your regulations are fair. **138** Your laws are perfect and completely trustworthy. **139** I am overwhelmed with indignation, for my enemies have disregarded your words. **140** Your promises have been thoroughly tested; that is why I love them so much. **141** I am insignificant and despised, but I don't forget your commandments. **142** Your justice is eternal, and your instructions are perfectly true. **143** As pressure and stress bear down on me, I find joy in your commands. **144** Your laws are always right; help me to understand them so I may live.

## Qoph

**145** I pray with all my heart; answer me, Lord! I will obey your decrees. **146** I cry out to you; rescue me, that I may obey your laws. **147** I rise early, before the sun is up; I cry out for help and put my hope in your words. **148** I stay awake through the night, thinking about your promise. **149** In your faithful love, O Lord, hear my cry; let me be revived by following your regulations. **150** Lawless people are coming to attack me; they live far from your instructions. **151** But you are near, O Lord, and all your commands are true. **152** I have known from my earliest days that your laws will last forever.

## Resh

**153** Look upon my suffering and rescue me, for I have not forgotten your instructions. **154** Argue my case; take my side! Protect my life as you promised. **155** The wicked are far from rescue, for they do not bother with your decrees. **156** Lord, how great is your mercy; let me be revived by following your regulations. **157** Many persecute and trouble me, yet I have not swerved from your laws. **158** Seeing these traitors makes me sick at heart, because they care nothing for your word. **159** See how I love your commandments, Lord. Give back my life because of your unfailing love. **160** The very essence of your words is truth; all your just regulations will stand forever.

## Shin

**161** Powerful people harass me without cause, but my heart trembles only at your word. **162** I rejoice in your word like one who discovers a great treasure. **163** I hate and abhor all falsehood, but I love your instructions. **164** I will praise you seven times a day because all your regulations are just. **165** Those who love your instructions have great peace and do not stumble. **166** I long

for your rescue, Lord, so I have obeyed your commands. **167** I have obeyed your laws, for I love them very much. **168** Yes, I obey your commandments and laws because you know everything I do.

## **Taw**

**169** O Lord, listen to my cry; give me the discerning mind you promised. **170** Listen to my prayer; rescue me as you promised. **171** Let praise flow from my lips, for you have taught me your decrees. **172** Let my tongue sing about your word, for all your commands are right. **173** Give me a helping hand, for I have chosen to follow your commandments. **174** O Lord, I have longed for your rescue, and your instructions are my delight. **175** Let me live so I can praise you, and may your regulations help me. **176** I have wandered away like a lost sheep; come and find me, for I have not forgotten your commands.

### Day 5 – November 3/Daily Devotional: “Jesus on Prayer”

Matthew 6:5-18

“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. **6** But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. **7** “When you pray, don’t babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. **8** Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! **9** Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. **10** May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. **11** Give us today the food we need, **12** and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. **13** And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. **14** “If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. **15** But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins. **16** “And when you fast, don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. **17** But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. **18** Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

### Day 6 – November 4/Daily Devotional: “True and False Worship”

Isaiah 58

**1**“Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast. Shout aloud! Don’t be timid. Tell my people Israel of their sins! **2** Yet they act so pious! They come to the Temple every day and seem delighted to learn all about me. They act like a righteous nation that would fasted before you!’ they say. ‘Why aren’t you impressed? We have been very hard on ourselves, and you don’t even notice it!’

“I will tell you why!” I respond. “It’s because you are fasting to please yourselves. Even while you fast, you keep oppressing your workers. **4** What good is fasting when you keep on fighting and quarreling? This kind of fasting will never get you anywhere with me. **5** You humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance, bowing your heads like reeds bending in the wind. You dress in burlap and cover yourselves with ashes. Is this what you call fasting? Do you really think this will please the Lord? **6** “No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. **7** Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. **8** “Then your salvation will come like the dawn, and your wounds will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the Lord will protect you from behind. **9** Then when you call, the Lord will answer. ‘Yes, I am here,’ he will quickly reply. “Remove the heavy yoke of oppression. Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumors! **10** Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon. **11** The Lord will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring. **12** Some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your cities. Then you will be known as a rebuilders of walls and a restorer of homes. **13** “Keep the Sabbath day holy. Don’t pursue your own interests on that day, but enjoy the Sabbath and speak of it with delight as the Lord’s holy day. Honor the Sabbath in everything you do on that day, and don’t follow your own desires or talk idly. **14** Then the Lord will be your delight. I will give you great honor and satisfy you with the inheritance I promised to your ancestor Jacob. I, the Lord, have spoken!” never abandon the laws of its God. They ask me to take action on their behalf, pretending they want to be near me. **3** ‘We have

#### Day 7 – November 5/Daily Devotional: “Sacrifice”

Mark 14:1-26

**1** It was now two days before Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The leading priests and the teachers of religious law were still looking for an opportunity to capture Jesus secretly and kill him. **2** “But not during the Passover celebration,” they agreed, “or the people may riot.” **3** Meanwhile, Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon, a man who had previously had leprosy. While he was eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard. She broke open the jar and poured the perfume over his head. **4** Some of those at the table were indignant. “Why waste such expensive perfume?” they asked. **5** “It could have been sold for a year’s wages and the money given to the poor!” So they scolded her harshly. **6** But Jesus replied, “Leave her alone. Why criticize her for doing such a good thing to me? **7** You will always have the poor among you, and you can help them whenever you want to. But you will not always have me. **8** She has done what she could and has anointed my body for burial ahead of time. **9** I tell you “Where do you want us to go to prepare the Passover meal for you?” **13** So Jesus sent two of them into Jerusalem with these instructions: “As you go into the city, a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him. **14** At the house he enters, say to the owner, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?’ **15** He will take you upstairs to a large room that is already set up. That is where you should prepare our meal.” **16** So the two disciples went into the city

and found everything just as Jesus had said, and they prepared the Passover meal there. **17** In the evening Jesus arrived with the twelve disciples. **18** As they were at the table eating, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, one of you eating with me here will betray me.” **19** Greatly distressed, each one asked in turn, “Am I the one?” **20** He replied, “It is one of you twelve who is eating from this bowl with me. **21** For the Son of Man<sup>e</sup> must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the one who betrays him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born!” **22** As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “Take it, for this is my body.” **23** And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. **24** And he said to them, “This is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many. **25** I tell you the truth, I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new in the Kingdom of God.” **26** Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives. **10** Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the leading priests to arrange to betray Jesus to them. **11** They were delighted when they heard why he had come, and they promised to give him money. So he began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus. **12** On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, Jesus’ disciples asked him,

Day 8 – November 6/Daily Devotional: “Giving Grateful Praise”

Psalm 100

**1** Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth! **2** Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy. **3** Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. **4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name. **5** For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation.

Day 9 – November 7/Daily Devotional: “A Living Sacrifice to God”

Romans 12

**1** And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. **2** Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. **3** Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don’t think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. **4** Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, **5** so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we are all working together to help one another. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. **9** Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. **10** Love each other with

genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. **11** Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically **12** Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. **13** When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. **14** Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. **15** Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. **16** Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! **17** Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. **18** Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. **19** Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord. **20** Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." **21** Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good. All belong to each other. **6** In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. **7** If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. **8** If your gift is to encourage others, be

#### Day 10 – November 8/Daily Devotional: "The Temptation of Christ"

Luke 4

**1** Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, **2** where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry. **3** Then the devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread." **4** But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone.'" **5** Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. **6** "I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them," the devil said, "because they are mine to give to anyone I please. **7** I will give it all to you if you will worship me." **8** Jesus replied, "The Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.'" **9** Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! **10** For the Scriptures say, 'He will order his angels to protect and guard you. **11** And they will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.'" **12** Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the Lord your God.'" **13** When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he left him until the next opportunity came. Jesus Rejected at Nazareth **14** Then Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit's power. Reports about him spread quickly through the whole region. **15** He taught regularly in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. **16** When he came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. **17** The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written: **18** "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, **19** and that the time of the Lord's favor has come." **20** He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue looked at him intently. **21** Then he began to speak to them. "The Scripture you've just heard has been fulfilled this very day!" **22** Everyone spoke well of him and was amazed by the gracious words that came from his lips. "How can this be?" they asked. "Isn't

this Joseph's son?" [23](#) Then he said, "You will undoubtedly quote me this proverb: 'Physician, heal yourself'—meaning, 'Do miracles here in your hometown like those you did in Capernaum.' [24](#) But I tell you the truth, no prophet is accepted in his own hometown. [25](#) "Certainly there were many needy widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the heavens were closed for three and a half years, and a severe famine devastated the land. [26](#) Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them. He was sent instead to a foreigner—a widow of Zarephath in the land of Sidon. [27](#) And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, but the only one healed was Naaman, a Syrian." [28](#) When they heard this, the people in the synagogue were furious. [29](#) Jumping up, they mobbed him and forced him to the edge of the hill on which the town was built. They intended to push him over the cliff, [30](#) but he passed right through the crowd and went on his way. [31](#) Then Jesus went to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and taught there in the synagogue every Sabbath day. [32](#) There, too, the people were amazed at his teaching, for he spoke with authority. [33](#) Once when he was in the synagogue, a man possessed by a demon—an evil<sup>s</sup> spirit—began shouting at Jesus, [34](#) "Go away! Why are you interfering with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" [35](#) Jesus cut him short. "Be quiet! Come out of the man," he ordered. At that, the demon threw the man to the floor as the crowd watched; then it came out of him without hurting him further. [36](#) Amazed, the people exclaimed, "What authority and power this man's words possess! Even evil spirits obey him, and they flee at his command!" [37](#) The news about Jesus spread through every village in the entire region. [38](#) After leaving the synagogue that day, Jesus went to Simon's home, where he found Simon's mother-in-law very sick with a high fever. "Please heal her," everyone begged. [39](#) Standing at her bedside, he rebuked the fever, and it left her. And she got up at once and prepared a meal for them. [40](#) As the sun went down that evening, people throughout the village brought sick family members to Jesus. No matter what their diseases were, the touch of his hand healed every one. [41](#) Many were possessed by demons; and the demons came out at his command, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But because they knew he was the Messiah, he rebuked them and refused to let them speak. [42](#) Early the next morning Jesus went out to an isolated place. The crowds searched everywhere for him, and when they finally found him, they begged him not to leave them. [43](#) But he replied, "I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other towns, too, because that is why I was sent." [44](#) So he continued to travel around, preaching in synagogues throughout Judea.

#### Day 11 – November 9/Daily Devotional: "Trusting God's Plan"

James 1

[1](#) This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am writing to the "twelve tribes"—Jewish believers scattered abroad. Greetings! [2](#) Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. [3](#) For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. [4](#) So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing. [5](#) If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. [6](#) But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. [7](#) Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. [8](#) Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do. [9](#) Believers who are poor have something to

boast about, for God has honored them. **10** And those who are rich should boast that God has humbled them. They will fade away like a little flower in the field. **11** The hot sun rises and the grass withers; the little flower droops and falls, and its beauty fades away. In the same way, the rich will fade away with all of their achievements. **12** God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. **13** And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, “God is tempting me.” God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. **14** Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. **15** These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death. **16** So don’t be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. **17** Whatever is good and perfect comes down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. **18** He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession. **19** Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. **20** Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. **21** So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls. **22** But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. **23** For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. **24** You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. **25** But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. **26** If you claim to be religious but don’t control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. **27** Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

Day 12 – November 10/Daily Devotional: “Giving Praise to the God of All Comfort”

2 Corinthians 1

**1** This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy. I am writing to God’s church in Corinth and to all of his holy people throughout Greece. **2** May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. **3** All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. **4** He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. **5** For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. **6** Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. **7** We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us. **8** We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. **9** In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. **10** And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. **11** And you are helping us by praying for

us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety. **12** We can say with confidence and a clear conscience that we have lived with a God-given holiness and sincerity in all our dealings. We have depended on God's grace, not on our own human wisdom. That is how we have conducted ourselves before the world, and especially toward you. **13** Our letters have been straightforward, and there is nothing written between the lines and nothing you can't understand. I hope someday you will fully understand us, **14** even if you don't understand us now. Then on the day when the Lord Jesus returns, you will be proud of us in the same way we are proud of you. **15** Since I was so sure of your understanding and trust, I wanted to give you a double blessing by visiting you twice— **16** first on my way to Macedonia and again when I returned from Macedonia. Then you could send me on my way to Judea. **17** You may be asking why I changed my plan. Do you think I make my plans carelessly? Do you think I am like people of the world who say "Yes" when they really mean "No"? **18** As surely as God is faithful, our word to you does not waver between "Yes" and "No." **19** For Jesus Christ, the Son of God, does not waver between "Yes" and "No." He is the one whom Silas, Timothy, and I preached to you, and as God's ultimate "Yes," he always does what he says. **20** For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory. **21** It is God who enables us, along with you, to stand firm for Christ. He has commissioned us, **22** and he has identified us as his own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the first installment that guarantees everything he has promised us. **23** Now I call upon God as my witness that I am telling the truth. The reason I didn't return to Corinth was to spare you from a severe rebuke. **24** But that does not mean we want to dominate you by telling you how to put your faith into practice. We want to work together with you so you will be full of joy, for it is by your own faith that you stand firm.

### Day 13 – November 11/Daily Devotional: "God's People"

#### 1 Peter 2

**1** So get rid of all evil behavior. Be done with all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and all unkind speech. **2** Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, **3** now that you have had a taste of the Lord's kindness. **4** You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor. **5** And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God. **6** As the Scriptures say, "I am placing a cornerstone in Jerusalem, chosen for great honor, and anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." **7** Yes, you who trust him recognize the honor God has given him. But for those who reject him, "The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone." **8** And, "He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them. **9** But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. **10** "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy." **11** Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires

that wage war against your very souls. [12](#) Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world. [13](#) For the Lord's sake, respect all human authority—whether the king as head of state, [14](#) or the officials he has appointed. For the king has sent them to punish those who do wrong and to honor those who do right. [15](#) It is God's will that your honorable lives should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you. [16](#) For you are free, yet you are God's slaves, so don't use your freedom as an excuse to do evil. [17](#) Respect everyone, and love your Christian brothers and sisters. Fear God, and respect the king. [18](#) You who are slaves must accept the authority of your masters with all respect. Do what they tell you—not only if they are kind and reasonable, but even if they are cruel. [19](#) For God is pleased with you when you do what you know is right and patiently endure unfair treatment. [20](#) Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you. [21](#) For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps. [22](#) He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. [23](#) He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly. [24](#) He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed. [25](#) Once you were like sheep who wandered away. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls.

Day 14 – November 12/Daily Devotional: “The Blessings of God”  
Matthew 5:1-14

[1](#) One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, [2](#) and he began to teach them. [3](#) “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. [4](#) God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted. [5](#) God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth. [6](#) God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied. [7](#) God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. [8](#) God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God. [9](#) God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. [10](#) God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. [11](#) “God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. [12](#) Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way. [13](#) “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. [14](#) “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

Day 15 – November 13/Daily Devotional: “Seeking Repentance”

Psalms 51

**1** Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. **2** Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. **3** For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. **4** Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just. **5** For I was born a sinner— yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. **6** But you desire honesty from the womb, teaching me wisdom even there. **7** Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. **8** Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me— now let me rejoice. **9** Don’t keep looking at my sins. Remove the stain of my guilt. **10** Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. **11** Do not banish me from your presence, and don’t take your Holy Spirit from me. **12** Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you. **13** Then I will teach your ways to rebels, and they will return to you. **14** Forgive me for shedding blood, O God who saves; then I will joyfully sing of your forgiveness. **15** Unseal my lips, O Lord, that my mouth may praise you. **16** You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. **17** The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God. **18** Look with favor on Zion and help her; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. **19** Then you will be pleased with sacrifices offered in the right spirit— with burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings. Then bulls will again be sacrificed on your altar.

Day 16 – November 14/Daily Devotional: “Fearless Trust in God”

Psalms 27

**1** The Lord is my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble? **2** When evil people come to devour me, when my enemies and foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. **3** Though a mighty army surrounds me, my heart will not be afraid. Even if I am attacked, I will remain confident. **4** The one thing I ask of the Lord—the thing I seek most—is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, delighting in the Lord’s perfections and meditating in his Temple. **5** For he will conceal me there when troubles come; he will hide me in his sanctuary. He will place me out of reach on a high rock. **6** Then I will hold my head high above my enemies who surround me. At his sanctuary I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy, singing and praising the Lord with music. **7** Hear me as I pray, O Lord. Be merciful and answer me! **8** My heart has heard you say, “Come and talk with me.” And my heart responds, “Lord, I am coming.” **9** Do not turn your back on me. Do not reject your servant in anger. You have always been my helper. Don’t leave me now; don’t abandon me, O God of my salvation! **10** Even if my father and mother abandon me, the Lord will hold me close. **11** Teach me how to live, O Lord. Lead me along the right path, for my enemies are waiting for me. **12** Do not let me fall into their hands. For they accuse me of things I’ve never done; with every breath they threaten me with violence. **13** Yet I am confident I will see the Lord’s goodness while I am here in the land of the living. **14** Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord.

**1** King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet tall and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. **2** Then he sent messages to the high officers, officials, governors, advisers, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the provincial officials to come to the dedication of the statue he had set up. **3** So all these officials came and stood before the statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. **4** Then a herald shouted out, “People of all races and nations and languages, listen to the king’s command! **5** When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments, bow to the ground to worship King Nebuchadnezzar’s gold statue. **6** Anyone who refuses to obey will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.” **7** So at the sound of the musical instruments, all the people, whatever their race or nation or language, bowed to the ground and worshiped the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. **8** But some of the astrologers went to the king and informed on the Jews. **9** They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “Long live the king! **10** You issued a decree requiring all the people to bow down and worship the gold statue when they hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and other musical instruments. **11** That decree also states that those who refuse to obey must be thrown into a blazing furnace. **12** But there are some Jews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—whom you have put in charge of the province of Babylon. They pay no attention to you, Your Majesty. They refuse to serve your gods and do not worship the gold statue you have set up.” **13** Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage and ordered that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought before him. When they were brought in, **14** Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you refuse to serve my gods or to worship the gold statue I have set up? **15** I will give you one more chance to bow down and worship the statue I have made when you hear the sound of the musical instruments. But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. And then what god will be able to rescue you from my power?” **16** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. **17** If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. **18** But even if he doesn’t, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.” **19** Nebuchadnezzar was so furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face became distorted with rage. He commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual. **20** Then he ordered some of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. **21** So they tied them up and threw them into the furnace, fully dressed in their pants, turbans, robes, and other garments. **22** And because the king, in his anger, had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames killed the soldiers as they threw the three men in. **23** So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, securely tied, fell into the roaring flames. **24** But suddenly, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to his advisers, “Didn’t we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?” “Yes, Your Majesty, we certainly did,” they replied. **25** “Look!” Nebuchadnezzar shouted. “I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire unharmed! And the fourth looks like a god!” **26** Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the door of the flaming furnace and shouted: “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!” So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stepped out of the fire. **27** Then the high officers, officials, governors, and advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not touched them. Not a hair on their heads was singed, and their clothing was not scorched. They didn’t even smell of smoke!

**28** Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king’s command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. **29** Therefore, I make this decree: If any people, whatever their race or nation or language, speak a word against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they will be torn limb from limb, and their houses will be turned into heaps of rubble. There is no other god who can rescue like this!” **30** Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions in the province of Babylon.

Day 18 – November 16/Daily Devotional: “Turn to the Lord with All Your Heart”  
Joel 2:12-32

**12** That is why the Lord says, “Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, and mourning. **13** Don’t tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead.” Return to the Lord your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish. **14** Who knows? Perhaps he will give you a reprieve, sending you a blessing instead of this curse. Perhaps you will be able to offer grain and wine to the Lord your God as before. **15** Blow the ram’s horn in Jerusalem! Announce a time of fasting; call the people together for a solemn meeting. **16** Gather all the people—the elders, the children, and even the babies. Call the bridegroom from his quarters and the bride from her private room. **17** Let the priests, who minister in the Lord’s presence, stand and weep between the entry room to the Temple and the altar. Let them pray, “Spare your people, Lord! Don’t let your special possession become an object of mockery. Don’t let them become a joke for unbelieving foreigners who say, ‘Has the God of Israel left them?’”

The Lord’s Promise of Restoration **18** Then the Lord will pity his people and jealously guard the honor of his land. **19** The Lord will reply, “Look! I am sending you grain and new wine and olive oil, enough to satisfy your needs. You will no longer be an object of mockery among the surrounding nations. **20** I will drive away these armies from the north. I will send them into the parched wastelands. Those in the front will be driven into the Dead Sea, and those at the rear into the Mediterranean. The stench of their rotting bodies will rise over the land.” Surely the Lord has done great things! **21** Don’t be afraid, my people. Be glad now and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things. **22** Don’t be afraid, you animals of the field, for the wilderness pastures will soon be green. The trees will again be filled with fruit; fig trees and grapevines will be loaded down once more. **23** Rejoice, you people of Jerusalem! Rejoice in the Lord your God! For the rain he sends demonstrates his faithfulness. Once more the autumn rains will come, as well as the rains of spring. **24** The threshing floors will again be piled high with grain, and the presses will overflow with new wine and olive oil. **25** The Lord says, “I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locusts. It was I who sent this great destroying army against you. **26** Once again you will have all the food you want, and you will praise the Lord your God, who does these miracles for you. Never again will my people be disgraced. **27** Then you will know that I am among my people Israel, that I am the Lord your God, and there is no other. Never again will my people be disgraced. The Lord’s Promise of His Spirit **28** “Then, after doing all those things, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. **29** In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on servants—men

and women alike. **30** And I will cause wonders in the heavens and on the earth—blood and fire and columns of smoke. **31** The sun will become dark, and the moon will turn blood red before that great and terrible<sup>f</sup> day of the Lord arrives. **32** But everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, for some on Mount Zion in Jerusalem will escape, just as the Lord has said. These will be among the survivors whom the Lord has called.

Day 19 – November 17/Daily Devotional: “The Joy of Going into the House of God”  
Psalms 84

**1** How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of Heaven’s Armies. **2** I long, yes, I faint with longing to enter the courts of the Lord. With my whole being, body and soul, I will shout joyfully to the living God. **3** Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow builds her nest and raises her young at a place near your altar, O Lord of Heaven’s Armies, my King and my God! **4** What joy for those who can live in your house, always singing your praises. **5** What joy for those whose strength comes from the Lord, who have set their minds on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. **6** When they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs. The autumn rains will clothe it with blessings. **7** They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Jerusalem. **8** O Lord God of Heaven’s Armies, hear my prayer. Listen, O God of Jacob. **9** O God, look with favor upon the king, our shield! Show favor to the one you have anointed. **10** A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else! I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of my God than live the good life in the homes of the wicked. **11** For the Lord God is our sun and our shield. He gives us grace and glory. The Lord will withhold no good thing from those who do what is right. **12** O Lord of Heaven’s Armies, what joy for those who trust in you.

Day 20 – November 18/Daily Devotional: “True Worship”  
Zechariah 7

**1** On December 7 of the fourth year of King Darius’s reign, another message came to Zechariah from the Lord. **2** The people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech, along with their attendants, to seek the Lord’s favor. **3** They were to ask this question of the prophets and the priests at the Temple of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies: “Should we continue to mourn and fast each summer on the anniversary of the Temple’s destruction, as we have done for so many years?” **4** The Lord of Heaven’s Armies sent me this message in reply: **5** “Say to all your people and your priests, ‘During these seventy years of exile, when you fasted and mourned in the summer and in early autumn, was it really for me that you were fasting? **6** And even now in your holy festivals, aren’t you eating and drinking just to please yourselves? **7** Isn’t this the same message the Lord proclaimed through the prophets in years past when Jerusalem and the towns of Judah were bustling with people, and the Negev and the foothills of Judah were well populated?’” **8** Then this message came to Zechariah from the Lord: **9** “This is what the Lord of

Heaven’s Armies says: Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another. **10** Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor. And do not scheme against each other.

**11** “Your ancestors refused to listen to this message. They stubbornly turned away and put their fingers in their ears to keep from hearing. **12** They made their hearts as hard as stone, so they could not hear the instructions or the messages that the Lord of Heaven’s Armies had sent them by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. That is why the Lord of Heaven’s Armies was so angry with them. **13** “Since they refused to listen when I called to them, I would not listen when they called to me, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies. **14** As with a whirlwind, I scattered them among the distant nations, where they lived as strangers. Their land became so desolate that no one even traveled through it. They turned their pleasant land into a desert.”

Day 21 – November 19/Daily Devotional: “Where the River Flows There is Life”  
Ezekiel 47:1-12

**1** In my vision, the man brought me back to the entrance of the Temple. There I saw a stream flowing east from beneath the door of the Temple and passing to the right of the altar on its south side. **2** The man brought me outside the wall through the north gateway and led me around to the eastern entrance. There I could see the water flowing out through the south side of the east gateway. **3** Measuring as he went, he took me along the stream for 1,750 feet and then led me across. The water was up to my ankles. **4** He measured off another 1,750 feet and led me across again. This time the water was up to my knees. After another 1,750 feet, it was up to my waist. **5** Then he measured another 1,750 feet, and the river was too deep to walk across. It was deep enough to swim in, but too deep to walk through. **6** He asked me, “Have you been watching, son of man?” Then he led me back along the riverbank. **7** When I returned, I was surprised by the sight of many trees growing on both sides of the river. **8** Then he said to me, “This river flows east through the desert into the valley of the Dead Sea. The waters of this stream will make the salty waters of the Dead Sea fresh and pure. **9** There will be swarms of living things wherever the water of this river flows. Fish will abound in the Dead Sea, for its waters will become fresh. Life will flourish wherever this water flows. **10** Fishermen will stand along the shores of the Dead Sea. All the way from En-gedi to En-eglaim, the shores will be covered with nets drying in the sun. Fish of every kind will fill the Dead Sea, just as they fill the Mediterranean. **11** But the marshes and swamps will not be purified; they will still be salty. **12** Fruit trees of all kinds will grow along both sides of the river. The leaves of these trees will never turn brown and fall, and there will always be fruit on their branches. There will be a new crop every month, for they are watered by the river flowing from the Temple. The fruit will be for food and the leaves for healing.”