

10 days of prayer

BACK TO THE ALTAR

January 11 – 21, 2023

Leader's Guide: Back to the Altar

Welcome to Ten Days of Prayer 2023! We believe prayer is the birthplace of revival. God has worked so many miracles in past years as we have

sought Him together in prayer and fasting. The Holy Spirit has brought about conversions, renewed passion for evangelism, revived churches, and healed relationships.

Has God's voice been calling you to revival? The Bible is full of promises for you:

"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

"And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

"And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Joel 2:32).

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8).

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20).

Wherever you are in life right now, God is closer than you think. He wants to pour out His blessings on your family, your church, your community, and your world. Join us now in responding to the call to come back to the altar!

General Items for Ten Days of Prayer

Daily Prayer Guides

We have provided a prayer guide for each of the ten days. Each guide includes a Bible passage, devotional reading, Bible texts to pray through, prayer suggestions, and song suggestions. We recommend that you copy the daily guides so each participant can have one to follow during the prayer time. Churches around the world will unite in praying about each day's topic. Join them in praying through the verses and prayer requests, but don't feel that you must rush through the entire list of prayer suggestions. You may want to divide into small groups and have each group pray for a portion of your prayer requests.

We also included a document called World Church Prayer Requests. It's important to pray together for our world church family, but you may want to spend extra time praying for local needs if your group includes visitors from the community. Pray about how you can best welcome guests and make them feel a part of your group.

Suggested Times for Each Prayer Session

Keep your prayer time simple so the group can focus on actually praying. How much time you spend on each section will vary. The following guide is just a suggestion:

Welcome and introduction: 2 – 5 minutes

Read devotional (in daily prayer guide): 5 minutes

Pray through the verses in "Praying God's Word" (in daily prayer guide): 10 – 15 minutes

Pray about the items in "More Prayer Suggestions" (in daily prayer guide): 20 – 30 minutes

Respond in song and praise: 5 – 10 minutes

Pray for Others

Encourage each person to pray consistently for five to seven people that God has placed in their life. They can be relatives, friends, coworkers, neighbors, or simply acquaintances. Encourage them to ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in choosing these names and in reaching out to these people during the ten days. You may want to provide some cards or pieces of paper on which people can record the names they will be praying for.

Sabbath Services During Ten Days of Prayer

Have a special prayer focus and share testimonies of answered prayer during the church services on both Sabbaths. Be creative—there are many ways to share with the church family what is happening during the daily prayer meetings.

Final Sabbath Celebration

The final Sabbath should be designed as a time of great rejoicing in all that God has done throughout the ten days. Include ample time for testimonies of answered prayer, biblical teaching/preaching on prayer, and singing. Lead the congregation in a time of prayer so that those who have not attended the daily meetings can experience the joy of praying with others. Please see the Sabbath Celebration handout for more ideas.

Follow-up to Ten Days of Prayer

Pray about how God wants your church/group to continue what He has begun during Ten Days of Prayer. Perhaps you will continue with a weekly prayer session. Or perhaps God wants you to begin a new ministry in your church or an outreach to the community. Be open and follow where God leads. You're sure to be amazed as you walk with Him. The document called Outreach Challenge is filled with ideas for service.

Testimonies

Please share stories of how God has worked through Ten Days of Prayer! Your stories will be an encouragement to many others. Testimonies may be submitted online at www.tendaysofprayer.org.

United Prayer Pointers

Agree Together

When someone prays a request to God, be sure some others pray for that same request and agree together—this is powerful! Don't think that because one person has prayed about the request, no one else needs to. "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 18:19). How encouraging it is to be lifted up in prayer!

Claiming God's Promises

Encourage the group to claim God's promises as they pray. It is so easy to focus on our problems. But when we claim God's promises, we increase our faith and remind ourselves that nothing is impossible with God. The promises help us take our eyes off our weaknesses and difficulties and set them on Jesus. For every weakness and every struggle, we can find Bible promises to claim. Encourage people to search for more promises and write them down so they can claim them in the future.

Fasting

Invite those joining you in Ten Days of Prayer to consider some type of fasting, such as fasting from TV, secular music, movies, the Internet, sweets, or other types of food that are hard to digest. Use the extra time to pray and study the Bible, asking God to help you and your congregation to abide more fully in Christ. By adopting a simple diet, we allow our minds to become more receptive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you what to pray for in a person's life or in a particular situation. The Bible tells us that we do not know what to pray for and that the Holy Spirit is the one making intercession for us.

"We must not only pray in Christ's name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit 'maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.' (Romans 8:26). Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer 'exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think' (Ephesians 3:20)" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 147, emphasis supplied).

Journaling

Keeping a prayer journal during the Ten Days of Prayer can help participants to internalize the daily prayer theme, make concrete commitments to God, and recognize His blessings. Writing out our prayers and keeping a record of God's answers is a proven path to encouragement.

If you wish, you might provide time during the prayer meeting for people to journal their responses to God in private prayer journals. Or you could keep a group journal of prayer requests and answers—either in a notebook, on a large poster, or online. It is exciting and faith-building to look back and see how God has answered prayers!

Reverence

Encourage and model a reverent attitude. We are approaching the throne room of the King of the universe. Let's not treat this prayer time carelessly in our posture or mannerisms. However, it is not necessary that everyone kneel continuously. You want people to be comfortable for an hour, so encourage everyone to kneel or sit or stand as God leads and as they are comfortable.

Sentence Prayers

Prayers should be short and to the point. This gives others an opportunity to pray as well. Try to limit your prayers to a few sentences. Each person can pray multiple times. Short sentence prayers keep the prayer time interesting and allow the Holy Spirit to impress the group how to pray. You don't need to open and close each short sentence prayer with phrases such as "Dear God" and "Amen." It is an ongoing conversation with God.

Silence

As a leader, don't dominate the prayer time. The goal is to get others praying. Times of silence are wonderful, as they give God time to speak to our hearts. Allow the Holy Spirit to work and give everyone time to pray.

Singing

Spontaneous group songs, mingled between prayers, add beauty to the prayer meeting. Suggested songs are listed at the end of each theme sheet. Do not feel that you need to use all the songs—these are simply suggestions. Singing is also a good way to transition from one prayer section to another.

Taking Prayer Requests

Don't ask for prayer requests from the group. Instead, tell people to pray their requests and encourage others to join in agreement and prayer for those requests. Here's why: time! Talking about the requests will take up most of your prayer time. Satan is thrilled if he can keep us talking about the problem instead of praying about the problem. Group members will often begin counseling and suggesting solutions. The power is from God! The more we pray, the more His power is unleashed.

Your Daily Time

This is so important! Make sure that you as a leader are spending time daily at the feet of Jesus, talking with Him and reading His Word. If you will make knowing God a first priority in your life, it will open such a beautiful experience to you. "From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the Great Reformation. There, with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 210). When a leader prays, God works on hearts!

Introduction

Welcome to Ten Days of Prayer 2023! We believe prayer is the birthplace of revival. God has worked so many miracles in past years as we have sought Him together in prayer and fasting. The Holy Spirit has brought about conversions, renewed passion for evangelism, revived churches, and healed relationships. Here are just a few testimonies from the previous year:

“After participating in the Ten Days of Prayer, my spiritual life has completely changed.” (Josphat T.)

“The blessings were immeasurable. The Holy Spirit was evidently in our midst!” (Barbara J.)

“The Ten Days of Prayer have brought our members closer to the Lord. The fellowship has been sweeter, and individuals have verbalized that they are more determined to engage in mission and soul winning.” (Arlene A.)

Has God’s voice been calling you to revival? The Bible is full of promises for you:

“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

“And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Joel 2:32).

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8).

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20).

Wherever you are in life right now, God is closer than you think. He wants to pour out His blessings on your family, your church, your community, and your world!

Our Prayer Theme: Back to the Altar: Making a Place for God

Hurried and worried. Angry and upset. Busy and broken.

These are some of the words that people around the globe are using to describe their lives in today’s fast-paced society. If you too are feeling the weight of our perishing world, we invite you on 10-day prayer journey to the very heart of God—the place where burdens are lifted, hurts are healed, and strength is renewed. You will be challenged to build anew your altar of personal worship to the true and living God, for He has promised, “Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you” (Jeremiah 29:12).

Let’s pray together for a revival of our personal and family worship altars, that the Holy Spirit might reform and empower us to proclaim God’s final message of hope to the world!

Suggested Guidelines for Prayer Times

- Keep your prayers short—just a sentence or two on one topic. Then give others a turn. You can pray as many times as you'd like, just as you talk in a conversation.
- Do not be afraid of silence, as it gives everyone time to listen to the Holy Spirit.
- Singing songs together as the Spirit leads is also a huge blessing. You do not need a piano for this; singing acapella is fine.
- Rather than using up valuable prayer time talking about your prayer requests, simply pray them. Then others can also pray for your requests and claim promises for your need.

Claiming the Promises

It is our privilege to claim God's promises in our prayers. All His commandments and counsels are also promises. He would never ask from us something that we could not do in His strength.

It is so easy to focus on our needs, our difficulties, our challenges—and to wail and whine about our situation when we pray.

This is not the purpose of prayer. Prayer is meant to strengthen our faith. That is why we encourage you to claim God's promises in your prayer time. Take your eyes off yourself and your weaknesses and look to Jesus. By beholding Him, we become changed into His image.

Ellen White offers this encouragement: "Every promise in the Word of God is for us. In your prayers, present the pledged word of Jehovah and by faith claim His promises. His word is the assurance that if you ask in faith, you will receive all spiritual blessings. Continue to ask, and you will receive exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think" (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 71).

How can you claim His promises? For instance, when praying for peace, you can claim John 14:27 and say, "Lord, You have told us in Your Word, 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' Give me the peace that You promised to leave with us." Thank the Lord that He is giving you peace, even though you may not feel it right then.

Fasting

We encourage you to do a Daniel Fast during these ten days. Starting the year with prayer and fasting is a wonderful way to consecrate our lives to God for the upcoming year. Ellen White tells us, "Now and onward till the close of time the people of God should be more earnest, more wide-awake, not trusting in their own wisdom, but in the wisdom of their Leader. They should set aside days for fasting and prayer. Entire abstinence from food may not be required, but they should eat sparingly of the most simple food" (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 188, 189).

We know about Daniel, who ate fruits and vegetables for ten days. We likewise encourage you to adopt a very simple diet during these ten days. If we want clearer minds for hearing God's voice, and if we want to draw closer to Him, we need to make sure that our diet is not hindering us.

Fasting is not only about abstaining from food. We also encourage you to fast from TV, movies, computer games, and even Facebook and YouTube. Sometimes things that are not bad in themselves can take so much of our time. Put aside everything possible so you can have more time to spend with the Lord.

Fasting is not a quick way to obtain a miracle from God. Fasting is all about humbling ourselves so God can work in us and through us. Let's draw closer to Him through prayer and fasting, and He will draw closer to us.

Holy Spirit

Be sure to ask the Holy Spirit to show you what you should pray for in a person's life or in a particular situation. The Bible tells us that we do not know what to pray for and that the Holy Spirit is the One who intercedes for us.

“We must not only pray in Christ’s name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit ‘maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered’ (Romans 8:26). Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer ‘exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think’ (Ephesians 3:20)” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 147).

Faith

We read in the Spirit of Prophecy that “prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 509). We are also told that “for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received” (*Education*, p. 258). So make a habit of thanking God in advance through faith for what He is going to do and how He is going to answer your prayers.

Pray for Others

During these ten days we encourage you to pray consistently for the people God has placed in your life. Choose five to seven people—they can be relatives, friends, coworkers, neighbors, or simply acquaintances. Take some time to ask God whom He would like you to pray for. Ask Him also to give you a real burden for these people. Write the names on a piece of paper and keep it in a prominent place, such as in your Bible. You’ll be amazed at how God works in response to your prayers!

Ten Days of Prayer Outreach Challenge

Jesus calls us not only to pray but also to serve the practical needs of those around us. “For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me” (Matthew 25:35, 36).

In *The Ministry of Healing* we read, “We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work” (p. 512). We have received so much love from our Savior, and we have the privilege of sharing that love with friends, neighbors, and strangers in need.

Ask God how you and your church can serve others after Ten Days of Prayer. As you work to organize service activities, avoid letting the arrangements distract you from praying. “Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people” (*Prayer*, p. 313).

In the online Ten Days of Prayer resources, you’ll find a document with dozens of outreach ideas. Jesus invites you to be His hands and feet to a world in need!

About the Author

Dwain N. Esmond, Ph.D. (student), is an author, editor, and ordained minister. For more than 28 years Pastor Esmond has answered God’s call to ministry. He served as vice president of editorial services for the Review and Herald Publishing Association before joining the Ellen G. White Estate in 2015 as associate director/editor. He has led several publications, including 11 years as editor of the former *Insight Magazine* youth journal. Dwain has authored three best-selling young adult devotionals and has more than 350 publications to his credit. He currently supervises the preparation and publication of White Estate-related content, such as *The Gift of Prophecy in Scripture and History*, an academic text on the work of the Holy Spirit in prophecy; the 2021 Ellen White devotional, *Jesus: Name Above All Names*; and most recently, *The Three Angels’ Messages* compilation (2022). He is joined in ministry by his beloved wife, Kemba, and their son, Dwain Jr.

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Night of Prayer

Consider holding an all-night prayer service as part of Ten Days of Prayer. For example, you could begin at 6:00 p.m. and finish at 6:00 a.m. Choose a schedule that's suitable for your group.

Why a Night of Prayer?

There is nothing "holy" in staying awake and praying all night. However, night might be the only time when people are not busy or in a rush. We believe that your purpose should not be to stay up the whole night but to pray as long as necessary and until you have prayed for everything you feel God wants you to pray for.

We suggest that several people lead out during the night. Be sure to have some breaks. As a leader, you can sense the atmosphere and know when a break is needed and when you need to move on to the next section of prayer. You can also incorporate the reading of Bible passages into your prayer time. You may want to do all of the suggested items or only some of them, depending on what is best for your group. Feel free to change the order.

Possible Format for Night of Prayer

Start with a session of praise. Praise God in your prayers and also through songs.

Take some time for confession, making sure that nothing is hindering God from hearing you. Give people time for private confession and have a time of corporate confession. Encourage the people to confess private sins privately and to confess publicly only the public sins. In Daniel 9:1-19 we read about Daniel, who interceded and publicly confessed the sins of God's people.

Pray for the needs of people who are at the prayer meeting. So many people are hurting or in need of prayer, or know someone else who is in desperate need of prayer. Make a circle, put a chair in the middle, and invite those who have a special prayer request to come one by one and share their requests. Then gather around the person and have two or three people pray for the person's specific need and claim God's promises.

Divide the group in two. Have the females pray in one room (with a female leader) and the males in another room (with a male leader). Many personal needs cannot and should not be shared with everyone. It is easier to share with those of the same gender.

After you come back together, **pray for needs in your community and church.** Also take time for **world church prayer requests** (listed in a separate document in the Ten Days of Prayer materials). Don't feel that you must rush through the entire list. You may want to divide into small groups and have each group pray for part of the list.

Pray for the list of five to seven people you have been praying for during these ten days.

Choose a Bible passage and pray through it.

Close the prayer time with another session of praise and thanksgiving.

Outreach Challenge for Ten Days of Prayer

Jesus calls us not only to pray but also to serve the spiritual and physical needs of those around us. “For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me” (Matthew 25:35, 36).

In *The Ministry of Healing* we read, “We must live a twofold life—a life of thought and action, of silent prayer and earnest work” (p. 512). We have received so much love from our Savior, and we have the privilege of sharing that love with friends, neighbors, and strangers in need.

Ask God how you and your church can serve others after the Ten Days of Prayer. As you work to organize the service activities, avoid letting the arrangements distract you from praying. “Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people” (*Prayer*, p. 313).

Here are some ways of helping others. Choose whatever fits the needs of your community, and feel free to add your own ideas.

- Cook a meal for someone who has been sick.
- Invite a neighbor/co-worker to a social gathering.
- Give food to a homeless person.
- Donate clothing that you would want donated to you.
- “Adopt” an elderly person. Visit the person on a regular basis and help with chores, shopping, cooking, or garden work.
- Bake some bread and share a loaf with a neighbor.
- Help with neighborhood projects.
- Offer to stay with a sick or disabled person so their caretakers can run an errand.
- Participate in neighborhood projects.
- Introduce yourself to a new neighbor by taking them a meal. Make them feel welcome in the neighborhood.
- Buy groceries and deliver them to a needy family.
- Donate your old eyeglasses.
- Offer to give a Bible study.
- Visit people in nursing homes.
- Give some “food” money to a student.
- Collect clothing for the needy. You might start a clothes closet at your church for sharing with others.
- Donate your old laptop or other electronics.
- Donate a used car.
- Organize a “Health Expo.”
- Send a card to a shut-in.
- Organize an evangelistic series.
- Call your neighbors and ask how they’re doing.
- Give someone a book you think they’d like.
- Pass out GLOW tracts (available to order here: <http://www.glowonline.org/>).
- Invite someone to accept Jesus.
- Hold a cooking school.
- Give away sharing books about biblical topics.
- Take some food to someone who has lost a loved one.
- Visit someone in the hospital to encourage them or help them in some way.
- Read to an elderly person.
- Visit a children’s home and offer your help to the staff.
- Start a sewing/knitting/crocheting group to make clothes to give away.
- Read the Bible aloud for someone who can’t see or read.

- Host a youth night at your home.
- Volunteer at a shelter for abused persons.
- Donate some books to a children's home or shelter.
- Take children from your church to visit a home for elderly people. Present a program for them.
- Plan and host a fun day for special-needs kids and their families.
- Have a community clean-up day.
- Start a healthy living club in your church. Invite friends and neighbors.
- Ask someone if they would like to join you in watching a DVD with a spiritual message. As you watch together, pray that the Holy Spirit will speak to the person's heart.
- Design your own project.

For more resources on witnessing, visit www.revivalandreformation.org/resources/witnessing.

Bible Promises to Claim in Prayer

All Scriptures taken from NKJV

Promises for the Holy Spirit

“Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone.” Zech. 10:1

“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” Luke 11:13

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. . . . And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” John 14:26; 16:8

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” John 14:12-14

“So he answered and said to me: This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts.” Zech. 4:6

Promises that God Answers Prayers

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.” John 15:7

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Heb. 4:16

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” Mark 11:24

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.” Ps. 50:15

“Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.” Matt. 18:19

“And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” Matt. 21:22

“And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” John 14:13, 14

“And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” John 16:23, 24

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we asked of Him.” 1 John 5:14, 15

Promises About God's Power

"Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." Gen. 18:14

"The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." Ex. 14:14

"But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.'" Mark 10:27

"He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it." 1 Thess. 5:24

"I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You." Job 42:2

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:31, 32

"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" Num. 23:19

"Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Isa. 40:28-31

Promises for God's Guidance

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Josh. 1:9

"Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you." Gen. 28:15

"Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared." Ex. 23:20

"But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul." Deut. 4:29

"Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." Jer. 33:3

"Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." Isa. 40:4, 5

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye." Ps. 32:8

"And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed." Deut. 31:8

"Who is the man that fears the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way He chooses." Ps. 25:12

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” Prov. 3:5, 6

“If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.” Isa. 58:10, 11

“It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.” Isa. 65:24

Promises for a Changed Heart

“Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.” Jer. 24:7

“And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.” Deut. 30:6

“ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” Ezek. 36:26

“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Phil. 1:6

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Cor. 5:17

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.” 1 Thess. 5:23, 24

Promises for Forgiveness

“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chr. 7:14

“For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.” Ps. 86:5

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.” Mark 11:25

“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” Eph. 4:32

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

“Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Isa. 1:18

“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins.” Isa. 43:25

“For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” Jer. 31:34

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” Eph. 1:7

Promises for Victory Over Sin

“ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith.” 1 John 5:4

“ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” Rom. 8:37

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 15:57

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” Isa. 41:10

“Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”
Eph. 6:16

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20

“For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” Phil. 2:13

“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” Gal. 5:16

“And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.” Rom. 16:20

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Rom. 12:2

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” 1 John 2:15

Promises for Healing

“If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.” Ex. 15:26

“Your sandals shall be iron and bronze; as your days, so shall your strength be.” Deut. 33:25

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” Ps. 103:2-5

“Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh and strength to your bones.” Prov. 3:7, 8

“He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.” Isa. 53:3-5

“Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for You are my praise.” Jer. 17:14

“For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds,’ says the Lord, ‘because they called you an outcast saying: This is Zion; no one seeks her.’” Jer. 30:17

“Behold, I will bring it health and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth.” Jer. 33:6

“But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.” Mal. 4:2

“Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.” James 5:14, 15

Promises for Strength to Do God's Will

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:16-18

"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Gal. 6:9

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Phil. 4:13

"For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." Phil. 2:13

"And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. 12:9

Promises About Being God's Witnesses

"Do not fear, nor be afraid; have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one." Isa. 44:8

"Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you." Isa. 60:1

"Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation." 2 Cor. 5:18

"But the Lord said to me: Do not say, 'I am a youth,' for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak." Jer. 1:7

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Peter 2:9

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15

Sabbath Celebration

Design the final Sabbath of Ten Days of Prayer to celebrate God's goodness and mighty power. Share how you have experienced the power of prayer and the good news of the everlasting gospel during the past ten days. Rejoice in what God has done, is doing, and will do.

The needs of each congregation are unique, so please work with local leaders to develop a specific plan for your church. Here are some possible items to include in your final Sabbath church service.

Theme:

Back to the Altar — Making a Place for God

Theme Verse:

"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him" (John 4:23).

Possible Hymns:

Sweet Hour of Prayer

In the Garden

Give Me the Bible

Abide With Me

Give Me Jesus

O Worship the King

Showers of Blessing

Softly and Tenderly

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Sermon Ideas:

Have a pastor, elder, or prayer leader preach a short sermon about the importance of regular personal devotions and family worship. Scripture passage: John 4:23.

[OR]

Have the Ten Days of Prayer participants take turns offering 1- or 2-minute summaries for each of the 10 daily prayer guides.

Share the title, the main verse, and a key thought. (Plan ahead so the summaries stay within 1-2 minutes. For most people, one minute is 125-150 spoken words.)

[OR]

Enlist three individuals of different age groups to give 5-minute presentations on how they do personal devotions. In addition, have one or two families share ideas of how to facilitate engaging family worship experiences. The youth could also help with music or offer testimonies.

Conclude with an appeal for listeners to make personal devotional time and family worship a priority.

Other Program Ideas:

Member testimonies of answered prayer, small-group prayer time, announcement of future prayer or service activities, children's story about daily worship and prayer, special music selections, etc.

World Church Prayer Requests

- Lord, please let a mighty revival of primitive godliness sweep Your church in the final days. May we stand for truth though the heavens fall.
- We pray for religious liberty and freedom of conscience throughout the world. Lord, please open doors for the proclamation of Your Word.
- Lord, may Your world church accept the call to widely proclaim the three angels' messages to every nation and tongue. Show us how to center all of these teachings on the love and righteousness of Christ.
- Lord, may Adventists around the world declare "I Will Go" and take up the call to serve You and proclaim the good news of salvation.
- We pray for wisdom to search, understand, and follow God's Holy Bible. Teach us to rightly divide the words of truth and faithfully share them with others.
- Lord, please renew our appreciation for the heavenly instruction found in the inspired writings of Ellen White.
- We pray for the latter rain of the Holy Spirit to empower our witness and enable us to finish the work God has given us to do before the Second Coming.
- Lord, we pray for Your healing and mercy in areas heavily affected by COVID-19.
- We pray for medical professionals, scientists, government leaders, and public health officials to have wisdom for the many decisions they must make.
- We pray that Adventists around the world will offer practical aid and encouragement to those who are suffering. Give us courage, creativity, and an unselfish spirit when our neighbors need us most.
- We pray for those who are financially affected by job losses and lockdowns.
- Lord, please show church members how to help those who are struggling with mental health issues or isolation.
- We pray for pastors and churches to find ways of keeping church members connected during lockdowns. Lord, please draw Your church together in worship and service.
- We pray for a spiritual revival among Seventh-day Adventist young people who attend colleges and universities worldwide. May they become vibrant ambassadors for Christ.
- We pray for the 69 percent of earth's population who have not received an unclouded presentation of Jesus.
- We pray for the 62 million people in the 28 least-reached cities of the former Soviet Union (Euro-Asia Division).
- We pray for God to raise up brave missionaries willing to work among the 746 people groups in the 20 countries of the Middle East.
- We pray for a mighty surge of Adventists who will serve God by loving others and by sharing with people from other cultures and religions.
- Lord, please raise up modern-day Waldensian students who are willing to serve You in difficult places.
- We pray for Adventist members who face persecution or imprisonment because of their beliefs.
- We pray for the 202 million people in the 41 least-reached cities of Southern Asia-Pacific Division to know Jesus.
- We pray for the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department of each local church as they seek God's plan and reach out to their communities with loving service, Bible study, and personal witnessing.
- We pray for Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) as they meet practical needs around the world.
- We pray for the 16 million people in the 6 least-reached cities of South Pacific Division.
- We pray for the Holy Spirit to help us know how to reach the 406 million people in the 105 least-reached cities of Northern Asia-Pacific Division.
- Lord, please bless as Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries mobilizes chaplains and interested members to minister to those in prison.
- Lord, we pray for our Sabbath School teachers. Please let them know how important their work is for our children.
- Lord, we seek your guidance for the many Centers of Influence, health and family programs, and Pathfinder clubs around the world.

- We pray that You will help us love, nurture, and disciple new members and church visitors.
- Lord, please show us how to send more truth-filled literature (printed and electronic) into our communities. We pray that people will read it and that the Holy Spirit will convict them of Bible truth.
- Lord, we ask for Your protection over missionaries working in dangerous places.
- Please raise up literature evangelists, student volunteers, authors, media specialists, and financial supporters to spread words of hope and life.
- We pray for Adventist schools, students, and teachers worldwide. May these schools faithfully teach Bible truth and lead young people into mission, service, and a saving relationship with Christ.
- Lord, give us wisdom to reach secular cultures that have no interest in religion. Let Your Holy Spirit break down the walls that surround secular hearts.
- Bless us as we reach out to people enslaved by spirit worship, idolatry, and animistic beliefs. Help us to understand their worldview and introduce them to a personal Savior.
- Lord, please inspire Seventh-day Adventists around the world to pray as never before. Teach us to claim Your promises and expect You to move mountains when we pray.
- We pray for the 541 people groups in the 18 countries of Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. Please lead them to biblical truth.
- Show us how to meet the practical and spiritual needs of refugees. May our church be known for our love of all people, no matter who they are or where they come from.
- We ask You to raise up urban missionaries to plant churches for the 806 people groups in the 20 countries of Inter-European Division.
- Please raise up an army of workers to plant churches for the 948 people groups in the 38 countries of Inter-American Division.
- Please teach us how to proclaim our fundamental church beliefs with clarity, creativity, and biblical authenticity. May the love of Jesus be at the core of everything we believe.
- Lord, please prepare young people to plant churches for the 789 people groups in the 9 countries of North American Division.
- We ask You to prepare volunteers to serve the 70 people groups in the Israel Field.
- We ask You to raise up medical missionaries to plant churches among the 830 people groups in the 11 countries of East-Central Africa Division.
- We ask You to raise up prayer warriors to intercede for the 2,568 people groups in the 4 countries of Southern Asia Division.
- Please let our families reveal Your love in our homes and communities. We ask You to bring harmony into homes, heal broken relationships, protect the vulnerable from abuse, and reveal Your sanctifying power in seemingly hopeless situations.
- We ask You to raise up nurses and doctors to plant new churches among the 1,978 people groups in the 22 countries in West-Central Africa Division.
- We pray for the 49 million people in the 19 least-reached cities of Trans-European Division.
- We pray for our children. Please empower them to stand boldly for You when they encounter obstacles and pressure. Help them to make wise choices and stand for truth.
- Teach us to follow Christ's selfless example by meeting the daily needs of people close to us. Equip us to serve as medical missionaries, community volunteers, and friends to the needy.
- We pray for youth leaders around the world who are faithfully passing our heritage to the next generation: identity in Christ, mission as Seventh-day Adventists, and leadership in the local church.
- We pray for our youth who are living dangerously for the Lord through One Year in Mission and Mission Caleb.
- May our church members, pastors, and leaders around the world feed on God's Word every day. May we also seek You daily in personal prayer. Remind us that without You, we can do nothing.

Back to the Altar — Praying for a Reconnected Heart

DAY 1 — WHERE ARE YOU?

“Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’” (Genesis 3:9)

The Most Important Question

Is there a more searching question than the one God directed at the newly-fallen Adam? God, of course, knew exactly where Adam and Eve were. He is omniscient—all-knowing—after all, so God was really asking, Adam, do *you* know where you are? Adam and Eve had disobeyed God (Genesis 3, 4), and their disobedience created a breach, a break in what had heretofore been a perfect relationship between God and His crowning creation. The place where God had met them on every previous day was empty on this day. The first faces ever created bore no smile for their Creator that day. Arms He had fashioned from clay did not enfold Him that day. Hearts whose beats had often synchronized with His own were strangely distant, almost silent that day.

Not Enough

Ellen White comments, “Satan represented to the holy pair that they would be gainers by breaking the law of God. Do we not today hear similar reasoning?” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 54). Adam and Eve made the mistake of listening to the devil, and he convinced them that what God offered them was not enough, that communion with God in a close, trusting relationship was not enough. In an instant the mild, balmy climes of Eden now “seemed to chill the guilty pair. The love and peace which had been theirs was gone, and in its place they felt a sense of sin, a dread of the future, a nakedness of soul. The robe of light which had enshrouded them now disappeared, and to supply its place they endeavored to fashion for themselves a covering; for they could not, while unclothed, meet the eye of God and holy angels” (p. 57). Sin had changed the spiritual condition of the only creatures in Eden with whom God had shared His very image. Indeed, it had shattered God’s image in them.

A Time to Pray

From Adam and Eve’s broken relationship with God to the present flood of severed ties that we see etched on faces around the globe, perhaps there is nothing more important for which to pray than for a return to the place where God waits for us. Millennia may have passed, but the lies that felled Adam and Eve have not changed. Satan still claims that God is withholding something from us, that He cannot be trusted, that He is not enough. This message is especially alluring in a tech-obsessed, digital age in which more gadgets and connectedness promise a type of spiritual nirvana, a higher state in which we control our fate instead of bowing to the God who made us. Now is the time to reject Satan’s lies and go back to the One who has loved us with an everlasting love, back to the One who is drawing us to His side with lovingkindness (Jeremiah 31:3)!

Let’s pray together.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

A Powerful Promise

“It is a wonderful thing that we can pray effectually; that unworthy, erring mortals possess the power of offering their requests to

God. What higher power can man desire than this—to be linked with the infinite God? Feeble, sinful man has the privilege of speaking to his Maker. We may utter words that reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. We may speak with Jesus as we walk by the way, and He says, I am at thy right hand” (Ellen G. White, *Prayer*, p. 7)

All prayer groups have different ways of praying together. We encourage you to spend the next 30-45 minutes in united prayer, in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads. Below are some examples of praying through Scripture. You may pray through other passages also. See the Leader’s Guide for other prayer ideas.

Praying God’s Word — Jeremiah 24:7

“I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.”

“I Will Be Their God”

God, thank You for coming to find us when we have done things to sever our relationship with You. Thank You for loving us with a love that lasts forever and for constantly, consistently, conspicuously drawing us to Your side each moment of every day. Thank You, God, for a love that still seeks sinners! Amen.

“With Their Whole Heart”

Precious Jesus, we thank You for the promise of a rekindled heart, a heart that seeks God and waits for Him in seasons of want and seasons of plenty. We ask You to fulfill Your promise of a new heart with a new affection for You. Amen.

“They Shall Be My People”

God, it boggles our minds that You would claim us as Your own after we have left You. Thank You for covering us with the perfect life of Jesus Christ and giving us a new name (Revelation 2:17). Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God’s voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Sweet Hour of Prayer (#478); Just as I Am (#313); What a Friend We Have in Jesus (#499); Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is

Calling (#287); Nearer, Still Nearer (#301)

Other Songs: Change My Heart, O God; I Love You, Lord

Back to the Altar — A Place for Remembering

DAY 2 — CONSECRATION AND COMMEMORATION

“And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him” (Genesis 12:7).

Consecration and Commemoration

In the Bible, altars always represent places of consecration and commemoration. They are an outward symbol of one’s personal connection to God, of one’s acknowledgment and worship of the true and living God. Altars were often built to commemorate encounters with God that had a profound impact on someone’s life. When God did something “super-normal,” “supernatural,” or “super-special,” the recipients of God’s mighty act often did not want to forget it, so they would build an altar—a place for remembering—on the spot where they had seen God move.

When God told Abram in Genesis 12:7 that He would give the land of Canaan to his descendants, Abram built an altar there because his encounter with God was “super-normal.” In that moment God promised to transcend everything normal in Abram’s life and make from his seed a great and mighty people. When Isaac was wandering the desert of Gerar and fighting the locals over wellwater, God appeared to him and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants” (Genesis 26:24). Isaac commemorated this divine encounter by building an altar on that very spot because his encounter with God was “supernatural.” God had broken through the natural order of Isaac’s life to affirm that His promise to Isaac’s father was now Isaac’s promise also. Isaac’s son Jacob traveled to a place called Bethel (Genesis 35:3) and built an altar in honor of God, who had appeared to him during his flight from Esau. Because that encounter with God was “superspecial,” Jacob built an altar there. A fearful Gideon was pleasantly surprised when God appeared to him in peace and called him to lead the nation to victory. Gideon was so moved that he built an altar on the spot and called it “Jehovah is Peace” (Judges 6:24) because his encounter with God was “super-peaceful”!

Never Forget

While many see God’s mighty acts in their lives as mere moments of coincidence or chance, others recognize the moving of God and do all within their power to never forget what He has done. And there is an added benefit to their efforts: future travelers along life’s journey are blessed by the altars set up by believers. Ellen White notes, “Abraham set us a worthy example. His was a life of prayer.

Wherever he pitched his tent, close beside was set up his altar, calling all within his encampment to the morning and evening sacrifice. When his tent was removed, the altar remained. Roving Canaanites received instruction from Abraham, and wherever one of these came to that altar, he there worshiped the living God” (*From Eternity Past*, p. 76).

What heavenly blessings do you want to remember in the future? And what altar to God will you build today?

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)**Praying God’s Word — Genesis 12:7**

“And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.”

“He Built an Altar”

God, on this day I want to remember what You have done in my life, how You have intervened when I was on the wrong path, how You rescued me. I want to remember and praise You for Your loving grace toward me. I remember Your goodness, and in response will (re)consecrate my life to You. Amen.

“To the Lord”

Lord God, You and You alone deserve our praise, our worship, and our consecration. There is no other god like You: so loving, so kind, so patient, so merciful, so powerful, and so willing to save and help. Our eyes are on You, Lord. Our hearts are Yours. Our adoration and praise are for You alone, for You are worthy! Amen.

“Who Had Appeared to Him”

Father, Your presence always surrounds us—yes, closer than we realize. You have made Yourself known, whether through the Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy, a sermon, a prayer, or another person, and we thank You for revealing Yourself. We rejoice in the reality of Your all-permeating presence through Your Holy Spirit, and we invite You to inhabit our bodies as living vessels. Glorify Yourself through us. Show us how to love people around us and lead them to Your truth. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God’s voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: I Will Sing of My Redeemer (#343); O Worship the King (#83); Come Thou Fount (#334)

Other Songs: Give Thanks With a Grateful Heart; Count Your Blessings

Back to the Altar — The Cadence of Life

DAY 3 — MORNING AND EVENING

“Stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at evening” (1 Chronicles 23:30).

Life with God

A reading of 1 Chronicles 23 reveals that God commanded the Levites—those who cared for the ancient Jewish temple and its services—to stand in His presence, lifting their voices in thanksgiving and praise to Him every morning and every evening. This devotional exercise originated in another imperative that God gave Moses when He asked the Israelites to “make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8). God further enjoined, “One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight” (Exodus 29:39).

Life in Between

Israelite life was meant to be lived between two daily, foundational spiritual experiences. God’s people were to begin and end each day with Him. They were never to take His saving grace for granted. They needed God’s power to protect them from outward threats as they traversed a hostile wilderness on the way to the Promised Land. They needed to be guarded against temptations from within—the desire to practice Egyptian values and Egyptian spirituality and Egyptian attitudes learned in captivity. The morning and evening sacrifices were God’s way of laying down a devotional pattern for Israelite individuals and families to follow, a way of keeping them in right relationship with Him. Here is how Ellen White describes this sacred, solemn, daily experience:

“As the priests morning and evening entered the holy place at the time of incense, the daily sacrifice was ready to be offered upon the altar in the court without. This was a time of intense interest to the worshipers who assembled at the tabernacle. Before entering into the presence of God through the ministration of the priest, they were to engage in earnest searching of heart and confession of sin. They united in silent prayer, with their faces toward the holy place. Thus their petitions ascended with the cloud of incense, while faith laid hold upon the merits of the promised Savior prefigured by the atoning sacrifice. The hours appointed for the morning and the evening sacrifice were regarded as sacred, and they came to be observed as the set time for worship throughout the Jewish nation. And when in later times the Jews were scattered as captives in distant lands, they still at the appointed hour turned their faces toward Jerusalem and offered up their petitions to the God of Israel. In this custom Christians have an example for morning and evening prayer. While God condemns a mere round of ceremonies, without the spirit of worship, He looks with great pleasure upon those who love Him, bowing morning and evening to seek pardon for sins committed and to present their requests for needed blessings.” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 353, 354)

If your devotional life has lost its cadence, ask God now to renew your commitment to morning and evening worship today.

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)**Praying God's Word — 1 Chronicles 23:30**

"Stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at evening."

"Every Morning"

Jesus, we want to start our days with You. Please do wake us up so we may enjoy communion in Your presence. Help us to make this a daily habit and not to rush it or put it off. Help us to make You truly first and foremost in our thoughts each and every day. Amen.

"Thank and Praise the Lord"

Father, we are quick to bring before You our various requests, complaints, and wishes, sometimes forgetting that You are a Person, not a vending machine. Remind us of all the aspects of Your character, all the small and big things You have done and are doing for us, so we can thank and praise You for them. Right now, bring to our minds reasons to praise You. Amen.

"Likewise at Evening"

God, we not only desire to start our day with You but to end it with You also. As we reflect upon the hours You gave us, may You bring to our minds the many times we have seen Your faithfulness throughout the day. Let us fall asleep with praise on our lips, for You are our everlasting Savior. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Father, Lead Me Day by Day (#482); I Surrender All (#309); Draw Me Nearer (#306)

Other Songs: Whisper a Prayer; Open My Eyes, Lord

Back to the Altar — Rebuild It and He Will Come — Again!

DAY 4 — WHAT BRINGS GOD BACK

“So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down” (1 Kings 18:30).

When the Rains Stopped

The atmosphere that fateful day was charged, though an eerie silence had engulfed Mount Carmel. In previous times this wooded mount was lush, green, and beautiful. It received plenty of rainfall and was considered a holy place, a place of blessing and fertility (Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 144). But all that had changed. What used to be green was now burnt and bare, the result of a painful, three-and-a-half-year drought (1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; James 5:17). Here’s how Ellen White describes Israel at this time:

The earth is parched as if with fire. The scorching heat of the sun destroys what little vegetation has survived. Streams dry up, and lowing herds and bleating flocks wander hither and thither in distress. Once-flourishing fields have become like burning desert sands, a desolate waste. . . . Once-prosperous cities and villages have become places of mourning.

Hunger and thirst are telling upon man and beast with fearful mortality. Famine, with all its horror, comes closer and still closer. (*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 124, 125)

The Drought Within

Perhaps greater than the physical drought that gripped the nation was the spiritual drought that left God’s people soul-thirsty and faith-depleted. Israel was ruled by the evil King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel. Ahab’s Sidonian bride had helped weaken his allegiance to God. It was into this catastrophic spiritual apostasy that God called the prophet Elijah. Of Elijah, Ellen White writes, “there dwelt in the days of Ahab a man of faith and prayer whose fearless ministry was destined to check the rapid spread of apostasy in Israel” (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 119).

Elijah Rebuilds the Altar

After the prophets of Baal and Asherah failed to get their gods to send fire, it was “at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice” (1 Kings 18:36) that Elijah called the people near and rebuilt the broken altar to the true God. In a very real sense, Elijah was not just calling the nation back to the altar of true worship; rather, he was calling the nation back to the altar of *regular, systematic* worship of the true God! Israel’s corporate worship altar was broken, but Israel’s personal and family altars had been broken long before.

What Brings God Back

It was the restoration of true, heartfelt worship that moved God to respond at Carmel. Elijah’s first act of national spiritual revival was to rebuild the broken altar. If your personal or family worship altar is broken, rebuild it, and let the fire of God’s presence consume all who gather to worship Him!

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)**Praying God's Word — 1 Kings 18:30**

“So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.”

“The People Came Near to Him”

Jesus, it was Your Holy Spirit that convicted the hearts of the Israelites on Mount Carmel as Elijah rebuilt the altar. In the same way, we ask that You will convict our hearts today. Show us our sins, so we may find forgiveness and grace to overcome in Jesus. Draw us close to You, reveal the beauty of Your holiness to our hearts, and give us a longing for You like we have never had before. Amen.

“He Repaired the Altar of the Lord”

Our Father, we are guilty of neglecting regular time with You—regular worship—whether individually or as a family unit. Give us a new heart, a new mindset, and lead us to reestablish regular times of worship and devotion with You. Help us to be intentional and consistent. Invigorate our faith so we may live out true religion through Your presence in us. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Come, Holy Spirit (#269); Nothing Between (#322); Trust and Obey (#500)

Other Songs: I Have Decided to Follow Jesus; I Shall Not Be Moved

Back to the Altar — Early Will I Seek Thee

DAY 5 — JESUS, THE EARLY RISER

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him” (John 4:23).

The Altar Truth

There is an “altar truth” in the life of Jesus that no Christian should miss. During the past few days we have reflected much on altars in Scripture and on the lives of those who built them. The altar is a metaphor for a place and time of worship to the true and living God. One need not possess a physical altar in order to worship God. In fact, if a follower of Jesus lives in consistent, earnest, Biblebathed communion with God, he or she has already erected an altar as real as the one that Elijah rebuilt on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18).

We see such an “altar” in the life of Jesus. Amid a busy life of daily ministry, constant threats, and withering assaults from the devil, Jesus made time for long seasons of prayer and worship. He who was equal with the Father (Philippians 2:6) still thought it important to “be still and know” that God is God (Psalm 46:10). Jesus understood from an early age that His calling required constant connection with His Father. This was the only way to carry the sins of the world to the cross.

Early Seekers Wanted

In Mark 1:35 Jesus rose “a long while before daylight” and found a quiet, solitary place to talk—and listen—to His Father. The previous day had been spent in full-on ministry—healing the sick, casting out demons, and redeeming the lost. When the disciples awoke, they noticed Jesus was gone and went in search of Him. “When they found Him, they said to Him, ‘Everyone is looking for You’” (Mark 1:37). Jesus’ answer is a powerful reminder of the blessing that awaits all who tend their morning and evening altar.

“Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth,” Jesus remarked (Mark 1:38). Did you get that? Jesus was faced with a powerful dilemma. Stay in the place where He was—Peter’s home—and continue fruitful ministry there. Or, leave that place for new, untested ministry territories. Few Christians today would give up a fertile ministry moment for an unknown one. Yet, Jesus did exactly that with no hesitation. How did He make the right decision? God the Father had revealed the plans for that day to Jesus during His private devotional time. The Father affirmed Jesus’ purpose as He prayed and waited in His presence.

Friends, when we fail to seek God early in worship and prayer, we miss God’s plans for our day and His affirmation of our purpose. Today let us pray for the commitment to rise early and spend time with God that He might ready us to fulfill His purpose for our day and our lives.

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

Praying God's Word — John 4:23

"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him."

"True Worshipers"

Father, teach us in our everyday activities, in both the important and the mundane aspects of our lives, how to worship You. May we no more compartmentalize our faith, may we no more think of worship as only a Sabbath event, but truly see it as the happiest way of life. May we be continually connected to You and live as true worshipers of the only true God. Amen.

"Worship the Father in Spirit and Truth"

Thank You, God, that we can worship You from wherever we are and whenever we want to. You hear us whether we are at home, at work, at church, or traveling. We give You praise for this 24/7 availability to Your children. Lord, guide us into all truth through Your Holy Spirit so that our worship, yes, our lives, will be in harmony with all truth. Thank You, God, for leading us into a true worship experience. Amen.

"The Father is Seeking Such"

Gracious Father, Your love for us is beyond comprehension. You desire us to be close to You. You actively seek us out and are so eager to become everything to us. Forgive us when we have ignored You and not spent much, or any, daily time with You. We know You don't force Yourself upon us. Thank You for the assurance that if we invite You to commune with us, You will be among us. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Give Me Jesus (#305); In the Garden (#487); I Will Early Seek the Savior (#539); Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus (#290)

Other Songs: Give Me Oil in My Lamp; He's Able; Into My Heart; Thy Word Is a Lamp Unto My Feet

Back to the Altar — Ending the Day with God

DAY 6 — THE ALL-NIGHT PRAYER WARRIOR

“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God” (Luke 6:12).

An Example for Us

Jesus was known to spend whole nights in prayer, as He did on the night before selecting a team of 12 disciples who would one day take the gospel to the world (Luke 6:12, 13). You might be inclined to stay awake all night too if you had a world to save with the help of 12 unqualified sinners. The responsibility was so heavy. Here is how Ellen White describes Jesus, the all-night Prayer Warrior:

The Majesty of heaven, while engaged in His earthly ministry, prayed much to His Father. He was frequently bowed all night in prayer. His spirit was often sorrowful as He felt the powers of the darkness of this world, and He left the busy city and the noisy throng, to seek a retired place to make His intercessions. The Mount of Olives was the favorite resort of the Son of God for His devotions. Frequently after the multitude had left Him for the retirement of the night, He rested not, though weary with the labors of the day. . . . While the city was hushed in silence, and the disciples had returned to their homes to obtain refreshment in sleep, Jesus slept not. His divine pleadings were ascending to His Father from the Mount of Olives that His disciples might be kept from the evil influences which they would daily encounter in the world, and that His own soul might be strengthened and braced for the duties and trials of the coming day. All night, while His followers were sleeping, was their divine Teacher praying. . . . His example is left for His followers. (*Homeward Bound*, p. 169)

Understanding the Stakes

While some Christians start their day with God, due in part to the fear of what awaits them once they leave their home, many rarely end it in His presence. Having received what they needed to get them through the day, they barely pause to thank God for His provision and protection over their lives. Tired and worn, they drop into bed with little thought of seeking Him for power to face tomorrow’s trials. They rarely even thank Him.

Jesus understood the high-stakes spiritual reality that greeted Him each day. He had a keen awareness of the spiritual danger that His disciples faced, even when they had not a clue (Luke 22:32). Today—and every day—let us never miss the opportunity to end our day with hearts lifted to God in prayer and praise. Let us pray earnestly for each other that God might keep us faithful as we near the return of Jesus Christ.

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

Praying God's Word — Luke 6:12

"Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."

"He Went Out to the Mountain to Pray"

Jesus, we are so thankful for Your example to us. Your life is the great pattern we follow, and we pray that You will live out Your life within us. Lord, we recognize our need for private time with You. Help us today to carve out special quiet times for prayer. Show us the "mountain" that is available to us—a place where we can commune with You and learn to hear Your voice more clearly. Amen.

"And Continued All Night"

God, most of us have never prayed an entire night. Some of us struggle to pray more than 30 seconds. And while the length of prayer does not determine whether You hear us, we do realize that more time with You would result in so many more blessings for us. It is in communion with You that we are strengthened, helped, led, convicted, guided, and blessed. God, please teach us to pray and to make this holy time with You a priority, both individually and as a church body. May we come to the point where our time in prayer is longer than the time we spend on our phones, in front of our TVs, or focused on other distractions. Make us prayer warriors. Amen.

"In Prayer to God"

Our loving God, with shame we must admit that for many challenges we do not turn first to You but to other sources which are not from You. Often we don't even realize that we have turned so many things or experiences into idols. Please forgive us. Show us where we have sought the things of this world instead of seeking You. You are the all-powerful, almighty God of the universe. We want to seek You only. To You only we pray. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Abide With Me (#50); Leaning on the Everlasting Arms (#469); Be Still, My Soul (#461); It Is Well With My Soul (#530)

Other Songs: His Sheep Am I; In Moments Like These; My Peace I Give Unto You

Back to the Altar — Our Most Urgent Need

DAY 7 — A CHURCH THAT WORSHIPS

“Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker” (Psalm 95:6).

(Un)regular Worship

A 2018 worldwide survey of Seventh-day Adventists found that only 34 percent of Adventist homes are engaging in regular morning and evening worship, and only 52 percent of church members have any personal devotions at all. Can a church with an end-time message centered on worship—the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12—deliver this solemn message if its members are not faithfully engaged in personal and family worship? In other words, can we proclaim effectively what many of us are not doing daily?

Ellen White comments, “There is nothing more needed in the work [of God] than the practical results of communion with God” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 47). Elsewhere she writes, “Like the patriarchs of old, those who profess to love God should erect an altar to the Lord wherever they pitch their tent. . . . Fathers and mothers should often lift up their hearts to God in humble supplication for themselves and their children. Let the father, as priest of the household, lay upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. In such a household Jesus will love to tarry” (*Child Guidance*, pp. 518, 519)

Our Most Urgent Need

The restoration of personal and family worship among Seventh-day Adventists is perhaps the most pressing need of our time. But it will not be easy. Today we face the challenge of technology that increasingly occupies our time and alters our minds. Our addiction to media, especially social media, has left us anxious, irritable, lonely, stressed, depressed, sleepless, and unhappy with our station in life.

Ironically, personal and family worship have the opposite effect. Worship calms our minds, decreases loneliness, reduces stress, increases peace, fulfills our emotional needs, and teaches us contentment. Might the altar be the antidote to our frazzled minds and restless hearts?

Now more than ever, God is calling us back to His heart, to consistent times of refreshing in His presence. It is for this reason that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has launched the “Back the Altar” initiative, a landmark effort to rebuild the broken personal and family altars in God’s church. By 2027 we hope to see at least 70 percent of Adventist members engaged morning and evening in personal and family worship. You will hear more about this initiative in the days ahead, but we can all begin now to worship God faithfully and consistently. If we go back to the altar with God, we will be transformed into His image and empowered to finish His work!

Today let us ask God for a special outpouring of His Holy Spirit on our worship experiences with Him. Now more than ever, we need the precious blessing of communion with God.

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)**Praying God's Word — Psalm 95:6**

"Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."

"Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down"

God, how often we have failed to realize how truly great and awesome and beyond human comprehension You are. The vastness of the universe cannot contain You, and yet we too often do not honor or worship You accordingly and with deep reverence. Give us a glimpse of Your glory and help us realize how You deserve all honor, glory, and adoration. Remind us to approach You with reverence and respect, acknowledging You as our mighty God. Amen.

"Let Us Kneel Before the Lord our Maker"

Creator God, You are the ultimate Master Artist. All things You have made are beautiful and perfect. Your love is written on every opening bud and every leaf. You are also our true Father, the One who made us, desired us, and created us in Your image. How can we ever fully realize the honor You have bestowed upon us to be called Your children? We praise You and worship You, our Maker! Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: I Need Thee Every Hour (#483); Be Thou My Vision (#547); Spirit of the Living God (#672)

Other Songs: Unto Thee, O Lord; Surely the Presence of the Lord

Back to the Altar — Devotional Life and the End-time Message

DAY 8 — WORSHIP AND THE THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES

“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (Revelation 14:7).

The First and Second Angels' Messages

As Seventh-day Adventists, we are called to proclaim an end-time message of so much importance that nothing else should divert our attention (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 302). We preach the message of the first angel “flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth” (Revelation 14:6), urging all to fear God, give Him glory, and “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (verse 7). These verses remind us that humanity’s origin is divine, not evolutionary. We possess the “everlasting gospel”—timely and timeless, essential and eternal, needful and never-ending!

We also share the message of the second angel found in Revelation 14:8: “Babylon is fallen”! This sacred message calls all true followers of God to reject all humanly originated forms of worship and belief not based on God’s Word. It calls us away from randomly assembled beliefs which are not based in Scripture nor supported by the Spirit of Prophecy. Come out of Babylon that you be not partaker of her sins nor of her plagues, the angel of Revelation 18:4 would later command. This sacred message is a call to stand apart in our true worship of God!

The Third Angel's Message

But, Friends, if the first two messages were powerful, Ellen White says something quite startling about the message of the third angel. Ellen White writes in her Letter 209: “The power of the proclamation of the first and second angels’ messages is to be concentrated in the third” (1899). How so? Because the third angel’s message captures the everlasting gospel of the first message and its call to worship! It embraces the second angel’s call for separation from false worship. But the proclamation of this third message is unlike the first two in that it delivers a fearsome warning: “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of his indignation” (Revelation 14:9). This message reveals earth’s marked-up beast-worshippers and heaven’s sealed-up God-worshippers!

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12). Of this message Ellen White further notes, “It is present truth. This message is to go forth with great distinctness and power. It is not to be clouded by human theories and sophistries” (Letter 20, 1900). As we pray today, let us ask God to empower our worship that we might powerfully proclaim His end-time message to a perishing world.

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

Praying God's Word — Revelation 14:7

"Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

"Fear God and Give Glory to Him"

Our mighty Creator God, King of the Universe, we want to humble ourselves in Your presence. You are our God, the only God, and You are worthy of our praise, our devotion, and a life of consecration to Your will. You are wonderful, beautiful, powerful, and amazing. We ask that You will fulfill Your promise and fill us with Your Holy Spirit so that our lives become a reflection of Your perfect character of love. Glorify and reveal Yourself through us we pray. Amen.

"For the Hour of His Judgment Has Come"

Jesus, the prophetic word of the book of Daniel and Revelation is clear: We are living in the judgment hour of earth's history. Thank You that we can have confidence in the sufficiency of Your righteousness, which is ours by faith, and which provides us with assurance of salvation as we face judgment. Help us, by Your grace, to live lives of useful, mission-focused service, honoring You in all we do. Amen.

"And Worship Him Who Made Heaven and Earth"

Oh Jesus, when we look upon this world and the universe, we are in awe of the beauty of Your handiwork. Despite sin's effect on it all, we can still see that You are the Master Artist who put so much beauty and intentionality into Your craftsmanship. We would not exist without You. Thank You for sharing Your life and creating us not only to exist for ourselves but to live in eternal fellowship with You, our Creator. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Seeking the Lost (#373); Rescue the Perishing (#367); Lift Up the Trumpet (#213)

Other Songs: For God So Loved the World; I Will Make You Fishers of Men

Back to the Altar — Worship Keeps the Mind

DAY 9 — DON'T LOSE YOUR MIND

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

Heart of the Matter

The unregenerate human heart is something to behold. If you watch the news from day to day, you will see human beings acting in ways that make us question their humanity. Wonderful acts of love and kindness happen around the globe each moment of the day, but there is no doubt that evil is likewise manifested wherever we look. While we rightly obsess about unending wars, political corruption, and senseless violence on a mass scale, we must also acknowledge that wherever dastardly deeds are done, deranged human hearts are at work.

Quite frankly, the Bible does not have much good to say about human hearts that are un-surrendered to Jesus Christ. God states, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). The heart to which God refers here is not so much the “ticker” in our chest but our “brain heart”—the seat of our thinking, the center of our intellectual and moral being, the fount from whence our desires flow. Jesus made the point even clearer when He observed, “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45).

With the Mind We Worship

Ellen White wrote the following about the importance of the human mind: “The mind controls the whole man. All our actions, good or bad, have their source in the mind. It is the mind that worships God and allies us to heavenly beings” (*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, p. 72). It is the mind that God seeks to enlist in the Battle against self and evil. Commenting on the power of the Bible to educate and strengthen the mind, Ellen White also observed, “Nothing will so impart vigor to all the faculties as requiring students to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 24). What a blessing it is to know that our minds can be reshaped by God’s healing Word!

Keep Thy Heart

Human minds must be kept, tended, and guarded, as Solomon encouraged in Proverbs 4:23. Like King David we must ask God to create in us clean hearts and minds (Psalm 51:10), but we must guard this gift with all diligence. Regular seasons of personal time spent in praise, prayer, Bible study, and witnessing will do more to guard our minds in Christ Jesus than anything else we can do each day: “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You” (Isaiah 26:3). Keep your mind, even when everyone else is losing theirs.

Let’s talk to our God.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

Praying God's Word — Proverbs 4:23

"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."

"Keep Your Heart"

Jesus, in this world of distractions and the constant bombardment of information, we struggle to focus on You. We recognize our total dependance upon You and ask You to enable us to keep our hearts. Help us to make the right choices every day to keep ourselves pure from the attacks of the evil one. Amen.

"With All Diligence"

Precious Savior, thank You for Your commitment to us. Thank You for exemplifying what true love and commitment look like. You know how we at times lack proper commitment to You and Your cause. And we are so quick to teach others, while not taking to heart our own lessons. Forgive our hypocrisy and guide us into a life of diligent faithfulness. Amen.

"Out of It Spring the Issues of Life"

God, we often forget how precious, delicate, and important our heart is, and so we mistreat it by allowing certain influences into our lives. We may not realize how all things shape who we are and what we believe about You. Teach us to be on guard and to allow only holy influences in our lives. You enter in, Lord, and live out Your life within us. Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: I'd Rather Have Jesus (#327); I Would Be Like Jesus (#311); Take Time to Be Holy (#500)

Other Songs: Seek Ye First; Create in Me a Clean Heart; All in All

Back to the Altar — Empowered to Finish the Work

DAY 10 — I WILL GO!

“Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me” (Isaiah 6:8).

Worshippers Go

Who is willing to go? That’s the question God asked Isaiah when he caught a life-altering vision of God. The moment was filled with amazing special effects. God was seated on a throne “high and lifted up” (Isaiah 6:1). His robe filled the temple as six-winged angels serenaded Him with a chorus of “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!” (verse 2). As God began to speak, the doorposts of the temple began to shake and smoke filled the house. The whole episode so “undid” Isaiah that he cried, “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (verse 5). Can we blame him? Who can catch a glimpse of God and not be unmasked?

Isaiah was awed by the holiness and majesty of God, but God does not reveal Himself purely for our astonishment. God’s revelation of Himself is usually followed by a request. This was the case, for instance, when He gave John a revelation of Jesus Christ while exiled on the island of Patmos. John’s vision of the end of the world and the return of Christ was meant to be shared. Likewise, when God revealed Himself to Isaiah, He was looking for a messenger willing to spread His message of love and warning. Isaiah’s answer was one for the ages: “Here am I! Send me” (verse 8).

One on One

But God did something for Isaiah that led him to accept the call to go. When God took away his iniquity and purged his sin, Isaiah’s response to God’s grace was “I will go” (Isaiah 6:8). His decision to accept God’s mission was made during a private, devotional experience with God. The power he would wield in public for God was power that he gained in private with God. Anointed writer, faithful prophet, fearless proclaimer—all of Isaiah’s outward identities were but a reflection of who he was on the inside. He had been to the altar with God!

As we end our 10 Days of Prayer experience, it is our prayer that you have begun to rebuild your personal altar of daily worship. It is our hope that your family has covenanted to meet God each morning and evening. But more than that, we pray that you will accept God’s special invitation to go. In so doing you will be touched, and “To those who make so full a consecration that the Lord can place His touch upon their lips, the word is spoken, Go forth into the harvest-field. I will cooperate with you” (Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 23).

Let’s pray together.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)**Praying God’s Word — Isaiah 6:8**

“Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.”

“Whom Shall I Send . . . ?”

God, the fact that You have to ask this question is rebuke enough to us. We have not heeded the call to serve and proclaim You. At times we feel overwhelmed by the seemingly impossible task of world evangelism. Other times we simply get too busy with our own lives, our own agendas and desires. We are sorry, Lord. Forgive us, and use us in Your vineyard, we pray. Amen.

“Here Am I!”

Beautiful Jesus, You have called, and now I answer. Here am I. I don’t have much to bring, but knowing that You are by my side is all I need to know, for those You send, You will also enable to do the works of Jesus. So, here am I, Lord. Take this man/woman/child and glorify Yourself through my life. Amen.

“Send Me.”

God, we realize that the purpose of our lives is to reveal Your character of love to this world. Please send us into Your mission field. Show us where You are at work so that we can join Your Spirit’s moving. Direct our ideas and projects, our friendships, and mission efforts. We want to shine for You, Jesus. Send us! Send me. I will Go! Amen.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God’s voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go (#573); Take My Life and Let It Be (#330); So Send I You (#578); Stand Up! Stand Up for Jesus! (#618)

Other Songs: Father, I Adore You; Pass It On; This Little Light of Mine; Make Me a Servant