



RESCUER

PRAYER AND READING
GUIDE 2023

Providence Family,

We could not be more excited about spending another intentional season praying together as a church. We believe that God is ready and willing to answer our prayers, and we are expecting Him to move in incredible ways as we call out to Him together!

This booklet is meant to encourage and guide you in prayer over the next several weeks. The reading and guided prayer sections are built around the Sunday morning sermons in the sermon series, *Rescuer*. Following along will help you to pray in unison with our church family and prepare you for the sermon on Sunday.

We had an amazing team of Contributors for this guide that included Becca Simmons, Daniel Ward, Allen Boone, Leslie Hatcher, and Gloria Fan. I am so grateful for the gifts God has given them and their willingness to use them to serve our church family.

I am praying that this season will be used by God to grow us individually and corporately as praying people! Make a commitment to return to this guide each day to read God's Word and pray. Settle on a time and place and see what God will do!

Daniel Savage







NOAH

The story of Scripture is often simplified to four words: Creation. Fall. Redemption. Restoration. God created. Man fell, or sinned, causing the need for a redemption plan that would restore all that sin broke.

When Noah is mentioned, approximately 1056 years after the first man Adam and only six chapters into the Bible, we see how far man can fall when separated from God. Man grew increasingly evil, so much so that God was grieved and ready to blot out man. Noah was the one man that God named as righteous, having found favor with God.

By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. Hebrews 11:7

Reading the testimony of Noah, we learn that God is firm in expectations, yet also keeps His eyes on the righteous. Noah is not perfect, not sinless, but his faith gave him favor in the Lord. As God saves Noah and his family in the ark, the thread of God's redemption and desire for restoration is evident. Noah's story points us to the need for the Rescuer, Jesus!

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

God created all things; man and woman created distinctively in His image (Gen 1:27). They were given the choice to obey, and given one rule to not eat of one specific tree. In Genesis 3, we read that Adam and Eve disobeyed this rule. God gave consequences, with the most dire being separation from communion with Him as they had known it. What an amazing reality Genesis 3:8 implies: *"And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day..."* Adam and Eve were used to the sound of the Lord walking in the garden! They hid, which implies they were used to God finding them, possibly even walking with God in the garden! Can you imagine the reality of walking with God in the garden?! But, man fell. And the need for a rescuer was set in motion.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for His amazing creation! Praise Him for His kindness and compassion even in His firm discipline.

Confession:

Reflect on moments you have known God gave you the choice to obey, yet you fell to the temptation of disobedience. Ask for His forgiveness.

Thanksgiving:

Consider the image of genuine relationship that is given in Genesis 3:8, and thank God for His desire to be in relationship with us!

Supplication:

Knowing God desires a relationship with us, ask God to increase your own desire to spend time with Him and to know Him more fully. Pray that God would increase your knowledge of Him, as well as increase your discernment and desire to obey.



READ: GENESIS 6

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Living outside the garden, it didn't take long for man's choice to move toward a wickedness so great that God was ready to "blot out man" (Gen 6:7). God says through His Word that His ear is on the righteous and He hears them! Noah is one man who would confirm that through his testimony (Gen 6:8-9). God desires for us to pursue Him and do good, turning away from evil. He promises that He will see our efforts! (Psalm 34:12-16)

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Offer worship to the Lord for His continued sight of you! Praise Him for His love and guidance!

Confession:

Ask the Lord to reveal the ways you ignore His Word. Ask Him for the strength to turn from evil and walk in His ways.

Thanksgiving:

God continues to desire a relationship with us, even though our sin is apparent. Give thanks for His patience and persistence with us!

Supplication:

Knowing that sin can be a slippery slope to more sin and distance from the Lord, ask that the Lord first strengthen your individual fight against sin. Then, ask the Lord to strengthen our church's resistance to sin and to give us the discernment to remain biblically faithful even when it might be countercultural.



MARCH 1, 2023

READ: GENESIS 7

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

"Who cuts a channel for the torrents of rain, and a path for the thunderstorm..." (Job 38:25 NIV) This quote is from a moment in the book of Job when God is reminding him that He created the world. How apt for this to come to mind as Noah loaded the ark, as the Lord commanded. Then, the flood of waters came upon the earth. Noah's story is a great witness to the Lord's control of the earth and all that was in it, for it is the Lord who remains the Creator and in charge of creation!

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for the amazing power and creativity He displays through His creation! Consider in awe that God created and still remains in full, all-encompassing control of all that He made!

Confession:

Have you ever wanted to question how God oversees weather or the power made visible through the natural world? Confess your limits, especially in light of His omnipotence.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks that God remains in control! Reflect on the comfort that can be had knowing God is not distant, but instead He remains both in control and intimately involved.

Supplication:

Pray for those in your immediate sphere of influence. God reveals Himself specifically through the Bible as well as generally throughout His creation. Pray that your family (and your four) would see God's beauty, power, and restraint in creation. Pray these things would inspire both awe and humility in yourself and those you care about!



MARCH 2, 2023

READ: GENESIS 8

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

"But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark." (Genesis 8:1) When God noted Noah's righteousness, He gave Noah the plan for the ark. Noah built the ark and was led into the ark at the right time. Noah and the ark were instruments and demonstrations of God's rescue. When Jesus came, He once again showed off God's mercy, not as an instrument of rescue but, instead, as God Himself, the Rescuer!

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Celebrate the redemptive story God established in Scripture from the beginning! Praise Him for His plans to rescue His people!

Confession:

Reflect on God's mercy toward you and confess moments you have not been merciful toward others. Pray that God would teach you His ways and that His love and mercy would be shown through you.

Thanksgiving:

Think about the moment you were saved. Give God thanks for your salvation and that you have received His mercy and grace!

Supplication:

Just as Noah was able to be an instrument of God's rescue, pray that God would give you opportunities to share His message of hope and redemption in your neighborhood, school, workplace, and throughout the city. Pray that Providence's efforts in the city would bring people to a saving knowledge of Jesus and ask for boldness to share His Name when given the chance!



MARCH 3, 2023

READ: GENESIS 9

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

I will remember my covenant. Several times in Genesis 9, God speaks aloud to Noah that He is both making a covenant to not destroy the whole earth with flood waters again and that He will remember His covenant. The story of Noah acts as a warning of the destruction that can come when man sins and turns away from the Lord. But even more so, the story of Noah points to the truth that God's desire is to save the world and not condemn it (John 3:16-17)! Noah's imperfection encourages us that God can use fallible people in His mission, and can help us trust even more in the perfect salvation offered through Jesus!

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for His Promises and that He is a promise keeper!

Confession:

Think about the moments you have taken your own sin lightly. Confess your need to be saved from your sin and ask God to open your eyes to what displeases Him.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks to God for making a plan of salvation that we can know and trust in!

Supplication:

God makes promises for all people! Pray for our missionary partners around the world as they try to spread the message of God's saving work. Pray there would be opportunities to share, that people would be open to hear, and that God would redeem more people to Himself!



MARCH 4, 2023

READ THE SERMON TEXT FOR TOMORROW:

GENESIS 6:11-22; 8:13-18; 9:8-28

Reflection:

Consider all that you have read and prayed about over the last week and write down a few things that have encouraged or challenged you.

Prayer:

Thank the Lord for revealing Himself through His word and ask Him to speak to you through the sermon tomorrow.







JOSEPH

After God saves the human race through Noah and the ark, the descendents of Noah and his sons return to rebellion and wickedness. In Genesis 12, God begins the next phase of his plan of redemption by calling out Abram from among idol worshippers. He reveals himself to Abram and renames him Abraham. He promises him that he will have many descendants and that he will be a blessing to all nations. Abraham becomes the father of God's people. He has a son named Isaac, who has two sons, Esau and Jacob. Jacob is chosen as the son of promise and God renames him Israel. Jacob's twelve sons will become the twelve tribes of Israel that we read about throughout the rest of the Old Testament. One of those sons was Joseph.

God had special plans and purposes for Joseph, which we will read about in the coming days. Joseph becomes a rescuer for his family. He endures many years of hardship, uncertainty, and evil at the hands of those who hated him. His suffering produces deliverance for those who tried to harm him. In many ways, he points us to a greater rescuer, Jesus, who would suffer at the hands of hateful people only to be used by God to save many

MARCH 6, 2023

READ: GENESIS 37

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Joseph was Jacob's favored and beloved son, but God allowed Joseph's removal from his father's household and developed his character and faith through years of hardship and suffering. The young and proud Joseph did not know he would never grow up under his father's loving Adoration: and protection. He was violently beaten and stripped of his clothing, thrown in a well, and sold off as a slave to a foreign land by his jealous half-brothers. For years, Jacob, Joseph, and his brothers carried hidden guilt and shame in their hearts. But God was at work and had not abandoned them. The sanctifying work of these trials over the passage of time were not in vain, for God had a rescue plan that would save them from physical and spiritual famine and preserve the seed of our Rescuer, Jesus Christ!

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for He is Sovereign and has authority over all things in heaven and on earth! Praise God for sending a Rescuer who delivers you from sin and death and into eternal life! Worship the Lord as the Faithful One who will never leave you nor forsake you.

Confession:

Have you ever coveted someone else's life and wondered why others have it better than you? Do you think of yourself more highly than you ought to? Ask the Lord to examine your heart and remove pride, jealousy, hatred, or doubt, so that your heart is clean before Him.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks for God's steadfast love. Give thanks that His plans for you are His best for your ultimate good and that God disciplines you because He loves you. Thank Him for being a trustworthy Savior who helps you live one day at a time— as the Lord helped Joseph in the dark well and when he was sold off into slavery.



Ask God to help you seek Him intentionally in daily prayer and reading His Word. Ask Him to cleanse your heart and fill it with His Word so that you will not sin against Him. Ask God to help you trust in His plans for your life and obey Him.

[illegible]

MARCH 7, 2023

READ: GENESIS 39

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Joseph lost his freedom, family, and any control over his life and became a slave in Potiphar's household. He had to choose either to trust in himself or in God to survive and live. On the long journey to Egypt, he had a lot of time to process everything that had happened to him. While in chains, he must have had some gut-wrenching conversations with the Lord which led Joseph to humble himself and abide in the Lord in his circumstances; and the Lord gave him success in everything he did. In the Lord, Joseph found rest for his soul. God gave him favor with others, and Joseph bore fruit and became a blessing to everyone around him.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for being your Rock and Refuge and for times of refreshing in His presence. Praise Him for being a gentle and humble Savior who gives you rest for your soul. Praise God for the Holy Spirit who dwells within you and bears spiritual fruit in your life so that Christ is glorified!

Confession:

Are you weary and heavy laden? Confess your weariness and burdens. Have you been ungrateful for God's goodness and grace? Confess your faithlessness and ungrateful heart. Ask God to forgive you and give you a humble and teachable heart.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for his mercy and grace! He is patient with you and forgives you. Thank the Lord for creating you with purpose and for allowing hardships in your life which teach you to depend on Him, as He did with Joseph through his trials. Thank God for the gifts and talents He's given to you, as He's given to Joseph, to serve others for His Name's sake!



Supplication:

Ask God to give you perseverance and joy as you seek to daily abide in Jesus. Ask God to show you what your gifts and talents are and where to use them as an ambassador of Christ in your city. Ask the Lord to help you seek the welfare of the city and bear fruit. Pray for the salvation of souls in your city, and ask God to reveal people who need to be encouraged with the Good News today and give you courage to share it.

MARCH 8, 2023

READ: GENESIS 41

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

It was time to implement the Lord's rescue plan for the world. Joseph was released from prison to interpret Pharaoh's prophetic dreams from God. Pharaoh saw that God was with Joseph and was impressed that God revealed the meaning of his dreams to Joseph. Therefore, Pharaoh did not hesitate and made Joseph second in command to oversee the gathering of the excess grain from the upcoming abundant years in preparation for the upcoming famine years. The world was saved from starvation through Joseph. And from the very beginning, God preserved the remnant of Israel, ensuring the survival of Jesus' seed until His perfectly timed birth to save the world from sin and death!

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for His perfect plans, His love for the world, and for sending His Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins! Praise God for His Son, who holds the government on his shoulders! Praise God as the One who guides kings' hearts wherever he pleases!

Confession:

Confess when you have trusted more in men than in God. Ask God to forgive you when you speak disrespectfully about your country's leaders instead of praying for them.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks to God for the freedom to worship Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in our country! Give thanks that God is patient with all men, desiring for all people to turn from their sins and be saved before Jesus returns! Thank the Lord for His sovereignty and for including you in His plans.



Supplication:

Pray for the spreading of the Good News to the nations and ask God to show you how you can participate in the Great Commission. In light of the injustices and disasters happening all around the world, pray for the humility, salvation, and wisdom of the leaders of all nations and that God's will for justice and mercy would be accomplished through them (as it was accomplished through Joseph and Pharaoh).

MARCH 9, 2023

READ: GENESIS 44-45

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Joseph's brothers traveled all the way to Egypt to buy food during the famine. Joseph (whom they did not recognize) tested them by accusing Benjamin (his beloved little brother) of stealing. And Judah pleaded to be punished in Benjamin's place, knowing his father could not bear to lose Benjamin. Seeing that his brothers had changed, in an emotionally moving scene, Joseph revealed himself; imagine the brothers' looks of fear and confusion! Joseph was so happy to see them and held no ill will against them. He testified that they didn't send him there, but God sent him to Egypt to preserve a remnant on the earth and spoke kindly to them. In the same way, Jesus welcomes you with a heart full of love, offering forgiveness and peace with God and peace for you with the people you have hurt and who have hurt you the most.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for Jesus who took the blame for you and died in your place, so that you would be forgiven of your sins and have peace with God! Praise Jesus for being the Way, the Truth and the Life!

Confession:

Confess your inability to forgive someone who has hurt you badly and ask God to help you forgive that person. Confess any hurt you might have caused a friend or family member.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks that God hears your prayers and sees and knows all things. Thank Him for His Word that instructs and guides you in your relationships. Thank Him for the gift of family and friends who make your life rich in Christ.



Ask God to humble you and make you strong and courageous to forgive and love generously because Jesus loves and forgives you. Ask God to change the heart of the person who hurt you. Ask God to help you ask for forgiveness when you hurt others. Ask God to prompt Christ-honoring words and actions in your relationships with friends and family!

[illegible]

MARCH 10, 2023

READ: GENESIS 47, 49:33-50:21

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

At the end of Jacob's life, he made Joseph swear to carry his body out of Egypt and bury him with his fathers in Canaan. Pharaoh gave Joseph his blessing to fulfill his father's last wish and provided all of his servants, elders of his household, all the elders of the land of Egypt, chariots, and horsemen; it was a great company of Egyptian leaders and military power. And because Joseph had such a monumental impact on Pharaoh and all of Egypt, Pharaoh honored Joseph's father with a grand funeral procession. They arrived at Atad and mourned greatly and deeply for Joseph's father for seven days. The inhabitants of Canaan marveled at the grand, grievous mourning and named the place, Abel-misraim (mourning of Egypt). In the same way, may the church be an undeniable light to the world- a city on the hill that can be seen for miles and miles, displaying the manifold wisdom of God and drawing others to worship Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior!

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise the Name of Jesus for being the Savior and the Cornerstone of the church. Praise God for being our Redeemer and King and that one day, the church will be with Jesus for all eternity!

Confession:

Ask God to forgive you for not making Jesus your first love. Ask God to forgive any sins that have dimmed your light in the church family.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for His mercy and grace that is poured out to you in Christ. Thank Him for your Life Group leaders who pour into you, prepare for class, and teach God's Word to you and your children. Thank the Lord for godly friends in the church, who



have loved you through the good and bad times.

Supplication:

Ask God to open your eyes to the needs of the church and how you can play a role in meeting them. Ask the Lord to help our church love each other humbly and sacrificially, bearing each other's burdens, and praying for each other. Ask God to help our church stay unified in the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ and be an undeniable light in the darkness! Ask God to protect the church and its leaders from Satan's attacks and help her persevere until the return of Christ Jesus!

MARCH 11, 2023

READ THE SERMON TEXT FOR TOMORROW:

—— **GENESIS 37:3-11; 41:46-57; 45:4-8; 50:15-21**

Reflection:

Consider all that you have read and prayed about over the last week, and write down a few things that have encouraged or challenged you.

Prayer:

Thank the Lord for revealing Himself through His word and ask Him to speak to you through the sermon tomorrow.







MOSES

Jacob and his sons stayed in Egypt after the famine to be with Joseph. They prospered, multiplied, and became a great people. A new Pharaoh came to power who did not know Joseph and grew afraid of the Hebrew people. So, he began to oppress and mistreat them.

Moses was the instrument that God used to deliver his people from Egypt. He was a prophet that heard directly from God. God instructed him to go to Pharaoh and demand that he let God's people go. He led God's people out of Egypt and back towards the Promised Land. He delivered God's law and served as judge over the people. He was the great deliverer of God's people, but Moses would promise in Deuteronomy 18 that God would raise up another prophet like him. Another great deliverer would come who would be rejected by God's people, would speak the very words of God, and serve as the ultimate Judge. This new deliverer would not just deliver the people of Israel, but He would deliver all the nations from sin and death.

READ: EXODUS 2

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

In Exodus 2, we read about the extraordinary way God protected Moses when he was a baby. Moses was born at a time in history when the nation of Israel was enslaved and oppressed in Egypt. When the king of Egypt decreed that all Hebrew boys under the age of two were to be thrown into the Nile, Moses' mother made a basket, placed her son inside, and released it near the riverbank of the Nile River. Soon after, Pharaoh's daughter discovered Moses in the basket as she went down to the river to bathe. Consider how God preserved Moses' life by causing Pharaoh's daughter to take pity on Moses and adopt him as her son. Consider how God also showed great kindness to Moses' mother by allowing her to be chosen by Pharaoh's daughter to care for Moses during his infancy.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for what we learn about his character in Exodus 2. He is a good Father and he is our protector. Whether we find ourselves in good seasons of life or in times of grief or distress, He will show kindness to us and His purposes for our lives will prevail.

Confession:

Ask God for the faith to trust Him fully and to believe He is in control of every moment of your life. Ask God to forgive you for times you've doubted His sovereignty or His kindness.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks to God for the way He can strengthen your faith as you read stories of His protection and provision throughout Scripture.



Ask God to help you recall His kindness and provision for you as you go about your week. Ask Him to increase your faith in Him as you continue to read stories in the Bible that tell of His goodness and His character.

[illegible]

MARCH 14, 2023

READ: EXODUS 3

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

In Exodus 3, Moses is keeping his father-in-law's sheep in the wilderness near Mount Horeb when God appears to him in a burning bush. God told Moses he saw the affliction of his people, Israel, and he called Moses to return to Egypt to deliver the people out of the hand of Pharaoh. Moses had big questions for God in response to this calling - Moses doubted his qualifications for this task and his rapport with the people. He questioned what God would have him say. God's response to Moses was, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" Moses did not have to rely on the credibility of his own name, neither could he have delivered Israel in his own strength. Moses was simply a messenger sent to proclaim the incredible power of God's name. Moses' job was to make it known that deliverance would come by nothing other than the power of their God, the great I AM.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for the power of His name! Praise Him for the mighty acts He performed in the Old Testament and throughout the story of the Bible. Praise Him that there is no name, no ruler, and no authority that could ever compare to the immeasurable power of his name. (Ephesians 1:21)

Confession:

Ask forgiveness for the times you've failed to recognize God's power in your life and in the lives of your loved ones. Confess your weakness and need to Him, knowing that your need will never be greater than His power in your life.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for sending Jesus to be our ultimate Deliverer. Thank Him for His death on the cross and His resurrection which gives us life.



Spend time praying for your four who don't know Jesus and have not experienced the deliverance that comes from knowing Him. Pray for your loved ones who do know Jesus that they would be encouraged this week by recognizing God's power in their lives and in the world.

[illegible]

READ: EXODUS 6 AND 7:1-7

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Deliverance did not come to the people of Israel immediately. Pharaoh's heart was hardened to Moses' request, and as a result he doubled down on the task required of the people of Israel, making their work even more burdensome. Moses wondered what God was doing when things were getting so much worse instead of better. I imagine Moses thinking to himself, "Surely this can't be part of God's plan." Again, Moses brought his questions before the Lord (Ex. 5:22-23). God reminded Moses that his promises would come to pass. Though Pharaoh resisted and deliverance seemed out of reach, God's plans were not thwarted. God would deliver his people from bondage, and He would make his name known in Egypt. This passage is a reminder that God is not shaken by circumstances that may seem dire or hopeless. He is working on his timetable and not ours, and his promises will always come to pass.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

As you reflect on this passage, praise God that He is able to work even through the most difficult circumstances. Praise God that he will make his name known, even in the darkest places.

Confession:

Ask God to forgive you for times you've doubted his word. Ask him to help you trust him, even when things don't make sense to you.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks to God for being a promise keeper. Thank him that nothing can stop him from accomplishing his purposes in our life and in the world.



Pray for believers in nations that are hostile to God's Word. Pray for their faith to grow even in dark places where it feels hard to trust God. Pray for God to send encouragement to our missionaries, and pray that his word would reach people in countries where they have never heard the Gospel.

[illegible]

MARCH 16, 2023

READ: EXODUS 11 AND 12:1-13

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Pharaoh continually denied Moses' request to let the people go, and God sent a number of plagues to torment the Egyptians. The tenth and final plague is described in today's reading: the death of the firstborn. That night, God would go throughout the land and kill the firstborn in every family, but God graciously instructed his people Israel on how they could be spared from this devastating plague. The people of Israel were to observe a Passover meal. They were to prepare an unblemished lamb as part of this meal, and its blood was to be spread upon their doorpost. This first Passover was an act of God's judgment toward the Egyptians and an act of his incredible mercy toward the Israelites, who spread the blood upon their doorposts. As you read about the Passover in today's reading, let it remind you of God's gracious plan of sending Jesus to shed His blood to save the souls of those who believe in Him. Nothing would have saved the Israelites that night but the blood. Jesus is our passover lamb, and it is only His blood that can save us.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for sending Jesus to be our Passover lamb! Praise God for providing a way for us to be saved.

Confession:

Confess times your heart has not been moved when reading about Jesus' love and His sacrifice for sinners, and ask God to renew the joy of your salvation!

Thanksgiving:

Spend some time reflecting and thanking God that He has brought you out of death and into life. Thank God that He has not dealt with you as your sins deserved (Psalm 103:10) but has redeemed you through the blood of Jesus (Eph. 1:7).



Ask God to give you a heart that overflows with worship and gratitude for what Jesus has done! Pray for our church body that we would be so moved by what Jesus has done for us that we would boldly tell others about Him.

[illegible]

MARCH 17, 2023

READ: EXODUS 14

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

After the tenth plague, the death of the firstborn, Pharaoh granted the Israelites permission to leave Egypt to worship their God. God's promise came to pass. He delivered the people from the hand of Pharaoh, and he led them out of the land of Egypt. Soon after the exodus began, Pharaoh had a change of heart, and he sent his armies to pursue the Israelites. The multitudes of people who had just experienced God's miraculous deliverance looked at Pharaoh's armies approaching and began to doubt God. The armies were overtaking them and death was imminent. "Why would God have brought us into the wilderness to die?" they wondered. Moses answered them: "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord." At just the right time, and in spite of the people's unbelief, God caused the Red Sea to part, allowing the people to cross on dry land. With the Israelites safely across, God caused the walls of the Red Sea to collapse, swallowing up the Egyptian soldiers. Each chapter of Moses' story resonates with the good news of God's power to deliver his people.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for what His Spirit has revealed to you as you've read these accounts in Exodus. Praise Him for his power at work in your life.

Confession:

Pour out your heart before God today in honesty, confessing times you've doubted His ability to show up in your life. Ask God to help your unbelief. Ask Him to make your faith stronger and stronger as you walk with Him.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for being our deliverer and our rescuer. Thank Him that He is present and working in our world today with the same



power He revealed to the Israelites at the Red Sea.

Supplication:

Pray for the people of our city that God would soften hard hearts and cause people to turn to him. Ask God to use you to be a light in your spheres of influence within Raleigh.

MARCH 18, 2023

READ THE SERMON TEXT FOR TOMORROW:

—— **EXODUS 6:1-9; 12:1-13; 14:5-31**

Reflection:

Consider all that you have read and prayed about over the last week, and write down a few things that have encouraged or challenged you.

Prayer:

Thank the Lord for revealing Himself through His word and ask Him to speak to you through the sermon tomorrow.







DAVID

The Hebrew people settled in the Promised Land and became known as the people of Israel. They became a nation and then, they asked for a king. God raised up King Saul, but he turned away from the Lord. Therefore, God raised up a new king that was a man after God's own heart, David.

Before he became king, David had an opportunity to rescue God's people by facing the terrifying giant, Goliath. He was threatening God's people, and the army of Israel was filled with fear. David knew that he could defeat Goliath because he believed that God would be with him.

David was pointing to another rescuer who would come. He faced God's people's greatest enemy, trusted fully in his Heavenly Father, and proved victorious. As a picture of Jesus, he represented God's people in a great battle and won a victory that delivered them from death.

MARCH 20, 2023

READ: 1 SAMUEL 16

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

This account in 1 Samuel 16, reveals how differently God sees people than we do. The Lord instructs Samuel to go to Jesse's house and anoint one of his sons as the next king of Israel. Samuel arrives and he assumes the oldest, Eliab, was the one God had chosen based on his appearance, but God rejects Eliab and reminds Samuel that he "looks on the heart". The Lord ends up choosing the son that no one expected. He was the youngest and least likely, but he had a heart for the Lord. In many ways, Jesus was the savior that no one expected or would have chosen, but he was the only one who could accomplish God's plan.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God that He is the one who sees our hearts, captures our hearts for His purposes, and with great wisdom provides all that we need.

Confession:

Consider the times you have judged people by outward appearances or judged God's provision by the appearance of your circumstances. Ask for His forgiveness and for the ability to trust in His good plans and purposes.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks to God for His provision in sending Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Supplication:

Ask God to give you a heart that is fully devoted to Him. Ask Him to help you trust in His good providence and provision even when you cannot see how the story will end. Ask Him to give you opportunities to encourage others in this same way.



MARCH 21, 2023

READ: 1 SAMUEL 17:1-19

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

After Samuel anoints David, we are given the well-known story of David and Goliath. Before their meeting, we are told that the nation of Israel had gathered its armies to fight their enemy, the Philistines, who had the intent to conquer. Both armies were camped on opposite hills bordering a valley. The battle is on hold because a Philistine champion, Goliath, has stepped forward daily to put forth a challenge. He challenges any champion of Israel to fight him with the winner taking the victory for their army. However, God's chosen army is paralyzed with fear, including their leader, King Saul, because the challenge(r) seemed insurmountable. The nation of Israel had a King because they had asked God to give them a line of kings to lead their nation. A theme is beginning where they will continue to be let down by earthly kings. Thankfully, God had a plan to send a righteous King who would reign forever.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Despite sometimes failing to trust God in insurmountable circumstances, we can praise Him for His faithfulness and goodness; knowing fear no longer reigns over us (Psalm 56:3).

Confession:

Bring to the Lord times of doubt and fear. Confess times when you trust your own strength for a seemingly impossible situation.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for providing an eternal King who conquered fear and death. Thank Him for King Jesus!

Supplication:

Pray to God on behalf of those close to you, your family, and your friends. Ask Him to strengthen and encourage those who know Him but are currently paralyzed by fear. Ask Him to pursue

READ: 1 SAMUEL 17:20-30, PSALM 11

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

The battlefield is set with God's people frozen in fear. David follows the command of his father to leave the sheep he is attending and take provisions to his brothers who are encamped at the battle. When arriving, David hears Goliath giving his daily challenge to the army of Israel. David observes the men struck with fear. The Spirit of the Lord is with David (1 Samuel 16:13), and despite Goliath's intimidation, he is appalled by Goliath's defiance of the army of the living God. David's focus is not on himself, but on the honor of God's holy name. Psalm 11 reminds us we can trust our God as His throne is in heaven, defending the righteous, and condemning the wicked.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Show your admiration of God's holiness (Isaiah 6:3). Be in awe and praise Him for His goodness and all His attributes.

Confession:

Reflect on and confess when you have neglected to spend time pursuing and desiring to know God at a deeper level. Ask for Him to reveal His holiness to us so we can see our deep need for Christ daily.

Thanksgiving:

God graciously sent His son, Jesus, to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2). Give Him thanks for His son, who gives us a way to have a relationship with a holy God.

Supplication:

Petition God to make us, our church, a people after His own heart like King David (Acts 13:22). Plead with God to reveal Himself to us so we can see our need for a dependency on Him alone.



MARCH 23, 2023

READ: 1 SAMUEL 17:31-58

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

The remainder of 1 Samuel 17, tells of the confrontation between David and Goliath. Even without knowledge of the grand narrative in which it sits, the story by itself is remarkable. Against all earthly odds, David prevails and wins a great victory for the army of Israel. God was at work setting the stage for an explanation that could only point to Him. He used a shepherd that trusted in the one true God, to take down a fear-invoking champion of the wicked. David made sure to give honor and glory to the one to whom it was due (1 Samuel 17:46-47). David's trust was in a just God, who defends the righteous and condemns the wicked (Amos 5:14-15).

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for His justice and mercy. Be amazed at His goodness and put your trust in Him alone.

Confession:

We must reflect on and repent for the times we have trusted our own strength or something in the world instead of relying on God for strength and wisdom.

Thanksgiving:

Give thanks to God for his provision and goodness knowing He, in perfect love, works all things together for His good purpose (Romans 8:28).

Supplication:

Plead with God asking Him for revival in our city. Ask Him to remove our worldly passions and plans for our lives. Pray our city would be an area known for our trust in God.



READ: PSALM 23

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Psalm 23 is one of the most familiar passages in the Bible. David is the author and reading this Psalm reveals both something about God and how David relates to God. God is described as a shepherd. He protects and provides. He leads us down paths that take us to good things. The path is not always easy, but God is always there to protect and comfort us. Ultimately, God always prevails, which gives David (and us) a deep confidence in times of uncertainty.

Knowing that David relates to God in these ways gives us great insight into his courage before Goliath. This Psalm explains why David was appalled at the giant's threats and the response of God's people. David knew that God would always be with his people, and he was ready to put his life in God's powerful hands. We, too, can and should be eager to put our lives in God's good hands. He is worthy of our trust. He is always faithful and always there for us.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for His willingness to use His great power and strength for our protection and comfort. Praise Him for being a good shepherd.

Confession:

Examine your heart and ask yourself, "Have I been looking to God for provision and protection when I face trials, or have I been looking to something else?" Confess anything that comes to mind.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for His patience and kindness to continue to teach us and reveal our lack of faith. Thank Him for His forgiveness and willingness to walk with us even when we are slow to learn.



Ask the Lord to raise up workers for His harvest around the world. Ask Him to use our missionary partners and church plant partners to bring the gospel to those who have never heard it. Ask God to reveal to the nations that He is a trusted shepherd.

[illegible]

MARCH 25, 2023

READ THE SERMON TEXT FOR TOMORROW:

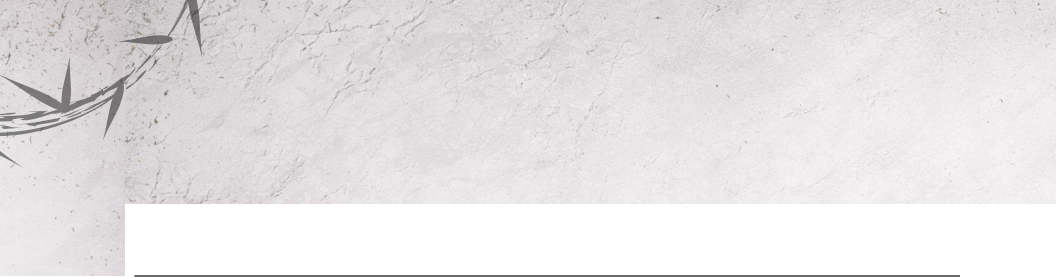
—— 1 SAMUEL 16:1-13; 17:1-50

Reflection:

Consider all that you have read and prayed about over the last week, and write down a few things that have encouraged or challenged you.

Prayer:

Thank the Lord for revealing Himself through His word and ask Him to speak to you through the sermon tomorrow.

[illegible]





ESTHER

David leads Israel in a time of prosperity and unity, but that quickly dissolves in the coming generations. Israel is led by a mix of good and wicked kings, but the wicked kings far outnumbered the ones who did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. God's people were led astray by these wicked kings and one prophet after another warned them that judgement was coming. God eventually gave His people over into the hands of their enemies, and they were carried off into foreign lands as captives.

Esther and the Jewish people mentioned in the book of Esther are still living in foreign lands many generations after the initial exile. Esther's story unfolds in this book and reveals God's goodness as He remains faithful to His people even after they had been scattered as a result of their sin.

Esther steps into the role of a savior for her people. She was the only one among the Jews who had access to the king. She goes to the king to ask for deliverance knowing that it could cost her everything. She goes as a representative of the people and God is with her. She is given favor and that favor is extended to all of God's people. Esther points us to another Savior who would come and stand in as a representative for God's people. He would give up his life and be given favor that he would pass along to God's people, so that we could be saved from sin and death.

READ: ESTHER 1-2

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

The opening chapters of Esther set the stage for what is to follow. Esther and Mordecai, the protagonists of the story, both earn favor with the Persian king. Esther for her beauty and Mordecai for his role in thwarting a plot against the king's life. Although God is never mentioned directly in Esther, His hand of providence is evident from the beginning. The unlikely events of these early chapters lead directly to the deliverance of God's people that follows in the book.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Give praise to God that He is at work in every aspect of our lives and in all of history. He is aware of every sparrow that falls, and we are worth more to Him than many sparrows (Matt. 10:29). He is a God of the details, as well as the big picture!

Confession:

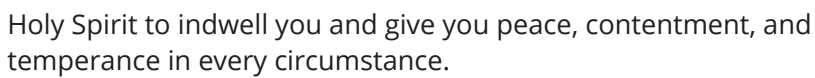
Consider the times when you have been unthankful or when you've been a poor steward of God's gifts to you. Confess them to God, and ask for help to be thankful for His favor and to be a wise steward of the circumstances He has placed you in.

Thanksgiving:

Think about a time when God has worked through unlikely circumstances in your life to bring about a good outcome and give Him thanks for His favor. It can be something good that has happened to you, that has led to your spiritual growth, or that has allowed you to bless others.

Supplication:

Whatever circumstance you're currently in, ask God to give you wisdom, guidance, and insight as to how to best live for Him and His kingdom. Ask for eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand His will as revealed in His Word. Pray for the

[illegible]

MARCH 28, 2023

READ: ESTHER 3-4

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Chapter 3 introduces the story's antagonist, Haman. After his pride is injured by Mordecai refusing to bow down to him, Haman lashes out not only against Mordecai, but against all his people, the Jews. Esther is in a unique position to help deliver her people, but doing so puts her own life at risk. Nevertheless, she shows courage and trust in God's providence by agreeing to intercede with the king, regardless of what the outcome may be.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God that even before we fall into peril, He sets in motion the means of our rescue. Rejoice in His plan from the foundation of the world to rescue us from sin through Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3-14).

Confession:

Confess your pride to God and ask for help from the Spirit to seek the good of others rather than self-exaltation.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for the times in your life that He has delivered you from difficult circumstances. Give thanks for the groundwork He is laying even now to provide future deliverance.

Supplication:

Pray for the needs of family and friends around you. Think about who might need deliverance from sickness, sorrow, joblessness, anxiety, or sin, and pray to the ultimate Deliverer on their behalf.



READ: ESTHER 5-6

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

With a wonderful bit of irony, the middle chapters of Esther show the beginning of Haman's fall. First, Esther begins preparing the banquet in which she plans to reveal Haman's evil plot to the king. Then, Haman, thinking that the king plans to honor him, unknowingly plans an extravagant show of honors that he must then personally bestow on his enemy, Mordecai. God's deliverance is both corporate and personal.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise God for His immeasurable grace and astounding mercy toward us!

Confession:

Confess to God your tendency to seek self-gain and the envy that comes with seeing others receive blessings that you desire. Ask God for contentment in whatever circumstance you're in (Phil. 4:10-13).

Thanksgiving:

Thank God that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6), and thank Him specifically for the blessings in your life that have resulted from pursuing God.

Supplication:

Pray for the church as we seek together to spread the good news of God's deliverance. Pray that the enemy's attempts to thwart the gospel will only result in it being spread and received all the more, by God's power and grace.



MARCH 30, 2023

READ: ESTHER 7-8

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

In the climax of the story, Esther and Mordecai convince the king to write an edict giving protection to the Jews, and Haman is hanged on the gallows he had built to hang Mordecai. It is a scene of relief, rejoicing, and even a touch of ironic humor. God delights in saving His people. His plan of redemption and restoration is certain. No plot or weapon devised against us, God's people, can stand (Isa. 54:17). Esther gives a foretaste of the victory of the cross, and the future, final deliverance at Christ's return.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Lift up your voice in praise to the God who delivers, rescues, redeems, and restores! He is worthy of our utmost adoration.

Confession:

Confess to God when, in moments of darkness, you doubt His power or desire to deliver. Pray for comfort and faith to persevere through your struggles.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for the stories in scripture that point to deliverance, the promises that assure it, and the Spirit who sustains our faith to believe it.

Supplication:

Consider the hopelessness, fear, struggles, and needs rampant in our city. Pray to God on behalf of those in need, and pray for opportunities to serve our communities and to share the gospel with those who have never heard it.



MARCH 31, 2023

READ: ESTHER 9-10

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

In the closing chapters, we see the aftermath of these events. Those who sought to destroy the Jews are themselves destroyed, and the Jews, having official protection from Persia, are more secure than at the start of the story. Queen Esther proclaims a new holiday so that later generations will remember God's rescue. Likewise, as we celebrate Easter, we should contemplate and celebrate Christ's resurrection in a special way to promote remembrance through the whole year.

GUIDED PRAYER

Adoration:

Praise the Father for giving His only begotten Son to deliver us from our sin! Praise Jesus for His humility and obedience even to the point of death on a cross (Phi. 2:8)! Praise the Spirit for enlightening our hearts and igniting the faith in us needed to believe on the Son!

Confession:

As you remember God's deliverance, confess the times you have forgotten Him. Ask God to compel your forgetful heart to remember His salvation in all circumstances.

Thanksgiving:

Thank God for giving us celebration as a means to remember His goodness toward us.

Supplication:

Pray on behalf of the nations who are still living in bondage to sin. Pray that God's people will carry the gospel into the dark places, that they too may receive rescue and salvation.



APRIL 1, 2023

READ THE SERMON TEXT FOR TOMORROW:

—— ESTHER 2:15-18; 4:1-14; 7:1-10; 8:1-6

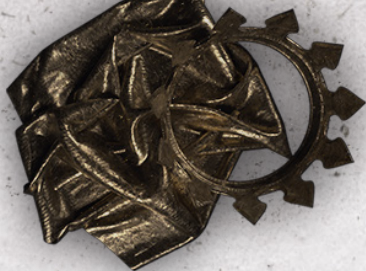
Reflection:

Consider all that you have read and prayed about over the last week, and write down a few things that have encouraged or challenged you.

Prayer:

Thank the Lord for revealing Himself through His word and ask Him to speak to you through the sermon tomorrow.





HOLY WEEK

APRIL 2-9

**8 DAYS OF DEVOTION
TO PREPARE YOUR HEART
FOR EASTER**



DEAR PROVIDENCE FAMILY,

Early on Sunday morning, three days after Jesus died on a cross, a few faithful women went to His tomb to anoint His body. To their surprise the large stone, which sealed his tomb, had been rolled back exposing the entrance. As they entered the tomb, an angel said, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, as He said" (Matthew 28:5 – 6). Jesus has risen from the dead! We say and sing this a lot, but don't let it grow old. It means our sins can be removed from us, and His righteousness can be given to us!

As Easter approaches, I encourage you to be intentional in preparing yourself to celebrate. It is possible to celebrate even if this Easter finds you going through a difficult or lonely time. Let me share a few considerations as we enter this special week.

Be on lookout for Jesus. Family, food, eggs, and chocolate will be part of the week, but don't get so distracted that you fail to give attention to what Jesus has accomplished.

† Be on lookout for humility and joy. None of us can look at the empty grave and rightly conclude that we are the hero. Easter invites many things, but never pride or boredom. So give yourself (and your family), some margins this week to think about the resurrection and to examine your heart. If you find sin, confess it. A forgiven heart is a joyful heart.

Be on lookout to share the gospel. Our joy in anything is maximized when we talk about it with others. This is especially true of Jesus. Let's all ask God for an opportunity to tell someone why we are so thankful to celebrate Easter this year.

Each day, beginning on Palm Sunday, we read a passage from the Bible that highlights a big event leading up to Jesus' resurrection. To add a visual, we use candles, similar to Advent. (Candles are optional, but with our boys, fire is always a win!) At Christmas, we light candles to remember the light coming into the world. For Easter, we begin with six lit candles and each day as we read, we blow one out to remember the darkness on the earth when Jesus died. Then on Easter morning we relight all six candles to celebrate Jesus' victory over the grave.

You can do this alone, with some friends, or with your family. Whether you follow this plan or not, let me simply encourage you to do something. Jesus rose from the dead to give us eternal life. We have reason to celebrate!
In Christ,

-Brian Frost

PALM SUNDAY

JESUS' ENTRANCE



With all six candles lit, blow out one candle and read
JOHN 12:12 – 26

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

† What do you think was going through minds of the people as they saw Jesus enter Jerusalem?

† What do you think was going through Jesus' mind?

† How do we demonstrate our admiration and love for Christ today?

MONDAY

JESUS' HUMILITY

With five candles lit, blow out one candle and read
JOHN 13:1 – 17

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

† What do you think you would have done if Jesus had knelt before you to wash your feet?

† Would you rather have someone wash your feet or be the one washing his feet?

† What does it look like for us to follow

TUESDAY

JESUS' TEACHING



With four candles lit, blow out one candle and read
JOHN 15:1 – 17

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

† What does it mean to abide in Jesus?

† As Jesus was preparing to go to the cross, why do you think he used some of his last words to teach his followers about love?

† How does Jesus enable us to love one another?

WEDNESDAY

JESUS' ARREST

With three candles lit, blow out one candle and read
JOHN 18:1 – 11

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

† What do you think was going through the minds of Jesus' disciples when Judas appeared?

† When Jesus said the words, "I am he," why do you think the soldiers fell to the ground?

† What clues show us that Jesus was still in total control?

† What do we learn here that gives us hope during our trials?

THURSDAY

JESUS' CONDEMNATION



With two candles lit, blow out one candle and read
JOHN 19:1 – 16

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

† What emotions or thoughts come to your mind when you read this?

† Why do you think that Jesus was so peaceful when evil men were treating him so violently?

† Why did Pilate try to release Jesus?

† Why did Jesus allow Himself to go through so much pain and ridicule?

GOOD FRIDAY

JESUS' CRUCIFIXION

With one candle lit, blow it out and read
JOHN 19:17 - 37

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

† Why did Jesus have to die in order to save us from our sin?

† What does it show us that Jesus would care for his mother while hanging on the cross?

† How should we respond to the news that Jesus died for our sin?

SATURDAY

JESUS' BURIAL



With no candles lit, read
JOHN 19:38 – 42

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

† What do you think was going through the disciples' minds when Jesus was in the grave?

† Why do you think Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were willing to bury Jesus?

† Why did they do this in secret?

† What would the world be like if Jesus had been buried and never risen from the dead?

JESUS' RESURRECTION

Light all six candles and read
JOHN 20:1 - 21

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- † How do you think the disciples felt when they saw Jesus?
- † Why was it so significant that Jesus rose from the dead?
- † Have you put your faith in Jesus?
- † Who do you know that needs to hear that Jesus died for sin and rose from the dead?



PROVIDENCE
CHURCH

