

# LOVE GOD'S WORD & PRAYER

## Daily Bible Reading

At Faith Baptist Fellowship, we *Love God's Word and Prayer*. We strongly believe that every growing disciple of Jesus needs to be regularly hearing from God through His word and personally speaking back to God through prayer. If regular Bible reading is not yet a habit of yours, this is a great way to get started!

**We are encouraging everyone to begin 2021 with spending time in the Psalms.** We will provide devotional thoughts and helpful prayer points on the passages. The weekend material will prepare you for the upcoming Sunday sermon as well as provide some discussion help for Faith Groups.

*We encourage you to set aside at least 15-20 minutes a day for reading and prayer. If you fall behind, just start on the current day. Try to develop the habit of reading at the same time and place. Have a journal and pen for answering questions and recording your thoughts and insights. For additional Bible reading plans check out our website at [www.faithsf.com/daily-bible-readings](http://www.faithsf.com/daily-bible-readings). Enjoy your time in God's Word and Prayer!*

## Monday, January 11

Read Psalm 8

**THINK:** To fully grasp the multiple layers of truth in this song of praise, read also Hebrews 2:6-8. This Psalm is a celebration with 3 layers: of God's glory and majesty seen in all creation (vv.1-3), of humanity created in the image of God with unique responsibility (v.4ff.), and of the coming Son of Man/Messiah, who we know to be Jesus Christ. The Hebrews writer clearly thinks of Psalm 8 as messianic, with its ultimate fulfillment being the Lord Jesus, yet it also rejoices in our dignity as unique creations and in the vast wonder and beauty of all that God has made. Hallelujah! You are a unique creation of God; God has plans for you! Kiss the Son! (2:12)

**PRAY:** This is a glorious song. Why not sing it? Yes, make up your own tune and sing away! In the very least, pray this Psalm of praise to God, line by line, phrase by phrase, rejoicing in creation, in humanity as created by God, and in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Truly, "How majestic is your name in all the earth!"

Our country is going through deep division and much bitterness. Let this Psalm remind you that God is God! He is on the throne!

## Tuesday, January 12

Read Psalm 9

**THINK:** The Psalmist looks in multiple directions in Psalm 9:

*He looks back* and with thanksgiving recalls God's wonderful deeds, help and protection from his enemy. He is helped to recall that God hasn't left him to the ruin of his opponents. The wicked will not triumph.

*He looks up* to see that yes, God is on the throne (v.7) and make no mistake, God will judge in righteousness and equity. He will not fail the oppressed, the needy, nor anyone who puts their trust in him. Are we trusting in God? He will not fail us!

*He looks ahead* to the final end of the wicked. Judgment will come. The Lord will indeed arise, judge, and put the nations in their place. Therefore, you who trust in the Lord, rejoice and praise him!

**PRAY:** First, *look back* at all that God has done for you. Pray a prayer of thanksgiving! Be specific. What has your Heavenly Father done for you? Rejoice in your salvation. Then *look up* and know that God sits enthroned. He will not be thwarted. The wicked may seem to flourish for a time, but God is not mocked. Finally, *look ahead* to your destiny as a child of God. Praise God, and be thankful, for every good gift that Jesus secured for you, including eternity.

## Wednesday, January 13

Read Psalm 10

**THINK:** Psalm 9 was a good reminder of God's eternal kingship, and his judgment on the wicked, necessary since this Psalm expresses that sometimes God seems far away. Life is hard. The wicked appear to flourish; they do evil things. Where is God? The wicked fool thinks, 1) There is no God; 2) God will never see what I'm doing; and 3) God will not hold me to account. (vv. 4,11,13) But the Lord is King forever and he will judge the wicked and uphold the cause of the fatherless and the oppressed. Don't be a fool!

**PRAY:** How do you see wickedness flourishing? Tell the Lord. How do you feel oppressed? Pray about it now. Does God seem silent? Express that to him. But then praise him as well, knowing that silence for a season does not mean you are forgotten or that those who seek to harm you will succeed. Rejoice that you are a child of God and have a future and a hope in Christ Jesus. **Pray for the youth.**

## Thursday, January 14

Read Psalm 11 & 12

**THINK:** A continuation of the series of Psalms regarding troubled times for King David, these two Psalms read like a commentary on our present moment in time. The wicked shoot their arrow at the upright; the foundations are trembling; it seems like the faithful have vanished; lies are more common than truth. The Lord may test his people, but he detests wickedness and violence. The Lord is in His holy temple. He sees and knows. His response will come- “I will now arise”-and when he does, he will punish those who do evil and save the needy and upright. His word is truth. It is pure.

**PRAY:** Think of the needs of our own nation and world and cry out to God in this moment in time. Let your own prayer echo the words of these Psalms: echo the deeds of the wicked; echo also the cries of the needy. Pray the truth of our present moment and ask God to rise up and bring relief in his time. Ask God for courage and faith to wait for this day, to endure the present moment, and for increasing faith to stand firm when the foundations are trembling. ***Hope in God.***

## Friday, January 15

Read Psalm 13 & 14

**THINK:** King David’s hardships continue; the Lord’s silence seems to continue as well. Notice the honesty. The frank emotion. He pulls no punches with God. No looks death in the eyes. ***But*** is a beautiful word here. The present calamity is not permanent. He trusts in God’s steadfast love, knows salvation is coming, and even sings.

Further, he knows that atheism is a dead-end street! The denial of God is merely an excuse to sin. God looks down and sees the sinful depravity of humanity (and Paul will quote this in Romans 3). God knows, he sees, and he will bring his salvation at just the right time.

**PRAY:** What is your present heart condition? What tribulations are you facing? What doubts, fears, trials? Tell them to the Lord. Does it feel like God is silent? That he is not helping you? That those who love sin and oppress you are winning the day? Tell the Lord! Be honest with him! It’s best if we don’t dress up our prayers like paper dolls, ignoring how we really feel and making our prayers “nice.” Rather, be blunt. And then remember his promises! Remember our gospel hope in Christ! Call to mind that God will not be mocked, and that it is foolish to say, “There is no God.” His day is coming!

## Weekend, January 16-17

Read Genesis 48:1-22 and 49:1-27

If you've fallen behind this week, consider using these extra days to catch up. You can also prepare your heart and mind for this Sunday's worship service. Read the planned sermon text above and the thoughts below in advance of Sunday morning's message. If you are in a Faith Group, consider discussing the questions below together.

**THINK:** It's time for Jacob (Israel) to pass out his blessing on his children and grandchildren before he dies. First, he blesses the two sons of Joseph, and does so in a curious fashion. What is unique about how he blesses them? What does it mean? How has this been a consistent theme in Genesis? Then as for his own sons, what stands out to you about the blessings he gives them? How do these blessings align with all we have read in Genesis up to this point? *Do you pray blessings upon your children? Do you do so as thoughtfully and deeply as Jacob does here?*

**PRAY:** Be inspired by the insightful blessing of Joseph and pray earnestly for your own children and grandchildren, if God has so blessed you. Pray for their salvation, for their walk with God, for their love of the Scriptures, for their hope in Christ, for the continuing development of their spiritual gifts and abilities to serve the Lord. Ask God to protect them from harm, to deliver them from the evil one who would do them harm. Pray for the children and youth of our church as well. Pray for Pastor Dana and Pastor Jayson as they bring the message this weekend on these blessings.

**FAITH GROUP:** Discuss together the concept of blessing the generations. Was a blessing passed on to you? Share with the group. How has our culture perhaps guided us away from this concept of blessing the generations?

Spend time in prayer for the children and youth of your group. Pray for the breaking down of generational barriers. Pray a blessing on each family represented in your Faith Group.