

Praying Through

THE DESPERATE TIMES:

A 10-Day Prayer Journal

BY LISA TERKEURST





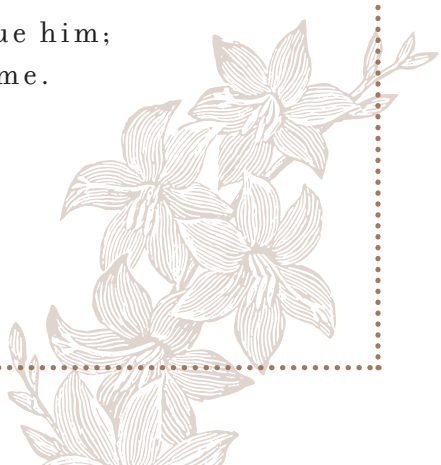
PSALM 91

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."

Surely he will save you
from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.
He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.
You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.
A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
You will only observe with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.

If you say, "The LORD is my refuge,"
and you make the Most High your dwelling,
no harm will overtake you,
no disaster will come near your tent.
For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways;
they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.
You will tread on the lion and the cobra;
you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

"Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him;
I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.
He will call on me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble,
I will deliver him and honor him.
With long life I will satisfy him
and show him my salvation."





DAY 1

“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High”

Lord, draw me close.

Your Word promises when I draw close to You, You are there. I want my drawing close to be a permanent dwelling place. At any moment when I feel weak and empty and alone, I pray that I won't let those feelings drag me down into a pit of insecurity. But rather, I want those feelings to be triggers for me to immediately lift those burdensome feelings to You and trade them for the assurance of Your security.

I am not alone, because You are with me. I am not weak, because Your strength is infused in me. I am not empty, because I'm drinking daily from Your fullness. You are my dwelling place. And in You I have shelter from every stormy circumstance and harsh reality. I'm not pretending the hard things don't exist, but I am rejoicing in the fact that Your covering protects me and prevents those hard things from affecting me like they used to.

You, the Most High, the name above every rejection, have the final say over me. You know me and love me intimately and personally and fully. Let my reactions to all things make it evident that I spend a lot of time with You. I want my gentleness to be evident to all. I want Your fullness in me to be the atmosphere around me. I want Your love to shine through me. And I want Your peace to be the path I walk. Your truth to be my wisdom when I talk. You are my everyday dwelling place, my saving grace. Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

Have you felt weak, empty, or lonely lately? What truths about God from this prayer can you use to replace those negative feelings with feelings of hope and assurance?

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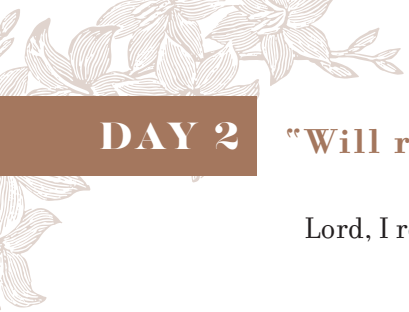
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DAY 2

“Will rest in the shadow of the Almighty”

Lord, I receive Your rest.

I need rest from the incessant hard emotions. Dry my tears. I don't want to bottle up my emotions in any way, but I do want Your help to control them. I don't want my emotions to hold me—or those I do life with—hostage in any way. Help me process what I feel in healthy, productive ways.

Your shadow is like shade on a hot, scorching day; it's the place where I can acknowledge what I feel. But You give me enough relief that those feelings don't consume me. You are the only one who can do this. No other person or distraction is mighty enough. Forgive me for chasing lesser things.

Forgive me for trying to get from people a love that only You can give. Yes, I choose to stop the chase and the unhealthy pursuits and place my trust in You. This is the rest I so desperately need. Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

Do you ever feel like your emotions are controlling you? How can you choose to rest in God's love for you today?

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DAY 3

“I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress.’”

Lord, I am safe with You.

With You, Lord, I am not afraid. Your shelter and shadow comfort me in my loneliness. I will proclaim out loud, “You are my refuge and my fortress; therefore, I will not fear.”

As a refuge You are my quick place to duck into when fear starts nipping at the edges of my emotions. I close my eyes and proclaim out loud Your promise to be my safe place. I remind fear that I will not entertain his whispered lies. His lies tell me I’ll always be alone, and yet Your truth assures me I’m never alone. Not today. Not tomorrow. Not ever. This isn’t dependent on a person. It’s a security I have in You.

Yes, You are my refuge.

And You are my fortress. A fortress is a strong, high place. It’s the place You lift me so fear can no longer have access to me. Fear can’t catch what it can no longer reach. What a comfort this is. You lift me high like this when I lift my soul in worship of Your holy name.

Reflect and Respond:

When fear shows up, where do you typically turn for comfort first? What fear do you need to hand over to the Lord?

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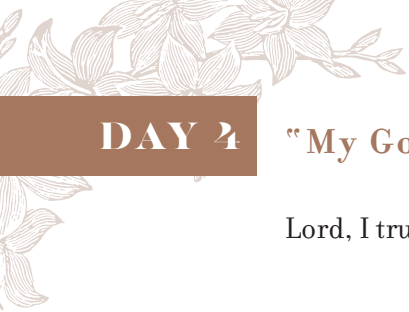
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DAY 4

“My God, in whom I trust”

Lord, I trust You.

With every hope for my future and with every desire of my heart, I trust You, Lord. I trust You, because You have a perfect plan with flawless timing already mapped out. I don't need to figure it out. I just need to stay close to You. Each day You will show me what steps to take. You will guide me toward Your best.

As long as I pursue You and am obedient to You, I know I am right on track. And even when I misstep, Your grace leads me back the minute I turn to You. Forgive me for doubting You. Forgive me for running ahead of You and sometimes lagging behind You.

I'm putting a stake in the ground today, proclaiming the truth that in You I am fully known and I am fully loved. You know me like no other. You love me like no other. And that combination assures me that You know what I need and when I need it. You already stand in my future and see the very best route for me. The path of provision and protection is perfectly designed by my God, in whom I trust.

Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

What hope for your future or desire of your heart do you need to surrender to God— declaring to Him that you trust in Him?

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DAY 5

“Surely he will save you from the fowler’s snare and from the deadly pestilence.”

Lord, You will save me.

I will have moments when the enemy has set out traps in secret to snare me and pull me off of Your best path. Just as the fowler has a strategic plan to lure the bird by hiding food in a disguised trap, my enemy wants to lure me. The food is good for the bird but not when it is part of the plan of the fowler. Satan will often take what is good and twist it into a hidden snare.

Help me see these kinds of traps. Help me recognize good things offered but with my enemy’s plans behind them.

My desire for love is good. But if I pursue love in the wrong way, with the wrong person, in the wrong timing, the enemy will trap me. I confess I have allowed this to happen. I ask for forgiveness. The enemy’s plans are to steal, kill, and destroy. Give me strength to resist the traps the enemy has set in my path today.

Lord, give me a keen awareness of the enemy’s schemes. Give me a pure desire for only Your best. Save me from the hurt and heartbreak of following after good things the wrong way.

Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

Where has the enemy been causing you to stumble recently? What traps do you need the Lord to help you avoid?

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DAY 6

“He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.”

Lord, You cover me, and Your faithfulness protects me. The fowler not only traps birds but also shoots them down with his silent but deadly arrows. Lord, You protect me not only from my enemy’s traps but from his direct attacks and assaults as well. It is Your faithfulness that shields me and surrounds me on all sides. This rejection I’m facing right now feels so deeply wounding that it’s hard to feel protected. I’m going to stand on truth rather than my feelings and proclaim that this rejection isn’t a piercing by the enemy but rather a protection by You.

Your covering has kept me safe, even if I can’t see that full picture right now. Baby birds under their mother’s wing rarely know the full story of what happens on the outside. They don’t need to know the details, and neither do I. If this now broken relationship was Your best, You wouldn’t have kept me from it. And if it is Your best sometime in the future, the enemy won’t be able to keep us apart.

But for now, I have peace that there’s a purpose for this brokenness. I don’t need to control it. I’m just going to embrace it as good for today. Shield me from the enemy’s darts of doubt, discouragement, and division. Surround me with your reassurance, inspiration, and unity. Make me brave. Make me steadfast.

Thank You for the certainty of Your protection. Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

Are you processing a rejection or deep hurt right now? How might God actually be using it for your protection?

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DAY 7

“A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked. If you say, ‘The LORD is my refuge,’ and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.”

Lord, I say it again with even more assurance: You are my refuge, and I make You my dwelling. Therefore, no harm will overtake me.

Lord, hard things will happen. This situation is hard. But it will not harm me long-term. It will not destroy me. It can be devastating for a season, but it will not be a destructive force in my life story.

Yes, rejection has destroyed others, but Your Word does say it will not overtake those who live what I’ve been praying. I do proclaim You as my refuge. I do make You my dwelling. Praying this, proclaiming this, and living this makes this my secure promise from You. I praise You for this good word. I praise You for being a promise maker and a promise keeper. Others may break their promises to me, but You never will.

Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

Are there any situations that feel like there is a destructive force in your life or in the life of someone you love? What truths from this prayer can you use to stir hope in your heart even in the face of this difficulty?

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DAY 8

“For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

Lord, I acknowledge Your angels on assignment from You to protect me. Like secret agents, Your angels are guarding me. Thank You for Your careful concern for every part of me—physical, emotional and spiritual. In all ways, You are with me.

As much as I feel the pull of temptation to chase lesser things in moments of desperation, I know Your angels fight for me. I will not feel alone or powerless in my desperation. I will feel guarded like the treasured daughter I am. I know You are making all things right and good. I know Your love will reign supreme.

Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

Are there any areas of your life where you feel powerless and alone? How does knowing God has angels assigned to you encourage you?

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DAY 9

“You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent.”

Lord, I know the enemy has already been defeated.

I fight from victory, not for victory. You have already won by defeating death and rendering the enemy a fallen foe. I will tread and trample the enemy by reminding him over and over again that he has no place in my life.

No place in my mind.

No place in my decision-making process.

No place in my heart.

No place in my future.

All of me is reserved and preserved for life. Your life.

No part of me was made for the death of the enemy.

I declare that my dead places of discouragement and insecurity be made alive by Your resurrection power.

In Jesus’ name! Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

Have you been living like you are fighting *for* victory or *from* victory? In what areas of your life do you need to remind the enemy he has no place?

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DAY 10

“Because he loves me,” says the LORD, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”

Oh, Lord, I do acknowledge Your name.

You are my Savior, my Lord, my leader, my love, my Maker, my friend, my God, my light, my truth, my salvation. Instantly when I call on Your name, Your power is infused into any situation I face.

I believe You will rescue me, protect me, answer me, be with me, deliver me and honor me with a satisfying life. It’s almost too much for me to take in all these promises. I don’t deserve all this, but I will receive them as the gifts they are.

I love You, Lord. I reserve the sacred parts of my heart for You alone. I place You above all, in all, around all and trust You with all. I will not let this heartbreak steal one more moment of my full attention being on You.

When anxiety tries to come back center stage, I will command it to leave in Your name. When doubt and discouragement threaten to weaken my belief in Your goodness, I will proclaim truth and watch the lies scamper like scared pests. When fear tries to steal my focus, I will worship Your holiness and elevate my perspective with Your promises.

Yes, You are with me always and forever. I may be rejected by man, but I am forever cherished and accepted by the Most High God.

Amen.

Reflect and Respond:

How would your life change if you truly believed and lived like you are forever cherished and fully accepted by the Most High God?

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