

LECTIO 365

is a daily devotional resource that helps you pray the Bible every day.

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Written by leaders from the 24-7 Prayer movement, and produced in partnership with CWR, this resource helps you engage with Scripture to inspire prayer and shape your life.

Journey through the year with Pete Greig, Carla Harding, Phil Togwell, Jill Weber and international guest writers.

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March 2021

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Audio for Each Day in MP3 Format

[Month of March 2021](#)

By opening a PDF version from above along with the appropriate audio selection you should be able to read and listen at the same time with two different windows open.

March 01 2021 (click for audio)

Costly Worship

Today is Monday the 1st of March and this week we are continuing our journey to Easter. Lent, a season of reflection, examination and honesty, feels particularly relevant this year.

Millions of us around the globe are experiencing the far-reaching impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the midst of this, as we prepare to remember the sorrow of Good Friday, wrestle with the silence of Easter Saturday and celebrate the hope of Easter Sunday, we are meditating on the Bible together. We are also drawing wisdom from the book *God on Mute*, the story of how Pete and Sammy Greig lived with debilitating illness, and the pain of unanswered prayer. If you're interested in going deeper, further resources are available from the 24-7 Prayer website.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to be honest with God today, joining with the ancient prayer of all God's people in the words of Psalm 10...

O Lord, why do You stand so far away?
Why do You hide when I am in trouble?
Psalm 10:1

Pause and pray

'The biblical character Job is famous for his terrible, inexplicable suffering. Eventually, right at the end of his tragic story... God finally speaks to Job...' *

'Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?
Tell me, if you understand.
Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!
Who stretched a measuring line across it?
On what were its footings set,
or who laid its cornerstone –
while the morning stars sang together
and all the angels shouted for joy?
Job 38:4-7

'God rolls back the clouds to unveil an awesome vision that, far from diminishing Job's expectations of His power, renders him speechless. God's answer to Job's archetypal cry of "Why?" is simply, "Look at Me" (see Job 38–41). "My ears had heard of You but now my eyes have seen You," cries Job in awe, as if his sufferings have simply evaporated (42:5). The book of Job is therefore both the most frustrating and enlightening treatment of unanswered prayer in the Bible, because God's solution to so much misery is ultimately to reveal His greatness.' *

*Pete Greig, *God on Mute*, p310

Ask

'Why does God not answer Job's actual questions? In what ways might God be wanting to re-frame my questions instead of answering them?

Sovereign God, I acknowledge that my life is very, very small while You are infinitely great and ultimately in control. I choose to focus on Your power instead of my problems today by spending a little time now in worship.' **

**Ibid, p311

Pause and pray

I think of someone I know who is asking painful questions of God because of their lived experience right now. God, speak with them. Like Job, may their ears hear Your voice and their eyes see Your Goodness

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage I ask myself, what tone do I think God speaks with as He replies to Job...

'Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?

Tell me, if you understand.

Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!

Who stretched a measuring line across it?

On what were its footings set,

or who laid its cornerstone –

while the morning stars sang together

and all the angels shouted for joy?

Job 38:4-7

It's amazing how differently this passage reads depending on what tone I project onto God's voice. If I imagine God speaking as a harsh and irritated judge, this seems like a frightening reprimand to an impudent subject. But, if I imagine the loving Father Jesus reveals speaking patiently and truthfully with love, I receive an awe inspiring, perspective elevating reminder that God is so much greater than I can comprehend. This God has got the whole world, and me, in His hands.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

God, I take a moment to acknowledge that You are so much greater than I could ever comprehend. I choose to worship You with the words of Isaac Watt's hymn 'When I survey'...

'Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God.
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.
Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an off'ring far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.'

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, I hold onto the words of Psalm 95,

'the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him.' (Psalm 95:3-4)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the 24-7 Prayer website.

March 02 2021 (click for audio)

Learning to Lament

Today is Tuesday the 2nd of March, and this week we are continuing our meditation on the Bible's unflinching honesty about suffering, as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring our own pain, loss and questions to God.

Each day, as we pray through this challenging topic we will P.R.A.Y.: P - pause to be still before God. R - rejoice with Scripture and reflect on a Bible passage. A - ask God to help us and others and Y - yield to God, trusting in His character and in His will for our lives.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to ask for God's action today, joining with the ancient cry of all God's people in the words of Psalm 5...

O Lord, hear me as I pray;
pay attention to my groaning.
Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God,
for I pray to no one but You.
Psalm 5:1-2

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on an honest and unflinching prayer of lament...

How long, Lord? Will you hide Yourself for ever?
How long will your wrath burn like fire?
Remember how fleeting is my life.
For what futility You have created all humanity!
Who can live and not see death,
or who can escape the power of the grave?
Lord, where is Your former great love,
which in Your faithfulness You swore to David?
Psalm 89:46-49

'Struggle and travail are important expressions of biblical spirituality. Lamenting is more than a technique for venting emotion. It is one of the fruits of a deepening spiritual life that has learned to stand naked before God without shame or pretense . . . Honest lament can express a vibrant faith; one

that has learned to embrace life's hardships as well as its joy, and to lift everything—everything—to the Father in prayer.' *

*Pete Greig, *God on Mute*, p312

Ask

'It's natural to ask God to help, heal, or intervene when things go wrong. It's entirely understandable that my instinct when confronted with difficulties is to ask God to make them go away. But more than half the Psalms model something different, inviting me to lift laments to the Lord from the midst of the mess of my unresolved pain...

I take time now to express my sadness to the Lord, giving voice to the disappointment, frustration, and fear that I may rarely dare admit, even to myself.' **

**Ibid, p313

Pause and pray

Who do I know who is joining in with the Psalmist's plea, 'How long, Lord?' Someone who is waiting and waiting for a heart-wrenching prayer to be answered. God, I stand with them and join their cry, 'How long, Lord?

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

How long, Lord? Will you hide Yourself for ever?
How long will your wrath burn like fire?
Remember how fleeting is my life.
For what futility You have created all humanity!
Who can live and not see death,
or who can escape the power of the grave?
Lord, where is Your former great love,
which in Your faithfulness You swore to David?
Psalm 89:46-49

Ethan, the Psalmist credited with writing these words, was lamenting what seemed like God's failure to keep His promises. God had promised King David that one of His descendants would reign forever. Yet Jerusalem was destroyed. The King and all the people of Judah had been taken into exile. I know that God didn't break His promise. It was fulfilled in the coming of Jesus; but that was centuries after Ethan's experience. All the Psalmist could do, in his present moment, was to bring his brokenness, fear and doubt to God.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Lord, I surrender to You my brokenness and invite Your work in me with the words of an African American spiritual...

'Oh yes, fix me, Jesus, fix me.

Fix me so that I can walk on
a little while longer.

Fix me so that I can pray on
just a little bit harder.

Fix me so that I can sing on
just a little bit louder.

Fix me so that I can go on
despite the pain,

the fear, the doubt, and yes, the anger.

I ask not that You take this cross from me, only that You give me the strength
to continue carrying it onward 'til my dying day. Oh, fix me, Jesus, fix me.' **

**Ibid, p313

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me reminds
me, that He lives,

'in the high and holy places, but also with the low-spirited, the spirit-crushed, And what [He does] is
put new spirit in them, get them up and on their feet again.' (Isaiah 57:15 MSG)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the 24-7 Prayer website.

March 03 2021 (click for audio)

The Stages of Grief

Today is Wednesday the 3rd of March and this week we are continuing our meditation on the Bible's honesty about suffering and invitation to surrender. We'll also be drawing wisdom from Pete Greig's book *God on Mute* and reflecting on how we can bring our own pain, loss and questions to God.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to appeal to God's compassion today, joining with the ancient lament of all God's people in the words of Psalm 6...

Have compassion on me, Lord, for I am weak.

Heal me, Lord, for my bones are in agony.

I am sick at heart.

How long, O Lord, until You restore me?

Psalm 6:2-3

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on an incredible declaration made by the Apostle Paul...

I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not "mine," but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I am not going to go back on that.

Galatians 2:20 MSG

'The Five Stages of Grief (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance)* help explain why I may initially get angry with God, raging against the apparent unfairness of His will... At other stages, I may seek to bargain with God, repenting of my sin, trying to be a better person, fasting, and making all sorts of promises to try to persuade Him to change His mind. One writer calls this "bribery of the infinite." Having vented my anger and having failed to bribe God, I really only have two choices left: depression or acceptance.' **

*In her theory, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross explained the 5 different stages of grief which is commonly referred to as DABDA.

**Adapted from Pete Greig, *God on Mute*, p314

Ask

'Might I be experiencing any of the stages of grief as I struggle with unanswered prayer? What emotions does the thought of accepting my situation provoke within me? Might it be helpful to share how I'm doing with someone today?

...Father, help me to be gentle with myself as I mourn the possibility or the actuality of loss. Help me to grieve well. Reconcile my desires with Your desires, my will with Your will, and my acceptance with the goodness of Your sovereign purposes.' ***

***Ibid, p315

Pause and pray

God, I name someone I know who is grieving today. Embrace them. Help them to be gentle with themselves. May they feel Your comforting presence with them.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not "mine," but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I am not going to go back on that.

Galatians 2:20 MSG

'My ego is no longer central...' says Paul, 'I am no longer driven to impress...' Can I say this? Am I following in the footsteps of Christ, who 'gave himself for me'?

Jesus, I choose to lay down my rights, my reputation and my social media ranking. Teach me what it is to fully surrender to Your love today.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I make the words of Horatio Spafford's hymn, "It is Well with My Soul," my prayer of yielding,

'When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.
Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blessed assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
And Lord haste the day, when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.'

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me, invites me to remain or abide in Him, as He abides in me. (paraphrase John 15:4)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

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March 04 2021 (click for audio)

Big Red Switch

It's Thursday the 4th of March, and this week we are meditating on what the Bible has to say about pain and loss. Today we are also hearing from Pete Greig about his personal experience of unanswered prayer captured in the book *God on Mute*.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's protection and provision today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 16...

Keep me safe, O God,
for I have come to You for refuge.
I said to the Lord, "You are my Master!
Every good thing I have comes from You."
Psalm 16:1-2

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on the opening lines of Jesus' most famous and ground-breaking message: The Sermon on the Mount...

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to Him, and He began to teach them.
He said:
'Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
Matthew 5:1-4

These blessings are puzzling. It would seem more logical to say blessed are the rich, or blessed are those who are surrounded by loved ones, but that's not what Jesus taught, or lived. Could the struggle, the loss or the need I face actually be an opportunity, or even an invitation, for more of God's presence and comfort in my life?

Ask

'Can I see any positive ways in which the Holy Spirit might be using my sorrow for good? Are there any signs of Him changing me in some way through these difficult times?

...Father, if You were to hand me a big red switch to solve my problems and heal my pain, I'd flick it without hesitation. But in the absence of that switch, please at least make something good out of this mess. Don't let this ugly situation make me ugly. Give me "beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair" (Isa. 61:3).' *

*Pete Greig, God on Mute, p318

Pause and pray

Who do I know who is living with a chronic illness or who is struggling with long-Covid? I pray for them now and ask God to comfort them. Lord, give them eyes to glimpse Your goodness, and ears to hear Your voice in the midst of all they're living with.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to Him, and He began to teach them.

He said:

'Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Matthew 5:1-4

Pete Greig reflects on how he and his wife have been shaped by their journey through chronic illness, 'Sammy and I would not want to go back, of course, to the dark days of brain surgery. But neither would we want to go back to the days before our lives were hijacked by fear. I guess we prefer the people we have become through all these contradictions.' *

*Pete Greig, God on Mute, p318

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Jesus, I yield to You with the words of Your own prayer from the Garden of Gethsemane.

'Before praying these famous words, I clench my fists, holding in my left hand my greatest desire (the miracle I need God to do) and in my right hand my deepest dread:

"Abba, Father. . . everything is possible for You. Take this cup from me." (Mark 14:36a)

I open my left hand to offer God my deepest desire and to ask for a miracle.

"Yet not my will, but Yours be done." (Luke 22:42)

I open my right hand and, naming my deepest dread, I make the difficult decision to relinquish control.'**

**Ibid, p319

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me reminds me that He,

‘... is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.’ (Psalm 34:18)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,

being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,

being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,

proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the 24-7 Prayer website.

March 05 2021 (click for audio)

Stupid Ain't Stupid

Today is Friday the 5th of March and this week we are continuing our meditation on the bible's unflinching honesty about suffering as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring our own pain, loss and questions to God.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's strength today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 91...

This I declare about the Lord:
He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;
He is my God, and I trust Him.
For He will rescue you from every trap
and protect you from deadly disease.
Psalm 91:2-3

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on the Apostle Paul's simple but challenging instruction to a young Christian community...

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

'Praying about the tiny things in my life opens my eyes to the hidden myriad of God's daily blessings, which then enables me to live with greater gratitude.' When I '...don't pray for stupid things such as parking spaces I only get to thank God when sensible things happen—which means that I live a less grateful life!' *

*Adapted from Pete Greig, *God on Mute*, p321

Ask

'Even against the backdrop of big prayers that have gone unanswered, God's will for me in Christ Jesus is still that I would "pray continually" and "give thanks in all circumstances." How do I do this? How do

I prevent disappointment destroying my joy? How do I stop unanswered prayer blinding me to the other prayers God has answered?

‘...keep my heart soft and my eyes open to recognize what You are doing all around me, Lord. I give You thanks now for the signs I see of Your goodness—however small—in my life today.’ **

**Ibid, p322

Pause and pray

Who helps me see the goodness in the world around me? God, I take a moment to thank You for them, and I ask You to give me a word of encouragement or a Bible verse to share with them Today.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Giving thanks in all circumstances isn’t the same as giving thanks for all circumstances. Paul isn’t extending an invitation to delusion or commanding me to bury my head in the sand. He’s encouraging me to notice and celebrate the best in my life, even in the midst of the worst. Giving thanks helps me to see beyond the prison walls of my present worries and struggles, to glimpse the hope-filled horizon beyond.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Jesus, I confess that I am so much quicker to list my needs than count my blessings. My mind is more preoccupied by what’s difficult than by what’s good. Open my eyes today to notice what is good, true, noble, right, pure, lovely and admirable around me. (Phil.4:8)

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves encourages me to,

‘not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, [to] present [my] requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard [my] heart and [my] mind in Christ Jesus.’ (Phil. 4:6-7)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full, being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others, being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost, proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the 24-7 Prayer website.

March 06 2021 (click for audio)

The Necessary Scarcity of Miracles

It's Saturday the 6th of March and today we are meditating on the Psalms and drawing wisdom from Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring our own struggles and questions to God.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to trust today in God's care, joining with the ancient prayer of all God's people in the words of Psalm 119...

Now let Your unfailing love comfort me,
just as You promised me, Your servant.
Surround me with Your tender mercies so I may live,
for Your instructions are my delight.
Psalm 119:76-77

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on a beautiful piece of poetry that reminds me just how intimately God knows me...

For You created my inmost being;
You knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from You
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in Your book
before one of them came to be.
How precious to me are Your thoughts, God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Psalm 139:13-17

I remember the first time I caught sight of my son on an ultrasound scan. At first the black and white image was grainy and in constant motion. But then out of the confusion came a strong nose, an up-turned mouth, then a clear profile. I felt like I was glimpsing something secret and miraculous.

Psalm 139 paints an even more intimate and incredible picture. The Creator of the universe took the time to witness my formation. As I read these words I realize that I have always been known, and I have never been alone.

Ask

I take a moment to absorb the everyday miracle of my own life. I pause and ‘marvel at the infinite complexity and intricate beauty of the world around me, giving thanks especially for the harmony of creation.’ **

**Adapted from Pete Greig, God on Mute, p323

Pause and pray

I think of someone I know who needs God’s healing in their body. Lord, You created their inmost being. You know exactly how fearfully and wonderfully You made them. I ask You to restore their health and strength Today

Pause and pray

Yield

Holy Spirit, as I return to the passage, I invite You to speak to me today through a word or phrase...

For You created my inmost being;
You knit me together in my mother’s womb.
I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from You
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in Your book
before one of them came to be.
How precious to me are Your thoughts, God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Psalm 139:13-17

The author C.S. Lewis once wrote, ‘That God can and does, on occasions, modify the behavior of matter and produce what we call miracles as part of Christian faith; but the very conception of a common, and therefore stable, world demands that these occasions should be extremely rare.’ *

*C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain, p25

‘Does C.S. Lewis’ assertion that miracles have to be “extremely rare” match up with my experience? Does it echo what I’ve been taught? Does it help me find a little more peace with my situation?’ **

**Adapted from Pete Greig, God on Mute, p323

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Today, I surrender to the God of the natural, and the supernatural, with the words of Psalm 8,

Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is Your name in all the earth!
You have set Your glory
in the heavens...
When I consider Your heavens,
the work of Your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which You have set in place,
what is mankind that You are mindful of them,
human beings that You care for them?
Psalm 8:1&3-4

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says through the prophet Jeremiah,

‘For I know the plans I have for you... plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.’ Jeremiah 29:11-13

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the 24-7 Prayer website.

March 07 2021 (click for audio)

A Sabbath Prayer for Lent

Today is Sunday the 7th of March, a day of rest on which we suspend our weekday pattern and enter a simpler time of prayer.

Throughout Lent, I am meditating on the journey and teaching of Jesus, whilst exploring how I navigate my own suffering and struggles. This, of course, isn't the whole of the human story, and it's certainly not where the story ends. And so today, I pause to remember the resurrection of Jesus, which changes everything.

'Sabbath is not primarily about [me] or how it benefits [me];' writes the author Eugene Peterson, 'it is about God and how God forms [me]. It is not, in the first place, about what [I] do or don't do; it is about God completing and resting and blessing and sanctifying. It means stopping and being quiet long enough to see, open-eyed with wonder - resurrection wonder.'*

* Eugene Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places* (p.116-117)

Jesus' disciple, Peter, writes:

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation...

1 Peter 1:3 (NLT)

Pause and pray

Father God, thank You that You do not remain 'on mute' forever. You speak; in so many ways, and at just the right time. I choose to stop, to be quiet and listen today with great expectation.

Pause and pray

Jesus, thank You that You did not remain in the grave for long. You rose from the dead and You are alive today... and forevermore. I choose to receive the life You give to me, and live it to the full Today

Pause and pray

Holy Spirit, thank You that You do not leave me to pray alone, but You pray with me and through me. Jesus, I am 'open-eyed with wonder' that You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34) I choose to put my trust in You today.

Pause and pray

I take a moment now to root these prayers in my life and my community. I pray now for someone I know who needs to hear God speak today...

Pause and pray

So be truly glad,' writes Peter. 'There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. 1Peter1: 6,7 (NLT)

Pause and pray

Sabbath blessing

May this day bring sabbath rest to my heart and my home.

May God's image in me be restored, and my imagination in God be re-storied.

May the gravity of material things be lightened, and the relativity of time slow down.

May I know grace to embrace my own finite smallness in the arms of God's infinite greatness.

May God's Word feed me and his Spirit lead me into the week and into the life to come.**

** Pete Greig, A Sabbath Blessing, www.petegreig.info

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the 24-7 Prayer website.

March 08 2021 (click for audio)

Tough Life

Today is Monday the 8th of March, and we are continuing our Lent meditation on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring to God our own pain, loss and questions.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's help today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 18...

'You light a lamp for me.

The Lord, my God, lights up my darkness.

In Your strength I can crush an army;

With my God I can scale any wall.'

Psalm 18:28-29 (NLT)

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on Jesus' words in John 16, where he promises his disciples both trouble and peace.

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

John 16:33 (NIV UK)

'Perhaps I should accept what older people and poorer people and many of those with disabilities already know: things are probably going to be very difficult today and just as hard tomorrow.

Maybe by adjusting my expectations I can reduce the sense of disappointment, isolation, and unfairness riding on the back of unanswered prayer. With a business-as-usual approach to life's trials, the good times can become surprising and delightful. It will be my blessings more than my sufferings that provoke me to ask God, "Why?"*

*Adapted from Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.324

Ask

'Which do I find more surprising: life's trials or its blessings? If I'd been born at a different time in history or in a different part of the world, how might I relate differently to the difficulties I face?

*I give thanks to You, Lord, for the 'common grace' of the world's essential goodness, and in the quiet, I name the particular signs of Your kindness towards me recently.'***

**Ibid, p.325

Pause and pray

I am aware that the difficulties I face are small in comparison to so many others.

As I think of someone I know who is suffering, Lord, I ask You to show them a sign of Your kindness today too. Strengthen their hearts Lord.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

John 16:33 (NIV UK)

What are the things that are troubling my mind and my heart at the moment? I name them, one by one, before the Lord.

Pause and pray

And now, Lord, I listen for what You want to say to me about these troubles. What is Your word to me today?

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I join with Jesus in His ultimate prayer of surrender in Gethsemane.

"Abba, Father... everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me." Mark 14:36a (NIV UK)

I ask You for a miracle.

"Yet not my will, but yours be done." Luke 22:42b (NIV UK)

I relinquish control.

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in John 14:

'My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.' John 14:27 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

*Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.*

*Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.*

*Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.*

Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 09 2021 (click for audio)

Bloody-minded Faith

Today is Tuesday 9th of March, and this week we are continuing our Lent meditation on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and learning from Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice that God hears me today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 19...

*'May the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my heart
be pleasing to You,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.'
Psalm 19:14 (NLT)*

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on a defining moment in the lives of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, when they were commanded to worship an idol on pain of death. With extraordinary courage, they replied:

*King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and He will deliver us from your Majesty's hand. But even if He does not, we want you to know, your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.
Daniel 3:16-18 (NIV UK)*

'The paradox of faith is encapsulated in this rousing speech. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego believe unequivocally that God can save them, and that God will save them. But then they add "even if he does not... we will not serve your gods".' These men have complete faith for a miracle, but they also have a sort of bloody-minded defiance should the miracle not happen.'

*Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.326-327

Ask

'If I could look into the future and see that my most desperate prayers are not going to be answered, how might it affect the choices I am making now?

*Mostly, I do believe that You are able to save me, Lord. I do have faith. But give me faithfulness too, to keep trusting and worshiping defiantly even if my prayers go unanswered.’***

****Ibid, p.327**

Pause and pray

Who do I know that has prayed and prayed for a miracle, but hasn't received one yet?

I ask You, Lord, to give them an extra dose of faithfulness too. Help them to keep trusting and worshiping defiantly, even if their prayers continue unanswered.

Is there something I could do today to encourage them?

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

*King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and He will deliver us from your Majesty's hand. But even if He does not, we want you to know, your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.
Daniel 3:16-18 (NIV UK)*

This short speech reveals the *huge difference between 'trusting God', and 'trusting God for something in particular...'*

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego trusted God. Whether or not they received the miracle that they hoped for, they simply trusted God. Full stop.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I use a prayer of surrender by Richard Foster:

*'Today, O Lord, I yield myself to You. May Your will be my delight today. May You have perfect sway in me. May Your love be the pattern of my living. I surrender to You my hopes, my dreams, my ambitions. Do with them what You will, when You will, as You will. I place into Your loving care my family, my friends, my future. Care for them with a care that I can never give. I release into Your hands my need to control, my craving for status, my fear of obscurity. Eradicate the evil, purify the good, and establish Your kingdom on earth. For Jesus' sake, Amen.'****

*****Richard Foster, quoted in Pete Greig, God On Mute, p.327**

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Proverbs that if I,

'trust in the Lord with all my heart... He will make [my] paths straight.'

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,

being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,

being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,

proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 10 2021 (click for audio)

Victory!

Today is Wednesday the 10th of March, and we are continuing our Lent meditation on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring to God our own pain, loss and questions.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in the safety of God's presence today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 22...

*'I was thrust into your arms at my birth.
You have been my God from the moment I was born.
Do not stay so far from me,
for trouble is near,
and no one else can help me.'
Psalm 22:10-11 (NLT)*

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on a few verses from the Apostle Paul's letter to the church in Corinth, which begins with the poetry of the prophet Hosea:

*"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"
The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.
1 Corinthians 15:55-58 (NIV UK)*

"This is not the worst thing to ever happen!" wrote Margaret Lee as she lay dying of cancer. "Cancer is so limited. It cannot cripple love, shatter hope, corrode faith, eat away peace, destroy confidence, kill friendship, shut out memories, silence courage, quench the Spirit, or lessen the power of Jesus."**

*Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.328

Ask

'As Christians, we believe in life after death, but also life before death, and even life in the midst of death (as we see in saints like Margaret Lee). What might the resurrection power of Jesus look like in the midst of my struggle today?

*Lord, fill me afresh with Your Holy Spirit. Let my life be marked by defiant love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.'***

**Ibid, p.329

Pause and pray

Lord, I think of those – perhaps even friends or family members – who have suffered the death of someone they loved during the coronavirus pandemic. I ask you to comfort and heal those who are mourning.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:55–58 (NIV UK)

What word or phrase jumped out at me from these verses?

I talk with the Lord about this now, and I listen carefully for what He wants to say to me today.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

As my prayer today, I use words from Judson W. Van DeVenter's hymn of surrender:

'All to Him I freely give

I will ever love and trust Him

In His presence daily live

I surrender all, I surrender all

*All to Thee my blessed Savior, I surrender all.'****

Amen.

***Judson W. Van DeVenter, quoted in Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.329

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Romans 8:

'that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate [me] from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

Romans 8:38-39 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

*Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.*

*Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.*

*Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.*

Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 11 2021 (click for audio)

A Higheer Way?

Today is Thursday the 11th of March, and we are continuing our Lent meditation on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring to God our own pain, loss and questions.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice that God meets all my needs today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 23...

*'The Lord is my shepherd;
I have all that I need.
He lets me rest in green meadows;
He leads me beside peaceful streams.
He renews my strength.
He guides me along right paths,
bringing honor to his name.'
Psalm 23:1-3 (NLT)*

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on some familiar words from the book of Isaiah:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:8–9 (NIV UK)

'Sometimes God denies my prayers because He has something even better for me. I breathe an easy amen to God's promise through Jeremiah: "I know the plans I have for you. . . plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV UK).

My heart rises to pray with Thomas à Kempis: *"O Lord, you know what is best for me. Give what you will, how much you will and when you will."**

*Thomas A Kempis, quoted in Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p330**

**Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.330

Ask

'Billy Graham's wife Ruth said that "God has not always answered my prayers. If He had, I would have married the wrong man several times!"*** With the benefit of hindsight, what passionate prayers are there in my past that I'm now grateful God ignored?

***Ruth Graham, quoted in Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p331

Is it possible that the reason for my unanswered prayer is that God has a "higher way"? If so, I ask Him now to help me trust His alternative plan, even if every fiber of my being wants something completely different.'****

****Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.331

Pause and pray

In the midst of personal struggle and suffering it's not always easy to believe that God has 'plans to give you hope and a future.' Who do I know is in this place right now, whether that's because of grief or sickness, financial difficulties, the breakdown of a relationship or something else entirely?

I name them before You today, Lord, and I pray that they will not only believe Your promise to Jeremiah, but that they will risk receiving it for themselves.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:8–9 (NIV UK)

The 'higher ways' that God invites me to walk in almost always involve, as someone put it, 'going lower'. They involve walking humbly. Loving mercy. Preferring others. Giving away power and influence. Even rejoicing in suffering. Decreasing, so that Jesus may increase in my life. (John 3:30)

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Today, I use a prayer attributed to an unknown soldier from the American Civil War as my own:

*'I asked for strength that I might achieve;
He made me weak that I might obey.*

*I asked for health that I might do greater things;
I was given grace that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy;
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men;
I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things that I might enjoy life;
I was given life that I might enjoy all things.
I received nothing that I asked for, all that I hoped for.
My prayer was answered, I was most blessed.
Amen.'******

*****quoted in Pete Greig, God On Mute, p.331

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Romans that:

'in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.'
Romans 8:28 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

*Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.*

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 12 2021 (click for audio)

Wake-up Call

Today is Friday the 12th of March, and we are continuing our Lent meditation on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring to God our own pain, loss and questions.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to receive comfort from God closeness today, joining with the ancient lament of all God's people in the words of Psalm 38...

*'You know what I long for, Lord;
You hear my every sigh.
My heart beats wildly, my strength fails,
and I am going blind.'
Psalm 38:9-10 (NLT)*

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on Jonah's prayer to the Lord his God... from inside the belly of a fish. He said:

*In my distress I called to the Lord, and He answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and You listened to my cry.
Jonah 2:1-2 (NIV UK)*

"Afflictions quicken us to prayer," observed John Newton, the former slave-ship captain best known for writing the hymn *Amazing Grace*. "Experience testifies that a long course of ease and prosperity, without painful changes, has an unhappy tendency to make us cold and formal in our secret worship; but troubles rouse our spirits, and constrain us to call upon the Lord in good earnest, when we feel a need of that help which we only can have from him."* **

*John Newton, *Letters of John Newton* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1960), n.p.

**Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.332

Ask

'Is it true that "troubles rouse our spirits" and "afflictions quicken us to prayer"?

*Like Jonah crying out to God from the belly of the beast, I rouse myself again today to call out to You, Lord, from the darkness of my impossible predicament.'****

***Ibid, p.333

Pause and pray

I think of others who are in the darkness of seemingly impossible predicaments. The girl who feels compelled to self-harm today. The young woman trapped in an abusive relationship. The man whose debts have spiraled out of control. The boy considering suicide.

I cry out to You on their behalf too. May Your light shine in their darkness.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and You listened to my cry.

Jonah 2:1–2 (NIV UK)

The word of the Lord came to Jonah and his response was to run away (Jonah 1:1-3). His escape attempt ended in the belly of a fish, where he prayed this wonderful prayer.

In the quiet, I think of a prodigal son or daughter, someone I know who has been running away from God. *I ask you, Lord, to meet them wherever they are right now – even if they feel 'deep in the realm of the dead' - and rescue them.*

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I use a prayer of the eighteenth-century soldier, explorer, and monk, Charles de Foucauld as my own today:

'Father, I abandon myself into Your hands; do with me what You will. Whatever You may do, I thank You: I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only Your will be done in me, and in all Your creatures—I wish no more than this, O Lord.

*Amen.'*****

****Charles de Foucauld, quoted in Pete Greig, God On Mute, p333

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me reassures me He can reach me wherever I am:

‘Even the darkness will not be dark to [God]; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light.’

Psalm 139:12 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,

being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,

being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,

proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 13 2021 (click for audio)

Changing the Conversation

Today is Saturday the 13th of March, and we are continuing our Lent meditation on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring to God our own pain, loss and questions.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's comfort today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 25...

*'Turn to me and have mercy,
for I am alone and in deep distress.
My problems go from bad to worse.
Oh, save me from them all!'
Psalm 25:16-17 (NLT)*

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on one of the Psalms, known as a 'song of ascent'.

*I lift my eyes to You,
To You whose throne is in heaven.
As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a female slave look to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the Lord our God,
till He shows us His mercy.
Psalm 123:1-2 (NIV UK)*

The writer of Psalm 123 acknowledges that communicating with God isn't always easy. In *God On Mute*, Pete says:

'Why does God speak clearly about peripherals but remain silent on the issue with which we most need His help? My answer - call it a hunch - is that sometimes God is enjoying the way we are wrestling with Him in prayer through this process. To put it another way, He may consider our

wondering and questioning more important than the relatively simple act of supplying us with an answer. Whatever the reason, I can't begin to tell you how frustrating this is! . . . Sammy and I are praying harder, we are searching our souls more diligently, and we are tuning our ears to the slightest whisper from heaven in a way we would not normally do. In short, we are drawing nearer to God precisely because of our unanswered prayer.*

*Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.334

Ask

'Do I ever experience God 'changing the conversation' when I am being vulnerable with Him in prayer or asking Him for help?'

*Instead of asking You to do something for me today, Lord, is there anything that You are asking me to do for You today?'***

**Ibid, p.335

Pause and pray

I pray for my local church community – help us to draw nearer to You in this season, Lord. And help us to listen carefully for the conversation that You want to have with us.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

*I lift my eyes to You,
To You whose throne is in heaven.
As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a female slave look to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the Lord our God,
till He shows us His mercy.
Psalm 123:1-2 (NIV UK)*

To be honest, I'm disturbed – angry, even – by the mention of 'masters' and 'female slaves'. I have to remind myself that this Psalm was written in a particular cultural time with economic circumstances different to my own, and so I hold these thoughts as I consider the purpose of this Psalm.

Psalm 123 is one of fifteen that are known as the 'songs of ascent', and they were sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for feast time. In that context, these Psalms helped people prepare to meet with God.

In the quiet, I prepare myself to meet with God in unexpected ways today.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Today, I return to a prayer of surrender by Richard Foster:

*'O Lord, I yield myself to You. May Your will be my delight today. May You have perfect sway in me. May Your love be the pattern of my living. I surrender to You my hopes, my dreams, my ambitions. Do with them what You will, when You will, as You will. I place into Your loving care my family, my friends, my future. Care for them with a care that I can never give. I release into Your hands my need to control, my craving for status, my fear of obscurity. Eradicate the evil, purify the good, and establish Your kingdom on earth. For Jesus' sake, Amen.'****

***Richard Foster, quoted in Pete Greig, *God On Mute*, p.335

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Jeremiah:

'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'
Jeremiah 33:3 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

*Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.*

Further resources related to the *God on Mute* series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 14 2021 (click for audio)

Mother's Day

Today is Sunday the 14th of March, the fourth Sunday in the season of lent. It's also Mother's Day in many countries, so today we interrupt our usual rhythm to pray in a simpler way on this special day of rest. It's also Mother's Day in many countries, so today we interrupt our usual rhythm to pray in a simpler way on this special day of rest.

I pray 'The Magnificat', a song composed by Mary, the mother of Jesus, and inspired by her own miraculous pregnancy:

*'Oh, how my soul praises the Lord.
How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!
For He took notice of His lowly servant girl,
and from now on all generations will call me blessed.
For the Mighty One is holy,
and He has done great things for me.'
Luke 1:46–49 (NIV UK)*

Pause and pray

I take time now to give thanks for my own mother, or those who have been like a mother to me. What qualities of God's heart has she revealed to me?

Pause and pray

The Bible describes many maternal, as well as paternal, traits in the heart of God. The book of Deuteronomy describes God giving birth (Deuteronomy 32:18). The prophet Isaiah compares God to a woman in labor, and to a mother comforting her child (Isaiah 42:14; 66:13). Jesus describes His affection for Jerusalem's children maternally: *'How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings'* (Matthew 23:37). And I love the tenderness of parental yearning as God speaks through the prophet Hosea:

*'When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
It was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
taking them by the arms;
but they did not realize
it was I who healed them.
I led them with cords of human kindness,
with ties of love.
To them I was like one who lifts
a little child to the cheek,
and I bent down to feed
Hosea 11: 1, 3-4 (NLT)*

I pray for mothers:

“Lord, for mothers today, we pray for joy.
For orphans, comfort.
For not yet mothers, hope.
For single mothers, grace.
For those who are lonely, family.
We ask for grace today
For the mothers of prodigals,
And for those who have lost children,
And for those who don't know where their children are.
May the embrace of grace displace shame
For mothers in prison,
For those who can't feed a baby,
For those who miscarried
Or had an abortion.
And Lord, may those who never held their own child,
For whom today is sadder than it is happy,
Know the love and joy of parenting
In the family of God.
Amen!*

*Pete Greig, Mothers' Day Blessing, petegreig.info

Sabbath blessing

May this day bring sabbath rest to my heart and my home.

May God's image in me be restored, and my imagination in God be re-storied.

May the gravity of material things be lightened, and the relativity of time slow down.

May I know grace to embrace my own finite smallness in the arms of God's infinite greatness.

May God's Word feed me and his Spirit lead me into the week and into the life to come.**

** Pete Greig, A Sabbath Blessing, www.petegreig.info

March 15 2021 (click for audio)

Choosing Life

Today is Monday the 15th of March, and this week we are continuing our journey to Easter. In the coming weeks, as we prepare for Easter, we will meditate on Jesus' suffering and draw reflections from the book *God on Mute*, the story of how our friends Pete and Sammy Greig walked through illness and the pain of unanswered prayer. If you're interested in going deeper, further resources are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's protection today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 27...

The Lord is my light and my salvation—
so why should I be afraid?
The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger,
so why should I tremble?
Psalm 27:1

Pause and pray

In today's passage from Deuteronomy, God is addressing the children of Israel. He lays before them His desire to bless them, but it's contingent on their choice...

This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
Deut. 30:19–20

In *God on Mute*, Pete writes: 'When I asked Sammy to marry me, it was a terrifying moment. I knew that she could say one single-syllable word and dash all my dreams, or say another and make them all come true. My future hung on her choice. Had I decided to avoid the risk of disappointment, grabbing her by the hair with one hand while beating my chest in triumph with the other and declaring, "You shall be mine," then my actions would not have been loving. Love, by its very nature, always permits

choice, and choice permits terrifying risks.’ *

*Pete Greig, God on Mute p. 146 Kindle version

Ask

‘Sometimes I wish that God didn’t trust me with quite so much choice. In what practical ways might I use my free will to “choose life” today, both for myself and those I meet?

I ask You, Lord, for the gift of heightened awareness today. Sensitise me to discern in each moment its extraordinary potential for life-giving words and deeds of love.’**

**Ibid p. 315

Pause and pray

God, I pray for students and young adults, who in this season of their lives are presented with and sometimes paralysed by so many choices. Big choices like who to date or to marry? Where to go to school? What kind of career? And lots of little choices as well.

God, I pray You would show them what ‘choosing life’ looks like, in the big choices and in the small. In the quiet, I name those I know before You now. Help them to choose life.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
Deut. 30:19–20

Jesus says in John 10, ‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full’ (John 10:10). Another translation calls it ‘abundant life.’ What bubbles up inside me when I meditate on the phrase, ‘abundant life?’ How does it make me feel? Hopeful? Expectant? A little nervous? What might abundant life look like? Do I have the courage to choose it?

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I yield today with this beautiful prayer from Mother Theresa:

‘Dear Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that my life may only be a radiance of yours. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel your presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me, but only Jesus’

Amen.' ***

***This prayer was a favourite of Mother Teresa, to whom it is often attributed, and she encouraged her Missionaries of Charity to use it after Mass. It is unclear, however, as to its source. Parts of the second half are drawn from Cardinal Newman's meditation 'Jesus the Light of the Soul' (Meditations and Devotions Part III, VII, 3).

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in the book of Romans:

For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

Romans 5:17

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 16 2021 (click for audio

This Means War

Today is tuesday the 16th of March. This week we are continuing to meditate on the story of Jesus, and as well as drawing wisdom from Pete Greig's book ***God on Mute*** as we wrestle with unanswered prayer and challenges in our own lives.

Each day, as we pray through this challenging topic we will **P.R.A.Y.**: **P** - pause to be still before God. **R** - rejoice with Scripture and reflect on a Bible passage. **A** - ask God to help us and others and **Y** - yield to God, trusting in His character and in His will for our lives.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's trustworthiness today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 25...

O Lord, I give my life to you.
I trust in you, my God!
Do not let me be disgraced,
or let my enemies rejoice in my defeat.
Psalm 25:1-2

Pause and pray

Today I am wading into the fray as I reflect on the Apostle Paul's call to arms in Ephesians 6.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.
Ephesians 6:12-13

'Sometimes, submission to God involves meek acceptance of suffering, but at other times I should get angry about our unanswered prayers and fight! Why? Because Christians do not believe that all suffering is God's will. We know that the terrors and tragedies screaming from today's newspapers cannot possibly reflect the heart of a loving Father at work in His world. Instead, we believe something

so surprising that it would be almost impossible to accept if it wasn't so blatantly true: we believe that the almighty God does not always get His way on earth—even though He is the almighty God! Jesus taught me to pray to the Father, “Your kingdom come, your will be done,” precisely because it isn't a foregone conclusion. ‘*

*Pete Greig, God on Mute p. 160 adapted from Kindle Version

Ask

‘Do I ever misdirect my anger against “flesh and blood,” or even against God Himself, when I should instead be harnessing it in spiritual warfare against “the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”?

God, I visualise myself putting on this armour and standing firm in You.

‘Recognizing the spiritual battle raging around me today, I put on the helmet of salvation...

the breastplate of righteousness...

the shield of faith...

the belt of truth...

the shoes of the gospel of peace...

and I take up the sword of the Spirit, the word of God...' **

** Ibid p. 317

Pause and pray

God, I pray for those I know who are in the middle of a spiritual battle. I hold each one I know in my heart. I take authority, in the name of Jesus, over the spiritual forces of evil that fight against them. I declare freedom for captives, strength for the weary, and the full resources of heaven available to them now. Your kingdom come, Your will be done. In Jesus' mighty name!

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Ephesians 6:12-13

We are given weapons to fight, and we are also given strength to stand our ground. Sometimes in a battle, all we need to do is stand. That is victory in and of itself.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

God, I yield myself to You today with a prayer from eighteenth-century soldier, explorer, and monk, Charles de Foucauld:

Father, I abandon myself into Your hands; do with me what You will. Whatever You may do, I thank You: I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only Your will be done in me, and in all Your creatures—I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Amen. ***

*** Ibid p. 317

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Romans 16:20 that, 'the God of peace will soon crush Satan under [my] feet.'

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 17 2021 (click for audio)

Chariots of Fire

Today is Wednesday the 17th of March. This week we are continuing our meditation on the Bible's honesty about suffering and invitation to surrender as well as drawing wisdom from Pete Greig's book **God on Mute**, as we wrestle with unanswered prayer and challenges in our own lives.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's goodness today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 27...

Yet I am confident I will see the Lord's goodness
while I am here in the land of the living.
Wait patiently for the Lord.
Be brave and courageous.
Yes, wait patiently for the Lord.
Psalm 27: 13-14

Pause and pray

In today's passage, the prophet Elisha is surrounded by the army of an angry king. He's in trouble and outnumbered...

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. 'Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?' the servant asked.
'Don't be afraid,' the prophet answered. 'Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.'
And Elisha prayed, 'Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.' Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all round Elisha.
2 Kings 6:15-17

'There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils,' observed C. S. Lewis. "One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors, and hail a materialist

or a magician with the same delight.' *

*C. S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters (London: Fount, 1986), 9.

Ask

'Am I inclined to be a bit over-sensitive to spiritual powers—perhaps blaming them for everything—or a bit oblivious of them instead? How might it affect my prayers and my choices if I lived today with a much greater awareness of the angelic realm?

As I pray in the quiet, would You open my eyes, Lord, as You opened the eyes of Elisha's servant, to perceive the spiritual realm'.**

**Adapted from Pete Greig, God on Mute p. 319 Kindle Version

Pause and pray

God, I pray for the church in the Western world that has largely lost its awareness of the unseen realm and the battle that wages within it. Would You deliver us from an excessive and blind materialism that denies the spiritual realities in our midst? Whether the powers are unjust systems and structures, or demonic entities, would You expose them, and give Your church the will and a way to fight.

Pause and. Pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. 'Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?' the servant asked.

'Don't be afraid,' the prophet answered. 'Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.'

And Elisha prayed, 'Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.' Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all round Elisha.

2 Kings 6:15-17

There are more who are with me than who are against me. I am not alone in my struggle - not now. Not ever. The resources of heaven, whether I see them or not, are available to me. Nothing, nothing at all, can separate me from Your love.

'Thank You for the wonderful reassurance we have that, while the present warfare may be vicious, the ultimate war has been well and truly won.' ***

*** Ibid p. 319

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

God, today I yield myself to You with this prayer from Ted Loder,

'O Lord, deepen my wounds into wisdom;
shape my weaknesses into compassion;
gentle my envy into enjoyment,
my fear into trust,
my guilt into honesty.

O God, gather me to be with you as you are with me.' ***

*** Ibid p. 319

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in 1 John 4:4:

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 18 2021 (click for audio)

Naked Trust

Today is Thursday the 18th of March. This week we are continuing to meditate on the reality of pain and loss in the scriptures and also hearing from Pete Greig about his personal experience of unanswered prayer captured in the book ***God on Mute***.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to cry out for mercy today, joining with the ancient lament of all God's people in the words of Psalm 31...

Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am in distress.
Tears blur my eyes.
My body and soul are withering away.
I am dying from grief;
my years are shortened by sadness.
Sin has drained my strength;
I am wasting away from within.
Psalm 31:9-10

Pause and pray

What does it mean to walk by faith, not by sight? Today I reflect on Paul's thoughts on the matter...

Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. For we live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.
2 Corinthians 5:6-9

Brennan Manning writes that 'The way of trust is a movement into obscurity, into the undefined, into ambiguity, not into some predetermined, clearly delineated plan for the future. The next step discloses itself only out of discernment of God acting in . . . the present moment. The reality of naked trust is the life of a pilgrim who leaves what is nailed down, obvious and secure, and walks into the unknown without any rational explanation to justify the decision or guarantee the future.

Why? Because God has signalled the movement and offered his presence and his promise.’*

*Brennan Manning, Ruthless Trust (London: SPCK Publishing, 2002), 13.

Ask

‘Boredom can be one of the hidden consequences of a long-term problem such as a chronic illness. Instead of living our lives to the full with “naked trust,” we merely survive from day to day. Have I become a little risk-averse?

In the quiet, God I ask You this question, ‘What might it look like for me to “live by faith, not sight” today?’**

** Pete Greig, God on Mute p. 321 Kindle Version

Pause and pray

God, I pray for those with long term, chronic illnesses. Those with ME or chronic fatigue, lupus, fibromyalgia, or other hidden, debilitating conditions. God would You stir up a sense of purpose - would You give hope for the future? Would you bring community around them, companions on the journey?

God, in the quiet I ask You to bring to mind someone who suffers from a chronic illness and I pray for them now.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. For we live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

2 Corinthians 5:6-9

‘Has any complacency crept into my life? How might God want to disturb me and take me on new adventures (however small!). May I have the kind of courage that comes from having an eternal perspective.’***

***Ibid p. 321

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Today I use a prayer for disruption by M. K. W. Heicher:

Disturb me, Lord, when I am too well pleased with myself,
When my dreams have come true because I have dreamed too little,
When I arrived safely because I sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb me, Lord, when with the abundance of things I possess
I have lost my thirst for the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life, I have ceased to dream of eternity
And in my efforts to build a new earth, I have allowed my vision of the new heaven to dim.
Disturb me, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wider seas where storms will show your mastery;
Where losing sight of land, I shall find the stars.
I ask You to push back the horizons of my hopes;
And to push into the future in strength, courage, hope, and love.
Amen. ****

****This prayer is often falsely attributed to either Sir Francis Drake or Archbishop Desmond Tutu but seems to have been written by M. K. W. Heicher and first published in The Minister's Manual, vol. 37 (1962) under the title 'Stir Us, Oh Lord'. We have personalised it into the first-person voice

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me reminds me that,

He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.
Ephesians 3:20

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 19 2021 (click for audio)

When Hope Dies

Today is Friday the 19th of March. This week we are continuing to meditate on the story of Jesus, now entering the mystery of Holy Saturday as we wrestle with unanswered prayer and the apparent silence of God.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to cry out for God's protection today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 57...

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy!
I look to you for protection.
I will hide beneath the shadow of your wings
until the danger passes by.
Psalm 57:1

Pause and pray

Today we begin our reflection on that darkest of days - Holy Saturday...

As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away.
Matthew 27:57-60

'No one really talks about Holy Saturday, yet if I stop and think about it, it's where most of us live most of our lives. Holy Saturday is the no-man's land between questions and answers, prayers uttered and miracles to come. It's where I wait—with a peculiar mixture of faith and despair—whenever God is silent or life doesn't make sense.' *

Ask

'Joseph of Arimathea's service to the body of Christ could have seemed a bit . . . pointless. Is there anything very practical that I can do to serve Jesus today, even if it is unnoticed or seems a bit unnecessary? I take a little time now to admit any ways in which I feel that my hope has died, asking the Lord to do what seems impossible in spite of my gloom.'**

Pause and pray

There are some who have been forgotten on the front lines of the pandemic over the last year. God, I pray for those who work in mortuaries or the funeral industry, who are completely swamped and overwhelmed. Would You strengthen and help them, comfort them, give them hope? I think of my local funeral home right now and I pray for them.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I imagine myself as Joseph of Arimathea. How does Jesus feel in my arms? How do I feel as I wrap his beautiful and brutalized body?

As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away.

Matthew 27:57-60

We sanitise the story but likely by the end of it all Joseph was filthy, smeared with and smelling like Jesus' own sweat and blood. And then there's that moment of horrible finality. Joseph rolls the stone in place and walks away - all his dreams dead within.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I yield today using a prayer of costly worship by songwriter Matt Redman:

'Blessed be Your name, on the road marked with suffering, Though there's pain in the offering, blessed be Your name. You give and take away, You give and take away,
My heart will choose to say, Lord, blessed be Your name.' ***
Amen.

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me reminds me that,

...our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

2 Corinthians 4:17

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the 24-7 Prayer website.

March 20 2021 (click for audio)

Absence

Today is Saturday the 20th of March. This week we are continuing our journey through Holy Saturday as well as drawing wisdom from Pete Greig's book ***God on Mute***, as we wrestle with unanswered prayer and challenges in our own lives.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's comfort today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 42...

Why am I discouraged?
Why is my heart so sad?
I will put my hope in God!
I will praise him again—
my Savior and my God!
Psalm 42:5

Pause and pray

Eugene Peterson brings a wonderful spin to this passage in Hebrews...

God is educating you; that's why you must never drop out. He's treating you as dear children. This trouble you're in isn't punishment; it's training, the normal experience of children . . . While we were children, our parents did what seemed best to them. But God is doing what is best for us, training us to live God's holy best. At the time, discipline isn't much fun. It always feels like it's going against the grain. Later, of course, it pays off handsomely, for it's the well-trained who find themselves mature in their relationship with God.
Hebrews 12:7, 10–11 MSG (emphasis added)

'The Bible leaves me in no doubt at all that when God is silent, He is not absent—even if that's the way it feels . . . Martin Luther argued that God withdraws and falls silent in order to draw me into the deeper relationship with Him that is only possible when I move beyond merely outward experiences and purely rational understanding. If Luther is right, then the silence and unknowing of Holy Saturday are essential to growing deeper in my relationship with God. The silence of God is intentional.

It is one of the great disciplines He puts on His children, “that I may share in his holiness” (Heb. 12:10).’ *

*God on Mute p. 194 Kindle Version

Ask

‘How can I really know that God is present, even when He is silent? Father, I want to thrive, not just survive, in this difficult season. I want to emerge from it stronger, wiser, and somehow looking a lot more like You. Is there any evidence, visible to me or to anyone that loves me, that He may be refining and maturing me through the difficult things I’m having to endure?’**

** Ibid p. 327

Father, in the quiet would you show me where You are at work in my heart and in my life?

Pause and pray

God, I’m amazed by the faithful saints who have loved and obeyed You, year in, year out, when they have not sensed Your presence or heard Your voice in any way. That is heroic faith! God, In the quiet I bring to mind someone now serving in what feels like Your silence. Would You strengthen them? Encourage them? Shape them more and more into your image and likeness.

What can I do to encourage them today ?

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

God is educating you; that’s why you must never drop out. He’s treating you as dear children. This trouble you’re in isn’t punishment; it’s training, the normal experience of children . . . While we were children, our parents did what seemed best to them. But God is doing what is best for us, training us to live God’s holy best. At the time, discipline isn’t much fun. It always feels like it’s going against the grain. Later, of course, it pays off handsomely, for it’s the well-trained who find themselves mature in their relationship with God.
Hebrews 12:7, 10–11 MSG (emphasis added)

Discipline isn’t much fun. And often I feel cranky and uncomfortable when being stretched in new directions. But, God I long to be mature, solid and secure in You. I want Your holy best. Bring it on.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I join King David in a prayer for God to search my heart:

Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,

and lead me in the way everlasting.
Psalm 139:23–24

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me reminds me in 1 Peter 5:10 that,

...the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 21 2021 (click for audio)

A Sabbath Prayer for Lent

Today is Sunday the 21st of March, a day of rest on which we suspend our weekday pattern and enter a simpler time of prayer.

Throughout Lent, I am meditating on the journey and teaching of Jesus' and exploring how I navigate my own suffering and struggles. This, of course, isn't the whole of the human story, and it's certainly not where the story ends. And so today, I pause to remember the resurrection of Jesus, which changes everything.

'Sabbath is not primarily about [me] or how it benefits [me];' writes the author Eugene Peterson, 'it is about God and how God forms [me]. It is not, in the first place, about what [I] do or don't do; it is about God completing and resting and blessing and sanctifying. It means stopping and being quiet long enough to see, open-eyed with wonder - resurrection wonder.' *

* Eugene Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places* (p.116-117)

Jesus' disciple, Peter, writes: All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation...1 Peter 1:3 (NLT)

Pause and pray

Father God, thank You that You do not remain 'on mute' forever. You speak; in so many ways, and at just the right time. I choose to stop, to be quiet and listen today with great expectation.

Pause and pray

Jesus, thank You that You did not remain in the grave for long. You rose from the dead and You are alive today... and forevermore. I choose to receive the life you give to me, and live it to the full today.

Pause and pray

Holy Spirit, thank You that You do not leave me to pray alone, but You pray with me and through me. Jesus, I am 'open-eyed with wonder' that You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34) I choose to put my trust in You today.

Pause and pray

I take a moment now to root these prayers in my life and my community. I pray now for someone I know who needs to hear God speak today.

Pause and pray

So be truly glad,' writes Peter. 'There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.
1 Peter 1:6,7 (NLT)

Pause and pray

Sabbath blessing

May this day bring sabbath rest to my heart and my home.

May God's image in me be restored, and my imagination in God be re-storied.

May the gravity of material things be lightened, and the relativity of time slow down.

May I know grace to embrace my own finite smallness in the arms of God's infinite greatness.

May God's Word feed me and his Spirit lead me into the week and into the life to come.**

N.B. Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

** Pete Greig, A Sabbath Blessing, www.petegreig.info

March 22 2021 (click for audio)

Living in the Mess

Today is Monday the 22nd of March and we are continuing our Lent meditation on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring to God our own pain, loss and questions. If you're interested in going deeper, further resources are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's help and protection today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 40...

*As for me, since I am poor and needy,
let the Lord keep me in his thoughts.
You are my helper and my savior.
O my God, do not delay.
Psalm 40:17*

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on the beginning of one of the most challenging Sabbaths for the followers of Jesus; the one that takes place directly after His crucifixion...

*The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.
Luke 23:55–56*

I imagine the deep grief and confusion that these women must have been feeling at this time; how much they probably wanted to busy themselves with activities that would help them to mourn and receive some sort of closure. But instead, they stop completely, to obey the commandment of the Lord, without a tidy conclusion to their questions and their pain.

Ask

'Do I try too hard to make sense of things, rushing to fix things, instead of just living with mess for a while?

I take time now to ask the Lord to help me be more okay with not being okay, requesting courage to be vulnerable, and grace to live with more mess.' *

*Pete Greig, God on Mute p350-351

Pause and pray

Is there someone in my life who I am trying to 'fix'? *Perhaps I am trying to solve their problems or wishing for progress where You, Lord, are asking me to be patient.*

I relinquish my need to fix their problems, Lord. Let Your Kingdom Come in their life and circumstances.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

Luke 23:55–56

In God On Mute, Pete describes attending a funeral where everyone seemed a bit too keen to 'solve' the unfathomable tragedy of a friend's death.

'I drove away later thinking how very fragile faith must be if I can't just remain sad, scared, confused, and doubting for a while. In my fear of unknowing, I leapfrog Holy Saturday and rush the resurrection. I race, disconcerted, to make meaning and find beauty where there simply is none. Yet.' **

**Ibid p217

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Today I pray the serenity prayer of Reinhold Niebuhr:

*'God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time, Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace, Taking, as Jesus did,
This sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,*

*So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.
Amen.'****

Yielding Promise

Today, Lord, I am thankful for the truth of Your promise in Romans:

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

Closing Prayer

*Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.*

***Reinhold Niebuhr, quoted in Pete Greig, *God on Mute* p351

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 23 2021 (click for audio)

Where Is God Now?

Today is Tuesday the 23rd of March and this week we are continuing to journey to Easter by exploring the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and learning from Pete Greig's book, *God on Mute*.

Together we will pray (**P.R.A.Y.**) very simply each day – '**P**': PAUSING to be still. '**R**': REJOICING with a Psalm and REFLECTING on a Scripture. '**A**': ASKING God to help us and others and '**Y**': YIELDING to His will in our lives, come what may.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to cry out to God today, using the ancient words found in Psalm 55...

Oh, that I had wings like a dove;
then I would fly away and rest!
I would fly far away
to the quiet of the wilderness.
How quickly I would escape—
far from this wild storm of hatred.
Psalm 55:6-8

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on the death of Jesus, as told in the gospel of Mark:

With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, 'Surely this man was the Son of God!'
Mark 15:37-39

In his book, the author Elie Wiesel recounts being forced to watch the hanging of a boy in Auschwitz: 'For more than half an hour he stayed there, struggling between life and death, dying in slow agony under our eyes. And we had to look him full in the face. He was still alive as I passed in front of him. His tongue was still red, his eyes were not yet glazed. Behind me, I heard the same man asking: Where is God now? And I heard a voice within me answer him: Where is He? Here He is—He is hanging here on this gallows.' *

* Elie Wiesel, Night (New York: Bantam, 1982) p62

Ask

'Where is God in the midst of my current challenges? I take time now to reflect, and I thank Jesus for coming close to me in my doubt and despair.

Thank You Lord that You suffered with me and for me as You hung there on that cross.' **

** Pete Greig, God on Mute p353

Pause and pray

Who do I know is asking the question, 'Where is God now?' because of their situation, or because of what's happening in the world today?

Jesus, You died for them, too. I ask that You will reveal Yourself and show me where I can demonstrate Your extravagant, sacrificial love today.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, 'Surely this man was the Son of God!'
Mark 15:37-39

The centurion was just doing his job that day, but something unexpected and dramatic happened. As he looked at the broken, bloody body hanging above him, he encountered the Son of God.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I pray the words from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Galatians:

'I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before [others] . . . and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life [I am] living is not "mine," but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not going to go back on that.' Amen. (Galatians 2:20 MSG)

Yielding Promise

Thank You God, that You sent Your son to die for me and for Your promise in Romans:

Therefore , there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life has set me free from the law of sin and death.
Romans 8:1-2 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 24 2021 (click for audio)

God, Have You Forsaken Me?

Today is Wednesday the 24th of March and this week we are continuing our Lent meditation on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as well as drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on how we can bring to God our own pain, loss and questions.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to rejoice in God's care and abundance today, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 69...

Answer my prayers, O Lord,
for your unfailing love is wonderful.
Take care of me,
for your mercy is so plentiful.
Don't hide from your servant;
answer me quickly, for I am in deep trouble!
Come and redeem me;
free me from my enemies.
Psalm 69:16-18

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on another Psalm, written hundreds of years before the crucifixion of Jesus, but with huge prophetic significance...

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?
...a pack of villains encircles me;
they pierce my hands and my feet.
All my bones are on display;
people stare and gloat over me.
They divide my clothes among them
and cast lots for my garment.
Psalm 22:1,16-18

'This Psalm depicts Christ's crucifixion so accurately that He himself quoted it from the cross. Far from abandoning the Word of God when He felt abandoned by God, Jesus found the Scriptures more poignant and pertinent than ever.

When God is silent, the galvanising revelations that formerly came to life through the Bible and through the "still small voice" may seem little more than a distant memory, but this does not make them any less true.' *

*Pete Greig, God on Mute, p354-355

Ask

'Is there a particular Bible verse that has been meaningful to me for a long time? I spend a little time exploring each word of that favourite Bible verse now, turning it into a prayer.' *

*Pete Greig, God on Mute, p354-355

Pause and pray

I think of someone I know who is living through the silence, or even the seeming abandonment, of God in this season.

I ask You, Lord, to give me a Bible verse for them today; and the courage to share it with them.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?

...a pack of villains encircles me;
they pierce my hands and my feet.

All my bones are on display;
people stare and gloat over me.

They divide my clothes among them
and cast lots for my garment.

Psalm 22:1,16-18

This documented, honest cry of King David feels like an irreverent prayer but echoed by Jesus it sets an example of what it looks like to be in relationship with God. Truly transparent, not hiding anything, I am at my holiest. Not deceiving or pretending to be something I am not, but acknowledging, honestly, my uncertainty and my pain.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

So, today, Lord, I yield honestly to You, using a fourteenth-century prayer of trust from Thomas à Kempis:

'O Lord my God, do not be far from me.

My God, have regard to help me.

I have many thoughts and great fears afflicting my soul. How will I pass through unhurt?

How will I break them to pieces?

This is my hope, my one only consolation,

to flee to you in every tribulation, to trust in you,

to call on you from my inmost heart,

and to wait patiently for your consolation.' **

**Freely modified from Prayers of the Middle Ages, ed. J Manning Potts (1954)

Yielding Promise

Today as I cry out to You Lord, I remember your promise in Isaiah:

Before they call I will answer;

while they are still speaking I will hear.

Isaiah 65:24

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,

being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,

being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,

proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 25 2021 (click for audio)

The Power of Comfort

Today is Thursday the 25th of March and we are continuing our Lent meditation and drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*, and seeking God's comfort in this time, as we bring our pain, loss and questions to Him.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

Today, I pause and repeat the words of Psalm 80, slowly...

Turn us again to yourself, O God.
Make your face shine down upon us.
Only then will we be saved.
Psalm 80:3

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on Paul's encouraging and life-giving words to the church in Corinth...

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.
2 Corinthians 1:3-4

The word comfort comes from the Latin *con fortare*, meaning 'with strength and support'. This isn't just a warm gesture or a soft encouragement; comfort equips us to persevere.

'The University of Wisconsin's Center for the Study of Pain conducted an experiment in which researchers timed how long volunteers could keep their feet in buckets of freezing water. They discovered something very remarkable: whenever a companion was allowed in the room with the person whose feet were being frozen, he or she could endure the cold for twice as long as those who suffered alone. "The presence of another caring person doubles the amount of pain a person can endure," the researchers said. The same is undoubtedly true of emotional pain.' *

*Pete Greig, *God on Mute*, p356

Ask

‘Who reveals God’s loving presence to me? Do they know how deeply I value the comfort their presence brings? I take time to give thanks for them, today.

Pause and pray

The apostle Paul says that we can pass on to others ‘comfort we ourselves receive from God.’ (v4) I take a few moments to ask the Lord to show me someone who needs to know His comfort expressed through me this week’.**

**Pete Greig, God on Mute, p357

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV UK)

These encouraging words remind me that God is compassionate and comforting; but I only experience this when I let go of my fears and uncertainties, and when I allow Him to meet me where I am.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I use a prayer attributed to Francis of Assisi:

‘O Master, let me not seek as much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.’***

***Francis of Assisi, quoted in Pete Greig, God on Mute, p357

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Isaiah 41:

I am the Lord your God
who takes hold of your right hand
and says to you, Do not fear;
I will help you.
Isaiah 41:13 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 26 2021 (click for audio)

Where is God?

Today is Friday the 26th of March and this week we are continuing our Lent meditation and drawing from the wisdom of Pete Greig's book *God on Mute* and reflecting on the reality of Holy Saturday - when we feel like our prayers haven't been answered, or maybe even heard.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to cry out to God today, joining with all God's people in the words of Psalm 83...

O God, do not be silent!
Do not be deaf.
Do not be quiet, O God.
Psalm 83:1

Pause and pray

Today I am reflecting on the comforting words of Psalm 23...

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for His name's sake.
Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff,
they comfort me.
Psalm 23:1-4

This famous Psalm is, surprisingly, not filled with reassurance that God will save me; or transform me. It is much simpler: a God who leads, refreshes, guides, and comforts me, especially when things are dark and difficult.

‘Holy Saturday is the day on which I wonder, Where is God? Yet the answer may be that He is here with me in the muck. When I am present in a situation—no matter how terrible it may be—He cannot be absent. Whenever life gets tough and I cry out to God for help, my desire is always to be airlifted out of the theatre of war. But more often than not, instead of airlifting me to safety, God parachutes down to join me in the muck and chaos of my situation.’ *

*Adapted from Pete Greig, God on Mute, p358

Ask

‘It’s only natural to want God to airlift me out of “the darkest valley” with a miracle, but are there any signs that He has actually parachuted in to join me here instead?

I take time now to thank You, Lord that ‘even though I walk through the darkest valley . . . you are with me,’ and I remember the signs of Your goodness at work in my life.’**

**Pete Greig, God on Mute, p359

Pause and pray

God of comfort, I ask You to draw near to someone I know who is in a dark valley at this present time. Remind them of the truth of this Psalm; that You are with them.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage I listen for a particular word or phrase that the Holy Spirit is highlighting to me today...

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for His name’s sake.
Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff,
they comfort me.
Psalm 23:1-4

What do I need from God today? Do I need to lie down? Do I need to be led by quiet waters? Does my soul need refreshing? Do I need guidance? Do I simply need God’s comfort?

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I return to a prayer of surrender by Richard Foster:

'Today, O Lord, I yield myself to You. May Your will be my delight today. May You have perfect sway in me. May your love be the pattern of my living. I surrender to You my hopes, my dreams, my ambitions. Do with them what You will, when You will, as You will. I place into Your loving care my family, my friends, my future. Care for them with a care that I can never give. I release into Your hands my need to control, my craving for status, my fear of obscurity. Eradicate the evil, purify the good, and establish Your kingdom on earth. For Jesus' sake, Amen.' ***

***Richard Foster, Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home (San Francisco: Harper, 1992) p243

Yielding Promise

Today, Father, I thank You for the certainty and hope found in Isaiah 58:

Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.
Isaiah 58:9 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 27 2021 (click for audio)

Seek God's Goodness

Today is Saturday the 27th of March and this week we are reflecting on the final days of Jesus as part of our Lent series and drawing on the wisdom from Pete Greig's book *God on Mute*. Together we are reflecting on the goodness of God in the midst of our own pain, loss and questions.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-centre my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me. (Romans 8:34)

Rejoice and Reflect

I choose to pause and repeat, slowly, the words of Psalm 27...

The one thing I ask of the Lord—
the thing I seek most—
is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
delighting in the Lord's perfections
and meditating in his Temple.
Psalm 27:4

Pause and pray

As I enter the final week of this Lent series, the countdown to Jesus' death begins:

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about half a litre of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.
John 12:1-3

Bethany was where some of Jesus' closest friends lived and here, He doesn't have to worry about the events that are about to happen, or the unbelievable pressures faced by being the Son of God. Here, in the intimacy of the dinner table, is a beautiful expression of community.

'Do I have a place like Bethany where I can go when I'm wrestling with unanswered prayer? It could be a place or a book or a piece of music that reminds me of all the good things God has done in the past. It could be a person like Lazarus whose very being makes the presence and power of God real to me even when life is at its worst...' **Pete Greig, *God on Mute*, p362

Ask

‘Where is my Bethany? Who is the person in my life that reminds me of God’s goodness? When did I last spend time in that place or with that person?’*

Lord, I thank You today for putting people in my path who remind me of Your goodness. I name three of these friends now, and I ask You to bless them today.

Pause and pray

What are the stories in my community that need to be told to encourage us of God’s goodness? Lord, how can I create a ‘Bethany’ environment in my home or my small group.?

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I open my ears to hear Your Word, and my heart to yield to Your will once again.

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus’ honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about half a litre of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

John 12:1-3

In the midst of this dinner party table, the friends of Jesus express their love and affection in their own specific ways: by serving, by being present and by extravagant devotion. In the same way, what good gifts has God given me that I can use today?

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I use a prayer of joyful surrender by Mother Teresa of Calcutta:

‘Dear Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that my life may only be a radiance of yours. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel your presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me, but only Jesus.’ **

**Mother Teresa of Calcutta, quoted in Pete Greig, God on Mute, p362

Yielding Promise

Today I am grateful for Your faithful promise in Psalm 23:

Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.
Psalm 23:6 (NIV UK)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.

Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.

Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.

Amen.

Further resources related to the God on Mute series are available from the [24-7 Prayer website](#).

March 28 2021 (click for audio)

A Sabbath Prayer for Palm Sunday

It's Sunday the 28th of March and today we leave our usual P.R.A.Y. rhythms behind and pray in a simpler way on this Sabbath day of rest.

Today, Christians all over the world celebrate Palm Sunday, when we remember Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, marking the start of Holy Week.

And so, I pause and reflect on the arrival of Jesus on this special day of rest with words found in the Gospel of John...

The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,
"Hosanna!"
"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"Blessed is the king of Israel!"
Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:
"Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;
see, your king is coming,
seated on a donkey's colt."
John 12: 12-15

The crowd erupts with worship as Jesus approaches Jerusalem. I take time now to worship Jesus, remembering His entire purpose in entering Jerusalem is to die for me.

I repeat this word 'Hosanna!' a few times, which simply means 'Saviour' or 'save'.

Pause and pray

Roman emperors would ride their finest stallions into a conquered city. Presidents today travel in vast armoured cavalcades. But the King of kings sits humbly, on a donkey, and prepares to die.

I ask the Lord for opportunities to model His humility; to serve, to listen, and to prefer others this week.

Pause and pray

The Apostle Paul describes the humility of Jesus in his letter to the church in Philippi.

In your relationships with one another have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:
Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death –even death on a Cross!
Philippians 2: 5-8

And so, I use the words of Thomas Merton as my prayer, today:

‘Lord, give me humility in which alone is rest, and deliver me from pride which is the heaviest of burdens. Possess my whole heart and soul with the simplicity of love. Occupy my whole life with the one thought and the one desire of love, that I may love not for the sake of merit, not for the sake of perfection, not for the sake of virtue, not for the sake of sanctity, but for You alone. Amen.’*

*Thomas Merton, New Seeds of Contemplation, (2003) p47

Sabbath Blessing

May this day bring Sabbath rest to my heart and my home.

May God’s image in me be restored, and my imagination in God be re-storied.

May the gravity of material things be lightened, and the relativity of time slow down.

May I know grace to embrace my own finite smallness in the arms of God’s infinite greatness.

May God’s Word feed me and His Spirit lead me into the week and into the life to come.**

**Pete Greig, Sabbath Blessing, petegreig.info

29 March 2021 (click for audio)

Approaching Easter

Today is Monday the 29th of March. Welcome to Holy Week, the culmination of Lent, in which we've been processing the pain and disappointment of recent months, and the final leg of our journey to Easter.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Jesus, as I join You on Your journey to Calvary, give me eyes to perceive You in the shadows of my circumstance, faith to believe in Your perfect plan, and grace to receive Your mercies anew. Lord, carry me through the darkness of these difficult days to the life and light to come.

Rejoice and Reflect

Today I join in the ancient cry of all God's people echoing the longing and lament of Psalm 88...

O Lord, God of my salvation,
I cry out to you by day.
I come to you at night.
Now hear my prayer;
listen to my cry.
For my life is full of troubles,
and death draws near.
Psalm 88:1-3

Pause and pray

I am reflecting today on an encounter early in the week of Jesus' crucifixion. The crowds are saying, 'We want to see Jesus,' but instead of responding to their excitement, Jesus issues a dark warning and a stark challenge. As I listen to His words now, what expressions can I see on the faces in the crowd?

Jesus replied, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.
John 12:23-25

What does it mean to 'hate' my life in this world?

'When Sammy and I were facing the stark possibility that she would die at the age of thirty, I was dismayed to discover that... my imagination was bereft of any imagery or vocabulary that could grant genuine comfort and joy at the prospect of resurrection from the grave... The contemporary Western

church at large seems to me to have little belief in the afterlife. We are so temporal and comfortable. We can perpetuate the delusions of our own immortality for longer than any previous generation, but ultimately, unless our death comes instantaneously in early life, we must think about such things. We will be the poorer if we do not. And so I have begun a solemn pilgrimage that some might deem a little morose. My aim? To get excited about spending eternity with Jesus.' *

*Pete Greig, God on Mute, p363

Ask

I take a little time now to get excited about the prospect of a world in which, 'there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away' (Rev. 21:4).

In my mind I visit a place I love, or visualize a face I love, and imagine it made completely new in a world where 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.' (1 Corinthians 15:54)

Pause and pray

Thinking now of someone who has sacrificed them self in some way for me, sowing their best into my life, I ask You Lord to show me how I might honor their legacy and multiply the harvest of their life this week.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I notice the surprising way in which Jesus defines glory...

Jesus replied, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

John 12:23-25

Jesus clearly knew that He was about to die, but also that glory awaited him on the other side. As his followers we suffer too. We grieve and die. And yet, as the apostle Paul says, we 'do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.' (1 Thess. 4:13) Our grief is tempered by hope because, as C. S. Lewis said, '[Death is] only the beginning of the real story... the Great Story, which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.'**

** C. S. Lewis, The Last Battle (London: Harper Collins, 1956, 1980), p.172

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

The bad news is that I am one day closer to my death. The good news is that I am also one day closer to eternity with Jesus. And so, I yield both my living and my dying to Him today, with the words of Horatio Spafford's hymn, It is Well with My Soul, written in response to the death of his four daughters on a transatlantic voyage:

When peace like a river, attendeth my way
When sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well, with my soul
And Lord haste the day, when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me declares in Revelation 22,

‘Surely I am coming soon.’ [And I reply] ‘Amen. Come Lord Jesus!’
Revelation 22:20 (ESV)

Closing Prayer

Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.

March 30 2021 (click for audio)

Never Too Late

Today is Tuesday the 30th of March in the season of Lent. This week we are concluding our God on Mute series and preparing our hearts for Easter.

Together we will pray (P.R.A.Y.) very simply each day – ‘P’: PAUSING to be still. ‘R’: REJOICING with a Psalm and REFLECTING on a Scripture. ‘A’: ASKING God to help us and others and ‘Y’: YIELDING to His will in our lives, come what may.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Jesus, as I join You on Your journey to Calvary, give me eyes to perceive You in the shadows of my circumstance, faith to believe in Your perfect plan, and grace to receive Your mercies anew. Lord, carry me through the darkness of these difficult days to the life and light to come.

Rejoice and Reflect

Today I join in the ancient cry of all God’s people echoing the longing and lament of Psalm 130...

*I am counting on the Lord;
yes, I am counting on him.
I have put my hope in his word.
I long for the Lord
more than sentries long for the dawn,
yes, more than sentries long for the dawn.
Psalm 130:5-6*

Pause and pray

It was probably on the Tuesday of Holy week that Judas Iscariot agreed to betray Jesus. I imagine him glancing around nervously as he slips away from the other disciples, and the 30 coins jangling in his pouch as he returns...

*Then one of the Twelve – the one called Judas Iscariot – went to the chief priests and asked, ‘What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?’ So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.
Matthew 26:14-16*

Why did Judas do it? What was his motive in betraying Jesus? This question matters because I am sometimes more like Judas than Jesus. Perhaps it was disappointment that Jesus was not living up to his expectations? Was he trying to force Jesus’ hand? Or maybe it was shame – Matthew tells us that this incident happened just after Judas was rebuked by Jesus for despising the woman who washed his feet with perfume. Or perhaps his motive was mere greed. As treasurer, Judas had misappropriated

funds, and thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave in Exodus 21, and of a field in the time of Jesus (Acts 1:18).

Ask

Have I ever been secretly disappointed with Jesus? Do I ever try to force His hand? Have I sometimes felt bypassed by the Lord? Am I more motivated by material things than by spiritual ones? Are there areas of compromise I'm justifying to myself?

'Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' (Ps. 139:13-24)

Pause and pray

I pray now for those I know who have left the Lord because they are angry at Him, or because they have been choked by 'the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things.' (Mark 4:19).

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage I listen for a particular word or phrase that the Holy Spirit is highlighting to me today...

Then one of the Twelve – the one called Judas Iscariot – went to the chief priests and asked, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?' So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.
Matthew 26:14-16

Within three days of this exchange Judas will betray Jesus with a kiss. Within four days he will realize the terrible and irreversible thing he has done and commit suicide. But what would have happened if Judas had not killed himself? What if he had held on long enough to encounter the risen Jesus and to receive forgiveness - with a kiss? Would Judas not have had the most powerful testimony of all the twelve? Would his preaching of the gospel not have saved countless people down the ages who considered their sins too great for grace?

No matter what I have thought and said and done, no matter how broken I may feel and how hopeless my situation may currently appear, it's never too late for God, and no sin is ever too great for his love.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

Lord, I surrender my sense of shame today, and receive hope in the places I feel hopeless, praying the famous words of that former slave trader John Newton:

*'Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me*

*I once was lost, but now am found
Was blind but now I see*

*Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come
T'was Grace that brought me safe thus far
And Grace will lead me home.'*

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says in Jude,

*To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and for evermore! Amen.
Jude v24-25*

Closing Prayer

*Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.
Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.
Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.
Amen.*

March 31 2021 (click for audio)

Eternal Prayers

Today is Wednesday the 31st of March in the season of Lent. This week we are concluding our God on Mute series and preparing our hearts for Easter.

Pause

As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.

Pause and pray

Prayer of Approach

Jesus, as I join You today on Your journey to Calvary, give me eyes to perceive You in the shadows of my circumstance, grace to receive Your mercies, and faith to believe in Your perfect plan for my life. Carry me, Lord, through the darkness of these difficult days to the life and light to come.

Rejoice and Reflect

Today I join in the ancient cry of all God's people echoing the longing and lament of Psalm 61...

*O God, listen to my cry!
Hear my prayer!
From the ends of the earth,
I cry to you for help
when my heart is overwhelmed.
Lead me to the towering rock of safety,
Psalm 61:1-2*

Pause and pray

The events of Holy Week are firmly rooted in a historical and geographical context. Christ lived and died at a particular time in history and a specific place in the world. And yet the consequences of Jesus' life, death and resurrection are also eternal and universal. Since the Bible doesn't tell us what Jesus did on the Wednesday of Holy Week, today we are going to step back a bit to consider the cosmic context of his suffering dramatically depicted in the book of Revelation:

And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp, and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people. And they sang a new song, saying:

*'You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
because you were slain,
and with your blood you purchased for God
persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.'
Revelation 5:8-9*

'It's awesome to imagine that our unanswered prayers—all the frustrations, the tears, the dashed hopes—are being stored up by God in those golden bowls and may, eventually, become our most powerful contribution to the world. Let me say it again: our unanswered prayers may be the real ministry of our lives.

As Tim Chester writes in *The Message of Prayer*: "Prayers we think of as directed to the present are in fact being stored up to be answered on the final day. When [for instance] we pray for those suffering ill health we are expressing our longing for the day when there will be no more sickness (Rev. 21:4). . . . The prayers we think have gone unanswered may in fact be stored up in the bowls of incense held by the twenty-four elders, waiting for a greater fulfillment than ever we anticipated. . . . Many of your prayers are lodged there and one day they will determine the ultimate course of history.'"*

*Pete Greig, *God on Mute*, p367

Ask

'The prospect of my pain contributing to some other miracle at some other time for someone else may not be very comforting right now, but isn't it reassuring to know that my prayers are not wasted? That they are accumulating credit in heaven? That every single one is remembered, cherished, and ultimately deployed by God?

*And so I take a little time now to pray 'the same old prayer' I've prayed a thousand times before, but this time I picture it rising like incense from one of those great golden bowls before the Lord.' ***

***Pete Greig, God on Mute, p368*

Pause and pray

Today's scripture reminds me that Jesus, with his blood, 'purchased... persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.' (v.9) Jesus did not just die for me. Two thousand years after that first Easter there are still an estimated 7,407 'unreached' People Groups. A staggering 41.6% of the world population has not yet heard the gospel. Many do not have access to a church or a Bible in their own language.***

***<https://joshuaproject.net>

I pause now to pray for the vital work of Bible translators and pioneer church planters this Easter.

Pause and pray

Yield

As I return to the passage, I smell the incense rising from those golden bowls and listen to the polyphonic sounds of the 24 elders singing...

And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp, and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people. And they sang a new song, saying:

*'You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
because you were slain,*

*and with your blood you purchased for God
persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.'*
Revelation 5:8-9

In 1732, John Leonhard Dober and David Nitschmann, 2 young Moravian Brothers from Herrnhut, answered God's call to serve as pioneer missionaries in the Danish West Indies. They agreed to sell themselves into slavery if necessary to reach the African slaves on those plantations. As their ship sailed from Copenhagen people waved and wept on the shore until the two men cried out across the water, referencing the scripture we have been considering today: 'May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of his suffering!'

****Johann Leonhard Dober and David Nitschmann, *Dreaming Beneath the Spires*

Within a few years, the Moravians had baptized 13,000 slaves in the Caribbean alone.

Pause and pray

Yielding Prayer

I return for the second time this week, to Horatio Spafford's great hymn, written after the death of his four daughters on a transatlantic voyage, as he himself crossed from America to England to comfort his grieving wife. 'Whatever my lot,' he wrote, 'Thou hast taught me to say, it is well with my soul'...

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blessed assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.*

*And Lord haste the day, when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.*

Yielding Promise

And now, as I prepare to take this time of prayer into the coming day, the Lord who loves me says:

*Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have summoned you by name; you are mine.
When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
and when you pass through the rivers,
they will not sweep over you.
When you walk through the fire,
you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze.
For I am the Lord your God,*

the Holy One of Israel, your Savior
Isaiah 43:1-3

Closing Prayer

*Father, help me to live this day to the full,
being true to You, in every way.*

*Jesus, help me to give myself away to others,
being kind to everyone I meet.*

*Spirit, help me to love the lost,
proclaiming Christ in all I do and say.*

Amen.