[**TIME ALONE WITH GOD**](http://timealonewithgod.org/)

Ingredients:

* Half an hour, every day.
* Quiet, so you focus on yourself and on God;
* Prayer, worship, thanksgiving, as your response to God
* Word, so you can ponder His truth
* Life, people and events, so you are aware of Him in these situations

Method:

* Time – a fixed time when you are unlikely to be interrupted is best but more important is to actually start having such a time with God.
* Quiet – A simple method is to be quiet until you are aware you are in God’s presence before you start to respond to Him.
* Word – Read and be familiar with what is said. Meditate on the Word: “What does it say?” “What does it mean?” “How should I respond?” You may use the questions to help you or set them aside.
* Life – Use the time to also be aware of the things that are happening, inside you and around you. Bring these before God and speak to Him.

# Monday

[**PSALM 131:1-3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+131&version=NIV)

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. Read the text until you can understand what it says. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. *“My heart is not proud, Lord. I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me.”* What does the Psalmist mean when he says that his heart is not proud (in this context)? Is he ashamed, humble, or just keeping himself within his own limitations? If he says that there are matters too great or too wonderful for him, what kind of situation would he be in? Have you been (or are you) in situations that seem beyond you? What would you do? What does the Psalmist do?
3. The thing about coming to terms with our limitations is the acknowledgement that we need help; and that we are not too proud to seek help. In the context of prayer, it is also the acknowledgement that God is not stymied by these matters as you are. Thus, *“But I have calmed and quieted myself.”* Is it possible to be calm and quiet when you are not in control of the situation? Take time going over these 2 verses until you can rest *“like a weaned child with its mother.”*
4. What is the major development in a child who is weaned? What is the child ready for? What does not change in the relationship between the mother and the weaned child? In saying that he is like a weaned child, what does the Psalmist acknowledge about his own development as a child of God? What must he not be too proud to do?
5. *“Israel, put your hope in the Lord both now and forevermore.”* Do you think the call to the nation to put their hope in the Lord is because the Psalmist’s problems were answered or because life will always be larger than their ability to cope? Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

[**PSALM 131:1-3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+131&version=NIV)

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. Read the passage. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down yesterday. Is there anything that you need to respond to?
3. Review the past day. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
4. Write down a prayer in response.

# Wednesday

[**PSALM 127:1-5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+127&version=NIV)

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. Read the text until you can understand what it says. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. From the context, what does the Psalmist mean by “the house”?
3. Why does he think that his own efforts are “in vain”? Does he mean that we can never succeed in raising our family without God? What does he mean?
4. The clue is at the end of v2: *“He grants sleep to those he loves.”* Without God watching over your family (or your life, if you view it in totality), you can never rest despite all your efforts. Do you think this is true?
5. *“Children are a heritage from the Lord.”* In biblical times, a family means children and barrenness is a stigma. Having children strengthens a family’s ability to survive and thrive. They are the capital of the family. Modern life however is different. Would you still have the same sentiment, that children are God’s gift and reward? Do families that opt not to have children or limit their number spurn God’s blessing?
6. *“Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one’s youth.”* A true warrior knows his weapon and regularly maintains it because his life depends on it. In likening children to a warrior’s weapon, what is the implication to parents? *“They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.”* When the day of reckoning comes their weapon will not fail them. If children are God’s gift for you to pass on your accumulated knowledge and experience (heritage), a warrior’s weapon to win battles with, what do these ideas imply for you? And yet *“Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.”* How would you put all these ideas in balance?
7. Whether you have children, or you are in a community and are in contact with children, can the perspective of the Psalmist inform your view of them? What will you do? Write a prayer to God in response.

# Thursday

[**PSALM 127:1-5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+127&version=NIV)

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. Read the passage. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down yesterday. Is there anything that you need to respond to?
3. Review the past day. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
4. Write down a prayer in response.

# Friday

[**PSALM 121:1-8**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+121&version=NIV)

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. Read the text until you can understand what it says. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. *“I lift up my eyes to the mountains.”* Are the mountains obstacles and problems that the Psalmist needs help with? Or are they a reminder to him of how much larger God is in relation to his needs?
3. *“My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.”* Do you have the same confidence as to who your source of help is?
4. *“The Lord watches over you …”* The picture of the Lord watching over you is repeated several times in the psalm but each time there is a different implication. List down what the Lord’s watching accomplishes.
5. Wherever the Psalmist goes, he is constantly in the shadow of the mountains. They are always there watching, never slumbering. This is how God is for the Psalmist. How about you? What is God like for you?
6. Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

[**PSALM 121:1-8**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+121&version=NIV)

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. Read the passage. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down yesterday. Is there anything that you need to respond to?
3. Review the past day. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
4. Write down a prayer in response.

# Sunday

**THE LARGENESS OF GOD**

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains.*

Of course God is larger than the mountains. And Jesus once said that with faith we can even move mountains. But a mountain can be a good physical reminder how small we are. We can look up to the mountains and immediately we are put in our place; or we feel sheltered, protected.

Unfortunately I do not live in a place where a mountain is in sight. Every direction I look I see man-made structures and my only physical reminder of the Maker of heaven and earth are the trees in my area. And so I need the reminders that these psalms give: our God is large and we are puny.

The Psalmist reminds me that I can run to God and just trust in his love. I don’t even understand what is going on; I cannot even pray intelligently. It is enough though that he understands. I can be calm and quiet in his strong arms.

The Psalmist reminds me that the things that are most important to me—family, heritage, future—I can entrust them to God. In fact, I need to! He blesses me and I invest myself in what he has given me but ultimately I leave them in his hands. He is much larger than I am. I can only do so much; he will do much more and so I need to pray daily and trust that he will bless and prosper my work.

The Psalmist reminds me that my help comes from the Maker of heaven and earth. Where I can, I pray and seek his help, his strength, his protection, his grace and mercy. However, I cannot keep watch over everything. I cannot control everything. I cannot anticipate everything. It is impossible. But my God does. He watches over me. He sees everything. Nothing escapes him. Not the past, not the future, and not the present. I am safe.

*My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

1. Take time to be quiet, until you can focus on being in the presence of God. If you have any initial thoughts, write them down.
2. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down in the past week. What conclusion can you draw from the passages of Scripture you have been considering? Is there anything that you need to respond to?
3. Read the short sharing above. Do they add anything to your own conclusions?
4. Review the past week. What concerns/joys/events occupy your heart?
5. Write down a prayer in response.