[**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

[**GENESIS 11:10-12:9**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=gen+11&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.

*Shem is the third son of Adam. We know nothing of Abram’s heritage except the lineage given in Chapter 11. God initiated a relationship with him, as described in Chapter 12. Out of this relationship came Israel, the Old Testament, Jesus, and the New Testament. This is a new beginning, but a very different one from Noah.*

1. *“Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.”* Essentially what was God asking Abram to do?
2. From Chapter 11, what information can you gather about Abram and Sarai, his wife? From Chapter 12, how would you describe the economic status of Abram? If you were in Abram’s position, generally living a good life in Harran, how would you respond to God’s call? What might be a motivation for Abram to follow God’s directions?
3. *“Abram went, as the Lord had told him … So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him … and called on the name of the Lord.”* Clearly Abram believed God and his promises, obeyed him and went, and began to be a worshipper of God. As the forefather of what would be a nation of God’s People, Abram sets us an example of how we are to respond to God. The first time when God called you, what did he require you to do? How have you been responding to God’s call ever since?
4. Write down a prayer in response.

# Tuesday

[**GENESIS 11:10-12:9**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=gen+11&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

[**GENESIS 12:1-3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2012&version=NIV)**,** [**15:1-21**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+15&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. 12:1-3: God gave 1 command and made several promises to Abram. List them down. Can you see what God’s ultimate goal is in these promises? (Note the heavy emphasis on blessing. In 2021 Week 14 we looked at Numbers 6 and came to the conclusion that God is the God who blesses. We see this of him in these promises again.)
3. Chapter 15: What was Abram’s problem? How did God respond? What do you think is God hinting at by asking Abram to look at the stars?
4. *“Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.”* What does this mean?
5. What was Abram’s second problem? How did God respond? (The ritual of walking between the carcasses seems to be a ceremony to seal an oath. To reassure Abram, God completed the ritual himself and as a sign to his descendents, God prophesied their enslavement and subsequently freedom. When the Israelites saw the pillars of cloud and fire, they would have already come out of Egypt and they would remember the smoking firepot and blazing torch that sealed the promise to Abram, their forefather.) Essentially what is God saying to Abram?
6. Think about the way God treated Abram. How would you describe it? Do you think God will treat you in the same way? Write down a prayer in response.

# Thursday

[**GENESIS 12:1-3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2012&version=NIV)**,** [**15:1-21**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+15&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

[**GENESIS 17:1-27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2017&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. At 99, how long had Abram walked with God (see Genesis 12:4)? Has any of the promises come true?
3. What does God require of Abram now? What does it mean? *“No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.”* The name change signifies a change in the course of Abram’s life. What are the clear and specific promises that God makes to Abram?
4. Abraham responded to God’s promise with glee, amazed that he will have a son at the age of 100. Yet his thoughts went to Ishmael, his son with Hagar, and he asked God to also bless him. How did God respond? What can you learn from this exchange between Abraham and God?
5. How did Abraham respond to God’s instructions?
6. There is much to admire about Abraham, our forefather in faith. What impresses you about him? What can he teach you about faith? Would you likewise respond to God in faith, like Abraham?
7. Write down a prayer in response.

# Saturday

[**GENESIS 17:1-27**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2017&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

**ABRAHAM: OUR FOREFATHER IN FAITH**

Knowing what we know, this side of the cross, it is awesome to see God putting his plan in motion thousands of years before, by approaching this man, Abram. We know little of him, except that he has few reasons to pull up his tents and leave Harran in pursuit of what was for many years, mere promises. He was obviously well-to-do, and beyond the fact that he was childless, has few needs yet to be met at 75.

We do not know how God encountered him and what form God took. Whatever the motivation, whether it was the encounter with God itself, or the promises, or even the hope of a child, Abram believed God and followed him. *“Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness,”* an idea that Paul picked up in Romans to argue the plan of God to use faith as the channel for him to work through.

This is not blind faith even though the information in the initial call was very sparse. As we read on we will see an ongoing conversation between Abram and God, questions raised and answered, situations arising and God stepping in to protect Abram. There was a growing relationship over the years and it was only after 24 years that God sought for a formal commitment from Abram/Abraham in the form of circumcision.

As God led Abram to leave the comfort and security of Harran for a journey with him, to small experiences of his protection and favour, to finally a life-long commitment of himself and all his family and possessions, symbolised by circumcision, God too leads us in our journey with him in life towards a similar life-long commitment of ourselves and our family and all our possessions.

*“Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.”*

Abraham knew this to be true in his life and experience even though the promises would only be fulfilled long after he had “*gone to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age.”* I think Abraham had a deep sense of who God is, causing him to be faithful to him, spurning all the false gods of his generation (see for example Genesis 18-19 which we covered on 2021 Week 35 where he discussed justice with God).

*“I am your shield, your very great reward.”* Perhaps when we first came to God it was because of what he has done for us and what he can do for us. Perhaps we are drawn by the rich promises he bestows on the followers of Jesus. But ultimately, as we journey with him, we should come to know that our greatest treasure is God himself. The best thing we can do is to follow him and keep him close.

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.