**TIME ALONE WITH GOD**

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 and Tuesday

[**PSALM 4**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%204&version=NIV)

Please go to this page, [New Format](http://timealonewithgod.org/new-format/), where I explain the rationale for this new format. Let me know whether you find the changes helpful or not. Thanks.

Remember this is your time alone with God. It is a time to tell God what is on your mind (thinking back over the past day), listen to him speak to you (reading and meditating on a bible passage), and finally, to respond to him (prayer). The questions are there to help you do this. Ignore them if they do not help. If your time is limited, I suggest that you don’t do everything in one go but spread them over the two days.

1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you during the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 4](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%204&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God.”* In asking God to respond to his call, the Psalmist describes God as righteous. What kind of problem do you think the Psalmist is in that a righteous God would respond?
2. *“Give me relief from my distress; have mercy on me and hear my prayer.”* What does the Psalmist pray for? When you or someone you know is suffering or persecuted for something right that they have done, what do you pray for? How do you encourage them?
3. *“How long will you people turn my glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods? Tremble and do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent. Offer the sacrifices of the righteous and trust in the Lord.”* How does the Psalmist view these people who disagree with his commitment to righteousness? What does he call on them to do?
4. *Many, Lord, are asking, “Who will bring us prosperity?” Let the light of your face shine on us. Fill my heart with joy when their grain and new wine abound. In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.* The Psalmist chooses to be righteous and trusts that the Lord will reward his faithfulness. What is the blessing of the righteous?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**PSALM 5**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%204&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%204&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“Listen to my words, Lord, consider my lament. Hear my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray.”* Once again the Psalmist cries to God but as you read the psalm you will find that he is not in trouble but troubled. Here he calls God his King and his God. What does he want from God?
2. *For you are not a God who is pleased with wickedness; with you, evil people are not welcome. The arrogant cannot stand in your presence. You hate all who do wrong; you destroy those who tell lies. The bloodthirsty and deceitful you, Lord, detest.* The Psalmist is very certain who God is, what he stands for, who he welcomes and who he abhors. Describe in your own words these people whom God rejects and by contrast, welcomes.
3. *“But I, by your great love, can come into your house; in reverence I bow down toward your holy temple. In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.”* Why is the Psalmist confident of his welcome? Do you have the same confidence?
4. *“But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.”* Do you think the Psalmist is right—that God will protect and bless the righteous, or that just as the rain falls on the righteous and unrighteous, God does not take sides?

# Friday and Saturday

[**PSALM 6**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%206&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%206&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath. Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am faint; heal me, Lord, for my bones are in agony. My soul is in deep anguish. How long, Lord, how long?”* This time the Psalmist cries out in anguish to God because he has done wrong. What does he ask for? Does your sin cause you anguish? Do you think God may act in anger towards you? Is the fact that there seems to be no answer an indication that he is angry?
2. *“Turn, Lord, and deliver me; save me because of your unfailing love.”* As he seeks forgiveness and deliverance, on what grounds does he come before God? *“Away from me, all you who do evil, for the Lord has heard my weeping. The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer.”* The Psalmist is confident he is heard. What is the basis of his confidence? Are you confident that God hears your cry?
3. *“All my enemies will be overwhelmed with shame and anguish; they will turn back and suddenly be put to shame.”* Who are these enemies, “all you who do evil (v8)”? They are the naysayers, the ones who mock the Psalmist’s trust in God’s love and mercy. Are there people in your life who are constantly disparaging your faith?

# Sunday

##### THE LORD HEARS WHEN I CALL TO HIM

*“In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.”*

The Psalmist has a high view of God—he is the righteous God and King—yet he does not refrain from calling out to him, pleading with him, sharing with him his troubles, bringing before him situations where wicked people behave badly, even laying his requests before him and waiting expectantly.

God is not aloof, distant, occupied with his majesty and seeking sycophants. God is engaged, involved, and cares about the affairs of his people. He is the God who hears and we are encouraged to open up to him. It is not that things will always be rosy and trouble-free; the Psalmist writes of occasions of deep distress thinking he might not even survive. “Among the dead no one proclaims your name. Who praises you from the grave?” he asks with impeccable logic.

The strength of the Psalmist’s prayer life is his deep conviction that God loves him, that he walks on the side of the righteous, that even when he, the Psalmist, fails in righteous behaviour, God will be merciful.

In these Psalms we catch a glimpse of the conversations that the Psalmist engages with God as he pours out his feelings, his problems, his thinking, his views on the people around him, and most of all, the reality of his complete dependence on God to set things right.

How wonderful that we have such a God with whom we can be completely honest and know that he hears with complete understanding.

*“But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.”*

1. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down in the past week. Read the short sharing above. Does it add anything to your own thoughts?
2. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.