**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

[**JEREMIAH 32:1-15**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=jeremiah+32&version=NIV)

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 [JEREMIAH 32:1-15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=jeremiah+32&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. *The army of the king of Babylon was then besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the courtyard of the guard in the royal palace of Judah. Now Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him there, saying, “Why do you prophesy as you do? You say, ‘This is what the Lord says: I am about to give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.’* Israel was at war and Jeremiah was prophesying her defeat. Why was God telling Israel this? What else did Jeremiah say would happen?
2. *“I knew that this was the word of the Lord; so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels of silver.”* What is the message to Israel in Jeremiah buying land just as he was prophesying Israel’s defeat?
3. Why was God saying that Israel will be defeated by Babylon and at the same time saying that it is OK to invest in Israel’s future? If you were an Israelite at that time facing these events, what do you think God is saying to you? Would you think one or the other is true? Or would you believe Jeremiah completely? What would you do?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**JEREMIAH 32:16-25**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=jeremiah+32&version=NIV)

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 the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [JEREMIAH 32:16-25](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=jeremiah+32&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. Jeremiah’s prayer focused on both the love of God and the judgement of God. How had God demonstrated both his love and his judgement? How is God’s love and judgement to be demonstrated in the current situation facing Israel?
2. *“Nothing is too hard for you.”* On what basis does Jeremiah make this assertion? Do you believe this as well, in the context of national and international events that affect your life and the future of your loved ones?
3. *“See how the siege ramps are built up to take the city. Because of the sword, famine and plague, the city will be given into the hands of the Babylonians who are attacking it. What you said has happened, as you now see.”* As the evidence of a terrible calamity continues to unfold before Jeremiah and his fellow countrymen, God also told them “Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.” Do you think God may bring upon us an overwhelming darkness with no respite, or that he is also God who is the light at the end of the tunnel? Why do you think so?

# Friday and Saturday

[**JEREMIAH 32:26-44**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=jeremiah+32&version=NIV)

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 the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [JEREMIAH 32:26-44](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=jeremiah+32&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. *“From the day it was built until now, this city has so aroused my anger and wrath that I must remove it from my sight.”* What do you learn about God from his response to Jeremiah’s prayer? Do you think the world today may provoke God to such an extent? Do you think you as a Christian may also fall under God’s wrath? Explain your reasoning.
2. *“They will be my people, and I will be their God.”* Why is it that despite all that Israel had done to provoke him God still stands by them? Do you believe that this is how God views you?
3. *“I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me and that all will then go well for them and for their children after them. I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul.”* Note that all this is said after God had outlined how Israel had provoked him to an extent that he had to act in judgement and the basis for God’s intentions here is that they are his people and he their God. What is to characterise the people’s relationship with God? How do you feel, knowing that this everlasting covenant is what you stand on, through the blood of Jesus Christ? In all that God said, what is most meaningful to you?
4. *“This is what the Lord says: As I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will give them all the prosperity I have promised them. Once more fields will be bought in this land of which you say, ‘It is a desolate waste, without people or animals, for it has been given into the hands of the Babylonians.’ Fields will be bought for silver, and deeds will be signed, sealed and witnessed in the territory of Benjamin, in the villages around Jerusalem, in the towns of Judah and in the towns of the hill country, of the western foothills and of the Negev, because I will restore their fortunes, declares the Lord.”* The Israelites know God the judge and God the promise keeper and the God of love. Do you think that as Christians we will only face God the promise keeper and the God of love, or do you think that God will not withhold judgement from us?

# Sunday

##### JUDGEMENT AND LOVE

*“I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banish them in my furious anger and great wrath; I will bring them back to this place and let them live in safety.”*

In his judgement of Israel, God did not mince his words: “The people of Israel and Judah have done nothing but evil in my sight from their youth; indeed, the people of Israel have done nothing but arouse my anger with what their hands have made, declares the Lord. From the day it was built until now, this city has so aroused my anger and wrath that I must remove it from my sight.”

Surely there is no turning back from such a fierce indictment. Israel has so aroused God’s anger that he must remove it from his sight! Yet, a few sentences later, God said: “I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banish them in my furious anger and great wrath; I will bring them back to this place and let them live in safety.”

It is incomprehensible to us but in God, judgement does not preclude love nor does love preclude judgement. You cannot think, because he loves me he will never judge me; nor can you think, since I have done wrong and am now suffering the consequence of my sin, there is no return.

The greatest power of God is not in his ability to change the external reality—after all, he created the external reality; the greatest power of God is that he is at all times in control of himself, to will and to do that which expresses his glory, the fullness of all that he is and stands for.

*“I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?”*

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.