

## 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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BY CLICKING ON THE DATE OF EACH PAGE YOU CAN READ AND LISTEN TOGETHER

### February 2020

**February 28**

**February 29**

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### Audio for Each Day in MP3 format

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#### Month of February 2020

**Feb 23**

**Feb 24**

**Feb 25**

**Feb 26**

**Feb 27**

**Feb 28**

**Feb 29**

**Feb 28 2020 (click to listen)**

### **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**

You have searched me, Lord, and You know me. You are familiar with all my ways. Test me, know my mind, and lead me on Your path today. (Adapted from Psalm 139)

#### **Rejoice and Reflect**

I rejoice in God's goodness, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 100...

Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth!  
Worship the Lord with gladness.  
Come before him, singing with joy.  
Acknowledge that the Lord is God!  
He made us, and we are his.  
We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.  
Psalm 100:1–3

### **Pause and pray**

Today we're reflecting on words of the prophet Joel. Speaking to the nation of Judah, he warns them that God's judgment is coming and delivers this challenging yet mercy-soaked invitation...

'Even now,' declares the Lord, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.'

Rend your heart and not your garments.

Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Joel 2:12–13

I find these words uncomfortable. This isn't a polite, sanitized and controlled approach to the Lord. Joel's language is passionate and raw. It provokes me to admit the impact of the parts of my life where I have turned 'away' from Him.

Joel invites me to fast and feel as I change direction. When I fast, all my comfort is stripped away. Am I prepared to feel uncomfortable, to fast, to make space and see what comes to the surface?

### **Ask**

I think about the past week: the way I've spoken to people, what I've done with my money, the things that have preoccupied my thoughts. I ask You to show me, God: where have I chosen to walk away from You? Where do I need to return to You with all of my heart?

### **Pause and pray**

Joel's invitation was to a group, not an individual. There's something powerful about a community or nation fasting and turning to God together. When was the last time my church fasted together? Lord, would You show us where we need to return to You, together.

### **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.

'Even now,' declares the Lord, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.'

Rend your heart and not your garments.

Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Joel 2:12–13

I am my own harshest critic and can take a while to forgive myself when I mess up. Maybe that's why I sometimes find it hard to believe that God forgives me. It's easy to project my own reluctance onto God, to assume that He is like me. This passage shows me that He's different. I'm struck by Joel's description of the Lord. It reminds me of Jesus' story of the prodigal son in Luke 15. No matter what I've done or how I've rejected Him, when I turn back to the Father, He's not angry and determined to punish me, but running toward me, arms outstretched, full of love.

### **Pause and pray**

### **Prayer of Yielding**

*Father God, I surrender to You today. I have sinned, I have let You down, in so many ways I am guilty. Please forgive me. Show me Your grace and compassion. Help me to rest in Your love.*

### **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.*

**Feb 29 2020 (click to listen)**

### **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**

You have searched me, Lord, and You know me. You are familiar with all my ways. Test me, know my mind, and lead me on Your path today. (Adapted from Psalm 139)

### **Rejoice and Reflect**

I rejoice in God's enduring love, joining with the ancient praise of all God's people in the words of Psalm 100...

Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him and praise his name.

For the Lord is good.

His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation.

Psalm 100:4–5

### **Pause and pray**

Today's reading gives us a glimpse into a dramatic moment in the life of the prophet Elijah. He's exhausted, desperately fleeing from the threat of death and ready to give up. At this, potentially his lowest point, he encounters the care of God not once, but twice... The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, 'Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.' So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'" 1 Kings 19:7–9

This journey that began in hunger, exhaustion and fear was a direct consequence of one the greatest moves of God Elijah ever witnessed. Through him the Lord had performed a miracle, humiliating the prophets of another god, and now people in power wanted Elijah dead. It's challenging that even then, when he's running for his life, he's running in the direction of 'the mountain of God'.

### **Ask**

Where do I run to when I need to escape and recover my life? Is it to comfort, to a person or to a place? Do I run towards God?

I think about where I feel tiredness, hunger or fear today – literally or metaphorically. I ask You, God, to replenish me, satisfy me and give me peace.

### **Pause and pray**

Elijah is desperate. He can't make the journey under his own steam, so an angel is sent to feed and care for him. Who do I know who's feeling desperate today? I ask You, God, to protect them and meet their needs. Can I be part of the answer to prayer for 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.

The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, 'Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.' So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'" 1 Kings 19:7-9

In the past I've been so fascinated by the food provided by the angel in this story, that it's been easy to overlook the possible fast that followed. That miraculous meal seemed to sustain Elijah through a 40-day journey through the desert. As he made his way towards the presence of God, did his growing physical hunger echo a spiritual hunger within him?

### **Pause and pray**

### **Prayer of Yielding**

*Lord, I imagine now that I am with Elijah, at the mountain, here to meet with You. I hear Your question, 'What are you doing here?', and answer as honestly as I can. Lord, I surrender myself, my questions and my needs to You, and I wait for Your voice.*

### **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.*