

YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

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# SPIRITUALITY AND PRAYER

*biblical foundations and models for current  
dilemmas*

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**“Spirituality and prayer:  
biblical foundations and models for current dilemmas”**

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## INTRODUCTION

The driest desert in the world is located in northern Chile, called the Atacama. Despite the 10 millimeters of rain a year, it rarely rains, which gives rise to beautiful flowers amidst the solitude of the sands. However, the waters that descend from the Andes Mountains still give life to some places, thus creating oases in the middle of nowhere.

When traveling in this desert, I realized that there was apparently no life anywhere. On both sides, I saw endless dunes and mountains. No trees, no animals, no desert-specific cactus or shrubs. The intense heat during the day was a remarkable experience. Still, nothing compares to the driest cold I have ever felt at night.

What surprised me the most was the presence of small towns amidst the infinite sands. There are 120 residents in Socaire, 5,000 people in São Pedro do the Atacama, to the most significant cities such as Antofagasta, with more than 300,000 inhabitants. Many of these places began to exist by living near or within an oasis. But today, there are still some places of life in the middle of the desert.

On the way, we can find some oases. It's unbelievable to see them; it looks like a mirage. How can water and life exist amid the driest desert in the world? For example, "the oasis of Jere is unique because there are several species of fruit trees. There are apple, grape, orange, pomegranate. There are eight different species of pear alone".<sup>1</sup> We can also mention the Puritama hot springs, which form another oasis in the desert. The water in these natural pools is warm, giving the pleasant sensation of 30°C.

For travelers, tourists, locals, and even animals, finding an oasis amidst the deep sands of the desert are indescribable. Life regains its strength, the hope of the journey is

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<sup>1</sup>For more information. Available at <<http://g1.globo.com/globo-reporter/noticia/2011/09/oasis-surge-e-surpreende-no-deserto-mais-seco-do-mundo.html>>. Accessed on: 09/22/2014.

rekindled, and peace and rest become the most pleasant reality. In our life, it is also like that. We need oases to live again, to have peace.

We live in a time of the great hustle and bustle. Professional, academic, family demands, etc., take our time completely; that is when we can handle everything. This reality often leads us to live in the desert without intimate communion with God. Our routine makes us get lost in the great mountains of the cold sands of life or leaves us submerged within the warm dunes of the afflictions of existence.

We cannot miss the available power of prayer to strengthen lives, revive the spiritually dying, and raise the dead from the dead. Do not allow your vision of who God is or your relationship with him to erode. On the contrary, as you read this book, let the Holy Spirit to create His oasis in the deserts of your life.

Oasis is an acronym. This methodology is for memorization. Each letter of the word oasis has a meaning. I will make a spiritual application going deeper into praying to find Peace in God. “**O**” means to **O**ccupy the mind with the presence of God. “**A**” presents the ways of **A**doration. “**S**” demonstrates our need to **S**upplicate for forgiveness and sanctification. “**I**” reveals God's great will for us to be **I**ntercessors. And finally, the letter “**S**” shows how good it is to feel the presence of God in the **S**ilence in prayer moment.

I recommend that you read this book prayerfully, asking God to speak to your heart the truths He wants to reveal through His Word and the experiences presented here. By the end of this reading, I hope that your understanding of the importance and necessity of talking to God awakens the desire to live this daily experience of intimacy with God. God created prayer to be an oasis, a time of delight, peace, nourishment, and supply of waters and heavenly refreshment.

Dear reader, I hope that this book will take you to a real oasis. Above all, it will motivate you to live a life of intimacy with God, finding daily peace, comfort, and motivation in prayer.



## **OCCUPY THE MIND WITH THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

“You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13)

"The only place we can hide from the presence of God is in His presence" Randy Maxwell.

On Monday, in the city of Salvador, the capital of Bahia, I was at home trying to talk to God in prayer. The day was starting. The movement and intense noise of cars, motorcycles, and buses increased by the minute. The school children next door were screaming and running happily. I was thinking about all the activities on my schedule, that huge list. It would be one of those days where we started very early and finished very late.

I couldn't concentrate. I could not pray, listen to God, meditate on His person, wonderful promises and warnings that He had to speak to me through His Word. What would you do? What have you been doing to meditate and occupy your mind in the presence of God in similar situations?

This chapter is intended to (1) present what the Bible says about our minds, (2) clarify what biblical meditation is, and (3) motivate you to always spend time contemplating God's character, works, and Your word. So, even with the hustle and bustle of a big city, like Salvador, or anywhere else, you and I can fully enjoy the presence of the Lord by our side.

### **The mind**



Dear reader, to understand more about how to occupy the mind with the presence of God, it is necessary to know how our mind is fed according to the Word of God. Soon, we will see how God wants to work in sanctifying and transforming our thoughts through a thorough meditation described in the Scriptures.

Paul wrote some definitions of the human mind. Here are some negatives:

1. II Corinthians 11:3-4 – **corrupted mind**. “But I fear that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted and depart from the simplicity and purity due to Christ.” “All things are pure to the pure; yet to the impure and unbelieving, nothing is pure. For their minds and conscience are corrupted” (Titus 1:15). Satan works tirelessly to deceive us and corrupt our minds and habits to distance us from God.
2. Colossians 2:18 - **carnal mind**. “Let no one rule over you, pretense of humility and worship of angels, basing himself on visions, without any reason bothering his carnal mind”. Human mind without the presence of Christ.

It's hard not to have experiences like the ones described above. Even because we are human, we need divine grace and sanctification to operate in our minds and change us to something pure. See below God's ideal for our thoughts and how He has shaped those who surrender to His power:

1. Ephesians 4:23 - **renewed mind** . "and be renewed in the spirit of your mind." And in Romans 12:2 it says, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."
2. 1 Corinthians 2:16 - **the mind of Christ**. “For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he can instruct him? We, however, have the mind of Christ .” And

Philippians 4:7 says, "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

So dear reader, our mind is corrupted by sin and has no solution if it is not transformed by the beautiful grace of Christ. Jesus wants to change everything in us. He wants to occupy our thoughts and decisions to help us on the way to Heaven and, above all, to leave us open to His saving power.

When we occupy our minds with the things of God, we can meditate on His person. But there is a "new spirituality" that teaches that we don't need to occupy our minds with God's presence or His will described in the Bible. See below to understand the danger of this new spiritual meditation.

### **“New Spirituality”**

Through prayer and the study of His Word, As we enter into the presence of the Lord of the Universe, the Holy Spirit transforms our thoughts. When our thoughts are transformed, soon, our behavior and life are also shaped by the company of God.

Thus, in the book *The Great Controversy*, there is an essential quote for our understanding of the value of contemplation: "in place of the justice and perfection of the infinite God [...] Satan has put the sinful and fallible nature of man himself." Then he says: "It is a law, both of the intellectual and of the spiritual nature, that through contemplation we transform ourselves. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects it is allowed to occupy itself. She identifies with what she is used to loving and revering" (p. 554-555). That is, through much contemplation, we are transformed. What have you been contemplating? Is it worth being changed for that?

God invites us to contemplate His Word and converse with Him, for when our minds are filled with the truths of God's Word, our spiritual life is renewed. As we pray, with our Bible open by our side, as we meditate on the principles of the Word of God, we have to ask God to enlighten our minds so that we understand His will and live the great hope He is giving us.

Thus, the Holy Scriptures present spirituality as contemplating and studying the inspired written messages that produce an appreciation of His teachings and love for the Savior and His works (Psalm 1:2; 119:15, 16, 97). "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18). The apostle Paul adds, "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by renewing your mind, that you may prove what that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2) is.

We currently see a new sensation, a new ecstasy, and an unreasonable search for inner peace and spiritual development. They are sincere people who yearn for a more profound experience with God. But, this new sensation is coated with oriental mysticism. That is, concepts from Hinduism and Buddhism are being united with the teachings of Jesus through the so-called " contemplative meditation/prayer, "a way of trying to enter a state of unconsciousness. They try to be free from all distractions and thoughts, in the presence of a "god" who, according to them, is at the center of each one's being.

This teaching is dangerous when it is united with the teachings of the Bible. For, in this way of praying, by contemplating the "mystical center that each one has," the mind is not occupied with the will of God. Still, it overestimates the "god" that is within the individual. It is a way to remove the imprisoning stress and afflictions of the soul and find yourself in an empty state of thought, known as Zen in Eastern religions. Also practiced by the practice of Yoga and transcendental meditations.

The “mantra”, for example, is a sacred formula for achieving this goal: “Mantra is a sound, syllable, word or group of words considered capable of creating transformation [spiritual transformation]. [...] The mantra originated in the Vedic tradition of India, later becoming an essential part of the Hindu tradition and customary practice in Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism. The use of the mantra is now widespread by various spiritualist movements," <sup>2</sup>including movements that want to be Christians. The feeling of a mystical, spiritual presence does not necessarily mean that this "presence" proceeds from God. Ellen White warned, "Under the guise of religion, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world" (Great Controversy, p. 464).

As a result, these concepts of "cosmic energy" within us contradict Scripture. Paul admonished, "Have this mind in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). The Bible teaches that instead of looking for something in the cosmos, we should look for Jesus and His model of communion with the Father. Think about it, dear reader. What kind of meditation are you looking for? Who do you want to find: the "I" within you or the heavenly Father by your side?

Some time ago, I met a lady who had a relatively mystical life of Christianity. She always sought to make these prayer connections by emptying the soul to reach the fullness of inner peace. He used to praise and silence to achieve a form of elevation of the innermost being. One day, I arrived at her church, and she had placed lights, candles, and symbols that led people's thoughts to something more mystical than biblical. Probably his faith practice revealed more of the meditation theories described above than the way Jesus taught us to worship God.

True meditation and mindfulness are founded on Jesus and His Word. It considers His life, death, resurrection, priestly ministry, and soon return to earth. The contemplation

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<sup>2</sup>Available at <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mantra>>. Accessed on 8/20/14.

of Jesus and the beauty of His truth transforms us. When we meditate on the sacrifice He made on the cross, we enter the presence of the one who is in love.

It would be beneficial for us to spend an hour daily reflecting on the life of Jesus. We must take it point by point and let the imagination take over each scene, especially the final ones. As we thus meditate on His great sacrifice for us, our trust in Him will be more constant. Our love will be quickened, and we will be more deeply imbued with His spirit (Desire of Ages, p. 83).

The meditation and salvation we seek do not come from within; we will find it if we look to Christ and Him alone. When we look to Jesus in His Word, our hearts are protected. See how the Bible teaches to meditate in the following few lines and on Whom to meditate.

### **Biblical Meditation**

Meditation for the Christian is to occupy the mind with the presence of God, His Word, and, through prayer, find peace in this link of communication with our Heavenly Father.

Jesus himself set the example of how to occupy the mind with the presence of God. He meditated and prayed, often alone, seeking the Father to fulfill His will in Him in favor of human beings. But Jesus also lived among the people. He practiced God's will with people.

Christ demonstrated and exemplified passive and active forms when referring to meditation. The passive ones are a study of the Word of God, prayer, and meditation on

the power and working of God to reveal His love to human beings. And active ways can be found in work, works of grace, and abundant life, as Jesus always provided.

Paul taught that "whatever is true, honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable if there is any excellence and if there is any praise, let your thoughts dwell on these things" ( Philippians 4:8).

Unlike this verse above, we can open the "windows of life" to forces and influences that will turn our thoughts away from God. For example, the eyes. Suppose I watch a lot of movies, magazines, newspapers, soap operas, etc. that have no content to increase my faith. In that case, I am allowing the enemy to quickly enter my mind through my eyes.

The ears are also part of the "windows of life." The gossip we allow to hear, the songs, the jokes, the comments and criticisms that we open our ears to understand. We will not subtly realize that unsanctified, impure, or incorrect thoughts have free access to the "command center" of our life, the brain.

I remember reading a book that explained individual controlling actions. In this material, it was described the power of contemplation to change the direction of our life.

It is like this: (1) **by contemplation, we generate our thoughts**: what we admire, look at, or appreciate will feed what we think. For example, if I greatly admire how someone is generous to those in need, my appreciation for the person's attitude can create thoughts in me that want to be like them. However, if I spend a lot of time contemplating violence and dishonesty, my ideas will likely move in this direction.

(2) **Thoughts form habits**: it seems obvious that thinking about something so much will make the routine a slow change in one's habits. (3) **Habits are often the basis of actions**: if I am in the habit of praying when I wake up, then my first action when I wake up will be to talk to God. And finally, (4) **actions have the power to direct the**

**course of life.** If I have actions of gossip, envy, or falsehood, possibly my life will be based on these fundamentals.

Therefore, what we contemplate has the power to change our thoughts, habits, actions, and life, consequently. We must always be aware of where we are meditating and opening our minds to receive. God wants us to think of all that is pure, faithful, honest, holy, and acceptable in order that His power may sanctify the life of the authentic child.

Our mind has to be occupied with the things of God. We must meditate on the Words of God, on the Law that God has placed for our protection and obedience, on the holy paths that God has traced for us to walk, on the works of God demonstrated in the lives of human beings and, most importantly, meditate on the Person of God same. Jeremiah wrote: "Your words were found, and I immediately ate them; your words have been my joy and the rejoicing of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord God of hosts" (15:16).

"Communion with God through prayer develops the mental and moral faculties, and the spiritual powers are strengthened as we cultivate thoughts on spiritual matters" (Desire of Ages, p. 71).

So, seeing some suggestions on how we should, according to the Bible, meditate daily, we will see in the next lines are several pleasant ways to occupy our minds with the presence of God, whether it be to start a prayer, or just a contemplation of Who our heavenly Father is.

### **Occupying the mind with the presence of the Lord God**

One of the most enjoyable ways to enjoy God's presence is by remembering His name and how He worked in His people, and how He works in our lives today. We can



occupy our minds with God's presence as we recall the great things He did for the people of Israel and observe His mighty deeds for frail humans through the meaning of His name.

Abraham, for example, was a man who occupied his mind and heart with the presence of God. When he was about to obey God's command in placing his Son Isaac on the altar for sacrifice, there soon appeared a ram caught in the bushes; called that place "***Jehovah-Jireh*** ) **the LORD will provide**" (Genesis 22:14). And you, have you occupied your mind with the presence of the God who provides everything? Before you begin your prayer, it is important to know Who you are reaching out to. The all-providing God is on the throne of the universe, in His transcendent majesty, to save and help sinners who need His presence alongside every daily struggle.

We can occupy our minds with the presence of God when we remember the episode when God commanded Moses to change the bitter waters into sweet, making a promise: "No sickness shall come upon you, which I sent upon the Egyptians; for **I am ( *Jehovah-ropheka* ) the LORD who heals you**" (Exodus 15:26). How many times do we need to get closer to God to ask for healing from our sinful desires that control us and make us more rebellious? In addition to spiritual sanity, we currently need a cure for our diseases. When we seek God, we can be sure that He is infinitely powerful to heal, always to reveal His love and grace through Christ Jesus.

“ ***Jehovah-Nissi*** ) **the LORD is my banner** " (Exodus 17:15). When Israel won the battle against the Amalekites, Moses gave this name to the altar he built. Has your life shown that the Lord is your banner? Unfortunately, many people claim to be followers of God, but their deeds, words, and thoughts do not demonstrate this faith; they do not reveal which “flag” they are fighting for. This world is a war against sin, against the adversary of God. Do not allow yourself to be dressed as a “son of God” , but carrying the banner of the enemy of God.

We occupy our minds, too, when we let God sanctify us by accepting the Sabbath as a covenant between the Lord and his people. "Surely you shall keep My sabbaths; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that **I am (Jehovah-meqaddeshkem ) the LORD that sanctifies you** " (Exodus 31:13). The Sabbath was not made just for Jews or to be the day of prohibitions. Instead, it is a day that reveals the creation of this world. It invites every creature to enjoy intimate communion with its Creator.

Furthermore, the Sabbath is a visible covenant of those who have accepted a complete commitment to living by the grace of Jesus. No one will be saved by works of the law but by faith in Christ, who saves everyone. Keeping the Sabbath is enjoying the climax of grace and living the experience of having an exclusive day chosen, sanctified, and blessed by God. A special day for us to have to celebrate our intimate relationship with our Creator. A vital day to reflect on who we are, our origin, our redemption, our purpose, and to whom we belong. How pleasant is this day to have more time to occupy the mind with the presence of God?

Gideon hid in fear of God's enemies when God appeared to him and said, "Peace be with you! Fear not! Thou shalt not die!" So, with his mind occupied in the presence of God, he built an altar and called it " (*Jehovah-shalom* ) **the LORD is peace** " (Judges 6:23-24). This world we live in is a place of injustice, persecution, struggles to survive, and often fear and discouragement. We need to build altars in our house. Prayer altars. Altars of worship to the One God. Altars of reverence and dependence on the Almighty Father. In this way, we will be able to find Peace through His presence in our homes and in our lives.

The peace, selfishness, proud that the human being seeks will never satisfy anyone. Often in our home, there is no peace for various reasons. Where there should be

an altar of worship and family unity for a service, there is a television, computers, and sundries that distract everyone's mind. Not that it's wrong to have these things, but the best place in the house should be the Lord's altar. The place where parents and children unite in prayer, the location of reconciliation for people who have fallen out or quarreled. There will be more peace in our lives and homes when we erect the altar of prayer and worship.

A custom in my family was to have a specific place in the house for prayer and worship. The presence of God was felt throughout the house, but this place was different and special. It was a place of peace, joy, and communion. It was not a few times that I woke up very early to go to school and saw my father on his knees praying and my mother, at other times, studying the Bible. I grew up realizing that God always wants to bring peace to every family's home, but He needs to be invited to stay in our home. Having a space in our hearts and in our house dedicated only to God makes life more peaceful and joyful. It's possible, it's wonderful, try it.

When David wrote the 23rd psalm, he was in the habit of occupying his mind with the presence of God, even to the point of writing, " (*Jehovah-Roi* ) **the LORD my shepherd** " (Psalm 23:1). He immortalizes the human expression in the Creator's presence in this poem. We often lack permission for God to be our shepherd.

One day I was talking to a young man named Mikael, whom I met in São Tomé, an African island located in the Atlantic Ocean. He must have been about 35 years old. He told me that he had had remarkable experiences with God. Nothing spectacular or sensational. But a daily life of communion with His heavenly Shepherd.

Over a few days, he and I developed a pleasant friendship, and, as a result, I realized how he tried to be a sheep of God. When going to church, he didn't just want to be a formal religious; he eagerly sought the companionship of the Holy Spirit. He always

recited Psalm 63:1: "O God, you are my mighty God, I seek you earnestly; my soul thirsts for you; my body yearns for you like a dry, weary land without water."

I realized in this young man's life that to be a sheep of the Good Shepherd is to live doing the best possible in each activity and work, trying to have a dependence and total surrender to God's care. Even when he erred in sinning, he sensed the shepherd's rebuke trying to help him fix his bad habits, and he understood Heaven's help in fortifying him against the enemy's wiles. Through this friend who is far away from me, I can never forget, when reading "the Lord is my shepherd," how to be a sheep of God.

Also, we can occupy our minds by remembering "*(Jehovah-sebaot) the Lord of hosts* " (1 Samuel 1:3). Also, "*(El - Shaddai ) God Almighty* " (Genesis 17:1), "*( El-Olam ) God eternal* " (Genesis 21:33), and "*( El -Elyon ) God Most High* " (Genesis 14:22). They are expressions that reveal the sovereignty of God. As you know them and remember them at every moment, it will help you develop a more submissive relationship with this Lord so graciously to fight by our side.

Often, we start our prayers already crying out for the victory of battles we are fighting, and we forget to remember to whom we are addressing our prayers. Jehovah-sebaot, El - Shaddai, El - Elyon, is with open arms to take care of you and take control of your life. Give Him everything. "Commit your way to the Lord, trust in him, and he will do more" (Ps 37:5). Really allow God to take the paths and decisions of your life so that you will find security to live each day.

Dear reader, there are countless ways to occupy your mind with the presence of God. Remember what He did to the people of Israel and remember the miracles and such intimate moments that you ever had with God, or if you didn't, make yourself available to have this intimacy with the LORD.

I remember a scene I experienced when I was 18 years old. I was camping with friends on a mountain near the college and the night sky was incredibly starry. I was facing a spiritual struggle; I was experiencing an interior transformation that Christ was working in me. At dawn, I was awake, praying, and contemplating the beauty of the stars, the small streaks of lights that usually appeared, the lights of the celestial bodies. At that moment, I was able to experience what it is like to occupy my mind with the presence of God. I didn't say a word, nor did I hear His voice. But one thing I'm sure of if I was sitting next to my heavenly Father and enjoying His enjoyable presence.

Is that you? Have you allowed your mind to enjoy the presence of God? Have you attained the privilege of being in the company of the Lord of the Universe? If the answer is yes, congratulations; keep it up because, before any prayers or moments of worship to God, we have to allow our minds to be occupied with the presence of Jesus.

### **Jesus' prayer**

Jesus is our example in everything. He spent nights in prayer, hours in intercession, gratitude, and supplication for power. We don't know perfectly about everything he talked about. Still, we have one certainty, Christ loved to be in the presence of his Father, occupying his mind with the Word of God. His greatest desire was to be in the company of those he loved. Before any word was said or expressed from the Son to the Father, some time was spent contemplating divine beauty and love.

Of course, Jesus is also God, but the point is that He, as a human, took pleasure in occupying his mind with the kingdom of Heaven and inviting his Father to be very close in intimate communion.

We see Jesus teaching the disciples some essential prayer points in another moment. And the first is: to seek the presence and kingdom of God to satisfy His will. "Therefore, thus pray ye: **Our Father which art in heaven**" (Matthew 6:9,10).

The first half of the prayer that Jesus taught us has to do with the name, kingdom, and will of God. His name may be honored, His kingdom may come and be established, and His will may be done. So when, in prayer, we seek to be in God's presence as our first interest, we can ask for the other things, which will be supplied by God's will to take care of us.

Christ shows in this example prayer above that the first must be God. Then he says, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). We are often tempted to pray and go to the end. We want to stop to ask, cry out, pray for so many difficulties and miracles that we need, but we forget who we are talking to.

God asks that we first place our hearts in His presence, that we fill our minds with divine bounties. Soon, other things will come as a consequence of God's love.

Dear reader, this is **an OASIS**. In the desert of mystical imagination, of the massification of pornography and violence, and in the meditation of the inner self, occupying the mind with the presence of God is an oasis of refuge for those who yearn for God.

My wish with this first chapter is that we may silently contemplate the beauty of God's holiness before beginning our prayers. We must occupy our mind with the presence of the LORD before we start a prayer, which is often overrun with words, very repetitive, and even dispersed by other thoughts.

When we get our first minute occupying our thoughts with God and directing our mind to the Throne of Grace, remembering biblical verses, our prayer will have more

meaning, more purpose and, importantly, we will feel that we are before the Lord of the Universe and of our life.

How about starting now? Close your eyes. Don't say a word, don't thank or ask. Just experience God by your side. Feel the company of Your Savior embracing you.

“A strong tower is the name of the LORD; to which the righteous flee and are safe” (Proverbs 18:10).

"In communion with Him, every day, every hour – abiding in Him – we must grow in grace" (Steps to Christ, p. 69).

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Next, see in the next chapter how to experience God through Worship and Thanks.

**Questions for reflection:**

1. What thoughts should we seek to have? What do you think of “windows of life”?
2. What dangers can there be when we want to have moments of peace and meditation?
3. What do you most like to meditate on? Has it made you closer to God?
4. How can we occupy our minds daily with the presence of God?



## **ADORATION**

"As he was approaching the descent from the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples, rejoicing, began to praise God with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen."

(Luke 19:37).

Many people make their prayers just moments of thanks or specific requests. They recognize God's care for them and show confidence in placing their difficulties and fears in the Lord's hands. It is excellent to do this; however, we need to go beyond this experience, seeking to be in the presence of the Loving, Righteous, and Holy Creator of the universe.

Worshiping God must be the basis of all prayer. The climax of this encounter. The Lord tells us that we must worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24).

There are many concepts and definitions for this word and this act. But I would like us to keep in mind what worship is: (1) recognizing that God is the only One worthy of being worshiped; (2) approaching God's presence in a spirit of humility before the Creator of the universe and our lives; (3) to desire to surrender all that we are and all that we have in the hands of this so magnificent and great Father.

### **Worship is a response to God's awesomeness and love**

One of the great discoveries that one can make of oneself is discovering the purpose of creation and why it was created. Spiritual life, personal values, dreams, and life history, among other things, are strengthened when we find the origin of our life in

God and, by relating to Him, we grow in a communion of goals and meaning for the whole life. All this generates a strong feeling in those who perceive their creation that the most immediate and sincere response is to worship the Creator.

Basically, there are three types of people regarding biblical spiritual insight. The first is someone who lives meaninglessly in their life. He goes to school, then to work, eats, gets married, walks around lovely places, the family grows, the disease comes, and, soon, death comes. It is a sad life without destiny or goals, appearances and superficiality.

The second individual is someone who has a self-centered purpose. He passes over everything, family, health, and friends, to achieve significant political, financial, religious, social, etc. This one has a life goal, to run only after growing and improving your life. Yet this is fleeting according to the Bible (Ecclesiastes 1-3). Possibly you will be frustrated with yourself.

I remembered now the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18-23). He could probably illustrate the example of this individual that was described above. We agree that he got everything he wanted. But the sadness in her heart never went away, especially after she refused to let go of all her dreams and achievements in response to Christ's invitation. One day this man woke up, and everything he had gathered was taken by the enemies.

However, in biblical spiritual perception, there is a third type of people that we can mention here. She manages to find happiness and passion for living every day. This person is a true worshiper. Throughout a life open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, perhaps not immediately, he worked to understand that the purpose of life is to worship, praise God, do His will, and follow the divine calls for our salvation.

This person awakens each day with the certainty of life's purpose. Your peace and satisfaction grow as you take the time to get to know and relate to God. Are you having

this enormous pleasure of living with purpose? Are you really enjoying worshiping God in response to His love and greatness?

I met a woman who inspired my life at a church I was a pastor. She has attained high academic, financial, and social positions. Known in several countries, she had administrative functions envied by many. Apparently, she had achieved everything a human being would want to have. His life's purpose had been accomplished. Maybe not.

After the age of fifty, she realized that the main thing in life was missing, God, even though she hadn't paid much attention and value to Him in recent decades. This brave woman understood that life only has value when recognizing God's sovereignty and command. In response to this recognition, she adored the Lord.

This daughter of God began to study the Bible to understand who the Lord is and how He has revealed Himself. It wasn't one, two, or three years. His final decision for an eternal commitment to Christ only came after 10 long years of reflection and breaking of prejudices. Finally, his baptism and the beginning of an endless journey of worship alongside his Savior.

Passed since this special event in this woman's life. Anyone who knows her realizes that the greatest desire is to worship the heavenly Father for so much love, kindness, and power in favor of her life and her family members.

She found the purpose of living fully. He continued with his high social and academic positions but consistently demonstrated, like Daniel in Babylon, that living to worship God is the best choice.

Dear reader, your story may be similar or totally different from the woman above. However, there is one similarity that you and I can choose to have: praising and worshiping God in response to His love and greatness.

To better visualize what worship is and how to dedicate our lives to exalting God with all our hearts, souls, and strength, we have to learn from Moses and return to Sinai so we can find the peace we seek.

## **Returning to Sinai**

Returning to Sinai is symbolic of the human quest to worship the Lord. Our OASIS moments, moments of prayer experiencing God's presence by our side, should always be like Moses on Mount Sinai. How many times, when the people of Israel were encamped, this leader had to return to this Mount to seek divine help and answers. How many times did he go up to plead for pardon and provisions? However, what impressed me the most were the times this leader returned to Sinai to worship God and try to see the face of the Lord.

The LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this which you have said; because you have found favor in my eyes, and I know you by your name." Then he said, " **I beseech thee, show me thy glory** ." He said to him, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD to you; I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have mercy on whom I have mercy." And he added, "You will not be able to see my face, for no man will see my face and live." The LORD said further: "Behold, a place with me; and you will be on the rock. When my glory has passed, I will put you in a cleft in the rock, and I will cover you with my hand, until I have passed. Then, when I take my hand away, you will see me from behind; **but my face shall not be seen**" (Exodus 33:17-23).

Moses' most intense desire was to see his Lord. He'd known him for nearly all of his years, for as long as he could remember being alive. Their fellowship and worship were ever-increasing. With each passing day, this man sought to worship and honor His Savior.

However, it was time for the climax of the relationship. He asked God to show His face. Too much boldness. But this request demonstrated all the fear and trembling of a true worshiper seeking to know more about His beloved Creator.

The perception of spiritual things is mental and not necessarily visual. We can rely on the definition of faith given in Hebrews 11:1 “assurance of things hoped for” and “conviction of things not seen.” Hope is related to what is not seen, what is waiting to happen. Therefore, visual experience is not an indispensable condition for the existence of hope. Returning to Sinai is to seek to worship God and know more about His Glory.

The slightest contact we can have with the majesty of God is so vast and wide for us, small and fragile beings, that just hearing His voice would be enough to understand His character.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, God gave us the Bible to reveal such greatness in a finite perception of sin. If only with the vision of the things of God it was possible to have faith, worship and an authentic experience with Him, not even the few prophets who received the gift of prophecy would be realizing who the Lord really is.

After all, “no one has ever seen God” (1 John 4:12). Hence, when Moses begged God to show him His glory, God emphasized His essence with a verbal description of His character, not His appearance. In other words, Moses asked for the "picture," and God gave him the "Written Word"

"When the Lord had descended in the cloud, he stood there with him and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And when the Lord passed before him, he called, Lord, Lord God, merciful, gracious, long-suffering , and abundant in

mercy and faithfulness..." (Exodus 34:5,6) and "Then the Lord spake unto you by means of fire; the voice of the words ye have heard; but apart from the voice you have not seen any form... Watch your souls carefully, for you have seen no form... lest you corrupt yourselves and make yourself a graven image in the form of an idol" (Deuteronomy 4:12,15-17).

God knows the weakness of the human being in the visual. At that moment, even a glimpse of the face of God could be an awakening to an idolatry, or in the heart of Moses, or perhaps of the people of Israel. The Lord knows that we often care more about the picture than the truth that something represents, making our worship an end in itself. By not revealing His face to Moses, the Lord not only preserved His servant but taught him that His word was enough. Not only for Moses but for all human beings, who wish to see God, at Sinai the Lord taught that His word is enough, so as not to have the danger of committing the sin of idolatry (Ex 20:3-6).

However, God constantly revealed His character and will in various ways, even demonstrating His greatness with glorious illustrations (Daniel 7:10; Revelation 1).

We cannot weaken our worship to the point where we rely on images, symbols, or voices to seek God. We must look to Mount Sinai for how God wants to be worshiped and seek to follow the commandments He has written in stone. May every moment of our life and our prayers, we can "return to Sinai," seeking to render a more authentic worship to the Lord and seek to be holy as He is Holy. "By beholding Christ we are changed into His image, and by denying ourselves . . . we shall be in intimate communion" (Ellen White, Manuscript 48, 11/26/1890).

"Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:25) who revealed not the face of the Godhead, but His entire character, power, and will. See in the next part

how the “I AM,” Jesus, inspires us to worship God and enjoy an intimate relationship with Him.

### **Looking for the “I AM”**

As we worship God, pray, and have fellowship with Him, we need to recognize who He is. Recognition, admiration, and reverence are all part of worship. With this, we remember the many times that Christ said "I am" to reveal himself so that we can worship him with greater zeal and with authentic intimacy.

As Jesus was conversing with the Jews, He used a well-known expression to communicate His nature. Said, “**I am**” (John 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5-6, 8). This reminds us of Exodus 3:14 when “I am” was explaining who it was that was talking to Moses.

As we are praying, we need to remember this name, this mark, and this characteristic of Jesus. He is God. He became a human being to give victory to those who put their faith in Him. To worship God in prayer is to converse intimately with the great "I am" who has become accessible to abundantly bestow His grace. Worship is putting God in place he should be in charge of everything and the only one worthy of our worship.

Other times Christ affirmed, "**I am the bread of life**" (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51), "**I am the light of the world** " (John 8:12). With that, He was attributing to Himself the divine power of Creator. Not only is it the bread that feeds us every moment we are hungry, but it is the bread of eternal life. His desire is to keep us in this present life and, through his grace, to sanctify us to eternal life. He is also our light, for he teaches us the right paths to follow, and he removes the darkness from our souls, giving us light and an understanding of the truth in his word.



By citing aspects well known to the Jews, He demonstrated that He desires to be connected with the true worshiper **in addition to being worshiped.** "**I am the door**" (John 10:7,9) shows that the miserable sinner can only have access to God and His presence through that door which is the Messiah. Furthermore, this door protects the faithful worshiper from the dangerous attacks of the lion that prowls around to devour (1 Peter 5:8).

"**I am the good shepherd** " (John 10:11, 14-15) recalls what we saw in the previous chapter in making sure that "God is my shepherd." And "**I am the true vine** " (John 15:1,5) presents us with the excellent opportunity to bear fruit in our lives through real, intelligent, deep worship with the Savior. The more we diminish our pride and selfishness to worship and be united with the Vine, the more life there will be.

In Trinidad and Tobago, a Caribbean Island close to Venezuela, I had the pleasure of meeting a lady about 55 years old. Mother of three, great civil servant, talented in the kitchen and handicrafts, and former worshiper of Vishna and Brahma (gods of the Hindu religion ). From her childhood, her parents taught her that worship should be done to several gods, as each deserved worship by helping to support humans and lessening their wrath.

She was very dedicated. She was faithful and sincere to the religion her parents taught her. One day, this 30-year-old woman met another "god" in her way of seeing, Jesus Christ. So he began to read the Bible and pray to understand more about this "god." Then he understood that only one God came to earth to reveal the Father. After much struggle, he dedicated his life and worship to Christ. He began a new life of witness and goodness as he found forgiveness for his sins and Peace in Jesus.

Jesus Christ deserves our worship and awe. He stated some essential expressions: "**I am the resurrection and the life** " (John 11:25). In this affirmation alone, there is so

much strength and hope that it generates the will to surrender entirely in total adoration and submission to those in communion with Him. God Himself came to earth to give eternal life to those who believe in Him (Acts 16:31).

**"I am the way, the truth, and the life"** (John 14:6). In addition to being Life, Jesus is the correct path, where the divine truths are to enlighten all who seek them, thirsty for the presence of the true God. Has Christ really been the way you've been walking? Have you been seeking and practicing the so powerful truths that exude from the Son of God? Give it some thought before continuing to read. Does this affirmation of Jesus generate in you a feeling of worship and lead you to practice worship in your life? Your answer shows the level of prayer and commitment you have to Christ. However, if you are not delighted with your response, there is a way to improve daily: asking for heavenly help to be a true worshiper.

Finally, **"I am Alpha and Omega "** (Revelation 1:8; 22:13). What solid and convincing words! Jesus himself says that He is the beginning and the end. Himself receives the worship of heavenly beings, men, and every being that lives through all the ages of the universe's existence. Worshiping God is not just recognizing but letting Him be the only one in your life. The beginning and end of each day. The front and back of each activity and planning. What strikes me most is that the word "final" does not only mean the conclusion of things or life; it also has the biblical sense of "consummation." That is, Jesus is adored by us because in Him our life has a beginning and a consummation, a climax that never ends, for we will be in His presence in eternity.

Dear reader, when we stop to pray, to talk to our heavenly Father, we need to worship Him. Often, in the hustle and bustle of everyday life, we don't leave time to recognize Who is our Creator, Lord and Savior. We summarize our prayers in requests

and thanks, which is not bad, but we often forget to worship and contemplate the Majesty of God.

God's desire for your life is that you can enjoy wonderful moments of prayer worshiping God, contemplating Him in His holiness and majesty, and giving thanks that He became man to be very close to Him, no matter where you are.

Read this psalm and see how David worshiped God

“O God, you are my mighty God; I eagerly seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my body yearns for you, like a dry, weary land without water. So I behold you in the sanctuary, to see your strength and your glory. Because your grace is better than life; my lips praise you... on my bed, when I remember you and meditate on you, during the watch of the night. Because you have been my help; in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me” (Psalm 63:1-3,6-8).

“It is not necessary for you to always be on your knees in order to pray. Cultivate the habit of talking to the Savior when alone, when you are walking, and when busy with your daily work” (Ellen White, *Select Messages*, vol. 2, p. 316).

### **The Pleasure of True Gratitude**

How good it is to be grateful for something that really makes us happy! How good it is for the heart to show gratitude for something we have received, or for a goal achieved, a favor, an affective gesture, a help, etc. If thanking you for these things is good, how much better is it thanking God for the many blessings He has graciously given us.

Gratitude is part of human life, from babies who can't speak but show gratitude with a smile and a giggle to those who have reached the highest age. This word that deciphers this feeling manages to define the sweetest and most sincere gestures of someone who recognizes that he has received something, either by merit or grace.

Interestingly, in some languages, acknowledgments are used very creatively. In Spanish, we say "gracias," showing that the recipient claims to have received something through the grace of the other person. The English expression "thank" also means being grateful for something a person has done and for receiving a favor.

What caught my attention was the word's meaning in Portuguese: "Obrigado." It does not literally reveal that you have received grace or favor. The person who thanks say "thank you" as gratitude; however, this indicates a broader idea of what it means to thank. "I'm **obligated** to repay you what you did for me." We certainly don't use it that much in this sense, but giving thanks generates a commitment to do good, to give back in a better way than what you received.

So, in our relationship with God, which is much more holy than with our fellow man, we must live moments of gratitude. Experiencing God through songs of appreciation, through thanksgiving in praise and charity, etc., thanking God makes us feel more of His presence, helps us to learn more about His person, and strengthens our faith in a firm and intelligent conviction that everything is under His control, so he deserves all praise and gratitude.

I remember one of the most memorable experiences in my life. My marriage. I worked as a chaplain and teacher of Religious Education in a College and a School in Salvador. These were beautiful days of working with the students. And what impressed me the most this year was the preparations for the wedding, even with the endless work activities in Education.

My fiancée and I didn't have our family members around to help us with these tasks, so we always took time in prayer, asking for God's guidance. For every detail of the wedding, we prayed and were already grateful for the blessings. As the big day approached, we were able to count on the help of our family, which was a great blessing.

And, when the long-awaited wedding day arrived, I remember that my fiancée and I stopped to pray and thank you for all the process we've been through together so far and ask God to continue to guide everything. So, it was all a blessing. Nothing went wrong, even the rain that fell; God held her so that all the guests were already well seated. After this day, giving thanks for me took on a very strong proportion, an intimate and friendly relationship with God through trust that He is guiding everything. We experience peace in prayer when we give thanks.

Dear reader, I believe you, too, have many experiences of answered prayers, miracles that God performed, and blessings achieved. Always remember everything that happened. When we look at what God has done for us in the past, we can, by faith, already give thanks for the blessings that will come in the future.

Let's look at some outstanding examples of thanksgiving to God in the Bible.

## **Gratitude in the Bible**

From Genesis to Revelation, we find people showing gratitude to God through words, actions, praises, prayers, etc. When we study the Word of God, we understand that thanking God for every possible reason is part of living in communion with Him. For example, after several conquests, David used to pray like this: "**Give thanks** to the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever" (1 Chronicles 16:34).

Even at the end of his life, even though he could not build the Temple for his God, he thanked him saying to the people: "Blessed are you, Lord, God of Israel, our father, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, Lord, is the power, the greatness, the honor, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; yours, Lord, is the kingdom, and you have exalted yourself to be head overall... Now therefore, O our God, **we give thanks** and **praise** your great name... they all bowed their heads, worshiped the Lord and fell down. before the king" (1 Chronicles 29:10-11, 13, 20). Gratitude is often linked to worship.

When Jesus was born, his parents took him to the Temple to dedicate him. Then Simeon thanked God, saying, "Now, Lord, you can let your servant go in peace, according to your word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:29-32).

Jesus Christ, even being God and receiving praises, and several gritudes from the people to whom He did good, always thanked the Father. "(...) I **thank** you that you heard me" (John 11:41). "I **thank** you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to babes" (Matthew 11:25).

The apostle Paul also had a very positive habit of thanking everyone who helped him in his missionary work. But beyond that, his life was to thank God for having done so much for him for free. "Giving **thanks** to the Father, who has made us suitable to share in the saints' inheritance in light" (Colossians 1:12). "And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:11). "I am **grateful** to him who strengthened me, Christ Jesus our Lord, who counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry" (1 Timothy 1:12). See how Jesus handled the gratitude of human beings.

## The ten lepers

Thanking is responding immediately to someone by acknowledging that you have received something. To thank God is to respond immediately to His grace. Giving grace is His part. Gratitude is our part, and it must spring up as a response in the heart.

Luke's account of the ten lepers is one of the most remarkable stories about human gratitude for the grace received from God. It says like this:

On his way to Jerusalem, Jesus passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Ten lepers met him as he entered a village, who stood at a distance and cried out to him, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us! When Jesus saw them, he said to them, Go and show yourselves to the priests. It happened that as they went, they were cleansed. **One of the ten, when he saw that he was healed, returned, giving glory to God with a loud voice, and fell on his face at the feet of Jesus, thanking him**; and this one was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked him, Were not ten who were healed? Where are the nine? Was there no one who returned to give glory to God but this foreigner? And he said to him, Arise and go; your faith has saved you.

This is a story that really touches our hearts. God always draws us through His grace and extraordinary love. He always wants us to recognize that everything belongs to Him and, above all, all things happen through His will.

The ten lepers realized that Jesus had the power of God to heal them. So they began to shout, "Master, have mercy on us!" Our life is to cry out to God for His goodness.

Jesus didn't even tell them they would be healed. He only said, "Go and show the priests." This is the power of God. And all the lepers began to run, eager to show the miracle that was yet to occur.

But, there is a character, we don't know his name or history. We do not know how he contracted leprosy, nor how he was rejected and excluded by the societies in which he was inserted. Was he the only Samaritan in this group? Was he young or older? We don't know anything about him.

However, we have one certainty when reading this report. His gratitude was so great that he broke through the borders of Jews and Samaritans and went to meet his Savior. His gratitude was so immense that all differences, regional prejudices, and sorrows were put aside to prostrate himself at the feet of the one who can do all.

Why didn't the other nine former lepers come back to thank you? We don't know the answer. However, it is possible to imagine. Perhaps the nine lepers did not want to have intimate communion with Jesus. Maybe the nine just wanted healing, acceptance from society, family, and the routine toils of life. Perhaps they weren't interested in living alongside the Giver of grace. God is a Father, and He cares for each of His little children, even those who reject Him, or those who want to make exchanges or bargains.

Christ can eliminate any problem in our life. Still, the problem is that we are not always willing to respond positively to grace, given with so much love.

However, God is pleased with people who want to praise, worship, and thank Him for everything and even nothing that they have received. This is trusting in His grace. This is depending on the Most High. This is the natural result of a life that is in daily communion with Christ. Whoever thanks God becomes a show of praise to God for the universe. No one can silence the voice of a worshiper who recognizes, even in plenty or in scarcity, that "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).



One Wednesday night I was leading the service at my church. The church was full of people, and I was talking about this account of the ten lepers. It was at a time that I opened up to dialogue and to find out what people wanted to say about what impressed them the most. Soon, a doctor friend of mine described a report he had in Campo Grande – MS, at Hospital do Pemphigus.

He said one of the doctors asked him to give a ride to a former patient who was returning home, cured of "Wild Fire", a dangerous disease that hits hard on the skin. When these two were already inside the car, my doctor friend was startled with such joy that this former patient had. This man was praising God as much as he could. Then my friend asked where he was from, and he heard the answer: "I am mayor of (...). I had been in this wonderful hospital for four months, which God used to restore me to health. Now, finally, I can return to my family, hug my children and my beloved wife, I can return to City Hall and witness how great God is!"

When in the service that night I heard a beautiful testimony like this, I was moved, for this mayor was determined to live in solitude and pain because of illness. But God healed him. The Great Physician used human doctors to restore his health. It made such an impact on his life that he couldn't hold back his gratitude and praise to the Lord of his life.

People who have daily communion with God, people who spend time in prayer and allow themselves to hear the Voice of the Lord, are people who can see more grace than those who are preoccupied with so many things, and less with the company of Christ.

Therefore, to thank God is to respond immediately to His grace. Giving grace is His part. Gratitude is our part, and it must spring up as a response in the heart. To be grateful is recognizing that we deserve nothing, but life and salvation are gifts given to His children. It is up to us to thank this great love.

## Jesus' prayer

It is good for us to worship God and give thanks for so many blessings He has graciously given us!

In the continuation of Jesus' prayer, we see how He teaches us to lift up His name and desire His will to be done. “(...) **Hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven**” ( Matthew 6:9,10).

“See what great love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God” (1 John 3:1). God is not only transcendent, to the point of ruling the universe with all power and forgetting about his creation. God is also immanent, that is, He is close to you, by your side to strengthen and give you the peace and true happiness you are looking for so much.

To sanctify the name of God is to worship God. Desiring for His kingdom to come and for His will to be done is the most complete way to praise the Lord with all your might. Jesus wants the kingdom of God to be in your life and that of your family as well. Longing for God's will to be done, we need to submit our plans, wills, dreams, ideas, and tastes according to the Word of the Lord.

Remember, **Worshipping** God is a response of love and **gratitude** for such undeservedly received grace. All the thanks we have in our hearts lead us to do the same as that former Samaritan leper, who fell down to adore Christ his Lord.

To experience God's presence in prayer is to worship and give thanks. Find peace through a prayer that is dedicated to praise and gratitude. And even in the days when nothing seems to resolve, everything is running out of solutions, when there are no human solutions for the difficulties we have, we need to remember what the prophet Zephaniah

said: “The Lord your God is in your midst, mighty one. to save you; he will delight in you with gladness; he will renew you in his love, he will rejoice over you with gladness” (Zephaniah 3:17). How do you feel about living this **OASIS** with Your heavenly father?

Dear reader, is it your desire to experience God's presence in your life through true worship? Do you have a burning desire to thank the Father for all he has done in your life? Jesus is with open arms to hear your prayer. Experience this love. Live this prayer. Close your eyes and talk to your Savior and Lord. Pour your whole life into His holy presence.

\*

“We can live in the pure air of Heaven. We can close the door to impure imagination and unsanctified thoughts if we bring our hearts into the presence of God through sincere prayer. Those whose hearts are open to the support and blessing of God will walk in an atmosphere holier than that of earth and will maintain constant communion with heaven” (Ellen White, Steps to Christ, 2007, p. 62).

### **Questions for reflection:**

1. What is adore and thanks for you?
2. How have you experienced gratitude through a life of worship?
3. Do you think worship and gratitude are related?
4. Comment on a time in your life when you felt a great desire to thank God for something that happened.



## SUPPLICATE

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

### What is sin in the Bible

There are several theoretical ways to define what sin is. The (1) inductive or empirical form, which wants to prove through analysis and observation; (2) paradigmatic, using a paradigm as a pattern to select what is correct and what is not, and, among other ways, the most important for this reading is (3) biblical.

This last method, biblical, seeks biblical words and expressions to help understand what sin is, trying to understand what God meant about this subject at different times. Sin is caused by some human situations or characteristics presented in the Bible. For example:

#### **1. Ignorance** - word Greek "*agnoia*"

In Romans 2:4 he showed that there are people " ignoring that it is the goodness of God that leads you to repentance". But in Hebrews 5:2, we see Christ as a High Priest who "is able to pity the ignorant and the erring." Moses tells the congregation of Israel in Leviticus 4:13: “If the whole congregation of Israel sins in ignorance, and it is hidden from the eyes of the community, and if they do, against any of the commandments of the Lord, that which ought not to be done, and are guilty."

In this sense, sin is caused by not knowing the will of God, and by not dedicating oneself to seeking more understanding of who God is. Thus, sin becomes something involuntary and can become an ignorance chosen by the person.

## 2. Error

The Hebrew word that defines sin as error is "*shagah*", "meaning to go astray, deviate from the right, morally err the will of God. The Greek word "*planao*" follows the same meaning.

In both the Old and New Testaments the writers inspired by God taught that to disobey God's commandments and decrees is a mistake, a sin against the Savior. In Numbers 15:22: "when you err and do not keep all these commandments which the Lord spoke to Moses." Proverbs 28:10: "He who turns the upright into an evil way will himself fall into the pit he made, but the upright will inherit good." Psalm 119:21: "Cursed, who turn away from Your commandments." Psalm 119:118: "You despise those who stray from your decrees, for falsehood is their cunning." Thus, remaining in error, deviating from the will of God, is a form of sin.

## 3. Disobedience

Greek word "parakoe". It means (1) unwillingness to listen, (2) disobedience, and (3) lack of attention to what is important. In Romans 5:19 it says, "For as through the disobedience of one man many were made sinners...". In Hebrews 2:2 "and every transgression or disobedience received just punishment."

In this way, we understand that by disobeying God's commandments and statutes, which are both in the Old and New Testaments, we are sinning against God and staining our life with something that separates us from God.

Disobedience can be voluntary or involuntary. First, it is pretty voluntary if I choose to openly disobey what the Lord has asked me to do. And on the other hand, involuntary disobedience shows the intention not to seek to know God's will to follow it. Both ways are sin against the Lord, according to the Bible.

#### 4. "Missing the target."

The best-known word in the Bible to understand what sin is "*hamartía*."

##### **Committing sinful acts, sinful conduct, sin-governed behavior.**

In Hosea 13:2 "Now they sin more and more, and out of their silver they make molten images, idols after their own estimation... Men even kiss calves." In Daniel 11:32, " He will pervert breakers of the covenant with flattery, but the people who know God will become strong and active."

Paul comments on sin in this way in Romans 6:6 "our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should not be slaves to sin ." "Therefore let not sin reign in your mortal body, so that you obey the passions thereof" (Romans 6:12). Peter said, "Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out " (Acts 3:19). In 1 Corinthians 15:17 "and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins ". But sin, in addition to being something individual, is also considered something of humanity. John the Baptist said of Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

What is missing the mark? What target? The goal of obedience out of love, which God has set for us to reach through His power helping us and guiding us not to err. It is divine power at work in the life of the person who struggles with his sinful tendencies in order to please God and respond to the love and grace already received.

"It is necessary to spend a lot of time in private prayer, in intimate communion with God. Only thus can victories be won" (Ellen White, Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 258).

Dear reader, sin is something severe and destructive in our lives. There are several ways written here to broaden our understanding of what it is to sin against God. In this

way, by knowing what the Bible says about sin, each of us should feel the filth that we are and run into the arms of Christ, pleading for forgiveness and sanctification.

## **5. Disrespect to God**

The Greek words “asebo,” “adikia” and “anomia” are similar in meaning sin as disrespecting God and against His law and justice. It can also mean: acting sinfully, breaking the law, and/or living without God's law.

Amos 4:1 says, "Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, which are in mount Samaria, oppress the poor, crush the needy, and say to your husbands, Give hither, and let us drink ." In 2 Thessalonians 2:8 it says, "then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the manifestation of his coming."

When we have irreverence in the presence of God, or when we are and act contrary to the Law and Justice of God, we sin, because we are disrespecting the character and will of the Lord.

## **6. Transgression and Perversion**

This is understood by the expression “going beyond the limit”. Open apostasy, moral depravity and abomination are similar when it comes to the degrading sin that a human being can plan and/or do. In Leviticus 20:10-11 we see that "if a man commits adultery with his neighbor's wife... his blood shall be upon them." In Proverbs 17:23 it says of those who wish to pervert the lives and characters of others: "The wicked take a bribe secretly, to pervert the paths of righteousness." And in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 it says, "Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition."



Basically, among all that we saw in the definitions and previous verses, we realize that sin is everything, internal and external, that goes against the will and character of God. It can either be considered as acts or, for the most part, sinful desires and feelings hidden because of the sinful nature that we have.

And the results of sin are many. Sin causes confusion and disquiet (Isaiah 57), causes wickedness and deeds against life. Sin results in heavy guilt in the individual who carries it, causing him to lose sleep, find no peace, live in affliction and lead a bitter life.

However, the main result of sin in our lives is a turning away from God and His will. When we are far from God, we are far from life, therefore death is the end of a sinner. Paul himself said, "The wages of sin is death." Sin destroys anyone's life. It destroys your family, your health, your faith, your happiness and friends. Sin brings problems, difficulties, and bitter consequences.

The only solution to sin is Christ. Paul goes on to say, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Do you want the power of Christ to work more and more in your life every day to help you overcome temptations, correct bad habits, and, through His wonderful grace, forgive your sins?

Keep reading this book. You will find secrets from men in the Bible who pleaded for forgiveness and sanctification and God granted them. Ask God to revive the work of salvation in your life. Beg your Savior to give a sanctified life each day.

**“Revive thy work, O Lord!”**

When we stop to look at our lives and how we are opening them to God's influence and presence, it is crucial to remember the words of the prophet Habakkuk. “I have heard,

O Lord, Your sayings, and I am alarmed: Revive Your work, O Lord, through the years, and through the years, make it known; in Your wrath, remember mercy” (3:2).

The context that the prophet lived was very difficult to develop faith. Perhaps very similar to the present day we live. There was much apostasy. People sought God only to receive something in return, and upon receiving, they left faith and commitments. There was great political corruption, where the nation's leaders despised all the weak and poor, making them the trash of society. Many false prophets appeared and confused more and more people's minds, and, as they did not study the word, they did not know how to define what was right or wrong. Without commenting on the moral degradation and violence in the streets. Did you find any resemblance to our days?

I knew a young woman who had been going to church for many years but never made a decision to commit to Christ. Her habit of going to bars, having boyfriends, having exuberant parties, and the lack of practice of true Christianity made her a slave to sin.

Over the years and the difficulties of life, she realized that she had to be baptized, as a way to get out of her problems. Finally, there was his baptism. Apparently, she was changed. However, old habits and temptations continued to surround his life. And gradually, she surrendered to her old life far from God. I could see that this girl always sought God's blessings and protection, but she never let the Spirit of God work a change, a revival, in her life.

For situations like this, the prophet does not see how to live before God in this way. It does not find solutions to help the people improve or increase their faith. So he seems to give a cry for help. "Revive Thy work, O Lord!" "Revive your people!" This means an intense petition made to God to "restore life" or "revive" the heart and true communion with God and neighbor.

Talking about prayer is talking about spiritual revival. If your prayer is not making you grow spiritually, stay tuned. If your prayer isn't motivating you to change your habits and thoughts, maybe it's best to analyze what's really going on. Every true prayer generates spiritual life in those who pray, this is reflected in their actions, decisions, and ideas. God's greatest desire is for each of us to spend time in prayer. Not just a prayer of simple thanks or requests, but something life-giving.

Spiritual hunger will come when we open our hearts to God to work. We need to pray, asking God to give us this desire because the things of this world are beautiful. Currently, we have all the resources available. Tablets, computers, translators, television, prominent temples, adequate transport, etc. All this is and can be more and more a great blessing for the preaching of the gospel.

However, what is most important is the people. We have the knife and the cheese, but we lack hunger. We need to want to evangelize. We need to look forward to seeing people converting and changing their lives for the love of Jesus. We need to be thirsty to talk about Jesus and transmit love to our neighbors. This is our current challenge as a church.

The Bible presents several examples of people who prayed for forgiveness and sanctification. Supplication is the climax of prayer. Supplication encompasses problems, sufferings, and anguish, as we see in the text of Habakkuk or in Hannah's cry when asking for a son (1 Samuel 1:9-11) or in the deep repentance that David showed in Psalm 51.

Supplication is an appeal, a cry addressed to God with such humility and, at the same time, such confidence in the mercy of our heavenly Father. It is at this moment that God performs a true spiritual surgery in our lives.

God, by His grace, is awakening His people. He is reviving His church, visible and invisible throughout the world. Would you, in fact, be in this movement? In the next

few lines, let's look at some examples of humans, like you and me, who made themselves available to God by searching for forgiveness and sanctification.

### **Supplicate for forgiveness and sanctification**

We must prepare the way for the coming of Jesus, as did John the Baptist. We need the Lord to increase our faith. We need to have less confidence and security in what we can do and more in what God is willing to do in each of us, individually and collectively.

We lack, to a much greater extent than we do now, the desire to be in full communion with the heavenly Father. We must plead for pardon and sanctification more fervently. "You will seek me and find me, when you search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). Only a contrite, sincere, pleading heart can be open to the influence of the Holy Ghost.

Let us also remember **Daniel**, already old, in the corrupt court of Persia. He was a sinful man, but he possessed great spiritual light from being in the presence of God every day of his life. He was known to have the Spirit of God. After going through many difficulties and victories in the dominated Babylonian empire, he was able to experience the presence of God and moments of hope when praying.

We often see that he pleaded in his prayers. He humbled himself with all his heart before his Lord asking for forgiveness and the sanctification of his own life and that of his people. "As we come intimately to His side and fellowship with Him...through the power of the Spirit of Christ, our hearts and lives are changed" (Ellen White, Letter 47, 3/28/1903).

Once, as we see in chapter nine of his book, Daniel had just studied Jeremiah's prophecies about the captivity of the people of Israel in Babylon and their release to return to the much-loved city of Jerusalem, and soon he "turned his face to the Lord. God, to seek him with prayer and supplication, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes" (Daniel 9:3).

We see that we all need to humble ourselves before God and seek Him with all our hearts. Fasting and sackcloth with ashes were a symbol and practice often used by the faithful to God who were sad, with some sin, something that displeased God, or with something that they needed divine help to solve.

When fasting, as Jesus said, it is not necessary to go out into the square or the streets and show yourself to everyone. Fasting is an intimate moment of the creature with its Creator. Fasting is a demonstration of self-denial and submission to the will of God. It allows our minds and hearts to be better able to understand and receive the Savior's words.

This prophet was fasting, praying in supplication, with sackcloth of ashes, to beg his God for forgiveness, not only for the sins he had committed, but for the iniquities that his people had been committing over the years. And God rejoices when a child of His comes with a small and sincere heart to ask for help and sanctification.

Daniel goes on to say:

I prayed to the Lord my God, I confessed... we have sinned and committed iniquities, we have done wickedly and been rebellious, departing from your commandments and from your judgments; and we did not listen to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the earth (Daniel 9:4-6).

This man is an example to all of us. He sought his God in the right way, pleading for forgiveness. It is crucial that we put ourselves in our smallness and recognize our

sinful nature to enter God's presence. Jesus always said: "Come to me the weary and the heavy laden, and I will give you rest." In other words, to go to God's presence, a person must recognize that he is weak and sinful and then find relief and forgiveness, which only God can give.

No matter how great the spiritual light of God is in someone, even if he enjoys divine favor and blessings, he must always walk humbly before the Lord. You must beg God in faith to direct your every thought and control your every impulse.

I often remember that I would gather in prayer and, with a proud and rebellious heart, I could not feel God. It was so difficult for me to pray and talk to my heavenly Father when I had my heart turned to myself, when I allowed my thoughts and desires to be in control.

One night, it was about 7:30 pm, I had spent a spiritually heavy week, I started to walk slowly near a small wood at the college. There was no one around. It was just God and me. So, in the dark of the night, I stopped with no stars and moon and started to cry while talking to God, asking for forgiveness for being such a bad son. I pleaded with Him to cleanse me from my sins and help me surrender my life entirely to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

I don't remember the details of that night very well. But when I looked at the clock it was already 22:30. I was so light. My heart was so grateful to God that I was sure I had received forgiveness and the opportunity to start over. So I went to the room where I lived. I spent a night sleeping in the presence of the Throne of God, something that only those who have had similar experiences know how good it is.

Dear reader, this is OASIS. It is experiencing the presence of God daily. It is living moments of hope in a future that our Savior is preparing. Have you had a heavy and

difficult life? Do you feel troubled and distressed because of your sins or mistakes that you have not yet felt forgiven?

Want the answer? Seek God with true supplications. Ask for forgiveness and openly confess to your heavenly Father. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

With the forgiveness received, Jesus puts on us His garments of purity and salvation. He lifts our burden. Therefore, he expects us to seek him for sanctification, that is, for the change of habits and customs in our life, in order to honor him wherever we go.

What is your decision today? Do you want to make supplication a renewing experience in your life with Jesus?

One who wants to live according to the Word of God must have frequent communion with Christ through prayer and study of the word. Because these are the sources of strength. Communion with God will give more strength to make decisions. Communion with God will give power to say no to the vices and sins we cherish. The believer must earnestly seek God, must plead for His presence beside every trial and test.

“The person who loves God is pleased to draw strength from Him , through constant communion with Him. When conversation with the Lord becomes habitual, the power of Satan is broken” (Ellen White, Review and Herald, Dec. 3, 1889).

See in the next few lines the example of Joshua and his supplication to better understand what God wants from our lives.

## **Joshua's Experience**

“Then **Joshua**, with the elders of Israel, tore his clothes, fell on his face before the ark of the Lord, covering his head with earth, and remained there until the evening” (Joshua 7:6).

The people of Israel had lost an important battle against the city of Ai. Joshua was sure victory was certain, but something got out of hand. Someone has sinned. So, with great sadness in his heart, with a desire to obey God in everything, he prostrated himself on the ground to ask God for forgiveness for the people's sin.

As we have seen, sin destroys, sin kills, sin creates anguish and imprisons its bearer with darkness. Sin is not just a wrong act, but wrong thoughts, plans, and even wills. We desire sin because it creates a fantasy for us. But its reality is deadly to the person and often to the people around him.

In the experience of Joshua and the people of Israel, the word of God clearly shows us that sin separates us from God, bringing consequences and failure. Only genuine repentance, the fruit of a sincere search for the Lord, can bring us back to our Creator. True repentance brings us before God (Jeremiah 15:19) and leads us in a new direction.

The supplication of Joshua and the elders of Israel was answered by God. Sin was abandoned and the nation gained victory. Supplication, or cry, is the result of sincere repentance. To tear their garments and put dust on their heads was an expression of what was in the hearts of the suppliants who humbly cried out for the presence of God.

Dear reader, when you have been praying, have you tried to humble yourself before God? Have you been longing for a cleansing that only the blood of the Lamb can accomplish in your life? Earnestly seek to plead with God for forgiveness and



sanctification. Keep in mind the spiritual struggle we fight every day, against the sin that surrounds us and against the sin that is born within us.

### **Spiritual struggle against sin**

We have to keep in mind that our struggle is not against the things of this world, such as our routine, our annoyances, our anger or sadness. Our real struggle is against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Ephesians 6:12).

As our fight is spiritual, we need heavenly weapons to protect and defend ourselves in the face of enemy attacks. “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds” (2 Corinthians 10:4).

“Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The supplication of the righteous can do much because of its effectiveness” (James 5:16).

We have to face many storms in our life. Our sins often imprison us in chains of depression, low self-esteem, obsession, pride, selfishness, etc. The less we plead with God for forgiveness, the less we confess our sins to God, the less we cry out for sanctification, the less we will have power from on high and the less we will endure storms.

Jesus was clear when he said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). When the repentant sinner pleads for pardon and sanctification, Christ hears his petition from the heavenly sanctuary and grants them peace and deliverance that only His grace can offer. The Savior does not choose who to help, he is available and open to anyone who seeks him.

So whatever storm you are going through, beg God for forgiveness and cleansing, and allow Him to transform you in every moment. Supplicate God to make you feel the need for revival and reformation in your life.

### **Need to plead for revival and reformation**

When analyzing the churches of Revelation, we perceive a historical and prophetic equivalence in the ages of Christianity. Unfortunately, the church that most resembles our period is the last, Laodicea. And, in addition to seeming prophetically analyzed, it is understood that we are ourselves.

This has some symptoms that are latent in our days, such as: blindness, nudity, misery and poverty. Besides that it can be neither cold nor hot. It's warm. This can be understood in all areas of life. Finished families. weakened love. Falsehood, pride, selfishness, etc. But mainly in the spiritual life, which permeates all spheres of our existence.

Praying for forgiveness and sanctification, a complete spiritual revival, helps us to end the Laodicea Syndrome. When we truly seek the Lord, when we seek the "refined gold" (faith and love), the "eye salve" (spiritual discernment) and the "white robes" (Christ's righteousness), we can live a real and true experience with God.

Dear reader, I write these words for myself, but I extend them to you. We have to stop playing religiosity and live in active communion with God. The Lord does not want religious beings. He looks for people who really live the true religion of the Bible, the love that comes from Christ.

God knows we often hide in church tradition, or local customs, formality, or even sentimental religion that seeks ecstasy. This is not spiritual life.

A true revival is needed. This will come through hours of studying God's Word intelligently. It will come through hours in prayer asking for sanctification and transformation of sins into a life that overcomes every temptation. It will come through a convinced faith in the grace of Jesus and the leading of the Holy Spirit in every moment.

One day a doctor friend was talking about a difficulty he had in a consultation with a patient. She had a lot of migraines. Then the doctor asked: "how many years have you been suffering from this disease"? She replied: "I have suffered for 40 years, I have taken every medicine you can imagine. I've done everything possible and impossible to heal myself, and nothing. I'm getting worse."

The doctor then reviewed some tests and asked other questions. Anyway, after 30 minutes of a very simple consultation, he gave the prescription: "You need to sleep early, eat more raw vegetables and go for a walk. This will help a lot. I'll give you other tips later." "But doctor!" she exclaimed with a scream and a thump on the table. "I came here for you to give me medicine and not to teach me how to live!"

How many and how many times do we, as sinners, go to God, begging for forgiveness or asking for something, and hear His answer: "Change your habits; trust me more; be honest and pure." Several times we heard something that was not what we wanted to hear. Several times we realize that God is not giving the "medicine" that we think is good. He is prescribing simple tips, which in the end, will bring healing, physical and spiritual. We need to be more attentive and willing to what God wants to say to our lives.

Life reform is needed. Jesus said, "Go and sin no more" (John 8:11). Every time we receive God's forgiveness and grace, we are light and clean. But the most noticeable consequence of true repentance and forgiveness is the reformation of life, habits, thoughts and decisions. God will help you in this reform.

Do you want to close your eyes now and seek spiritual healing? Do you feel God intensely inviting you to have a total surrender and a correct spiritual revival? Have this moment of prayer with your mighty Savior. Plead for forgiveness and sanctification before continuing this reading.

### **Jesus' prayer**

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors .  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:12-13).

Asking him to deliver us from evil is not only deliverance from temptations that come, but it is also about the evil one, the enemy of God. We do not fight against the flesh, but against “principalities and powers”, against “the rulers of evil in the heavenly realms”. We need to ask God to deliver us from the snares of the enemy. May it help us to overcome our sinful tendencies. Deliver us from everything that could be a danger to our faith, fellowship with Christ, and witness of the gospel.

“Blessed is the man who suffers because of temptation” (James 1:12). Temptations do not come from God, but He helps and perfects us when we are tempted by the enemy, in order to overcome and testify of His power.

We have to ask God to give us strength to resist temptations, the fiery darts of the enemy. “Deliver us from evil” is asking God to help us never depend on our own strength, never go a day without seeking His presence and His power, so that we never lose communion and connection with His will.

“While the soldiers were doing the terrible work, and He was suffering the most acute agony, Jesus prayed for His enemies: ' **Father, forgive them**, for they know not

what they do (Luke 23:34). That prayer of Christ for His enemies encompassed the whole world, involving every sinner who was to live to the end of time" (Ellen G. White, History of Redemption, p. 222).

Jesus teaches us to pray, asking God for forgiveness for the debts committed, making sure that the Father is by our side to forgive. But Christ adds something important in this respect. We must forgive each other too. We must take away the rancor, hatred and hurt we have towards someone for having offended us. That's why we emphasize in this book the following idea: "To forgive is to grant the other the right to be happy again and, above all, to forgive is to grant yourself freedom from the internal prison".

In the model prayer Jesus commented on the issue of forgiveness. He said, "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you...".

Forgiveness is not:

- **Forgiving is not ignoring a mistake.**

Someone might say, "Oh, never mind!" It doesn't fix it, it just covers it up. Ignoring a mistake doesn't necessarily mean forgiving those who hurt us.

- **To forgive is not to excuse or overlook the mistake.**

Joseph told his brothers: "You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20). Joseph handled the case with personality and moral firmness. He made no excuses for what had happened. One of the first steps we have to take to truly forgive is to recognize the mistake that someone has made against us.

- **Forgiving is not taking the blame for others.**

Many spend time thinking about what they did to be offended and wronged. Joseph didn't. He was loving and diplomatic with his brothers, but he didn't take the blame for it.

The forgiveness we must learn:

- **Forgiving implies clearly defining the wrong committed against us.**

Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt."

We need to recognize inwardly the wrongs that others have done against us so that we can forgive them.

- **To forgive is to face the cross of Christ.**

Once we have identified the mistakes they made against us, the feelings that were born in our being (hatred, rancor, humiliation, injustice, revolt, comparison, indifference, etc.) we have to go to the cross of Christ. Paul in Ephesians 4:32 says, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you."

\*

Dear reader, begging God for forgiveness and sanctification in prayer is one of the strongest ways to experience the presence of God in your life, it is to live the **OASIS** within the desert of sin, guilt and life without holiness.

As you allow God to cleanse and reform your life, it will surely result in a true revival. If we plead for forgiveness and sanctification, we must also offer our brothers and enemies true forgiveness. Do you need to ask someone for forgiveness? Or do you need to apologize for something they did to you?

May God bless you and that in your life you may experience more and more the wonderful presence of God. This will make your life so complete that you will want to

intercede for others by asking God for them. See the next chapter to experience God's presence through intercessory prayer.

**Questions for reflection:**

1. What is sin for you? What is sin in the Bible?
2. Do you think begging God for forgiveness is important? Why?
3. Is it difficult for you to be a forgiving person? How could you forgive those who offend you more?
4. Do you feel that your life, your family, and your church need to be revived by God? How?

## **INTERCEDE**

"Therefore he is also able to save perfectly those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them "(Hebrews 7:25).

### **What is intercessory prayer?**

It is the golden link that unites finite man with the throne of the infinite God. Men have no divine or good attribute that makes them worthy of asking for themselves, not even for other people. But through Christ, this becomes both possible and necessary.

The human being, whom Christ has saved by his death on the cross of Calvary, intercedes before the throne of God, and his petition is taken up by Jesus, who has bought him with his own blood. Our great High Priest places his righteousness on the side of the sincere suppliant, and the prayer of Christ unites with that of the human being who pleads.

Dear reader, intercession is just that, uniting with God in prayer and action to bless someone. It is crying out for someone's forgiveness, it is begging for any divine help in favor of the human being, with the final objective of uniting him to God. Intercessory prayer is having "love on your knees"; that is, it really loves people and wants their good. It's talking to God about someone. It is the duty of every Christian.

Living a life of intercession is what Christ wants of His disciples. It is a divine means of blessing couples who are falling apart. It is a divine means of interceding for children left alone and broken. It is a divine way to be interested in people who live in depression, who live in the darkness or illusion of life, without purpose or value. Indeed, intercessory prayer is most important in a true Christian's life.



For example. Soon after Israel's sin, when he made the golden calf, Moses returned to intercede before God on behalf of his people. The leader of Israel went to meet the Lord and, in communion and repentance, God read the sincerity and self-sacrificing purpose of his servant's heart. He said to the Lord: "Now therefore, forgive their sin; or if not, blot me out, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written" (Exodus 32:32).

Thus, God placed himself open to communicate with this feeble mortal "face to face," similar to two friends talking. Moses entrusted all of himself to God and opened his whole life before Him. The Lord did not rebuke his servant, but made himself available, as always, to listen to his supplications and intercessions.

I remember one night I was in the hospital with my wife. I was praying for her to get better and get good medication. But, in addition to praying for her, I was permanently moved to intercede for the sick in that hospital. It also happened when an ambulance passed, I would soon raise a prayer to Heaven, interceding for the ill person inside.

We mustn't have only a sense of pleading with God for people who are suffering but also a responsibility to intercede for them. Just as Jesus did, we need to be channels of blessing as we cry out for people who need human and divine help. See now four essentials of an intercessory prayer

## **Four Essentials of Intercessory Prayer**

### **1. Be specific**

I don't know if it happens to you, but our prayers are very general, and we tend to generalize all requests. How many times have we prayed, "Bless the missionaries, the brethren in the church, and the requests that have been made. Lord, even if I don't

remember what was asked, bless you all." This is generalizing a prayer. In other words, I'm not caring about the other person's request, but to be nice, I'm going to pray for everything.

God does not need you and me to generalize our intercessions. He wants us to really care about people's difficulties and requests. For that we need to be specific in every detail of our prayer.

For this, making a prayer list with the requests and needs you have been listening to helps you not forget and punctuate what was really manifested by someone. Use a small notebook to write. Get people to write. Take time to pray and specifically intercede one by one. In this way, you will experience more of God's compassionate character, and you will realize what Jesus himself commanded about loving your neighbor.

Paul always prayed intercessory prayers for people. "For God, whom I serve in my spirit, in the gospel of His Son, is my witness, that as I mention you unceasingly" (Romans 1:9). "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The supplication of the righteous can do much because of its effectiveness" (James 5:16).

## **2. Be delicate**

Intercessory prayer is a challenge and can discourage people who are not seeing the desired changes right away. Often praying for people who don't even recognize God can cause discouragement. Praying for individuals who are not interested in your prayers can sadden the intercessor.

However, be gentle with the people you are interceding for. Do not lose faith. Keep praying and crying. Kindly continue to share your desire for the salvation of the

other. Leave the work of salvation in the hands of the Holy Spirit, who always works powerfully in our lives.

And remember that the most significant interest in salvation is God, so you are uniting with the Savior in this noble work. "And he that searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is because it is according to the will of God that he makes intercession for the saints" (Romans 8:27). The greatest intercessor is the Spirit of God, who unites with us on behalf of people.

### **3. Be persistent**

"With all prayer and supplication, always praying in the Spirit, and being on the watch with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Ephesians 6:18).

To persist in intercessory prayer is not to keep repeating the same things to God as some people think. To persist is to fight every day for faith so that something happens. And if it doesn't, being convinced that God's will is above us is the best option.

Daniela had a husband who had not accepted Jesus as his Savior. She was eager to lead her husband to Christ. But he always resisted everything religious.

However, one day she decided that she would pray every day for an entire year for this purpose. Each morning, she would kneel down and cry out to God for her spouse's salvation. By the end of this year, she had seen no change and said to God, "I believe, my God, that I must go on for another year crying out for my beloved." "Couldn't the Lord work a miracle in your life?" she finished. Every day, there Daniela was, kneeling, interceding for her husband and his salvation.

One day, her husband came home, said hello, and headed for the bedroom. She found the attitude different. In silent steps, she went to see what her husband was doing.

And to her great delight, he was kneeling in the same spot where she, every day, knelt to ask for him. Daniela saw her lover praying for mercy and forgiveness from God.

Dear reader, God's will is for us to be persistent in praying for people. It is not to fill prayer with useless phrases or selfish requests. Prayer is a way by faith to place people and their difficulties in Heavenly Father's loving arms.

#### **4. Be patient**

“I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men” (1 Timothy 2:1).

In our days, e-mails, fast food, phone calls, etc. they make everything immediate in our life. We often place God's goodness and grace within this culture, where the answer to prayer must come immediately.

We must wait patiently. We must learn that God is much faster than we imagine, but he has different ways of answering prayer.

It can be with an immediate (1) "YES," which we often experience. It can be with a (2) "NO" because not everything we ask will really be for our salvation and sanctification. And, also, God can respond with a (3) "WAIT." Most of the time we pray, our Father tells us to wait, to wait for the right moment when He will definitely act.

Be patient and constant in your prayers. Do not lose faith, for the Lord guides the universe and your life. Having patience is akin to fully trusting that He can do whatever is really needed. Believe it. Keep interceding and wait on God. See also for whom Jesus interceded and the example for us.

**For whom did Jesus intercede?**

We know that God is the first to intercede for us. The prayer that Jesus prayed for the disciples and for all believers shows how much He cares to intercede for each of His children.

Jesus' prayer in John 17 is divided into three parts, which can be an example for us. These are: (1) request for Himself (v. 1-5), (2) intercession for the disciples (v. 6-19), and (3) prayer on behalf of all believers (v. 20-26).

When, in our prayers, we stop to intercede, here comes the part of prayer requests, the pleas, and cries we make for others. We need to pray for ourselves because we have anguish and challenges that we need to ask God to give us strength and solutions.

Like Jesus, he prayed for himself to receive the power of the Father. We must also cry out for our spiritual life, work, family, health, etc.; everything must be transparent to God, even the hidden intentions and desires of our hearts must be placed on the Throne of Grace.

In our prayers, we need to dedicate time to cry out for our projects and plans, for solutions to problems and challenges that we have to face. Always allowing God to be the center of our requests, and everything we do or get is for His glory.

Right after praying for yourself, we should pray for the requests and cries of the people around us. Praying for the church, praying for believers, praying on behalf of the government, interceding for neighbors in the building or neighborhood. Ask God for people who desire evil and destruction.

Interceding for the good of people should be a Christian custom, a habit. Praying to God for the salvation of souls should be a constant task for all who know lovely grace. See below how to bring blessings to people through intercession.

## **Bringing Blessings to People**

When reading several books and articles and analyzing the most cited themes in prayer requests, I realized that we could make an acrostic to memorize the reasons for our intercessory prayer. There are only six reasons here, not all of them, but I tried to organize them so that we remember the most cited ones.

In this way, by interceding for people and yourself, you will be bringing blessing to most of God's children. We will be interceding for the family bases, for the relationship between parents and children, for problems that arise in the home environment, etc., everything that is part of the family base. We must continue to pray for the sick. Whenever you can make visits to places where people suffer because of illnesses or accidents.

Our mission is to cry out to God for more new Christians so that more people will accept the gospel. But beyond that, pray and care for new Christians, those who have just been born through baptism, those who are still learning what it is to live with Christ. We can always include the known and unknown and their requests to God. Do we often know what our neighbor needs? Wouldn't it be worth praying for the women who serve us at the checkout in a supermarket? Wouldn't it be Christian to intercede for the drivers and conductors of the buses we take? Is it not so necessary that we pray for strangers who suffer natural disasters or serious problems?

Christ taught us to pray for the authorities and for our enemies or opponents. Even if we don't like the attitude of such people, or if we are nervous and disappointed, it is our duty also to intercede for the rulers of our society. And what about our enemies and opponents. God wants to transform our lives to the point where we are humble and Christian enough to be like Jesus, who prayed and interceded for those who hated Him. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Dear reader, this is our life of intercession, this is being a Christian. God is on our side to transform us and help us to be the ones who bring blessing to all possible people, in prayer, and in action.

### **The compassion and love of God in us**

Intercede is to become like the compassionate Jesus, who constantly intercedes for His children. When we dedicate our lives to praying for others, we allow our hearts to be shaped by God's love and mercy for His little children who suffer here in this world. Interceding is not just asking for you and your interests, but, above all, it is crying out to the Lord to take care and bless other people known or unknown to you.

We find in History many characters who showed true compassion for people. They lived praying and interceding for the multitudes and for the peoples they wanted to bring into the arms of Christ.

We remember David Brainerd, who prayed in the frozen forests of snow, interceding for Indians to accept Jesus. He spent nights crying out to God for help for people who were perishing without the gospel. When this missionary was about to die, he stayed at the home of Jonathan Edwards, who said, "I praise God for His providence in having you in my home, so that I can hear your prayers, witness your consecration, and be inspired by your example. of intercession for lost people".

There is also George Whitefield, a great preacher of multitudes of people. What was your secret? The intense desire in prayers to intercede for the salvation of all when possible. He prayed three times a day, pleading with God for heavenly power to touch people's hearts for Christ.

How not to quote the great Dwight Moody. The One who walked the streets of Chicago preaching about Jesus. His aim was to speak of Christ to at least one person a day. The day he couldn't, he would go out into the streets to find someone to listen to the gospel. His life demonstrated not only prayers for the salvation of people, but all his actions were in a way that interceded to God for the lost to accept Jesus as Savior.

Why does it seem that this generation of true intercessors has passed away? Why is it so lacking in our prayers the sincere intention to intercede for the lost and for the nations that have not yet accepted Christ? Often our prayers are focused on asking only for our problems, struggles and challenges. Our selfish, missionless prayers reflect the spiritual and missionary void we often find ourselves in.

God wants us not only to be lights and salt on the earth but that our prayers and cries be for the lost, for the multitudes that are not yet fully decided for Christ. The Holy Spirit wants to use us mightily to shake hell and bring out people bought by the blood of Christ. Intercession will only start to have more strength when we stop and dedicate hours to interceding for lives to be saved.

To have a compassionate heart like God's, we must (1) **pray** for groups of people, crying out to God for the salvation and transformation of these His children; (2) **find** other Christians who have fire in their hearts to win souls, people who feel the burning feeling and duty to save as many people as possible; (3) **have** objectives and strategies to develop a work of intercession and preaching in the locality in focus; and, (4) most importantly, **search** the Bible, the gospels, how Jesus sought to attract and save people, what Christ's feeling was about the crowds and learn from Him how to be a true and sincere intercessor.

The kingdom of God is coming, not only in people's hearts, but Jesus is coming back for people who have accepted and loved Him. But how will people know Christ if you and I do not intercede for them? How will they accept the gospel if you and I don't



spend time praying and doing something for them to meet Jesus? “It is impossible for anyone to ... enjoy fellowship with Him and not feel responsibility for the souls for whom Christ gave His life” (Review and Herald, 7/21/1891).

Interceding is letting God's compassion and love take over your life in order to save people. Do you have this desire? Do you want the Lord to make you a true intercessor?

### **Jesus' prayer**

“Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11)

Ask for daily bread, ask for daily spiritual food. Also ask, interceding, for the daily bread of the needy, doing your best to help. “And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

Luther used to make a famous list of what this daily bread means: food, drink, clothes, shoes, home, work, money, good government, good weather (neither cold nor hot), peace, health, discipline, honor, faithful friends and good neighbors. Of course, Luther was putting the needs and conditions of the social classes of Germany in the 16th century. What we can also do with the needs of our century and society.

The word bread in the Bible has some meanings joined together:

1. **What is indispensable to live;** the least food that the poor wretch or the pilgrim can afford. Asking God for daily bread means asking that the basic provisions of life be obtained, either by work or by someone's grace. Basic things in life, as

Jesus said in Matthew 6:25-34, are clothing and food, for God helps the birds to eat daily and the lilies of the field to dress.

2. The Bible also presents bread as a **symbol of God's life and grace**. Jesus is the Bread of Life. Manna was freely given by God for the care and maintenance of the people of Israel in the wilderness. To ask God for daily bread is also to ask for the saving grace of Christ that daily clothes the sinner who confesses and repents. It is living by the goodness of God, it is depending on His help and provision in work and daily struggles.

Dear reader, seeking God in prayer is putting your life, your needs in His hands. Intercessory prayer is crying out to the heavenly Father to bless the needs of people, closest or not, known or unknown, friends or not. Jesus wants you and me to be intercessors, following Christ's example.

This is **OASIS**. When you and I connect with the Lord to intercede and bless human beings, we experience the divine presence. We found the true oasis in the middle of the desert of selfishness and pride. Are you willing to start your mission through prayer? Close your eyes and talk to God. Place in Your arms the lives of people you know need a miracle, or just a daily blessing and protection.

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In the last chapter, the next, as you read, experience how pleasant and pleasant it is to feel the presence of God through Silence. How good it is to hear His voice through verses and promises that are remembered.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. What is intercessory prayer for you?
2. Who do you think we should intercede for?
3. Do you believe that just praying in intercession and doing no action is enough for God?
4. Comment on any experiences you have had when interceding for someone or knowing that someone was interceding for you. What did you feel? What has changed?

## **SILENCE**

“It is good to hope, and to wait in silence for the salvation of the Lord” (Lamentations 3:26).

Being silent in prayer helps us to hear the voice of God, it opens our hearts to surrender everything we ask and we intercede in His hands. To remain silent is to trust more in divine actions than in our own strength.

This chapter aims to present what the Bible says about the silence of God and the silence of the human being. In addition, it seeks to motivate each of us to fully trust the Lord so that we can find the peace He wants to give us. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

### **The silence of God**

This expression "the silence of God" generates a feeling of contrition in us. I feel that I am incapable and weak in the face of so many difficulties of human existence. And that only God can guide our lives in the best way we can't even imagine.

Countless times the Word of God reveals moments when faithful people had to face “the silence of God”. These people did not lose faith, blaspheme, or abandon their relationship with the Lord. Quite the opposite. The more they listened to the silence of God, the more they approached with full certainty that their lives were deposited in the arms of the Most High Father.

“Nothing inflicts such a wound on the soul as the sharp darts of unbelief. When the test comes, as it always will, do not be distressed or lament. The silence of the soul makes the voice of God clearer. 'Then they rejoiced in the calm' (Psalm 107:30). Remember that under you are the everlasting arms” (Ellen White, Signs of the Times, November 5, 1902, *our translation*).

Faithful, righteous servant, whom God commended before the representatives of the whole universe. However, this servant of God lived as we do today, in a world of sin and death. It is not God who brings misfortune, it is the enemy who afflicts us with all sorts of struggles, problems and temptations.

Despite all of Job's suffering, he did not abandon God. On the contrary, he sought more the face of the Creator and, even with human errors, the Lord revealed himself to Him. However, this came after a period of silence.

When God is silent, it is not that He is distant or indifferent to our problems and struggles. When we realize that God is far from us, it is the moment that He is closer, because it is necessary to take care of your faith at a critical moment. God's silence is revealed in the Bible as the Lord responding in the best possible way for the salvation and good of each person.

The apostle Paul felt the “silence of God” firsthand. When in many afflictions and persecutions for His name's sake, this follower of God begged aloud, deliver me from this thorn (2 Corinthians 12:7). And what he heard was a long, deep silence. But he continued to insist and beg God for deliverance from sin. However, he heard a phrase that should be our daily phrase: “**My grace is sufficient for you**” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

What about the great John the Baptist, the second greatest said Jesus Christ. When he was in prison and about to die, this disciple asked his cousin: “Are you the one who was to come, or is it something else that we are waiting for?” And Jesus graciously

answered him, "What you have heard and seen: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are raised..." (Luke 7:19-23). After these words, John heard nothing more, he remained in "the silence of God", however, his faith did not fail, and his certainty in the Savior increased.

Dear reader, despite these reports above and many others, the greatest we can cite here is the "silence of the Father" towards Jesus on the cross. After a night of much struggle and prayer. After asking, "Let this cup pass from me, but your will." After receiving countless lashes, injustices, criticism, mockery, and abandonment. Our Savior was crucified shamefully before the universe. And in the presence of all, he cried out: "Father, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46).

There is no way you and I can read this account and contemplate the Son of God, our Savior, living "the silence of God" and not understand that the Lord is always on our side. Even on the cross, the Father and the Spirit were closer than any creature, yet they needed to be silent.

Jesus is the greatest example for us. Even if we are not hearing the voice of God, or feeling His presence, we have to be completely sure that He is the one closest to us. Don't leave Him, don't forsake Him. Stand in faith with him, knowing that when there is silence from God, that is when we most need to be attentive and open to His eternal care.

### **Geovana's Experience**

Geovana is Sylvania's daughter. In her teens, she was baptized and her mother and younger brother, Daniel, in Salvador. His mother was a great manager in a bank chain in the city, she was an example of a sportsman, she was faithful to God and very dedicated to preaching the gospel.

However, one day, Silvânia had to go to the hospital because of a slight fall on the street. It was then that the doctors began to worry about her. They discovered a strong cancer in her lungs that was spreading through her body and reaching her brain. The family was desperate, with something so serious revealed overnight.

As a servant of God, this woman continued her active faith in God. Even with the heavy treatments to remove this malignant disease, his body was weakening. Still, the certainty of salvation did not leave his head.

The impact hit her children hard. Geovana, the eldest, struggled with God in prayer every day, crying out for her young mother's life. This daughter put all her hopes in the power of God, to the point of almost forcing Him to heal.

Approximately one year and nine months of spiritual struggle passed during the many treatments. To Geovana, God seemed silent because he wasn't doing anything. For Silvânia, even not seeing God's solutions and answers, she surrendered to the arms of the Lord of life. After the last three very tense weeks, this woman of God passed away on a Saturday morning.

There were periods of great sadness in the church and in the family. The children Silvânia, Geovana and Lucas, had difficulty praying and reading the Bible. They were not against God. But such was the sadness that God did not answer their petitions that they lost the strength to maintain communion with Him. Thank God the church and family were close to them. Through visits, conversations, intercessions, Geovana decided to follow the paths of her mother, who, even in her illness, held a small group of prayer and Bible study in her home for people who had not yet surrendered to Jesus.

Until one day, Geovana made a beautiful sermon at the church service, talking about the silence of God. Even with an inexplicable sadness, this daughter showed that God is never far from his children. He is never silent. She said a phrase that impressed

me a lot: “I thought that God was silent because He didn't answer exactly what I cried out. However, today I learned, with great pain, that the Lord was always by my side , giving me strength to take care of my mother and remain with faith”. In the conclusion he stated: “God is never silent, we are the ones who do not want to hear other answers than our own”.

Geovana became a church youth leader. She has been dedicated to uniting and strengthening the younger ones in the faith through her example. Even with all the difficulties she goes through and the longing, this daughter motivates everyone to remain firm in God, because He is faithful. And Lucas, has joined more strongly in the music ministry, leading friends to Jesus.

### **Be still and know that I am God**

“Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). “Rest in the Lord , and wait for him; be not weary because of him that prospereth in his way, because of the man that carries out evil designs" (Psalm 37:7). This is a powerful verse, it is a firm certainty in divine Power and Wisdom. Resting in God is what this chapter wants to present.

Silence after prayer is essential for us to reflect on the Father's promises of care for His children. The Spanish version of the Bible presents the same concept, but with one word increasing the meaning of our trust in Him. “Keep silence before Jehovah and wait for him” (Psalm 37:7 – *Reina Valera*). It is incredible how pleasant it is to rest in God, keep silence, and quiet the heart in the certainty that our life is given over to the cares and plans of the One who is Omniscient and Omnipotent.



The act of stopping to feel the presence of God, of meditating on divine promises and purposes, of allowing the “I” to disappear, as Paul said, and for Christ to live in us is one of the most fantastic experiences of someone who lives in the presence of God. God's.

Ellen White commented on an experience she had saying:

"Many nights over the past nine months I have only been able to sleep for two hours a night. Sometimes, I find myself shrouded in darkness, but I prayed and received very sweet comfort as I drew near to God. The promises: 'Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you' (James 4:8), and 'when the enemy comes like a stream of water, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up His standard against him (Isaiah 59: 19), were fulfilled in me. I was happy in the Lord. Jesus was sacredly near, and I thought the grace bestowed sufficient, for my soul was steadfast in God, and I was filled with grateful praise to Him who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Selected Messages, v. 2, p. 241).

Remain silent and listen to the voice of God. Don't wait for the dark moments of life to surround your life, don't let the sands of the cold desert arrive to sink your life. Keep your heart ready, so that the Holy Spirit prints on your mind the messages He wants to give. Biblical messages that fit your situation right now.

Look for a place of peace, or if you can't, try to wake up at dawn. The silence of dawn is spectacular to find peace. Let go of the thoughts that the enemy of God puts to distract us.

When we are still before the presence of God, when we are silent for a few seconds or minutes before the throne of grace, God helps us to be more submissive to divine guidance. Even some climactic moments where we can be in the center of a noisy city and feel God speaking to us. We have to open ourselves more to God and let Him use His Word to guide us in every moment.

Dear reader, this is Oasis. In the desert of noise, agitation and uncertainties, to be still, to be silent, to rest in the presence of God becomes a great oasis of refuge, of refreshment and of strength to continue the journey of this life.

To be silent before God is to pray without words, it is to live by faith the certainties and conviction in what is not seen.

### **Jesus' prayer**

“ For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever,  
Amen! ” (Matthew 6:13).

“Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, and the honor, ...  
thou exaltest thou as head over all” (1 Chronicles 29:11).

Jesus ends his prayer. This is an acclamation of greatness to God that we must make every day. We must give up our wants and desires to have the kingdom for ourselves. The kingdom must be Christ's. Thus, everything that happens in our life will be under the command and care of the Lord.

As we finish our prayer in the name of Jesus, surrendering to Him all glory, honor, and power, we are submitting everything we say in prayer to His will. Our requests and our thanks. Our supplications and our praises. Our intercessions and our lives are being surrendered to the Creator of the Universe.

When you end the prayer as Jesus ended it, you will feel joy and peace. You can be sure that this oasis has renewed your life. You will feel fulfilled for having sought God in the way He pleases. You will find the peace you are looking for.

The "AMEM " means "so be it". But it also leads us to the certainty that the divine answer is greater than our feelings and plans for our needs and desires. In our prayer, what counts is not what we ask but the certainty that the best comes according to God's will and answer.

How about you once again close your eyes and talk to your dear Father? Ask God that the moments of prayer be in your life oases of renewal of the alliance with your Savior. Ask God that the oasis of prayer be unforgettable and daily moments that will allow your life to be more open to the presence of God. Experience God in prayer. You will never be the same person again.

**Questions for reflection:**

1. What is God's silence for you?
2. Have you ever lived in a difficult situation and apparently didn't hear the voice of God, but felt that He was by your side? Comment on this experience.
3. Do you think it is important after prayer to be silent for a while to feel the peace of God? Why?

## CONCLUSION

The reality of an oasis in the desert really does not describe the greatness of pleasure, peace, and hope it gives to those who find it. Even in the driest desert in the world, the Atacama, there are places of refreshment, with plenty of water, fruits to eat, shade to rest, and even hot springs to relax.

But also, the reality of prayer becomes the most delicious place of peace where each person can find himself. Whether in the silence of the room, or in the calm of a grove of trees, or in the stressful traffic, or in the urgency of a decision at work, or in the pressures inside the school, or even in the emergency of the hospital, prayer is an oasis in the desert of life. Many desire to find peace and God has taught us that it is possible to find peace in prayer. How can this be possible?

In the course of these short written dialogues, I have tried to use the word OASIS, as an acrostic to punctuate and meditate on the biblical teachings on prayer. In each letter, an important lesson about prayer was placed. “**O**” means **O**ccupy the mind with the presence of God. “**A**” presents the Adoration. “**S**” demonstrates our need to **S**upplicate for forgiveness and sanctification. “**I**” reveals God's strong will for us to be **I**ntercessors. And finally, the letter “**S**” shows how good it is to feel the presence of God in the **S**ilence after prayer.

My wish for you, dear reader, is that the reality of prayer will bring peace to your life as you live in the presence of God. Share and motivate those closest to you to experience a life of worship. "And the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe, so that you may be rich in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).