

WEEK ONE STUDENT DAILY DEVOTIONAL

A Pilgrimage through the Psalms of Ascent

OVERVIEW:

Take some time each day this week to walk with God through the Psalms of Ascent. The Psalms of Ascent are a special collection of fifteen Psalms, 120-134, also known as Pilgrim Psalms. They were used as a soundtrack for the Jewish people going on spiritual pilgrimage to celebrate at the temple. The Israelites used their trip to the temple, their pilgrimage, to prepare their hearts for worship and reflect on what God has done in their lives and their community. As Eugene Peterson write, *“the trip to Jerusalem acted out a life lived up toward God, an existence that advanced from one level to another of developing maturity.”*³⁸

For your devotional I would recommend having your Bible and a journal, along with colored pencils, highlighters, and a pen or pencil. You will also need to access the Psalm 131 soundtrack, especially tracks 1 & 2. Depending on your situation, you can play these songs from a stereo or through headphones. You will want to have the music envelop you as you listen to it.

BREATHING PRAYER

To start your time with God each day, you are invited to participate in our breathing prayer as a way to settle your heart and prepare yourself soul for your time with God.

Take a deep slow breath in. Allow the air to fill your lungs, then slowly exhale. Repeat. Slow deep breaths allow us to relax and release the stress and tension that can overwhelm our bodies. Breathing prayers allow us to release our stress and worry to God and receive the Spirit of comfort and peace. Our Psalm 131 breathing prayer focuses on four statements: *calm my heart, quiet my soul, hope in the Lord, trust now and always.*

Breathe in, asking God to calm your heart. Breathe out, releasing quiet into your soul.

Breathe in, filling yourself with the hope of the Lord. Breath out, releasing control by trusting God.

Breathe in: Calm my heart. Breathe out: Quiet my soul.

Breathe in: Hope in the Lord. Breath out: Trust now and always

Breathe in: Calm. Breathe out: Quiet. Breathe in: Hope. Breath out: Trust.

Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

Repeat

SOUNDTRACK:

This week’s devotional song is Psalm 131 by The Orchardist. Feel free to engage with other songs on our soundtrack if you believe that will enhance your journey.

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION:

As you journey though the Psalms of Ascent, allow God to invigorate your creative juices. Choose one of these fifteen psalms that resonate with your soul and express it artistically. Put pencil to paper, paint to canvas, thread to needle, create a video, compose a song, choose whatever medium inspires you. Use this as a time to worship God.

³⁸ Peterson, Eugene. A Long Obedience in the Same Direction. Pg. 12.

DAY ONE:**BREATHE:** *Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.*

Take a few minutes and practice our breathing prayer as you come into God's presence. Calm your heart. Quiet your soul. Hope in the Lord. Trust now and always. Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

MUSIC: Listen to the Orchardist, Psalm 131**READ & INTERACT.** Read through the first three Psalms of Ascent, Psalm 120-122, imagining these are the soundtrack for your spiritual pilgrimage. Highlight or write down words or phrases that you connect with. Look for repeated phrases or patterns in the individual psalms and the collection.**CONSIDER:**

- Which was your favorite Psalm and why?
- What words or phrases resonated with you during your reading?
- What patterns did you see in this collection of psalms?

INTERACT: Meditate on the words, phrases, or ideas that God brought to your attention. Choose one of the following two options to further your connection with today's Psalms.

- **JOURNAL:** Write to God about them your experience in today's psalms. Share with God how today's songs add life to your current pilgrimage?
- **ART:** Create an artistic representation of what God is teaching you. Draw, paint, compose, write, sing. Express yourself using the gifts God has given you.

BREATHING PRAYER: Calm, Quiet, Hope, Trust.**CLOSING PRAYER: Psalm 131 (NLT)**

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. Put your hope in the Lord— now and always. Amen.

DAY TWO:**BREATHE:** *Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.*

Take a few minutes and practice our breathing prayer as you come into God's presence. Calm your heart. Quiet your soul. Hope in the Lord. Trust now and always. Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

MUSIC: Listen to the Orchardist, Psalm 131

READ & INTERACT. Read through the next three Psalms of Ascent, Psalm 123-125, imagining these are the soundtrack for your spiritual pilgrimage. Highlight or write down words or phrases that you connect with. Look for repeated phrases or patterns in the individual psalms and the collection.

CONSIDER:

- Which was your favorite Psalm and why?
- What words or phrases resonated with you during your reading?
- What patterns did you see in this collection of psalms?

INTERACT: Meditate on the words, phrases, or ideas that God brought to your attention. Choose one of the following two options to further your connection with today's Psalms.

- **JOURNAL:** Write to God about them your experience in today's psalms. Share with God how today's songs add life to your current pilgrimage?
- **ART:** Create an artistic representation of what God is teaching you. Draw, paint, compose, write, sing. Express yourself using the gifts God has given you.

BREATHE: Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.**CLOSING PRAYER: Psalm 131 (NLT)**

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. Put your hope in the Lord— now and always. Amen.

DAY THREE:

BREATHE: *Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.*

Take a few minutes and practice our breathing prayer as you come into God's presence. Calm your heart. Quiet your soul. Hope in the Lord. Trust now and always. Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

MUSIC: Listen to the Orchardist, Psalm 131

READ & INTERACT. Read through the next three Psalms of Ascent, Psalm 126-128, imagining these are the soundtrack for your spiritual pilgrimage. Highlight or write down words or phrases that you connect with. Look for repeated phrases or patterns in the individual psalms and the collection.

CONSIDER:

- Which was your favorite Psalm and why?
- What words or phrases resonated with you during your reading?
- What patterns did you see in this collection of psalms?

INTERACT: Meditate on the words, phrases, or ideas that God brought to your attention. Choose one of the following two options to further your connection with today's Psalms.

- **JOURNAL:** Write to God about your experience in today's psalms. Share with God how today's songs add life to your current pilgrimage?
- **ART:** Create an artistic representation of what God is teaching you. Draw, paint, compose, write, sing. Express yourself using the gifts God has given you.

BREATHE: Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

CLOSING PRAYER: Psalm 131 (NLT)

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. Put your hope in the Lord— now and always. Amen.

DAY FOUR:

BREATHE: *Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.*

Take a few minutes and practice our breathing prayer as you come into God's presence. Calm your heart. Quiet your soul. Hope in the Lord. Trust now and always. Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

MUSIC: Listen to the Orchardist, Psalm 131

READ & INTERACT. Read through the next three Psalms of Ascent, Psalm 129-131, imagining these are the soundtrack for your spiritual pilgrimage. Highlight or write down words or phrases that you connect with. Look for repeated phrases or patterns in the individual psalms and the collection.

CONSIDER:

- Which was your favorite Psalm and why?
- What words or phrases resonated with you during your reading?
- What patterns did you see in this collection of psalms?

INTERACT: Meditate on the words, phrases, or ideas that God brought to your attention. Choose one of the following two options to further your connection with today's Psalms.

- **JOURNAL:** Write to God about them your experience in today's psalms. Share with God how today's songs add life to your current pilgrimage?
- **ART:** Create an artistic representation of what God is teaching you. Draw, paint, compose, write, sing. Express yourself using the gifts God has given you.

BREATHE: Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

CLOSING PRAYER: Psalm 131 (NLT)

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. Put your hope in the Lord— now and always. Amen.

DAY FIVE:**BREATHE:** *Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.*

Take a few minutes and practice our breathing prayer as you come into God's presence. Calm your heart. Quiet your soul. Hope in the Lord. Trust now and always. Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.

MUSIC: Listen to the Orchardist, Psalm 131

READ & INTERACT. Read through the last three Psalms of Ascent, Psalm 132-124, imagining these are the soundtrack for your spiritual pilgrimage. Highlight or write down words or phrases that you connect with. Look for repeated phrases or patterns in the individual psalms and the collection.

CONSIDER:

- Which was your favorite Psalm and why?
- What words or phrases resonated with you during your reading?
- What patterns did you see in this collection of psalms?

INTERACT: Meditate on the words, phrases, or ideas that God brought to your attention. Choose one of the following two options to further your connection with today's Psalms.

- **JOURNAL:** Write to God about them your experience in today's psalms. Share with God how today's songs add life to your current pilgrimage?
- **ART:** Create an artistic representation of what God is teaching you. Draw, paint, compose, write, sing. Express yourself using the gifts God has given you.

MUSIC: Listen to the Orchardist, Psalm 131**BREATHE:** Calm. Quiet. Hope. Trust.**CLOSING PRAYER: Psalm 131 (NLT)**

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. Put your hope in the Lord— now and always. Amen.

OVERVIEW:

- Which Psalm of Ascent resonated with you soul the most this week?
- What makes this psalm significant to you?
- How will this psalm guide you in the week to come?