

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

DAY
29

WEEK 5

PRAYER AS SPIRITUAL WARFARE

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

2 Chronicles 20:12 is interesting: "Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you." Three armies had surrounded the Israelites. Understandably, they were tempted to be afraid, discouraged, overwhelmed, and worried. You can feel it in their words, their pleas. Often, we do not know what to do. Other temptations in the form of the devil's spiritual attacks can seek to neutralize us and drain our spiritual life. When we are faced with personal troubles or attacks from the evil one, when the devil tries to dump all kinds of evil temptations on us, we can stand strong. Christ will lead us on into victory.

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LEAD US INTO LIBERATION FROM THE GRIP OF THE EVIL ONE **LUKE 5:1-11**

Liberation is the act of setting someone free. It is for freedom that Christ has set us free! He made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Likewise, many on the battlefield have given their lives for our freedom. Lt. Murphy is credited with risking his own life to save the lives of his men when he knowingly exposed himself to enemy fire to gain a better position to transmit a call to get help. In his memory, “Murph” is a workout completed by CrossFitters and Navy Seals on Memorial Day every year. In the midst of running one mile, completing 100 pull-ups, 200 push-ups, 300 squats, and finishing with another mile, it is tempting to give into the pain and give up, but many persevere to honor the fallen who have died for our freedom.

Similarly, in life, we find ourselves tempted to give up or give into the enemy’s schemes, but we must keep fighting to honor Christ’s sacrifice and remember that He gives us victory over sin in our lives. He died so that we may be free from Satan’s grip. Not only that, the weapons we fight with have divine power to demolish the strong grip of the enemy. We fight with worship, the Word, and with prayer. In 2 Chronicles 20, worshipers led the march into battle. In response, the Lord sent an ambush against their enemies! The Israelites kept their eyes on the Lord and followed orders to stand firm and watch the deliverance God would bring!



REFLECTION PRAYER

- 1.** Our freedom isn’t free. Spend a moment in silence to honor those who’ve died for your freedom. If you’ve ever been to a war memorial, remember the deep reverence and gratitude you felt.
- 2.** Take some time to remember Christ’s sacrifice. Thank Him for your freedom. Praise Him for the victory He gives over the grip of the enemy! Satan has no hold on you!
- 3.** Take time to worship Him, focus your eyes on Christ, follow His orders to stand firm on the ground that’s already been won by His sacrifice, and be watchful as He brings deliverance!

LEAD US INTO DELIVERANCE

PSALM 23:4

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” –Psalm 23:4, KJV

In times of danger, difficulty, and even death, I will fear no evil. Why? “For thou art with me” in every situation of life. The “rod” (a short club) is a weapon of defense or discipline, symbolizing God’s strength, power, and authority. The “staff” (a long slender stick with a hook on one end) is used to draw a sheep close to the shepherd, guide it in the right way, or deliver it from trouble.

God’s rod and staff reassure us of God’s love and guidance in our lives. We often require deliverance from the onslaught of Satan and the world’s system, which is separated from the holiness of God. Satan is a masterful strategist who seeks our downfall by his various schemes. Some schemes of Satan are failures, disappointments, hurts, depression, worry, fear, grief, anger, conflicts, and broken relationships designed to defeat God’s people. Because of the presence and nearness of God, we can walk in victory and above all our circumstances. Our deliverance from evil is assured by our intimate relationship with Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Almighty God,

You sent Jesus to suffer and die for my sins. Lead me through all things that hinders my walk with You. I call on Your name to deliver me from the entanglements of Satan and everything that impedes me from receiving Your blessings and a victorious lifestyle. By Your grace and mercy, I stand on the promises of Your Word that “thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” In the name of Christ, amen.

LEAD US INTO PROTECTION AND COURAGE

PSALM 125

“Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore.”—Psalm 125:1–2

In 2018, I was assigned to Hill Air Force Base, Utah, which is nestled at the foot of the beautiful Wasatch Mountains. When we arrived, we were awestruck by how huge the mountains were and how close they seemed. They were especially beautiful in the winter—snowcapped and strong, always there, always present.

One morning, I got up early, weary and worried, looking to pray regarding the uncertainty of the future we were facing at the time. I opened my Bible and landed on the above Psalm. After I read these words, I looked out and saw those steady and strong mountains literally surrounding our house. I felt God saying, “You see those mountains there? That’s how present I am with you. Do you trust that those mountains can’t be shaken? Neither can I, because I made them. So trust in me. I’m surrounding you. I’m protecting you. I will not be moved from you, my child.”

When we are in times of difficulty and stress, it can often seem like God is distant. At times, we look for answers or rescue and there seems to be none. This is a reminder that regardless of the trouble we face, God is surrounding us with protection and provision both now and forever.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Father,

When it seems like we are being surrounded by attacks and adversity, may we remember that You do not forsake Your people. Rather, You surround us with Your presence. You are a God who cares for His people and longs for us to cast our cares upon You. We thank You for Your Spirit that guides us in truth, comforts us in our pain, and guards our hearts and minds with Your peace. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen.

LEAD US INTO PUTTING ON THE ARMOR OF GOD EPHESIANS 6:8

You must remember that each day God permits you life on this planet, you are engaged in spiritual warfare. This is not simply a descriptive statement (acknowledging a truth). For the Christian, this is a prescriptive statement (a truth you must act on).

When Paul talks about putting on the armor of God to the Ephesian Christians (Eph. 6:10–18), he makes it clear that it is a necessary first step for every Christian. It is the armor of God that gives you the strength to stand firm (v. 11), fight against the mighty powers of darkness who rule this world (v. 12), and be fully prepared for what He is calling you to (v. 15).

Are you feeling spiritually exhausted? Defeated? Overwhelmed? Unprepared? Are you ready to retreat? Circle the wagons? Wave the white flag of surrender to the world around you? Is the enemy too great and your own strength too small?

Your Father promises you His strength and victory when you lay down your armor and weapons and take up His. Don't be fooled into thinking that acknowledging this truth is the same as acting on it. Paul's final encouragement in this passage is to "pray at all times and on every occasion" (v. 18).

Make it a point today to spend time with Him in prayer. Confess your dependence on Him. Don't stop praying until you are encircled with His peace. Meditate on Scripture. Consider His truth and righteousness. His armor brings the victory today. Put it on, Christian!



REFLECTION PRAYER

Father,

You have called me to spiritual warfare today. Without You, I cannot win. If I fight this battle on my own, defeat is certain. Fill me with Your peace today. Remind me of who You are. You are the God of truth. You are the God of righteousness. You are the God of salvation. I confess my dependence on Your Holy Spirit. Replace my exhaustion with Your joy and my fear with Your boldness. Fill me with Your strength that I may stand firm and fight faithfully today.

LEAD US THROUGH SPIRITUAL WARFARE

MATTHEW 6:13

You may be familiar with the passage on Jesus and His temptations but have possibly missed a very key aspect: Jesus wasn't there by accident, but rather the Holy Spirit led Him into the desert for the expressed purpose of being tempted by Satan. This may seem at odds with the Lord's Prayer, "... lead us not into temptation . . ." (Matt. 6:13). However, it gives insight into God's relationship with us. God could shield us from all temptation, but He desires for us to trust Him to deliver us, to equip us to face our enemy head-on. The Lord has given us His authority, His power, and His purpose. All it takes to access those tools and weapons is our faith in Christ.

When Jesus was in the desert, He used Scripture to combat the lies of the devil. He also stood firm in His authority, in His sonship, and in His purpose. Using that example, it is clear that our greatest weapon against the enemy is intimacy with the Father. The closer we draw to the heart of the Father, knowing His Word, the more effective we are against the powers and principalities of this world. When temptation comes, our knowledge of our firm place in the Kingdom of God and our connection to the love of the Father will give us the same strength we see Jesus exercise in Matthew 4 when He said, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"



REFLECTION PRAYER

Lord Jesus,

Thank You for Your presence in our lives. Thank You that You knew us and loved us and chose us long before the creation of the world. We stand righteous and redeemed because of Your sacrifice on the cross and because of Your great love for us.

Because of that, the enemy has no ground on which he can accuse us and no weapon with which he can attack us. Draw us more and more near to Your heart, and forgive us when we doubt.

We ask all this in Your holy name, Jesus. Amen

LEAD US INTO VICTORY

DANIEL 7:25

Each week, Christian churches gather together and proclaim songs of God's victory such as, "The Battle Belongs to the Lord!" These songs are both a declaration and a reminder that no enemy can defeat God and His people. This refreshes our faith and challenges us not to get short-sighted when troubles find us, knowing that our sovereign King has already won.

In Daniel 7, Daniel's vision reveals coming kings and kingdoms who subdue the earth. A final king rises up, oppressing God's people. But afterward, Daniel sees that "all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him" (Dan. 7:27). God's eternal victory is guaranteed.

A friend shared with me three "p's" to consider in the midst of present suffering and temporal defeat, to which I will add a fourth. The first is "presence." God is with us in the midst of trials. He will never leave us nor forsake us. The second is "prayer." Petition for God's mighty hand to deliver you while accepting and acknowledging your desire to see His will accomplished regardless of personal pain. Pray for peace regardless of the outcome. Third is "perspective." Reframe your thoughts from temporary sufferings to the eternal victory promised by God. And finally, "perseverance." We run the race set before us, which is an arduous journey guaranteed to contain troubles. We must not give up! God will lead us to victory!



REFLECTION PRAYER

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father,

Yours is the power, glory, and honor forever.

Lead us to victory in Jesus. Help us not to despair in the midst of temporal pain but set our eyes on the eternal hope of glory that we might run well this race that You have set before us. In Jesus' name, amen.

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

ELIAT APONTE

Eliat Aponte was raised in a Christian home in Puerto Rico. He has been married to Debra for 32 years, and they have two daughters, Keila and Keizah, and a son-in-law, Kenny Tran. Eliat loves reading and construction and serves the Lord with gratitude in the Alliance Spanish Eastern District.

SYLVIA BENNETT

Sylvia Bennett is a loving wife, daughter, sister, and friend. She is also a United States Army chaplain and a devoted child of the Most High God!

MEICA CAMPBELL

A Pacific Northwest native, Meica Campbell has lived and served in Kentucky for her adult life. She currently serves the Ohio Valley District as the ordination/consecration and leadership development/Greenhouse coordinator. She is a consecrated minister with The Alliance and along with her husband, ministers to a small congregation in Georgetown, Kentucky.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

CHARLES CHAPMAN

Charles Chapman serves as the candidate development specialist for Alliance Missions where he connects with and helps prepare prospective international worker candidates for long-term service opportunities. Charles, along with his wife, Liz, and children, Julia (12) and Marcus (9), live on the west side of Columbus, Ohio.

CAESAR (CHAVO) CHAVEZ

Caesar (Chavo) Chavez was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. He served in the U.S. Army Infantry in Iraq. He holds a BA in philosophy from Kansas State University and an MA in intercultural studies from Asbury Theological Seminary. He currently serves as the associate pastor at Hope (C&MA) Church in Aurora, Colorado.

GRACE CHEON

Grace Cheon grew up in New York as a second-generation Korean-American, graduated from Alliance Theological Seminary with an MDiv in missions, and now works as the church multiplication coordinator at the U.S. Alliance National Office. She is married to Jonathan.

KATERINA COOK

Katerina Cook is an insurance agent who is deeply involved within her church. She directs Sunday school ministries and also leads the women's ministry and outreach programs within her church.

BEN DOUGLAS

Ben Douglas is the lead pastor of Faith Community Church on the west side of Columbus, Ohio.

JUSTIN DUBOSE

Justin Dubose is the lead pastor at Alliance Bible Church in Baytown, Texas. He is also a CH (MAJ) in the USAR serving as chaplain for the 7th Psychological Operations Group (POG). A husband to Alanna since 2005, they have five beautiful children. Justin has his PhD in organizational leadership and is passionate about equipping God's people to mobilize and train present and future Kingdom leaders.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

PAUL GARCIA

Paul Garcia is a Navy chaplain serving Marine Corps Officer Candidate School in Quantico, Virginia. He has been with The Alliance for 13 years. He and his wife, Heather, have been married 20 years; they have four boys, Isaac, Rylan, Jude, and Liam.

DARIA HASTIE

Darea Hastie is the director of family ministries at Long Hill Chapel in Chatham, New Jersey, where she has served for the last 10 years. She has a heart for connecting people, our next generation, and her community. Darea loves to spend time with her husband and their two teenage children.

JERRY HENDERSON

Ch., Capt. Jerry Henderson currently serves as an Active Duty United States Air Force chaplain serving at Holloman Air Base, New Mexico. Jerry and his wife, Joanna, have been serving in Christian ministry for more than 15 years and together have been blessed with six children.

EDEN KRAHN

Eden Krahn is a second-generation Hmong American Christian and Michigan native. She owns a small business, creating apparel that advocates the joy of prayer and the importance of inner work and spiritual development. Eden currently resides in Georgia with her husband and three daughters.

KRISTA LAIN

Chaplain 1st Lieutenant Krista Lain recently joined the U.S. Air Force Reserve and will serve 30+ days each year at Moron ARB in Spain. Previously, she served alongside her family overseas in Spain and Mongolia for 10 years with Envision/CAMA. Currently, she ministers at Arise Christian Fellowship in Lafayette, Indiana.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

GABE LAWSON

Gabe Lawson is an Active Duty Air Force chaplain (Capt.) currently stationed at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. Prior to his active duty service, Gabe served as an Alliance pastor in Kentucky for eight years. He is joined in ministry with his wife, Mary, and their four children.

RUFUS MCDOWELL

Rufus McDowell is a native of Griffin, Georgia. He served in the United States Army for twenty years and received his MDiv in pastoral ministries at Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary (Lynchburg, Virginia) and his DMin at Luther Rice Seminary (Atlanta, Georgia).

LES MCMAHAN

Les McMahan has been serving as cohort director for the LEAD program for the past six years after having graduated from the program. He was also co-director of Men's Ministries for the Central District and served as a bi-vocational pastor and youth pastor.

JEFF MILLER

Jeff Miller and his wife, Pam, graduated from Alliance University in New York, New York, and have journeyed together in ministry for 37 years. He is currently the Ohio Valley District superintendent. Jeff and Pam reside in Lexington, Kentucky, and have two daughters.

BETTY MOREJON

Betty Morejon serves as the youth director at Iglesia Alianza Cristiana y Misionera de Kissimmee in the Spanish Eastern District.

ANITA MORRISON

Anita Morrison is a Bible teacher and speaker who attends Hope Alliance Bible Church in Maple Heights, Ohio, where her husband, Ronald, is the founding and senior pastor. Anita leads worship, teaches a women's Bible study, and is the tutoring site coordinator for the church's after school program. She holds an EdM degree.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

CHINH NGUYEN

Chinh Nguyen is the senior pastor of Washington Metropolitan Church and the secretary of the Vietnamese District. He and his wife, Xuan-Lan, have three children, Caleb, Rebecca, and Priscilla.

AARON PFAHLER

Aaron Pfahler has served as the Worship Arts pastor at First Alliance Church in Columbus, Ohio, since September 2020. He is passionate about leading people to authentically encounter Jesus and inspiring the Church to become more engaged in advancing the Kingdom.

BRIAN SCOTT

Brian Scott has been married to Susan for 30 years. They live in Lexington, Kentucky, and have two daughters, Payton (24) and Jordan (22), and one son, Bryson (20). Brian works in the Ohio Valley District Office.

JOEL SMITH

Joel Smith has been a church planter and lead pastor in The Alliance for 30 years. He now serves the National Office as the dean of EquippingU Max and the Metro District of The Alliance as coaching team lead in the Church Health Department. Joel is also the founder of dalahcoaching.com.

TODD SOVINE

Todd Sovine grew up in The Alliance as a pastor and professor's kid. He has served in the local church for 16 years and in the Central District Office as the director of church multiplication for 16 years.

SPENCER SWEETING

Spencer Sweeting is the lead pastor of North Springs Alliance Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He's married to Beth and is a dad to Lucy, Josie, and Emma. Spencer is also a part-owner of the Green Bay Packers (the only publicly owned franchise in the NFL).

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

KORA TAUBE

Kora Taube is an Alliance international worker serving in Montevideo, Uruguay. She is married to Mark and is a mom to three kids. Kora loves that her work includes teaching English, working with kids, building relationships, and helping people consider Jesus. She longs to see people walking the way of Jesus together.

JUSTIN THORNTON

Justin Thornton is a desperate son of Jesus, a husband to Anne, and a father to three children, Selah, Anabelle, and JD. Justin planted churches for 12 years before becoming the director of multiplication for the Great Lakes District. He is also the author of *The Preacher*.

CHRIS VENA

Christopher Vena is a professor of theology and dean of the School of Christian Ministries at Toccoa Falls College in Toccoa Falls, Georgia. He is also ordained with The Christian and Missionary Alliance. A life-long sports and outdoor enthusiast, he enjoys sharing these activities with his wife and four daughters.

LISA VOGAN

As a consecrated disciple-making specialist for the Northeastern District of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, Lisa Vogan spends her time coaching, consulting, equipping, speaking, and facilitating leadership growth across the district and the United States. Lisa's greatest passion is encouraging, equipping, and empowering ministry leaders for Kingdom impact.

WANDA WALBORN

Wanda Walborn is an associate professor of spiritual formation at Alliance Theological Seminary in New York, New York, and the director of Empower, a certificate program for women of the Metropolitan District. Wanda is passionate about training leaders to advance the Kingdom of God.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

HANG WONG

Hang Wong grew up in New York City and was saved by Jesus in high school. He serves in the Candidate Recruitment & Development Office of the C&MA working with Alliance Theological Seminary students who desire to join the ministry of The Alliance. He is married to Kathy, and they have three young adult children.

GLORIA YANG

Gloria Yang is a wife, mother, and small business owner whose life is a testament to God's faithfulness and healing power. She is passionate about motherhood, writing, worship, and capturing moments in time. In all that she does, Gloria's desire is to tell the story of God's goodness.

DANIEL ZEWDU

Daniel Zewdu serves as a pastor in an Ethiopian congregation in Columbus, Ohio. He and his wife, Cherie, are blessed with two sons, Theo (19) and Eyosi (15), and one daughter, Nanette (9). Daniel and his family came to the United States to serve this church in 2008.