



## PRAYER SERVICE WEDNESDAY, JULY 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2021

Join us at 7pm in the Sanctuary or on [Facebook](#) and use this guide to pray along with us.

- **INTRO**

Welcome to Prayer Service! In his classic, *The Problem of Pain*, C.S. Lewis wrote, “We can ignore even pleasure. But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world...It removes the veil; it plants the flag of truth within the fortress of the rebel soul.” In a way, something like this can be seen in Psalm 39. In this unique prayer, a Psalm of David, the experience of some grave illness or tribulation causes him to come to terms with the fragility of life and utter dependence on God. As much as we all pray to avoid it, seasons of struggle can have a way of refining us like nothing else. Whether we find ourselves in a time of joy or a season of sorrow, the wisdom contained in this prayer is so important for us to pause and reflect on, especially as we connect it with the Gospel. *Let’s pray.*

- **PAUSE**

“As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.” (Pete Greig, *Lectio365*)

“Jesus, I give everything and everyone to you. I give everything and everyone to you, God.”  
(John Eldredge, *Daily Pause*)

*Pause and pray.*

As we read **Psalm 39** together, be open with the parts that confuse or challenge you; meditate on the parts that stand out to you:

***<sup>1</sup> I said to myself, “I will watch what I do and not sin in what I say. I will hold my tongue when the ungodly are around me.” <sup>2</sup> But as I stood there in silence—not even speaking of good things—the turmoil within me grew worse. <sup>3</sup> The more I thought about it, the hotter I got, igniting a fire of words: <sup>4</sup> “LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered—how fleeting my life is. <sup>5</sup> You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to you; at best, each of us is but a breath.” (Interlude) <sup>6</sup> We are merely moving shadows, and all our busy rushing ends in nothing. We heap up wealth, not knowing who will spend it. <sup>7</sup> And so, Lord, where do I put my hope? My only hope is in you. <sup>8</sup> Rescue me from my rebellion. Do not let fools mock me. <sup>9</sup> I am silent before you; I won’t say a word, for my punishment is from you. <sup>10</sup> But please stop striking me! I am exhausted by the blows from your hand. <sup>11</sup> When you discipline us for our sins, you consume like a moth what is precious to us. Each of us is but a breath. (Interlude) <sup>12</sup> Hear my prayer, O LORD! Listen to my cries for help! Don’t ignore my tears. For I am your guest—a traveler passing through, as my ancestors were before me. <sup>13</sup> Leave me alone so I can smile again before I am gone and exist no more.***

- **SONGS**

“Sweet Hour of Prayer”

### VERSE 1

Sweet hour of prayer sweet hour of prayer  
That calls me from a world of care  
And bids me at my Father's throne  
Make all my wants and wishes known  
In seasons of distress and grief  
My soul has often found relief  
And oft escaped the tempter's snare  
By thy return sweet hour of prayer

### VERSE 2

Sweet hour of prayer sweet hour of prayer  
The joys I feel the bliss I share  
Of those whose anxious spirits burn  
With strong desires for thy return

With such I hasten to the place  
Where God my Savior shows His face  
And gladly take my station there  
And wait for thee sweet hour of prayer

### VERSE 3

Sweet hour of prayer sweet hour of prayer  
Thy wings shall my petition bear  
To Him whose truth and faithfulness  
Engage the waiting soul to bless  
And since He bids me seek His face  
Believe His Word and trust His grace  
I'll cast on Him my ev'ry care  
And wait for thee sweet hour of prayer

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### “I Surrender All”

#### VERSE 1

All to Jesus I surrender  
All to Him I freely give  
I will ever love and trust Him  
In His presence daily live

Let me feel the Holy Spirit  
Truly know that Thou art mine

#### VERSE 4

All to Jesus I surrender  
Lord I give myself to Thee  
Fill me with Thy love and power  
Let Thy blessing fall on me

#### CHORUS

I surrender all, I surrender all  
All to Thee my blessed Savior  
I surrender all

#### VERSE 5

All to Jesus I surrender  
Now I feel the sacred flame  
O the joy of full salvation  
Glory glory to His name

#### VERSE 3

All to Jesus I surrender  
Make me Savior wholly Thine

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#### • PSALM 39:1-5

*<sup>1</sup> I said to myself, “I will watch what I do and not sin in what I say. I will hold my tongue when the ungodly are around me.” <sup>2</sup> But as I stood there in silence—not even speaking of good things—the turmoil within me grew worse. <sup>3</sup> The more I thought about it, the hotter I got, igniting a fire of words: <sup>4</sup> “LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered—how fleeting my life is. <sup>5</sup> You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to you; at best, each of us is but a breath.” (Interlude)*

The Psalmist does his best to suffer quietly and wait patiently, not opening his mouth for fear of speaking wrong in the presence of “the ungodly.” But, as one commentary puts it, “*Suppressed anguish only intensifies the agony,*” (NIV Study Bible). Many Psalms, including this one, remind us of this important truth and give us permission to *let it out*. With God, we don’t need to hold back the tears, we don’t need to hold in the pain, the sorrow, the doubts, the questions, the anger, the heartache—we can lay it all out. He already knows. He is the safest place for us to process pain, and the one who can transform it. As you seek God in prayer, is there anything you’re holding in? Past or present, for yourself or someone else? Invite God to search your heart. *Pause and Pray.*

- **PSALM 39:6-11**

***<sup>6</sup> We are merely moving shadows, and all our busy rushing ends in nothing. We heap up wealth, not knowing who will spend it. <sup>7</sup> And so, Lord, where do I put my hope? My only hope is in you. <sup>8</sup> Rescue me from my rebellion. Do not let fools mock me. <sup>9</sup> I am silent before you; I won't say a word, for my punishment is from you. <sup>10</sup> But please stop striking me! I am exhausted by the blows from your hand. <sup>11</sup> When you discipline us for our sins, you consume like a moth what is precious to us. Each of us is but a breath. (Interlude)***

“Remind me that my days are numbered—how fleeting my life is...We are merely moving shadows, and all our busy rushing ends in nothing.” Nothing has the power to shift our perspective and priorities quite like a brush with death: think of people who have been given a certain amount of time left who live, or who've had near-death experiences. How do they typically act, what choices do they usually make with their time? How swiftly our days flow through us until we cross that threshold from living *in time* to eternity. None of us really knows the number of our days: chances are strong that few of us will have time to prepare for when that final moment will be. Aside from those awaiting execution or martyrdom, how many really get to wake up knowing it will be their last day? The only way to prepare is to live each day in light of eternity, to be present in each moment as best as we can, to the people around us, the experiences we're privileged to have, to the God who gives it all.

Dallas Willard once said, “*The surest way to realize the full potential of your God-designed self is to live in eternity while you are in time, conscious of the loving gaze of your all-sufficient shepherd...*” In other words, when we walk in communion with God, when we fix our gaze on his gaze through each swiftly passing days, we have the gift of living in eternal life here in time, on the way to finishing our race and crossing over once and for all. In light of all this, what is your response? Is there someone you need to forgive, something you need to repent of, an idol you need to let go, a priority you need to shift, gratitude you need to express? Maybe you just need to slow down? Again, invite God to speak and search your heart. *Pause and Pray.*

- **PSALM 39:12-13**

***<sup>12</sup> Hear my prayer, O LORD! Listen to my cries for help! Don't ignore my tears. For I am your guest—a traveler passing through, as my ancestors were before me. <sup>13</sup> Leave me alone so I can smile again before I am gone and exist no more.***

This is a powerful image: “*I am your guest—a traveler passing through...*” The New Testament took this idea and set it in the perspective of the Gospel, in 1 Peter 2:11 and Hebrews 11:13. We're sojourners, pilgrims in this life. To what destination? To God. To eternal life, or eternal death. In God's mercy, through the saving work of Christ, all our stories, no matter how crooked the journey may be along the way, can end in *life and goodness*. In New Creation. With Christ as our Lord, our life journey becomes one long pilgrimage from this life to life eternal—*what an incredible thought*. Are we comfortable living in this “in between”? Are we able, by God's grace, to find contentment in the moment, and yet, not make ourselves too comfortable, setting our truest longing on his great prize? With all of life's joys and struggles, have we embraced this pilgrim life in Christ, do we know, in our heart of hearts, where our ultimate hope lies? *Pause and Pray.*

- **SONG**

“Build My Life”

## **VERSE 1**

Worthy of every song we could ever sing  
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
We live for You

## **VERSE 2**

Jesus the name above every other name  
Jesus the only one who could ever save  
Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe  
We live for You, we live for You

## **CHORUS**

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### • Closing

***“Father, help me to live this day to the full, being true to you in every way. Jesus, help me to give myself away to others, being kind to everyone I meet. Spirit, help me to love the lost, proclaiming Christ in all I do and say. Amen.”*** (Pete Greig, Lectio365)

Holy there is no one like You  
There is none beside You  
Open up my eyes in wonder  
And show me who You are  
And fill me with Your heart  
And lead me in  
Your love to those around me

## **BRIDGE**

I will build my life upon Your love  
It is a firm foundation  
I will put my trust in You a