

THE PRESENT WORD

ADULT BIBLE LESSONS

W O R S H I P L E A F L E T S

A VISION OF RESTORATION

*Responses are in **bold**.

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 47:1-2, 6-7

Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with loud songs of joy.

**For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome,
a great king over all the earth.**

Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.

**For God is the king of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm.**

MORNING HYMN

All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell.
Come ye before him and rejoice.

“All People That on Earth Do Dwell” (*GtG*, 385)

O enter then his gates with praise;
approach with joy his courts unto;
praise, laud, and bless his name always,
for it is seemly so to do.

Know that the Lord is God indeed;
without our aid he did us make;
we are his folk; he doth us feed,
and for his sheep he doth us take.

For why? The Lord our God is good;
his mercy is forever sure;
his truth at all times firmly stood,
and shall from age to age endure.

SCRIPTURE

Zephaniah 3:14-20

3:14 Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against
you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing
¹⁸as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

BIBLE STUDY

To be led using the Participant’s Book, p. 56, and Leader’s Guide, p. 58.

PRAYERS FOR THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

O God of majesty, you love us with an everlasting love and show us the way to justice and peace. In Jesus Christ you have reconciled the whole world to you and claimed us as your own.

O God, who rejoices over us with singing, the prophet reminds us that you are in our midst. Through Jesus Christ, you promised never to leave or forsake us. In the midst of fear, remind us of your loving presence, and replace our fear with joy.

Individual prayers of thanksgiving and intercession may be offered. There may be silent prayer.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray (*select a version of the prayer*):

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Remember and heed these words: Do not be afraid, for I am with you, says our eternal God. I love you and you are mine. Go with confidence to love and serve our God.

Amen.

THE PRESENT WORD

ADULT BIBLE LESSONS

W O R S H I P L E A F L E T S

PEACE AND JUSTICE REIGN

*Responses are in **bold**.

OPENING SENTENCES

Lamentations 3:22-24

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;

**they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.**

“The LORD is my portion,” says my soul,
“therefore I will hope in him.”

MORNING HYMN

“How Firm a Foundation” (*GtG*, 463)

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
is laid for your faith in God’s excellent Word!
What more can be said than to you God hath said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

“Fear not, I am with thee, O, be not dismayed,
for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand.

SCRIPTURE

Zechariah 8:1-8, 11-17

8:1 The word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying: ²Thus says the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. ³Thus says the LORD: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts shall be called the holy mountain. ⁴Thus says the LORD of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age. ⁵And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. ⁶Thus says the LORD of hosts: Even though it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in these days, should it also seem impossible to me, says the LORD of hosts? ⁷Thus says the LORD of hosts: I will save my people from the east country and from the west country; ⁸and I will bring them to live in Jerusalem. They shall be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness. . . .

this people as in the former days, says the LORD of hosts. ¹²For there shall be a sowing of peace; the vine shall yield its fruit, the ground shall give its produce, and the skies shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. ¹³Just as you have been a cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you and you shall be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.

¹⁴For thus says the LORD of hosts: Just as I purposed to bring disaster upon you, when your ancestors provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the LORD of hosts, ¹⁵so again I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; do not be afraid. ¹⁶These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace, ¹⁷do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, says the LORD.

¹¹But now I will not deal with the remnant of

BIBLE STUDY

To be led using the Participant’s Book, p. 62, and Leader’s Guide, p. 64.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

God of faithfulness, you give us a vision of the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, your home among mortals on earth. All people and nations will stream to your city where they will find nourishment, healing, and peace. Even now your blessing shines upon all the earth to help us see a larger vision of your loving care for all creation. And so you call us to move beyond our comfortable circles, and into unfamiliar places, as we seek to share your dream of a world made new in Christ.

When we face times of trial and uncertainty, stir us to remember your goodness toward us, that by meditating on your faithfulness in the past, we may be moved to deeper and richer faith in you.

Individual prayers of thanksgiving and intercession may be offered. There may be silent prayer.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray (*select a version of the prayer*):

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
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Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go forth from this place to be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong. Speak the truth to one another; render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace; do not devise evil in your hearts against one another; and love no false oath.

Amen.

THE PRESENT WORD

ADULT BIBLE LESSONS

W O R S H I P L E A F L E T S

PRACTICE JUSTICE*Responses are in **bold**.**OPENING SENTENCES**

Psalm 86:3–5

Be gracious to me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all day long.

**Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.**

For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.

Amen.

MORNING HYMN

I need thee every hour;
most gracious Lord;
no tender voice like thine
can peace afford.

Refrain:

*I need thee, O I need thee,
every hour I need thee!
O bless me now, my Savior—
I come to thee.*

“I Need Thee Every Hour” (GtG, 735)

I need thee every hour;
teach me thy will,
and thy rich promises
in me fulfill.
Refrain

SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 21:8–14

21:8 And to this people you shall say: Thus says the LORD: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. ⁹Those who stay in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but those who go out and surrender to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live and shall have their lives as a prize of war. ¹⁰For I have set my face against this city for evil and not for good, says the LORD: it shall be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

¹¹To the house of the king of Judah say: Hear the word of the LORD, ¹²O house of David! Thus says the LORD:

Execute justice in the morning,
and deliver from the hand of the oppressor
anyone who has been robbed,

or else my wrath will go forth like fire,
and burn, with no one to quench it,
because of your evil doings.

¹³See, I am against you, O inhabitant of the valley,
O rock of the plain,

says the LORD;

you who say, “Who can come down against us,
or who can enter our places of refuge?”

¹⁴I will punish you according to the fruit of your
doings,

says the LORD;

I will kindle a fire in its forest,
and it shall devour all that is around it.

BIBLE STUDY

To be led using the Participant's Book, p. 68, and Leader's Guide, p. 70.

PRAYER

God, you are our God and we are your people. May we never forget or minimize the height, depth and breadth of your love for us.

Now hear us as together we pray:

Give ear, O LORD, to our prayer and listen to our cry of supplication.

For those who are oppressed, and for those who oppress them;

Give ear, O LORD, to our prayer and listen to our cry of supplication.

For those who live in fear, and for those who reign terror on the innocent,

Give ear, O LORD, to our prayer and listen to our cry of supplication.

For those who suffer from unjust systems, and for us, who benefit from them, whether knowingly or unknowingly,

Give ear, O LORD, to our prayer and listen to our cry of supplication.

For those whose cries are muffled, and for those who have ears and refuse to hear.

Give ear, O LORD, to our prayer and listen to our cry of supplication.

By your Spirit, guide us into lives characterized by holiness and by the pursuit of justice, as expressions of our love for you.

Individual prayers of thanksgiving and intercession may be offered. There may be silent prayer.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

DISMISSAL

May God, who creates, redeems, and sustains, keep you steadfast in faith, buoyant in hope, and abounding in love. And the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

THE PRESENT WORD

ADULT BIBLE LESSONS

W O R S H I P L E A F L E T S

REPENT OF INJUSTICE

*Responses are in **bold**.

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 89:1–2, 15–16

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD,
And proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

Your steadfast love endures forever.

Your faithfulness is as high as the heavens.

Happy are those who sing your praise
and extoll your righteousness all the day.

MORNING HYMN

O shame to us who rest content
while lust and greed for gain
in street and shop and tenement
wring gold from human pain,
and bitter lips in deep despair
cry, “Christ has died in vain!”

“O Holy City, Seen of God” (GtG, 374)

Give us, O God, the strength to build
the city that has stood
too long a dream; whose laws are love,
whose ways are servant-hood,
and where the sun that shines becomes
your grace for human good.

SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 22:1–10

22:1 Thus says the LORD: Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, ²and say: Hear the word of the LORD, O King of Judah sitting on the throne of David—you, and your servants, and your people who enter these gates. ³Thus says the LORD: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place. ⁴For if you will indeed obey this word, then through the gates of this house shall enter kings who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their servants, and their people. ⁵But if you will not heed these words, I swear by myself, says the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation. ⁶For thus says the LORD concerning the house of the king of Judah:

You are like Gilead to me,
like the summit of Lebanon;

but I swear that I will make you a desert,
an uninhabited city.

⁷I will prepare destroyers against you,
all with their weapons;
they shall cut down your choicest cedars
and cast them into the fire.

⁸And many nations will pass by this city, and all of them will say one to another, “Why has the LORD dealt in this way with that great city?”

⁹And they will answer, “Because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshiped other gods and served them.”

¹⁰Do not weep for him who is dead,
nor bemoan him;
weep rather for him who goes away,
for he shall return no more
to see his native land.

BIBLE STUDY

To be led using the Participant’s Book, p. 74, and Leader’s Guide, p. 76.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Redeeming God, you call us to devote ourselves constantly to prayer for the sake of Jesus Christ. Therefore, let us offer our prayers this day on behalf of your church and the world, saying, fill us with your Spirit's power, that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Rescuing God, parent of orphans and protector of widows, you give the desolate a home to live in and lead out the prisoners into prosperity. Help us to order the patterns of our common life to support the health of your human family and the welfare of your world. Fill us with your Spirit's power, that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Steadfast God, you have given to your church the inheritance of faith in Christ alone, and bestowed your Spirit's love upon us to make us one in you. Help us to grow in strength and courage to witness to this hope: that all may find your saving love eternally in Christ. Fill us with your Spirit's power, that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Life-giving God, you send rain in abundance to relieve the parched crops and thirsty land, and make clean the winds of heaven. Help us to find sustainable solutions as we seek to honor and care for the well-being of your creation. Fill us with your Spirit's power, that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Loving God, you heard the sufferings of your people, listened to our cries, and sent a Son into our world that was no stranger to our pain. Help us to offer your healing and compassion as we minister to others in the mercy of your Christ. Fill us with your Spirit's power, that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you. Amen.

Holy and righteous God, you love justice and you call us to emulate you in that love. Forgive us for not loving justice as you do. As we repent and turn to you, restore us and transform us into the people you desire us to be. Fill us with your Spirit's power, that we may be one with Christ, as Christ is one with you.

Amen.

Individual prayers of thanksgiving and intercession may be offered. There may be silent prayer.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray (*select a version of the prayer*):

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
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Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Act with justice and righteousness. Go in peace and live lives of love before God and all people.

Amen.

THE PRESENT WORD

ADULT BIBLE LESSONS

W O R S H I P L E A F L E T S

RETURN TO LOVE AND JUSTICE

*Responses are in **bold**.

OPENING SENTENCES

Acts 2:17, 21

God declares: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.
The young shall see visions. The elders shall dream dreams.
Both men and women shall prophesy.

And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

MORNING HYMN

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
with all thy quickening powers;
kindle a flame of sacred love
in these cold hearts of ours.

"Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove" (*GtG*, 279)

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
with all thy quickening powers;
come, shed abroad a Savior's love,
and that shall kindle ours.

SCRIPTURE

Hosea 11:1-2, 7-10; 12:1-2, 6-14

11:1 When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
²The more I called them,
the more they went from me;
they kept sacrificing to the Baals,
and offering incense to idols.

12:1 Ephraim herds the wind,
and pursues the east wind all day long;
they multiply falsehood and violence;
they make a treaty with Assyria,
and oil is carried to Egypt.

.....

²The LORD has an indictment against Judah,
and will punish Jacob according to his ways,
and repay him according to his deeds.

⁷My people are bent on turning away from me.
To the Most High they call,
but he does not raise them up at all.

.....

⁶But as for you, return to your God,
hold fast to love and justice,
and wait continually for your God.

⁸How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, O Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?
How can I treat you like Zeboiim?
My heart recoils within me;
my compassion grows warm and tender.

⁷A trader, in whose hands are false balances,
he loves to oppress.

⁹I will not execute my fierce anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim;
for I am God and no mortal,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath.

⁸Ephraim has said, "Ah, I am rich,
I have gained wealth for myself;
in all of my gain
no offense has been found in me
that would be sin."

¹⁰They shall go after the LORD,
who roars like a lion;
when he roars,
his children shall come trembling from the west.

⁹I am the LORD your God
from the land of Egypt;
I will make you live in tents again,
as in the days of the appointed festival.

.....

¹⁰I spoke to the prophets;
it was I who multiplied visions,

and through the prophets I will bring
destruction.

¹¹In Gilead there is iniquity,
they shall surely come to nothing.
In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls,
so their altars shall be like stone heaps
on the furrows of the field.
¹²Jacob fled to the land of Aram,
there Israel served for a wife,

and for a wife he guarded sheep.
¹³By a prophet the LORD brought Israel up from
Egypt,
and by a prophet he was guarded.
¹⁴Ephraim has given bitter offense,
so his Lord will bring his crimes down on him
and pay him back for his insults.

BIBLE STUDY

To be led using the Participant's Book, p. 80, and Leader's Guide, p. 82.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Holy One, you see us for just who we are, and yet you love us with a parent's love. You continue to love us even when we wander from you. You gently call us to yourself when we are unfaithful. In your enduring love for us, we see both our guilt and our acquittal. Gracious God, continue to guide us and teach us to walk in your ways.

Loving God, through Jesus Christ you nurture and nourish us. You love us with a steadfast love: low and high, rich and poor together. Renew in us your call and release us from all fear, that we may heed these things and consider your steadfast love for all.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray (*select a version of the prayer*):

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
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as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
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Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
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For the kingdom, the power,
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DISMISSAL

Go forth to love and serve the Lord, remembering to hold fast to love and justice
and to wait continually for your God.

Amen.