

*The Power of
Praying®
Through
the Bible*

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GOD'S CONNECTION *with Us*

✿ Read and Consider ✿

Genesis 1:26–2:7

“The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7).

God created the universe with a word. He spoke stars and planets into existence. He formed the world with simple commands. God started the creation process without any preexisting things. He began with nothing. With the presence of the Holy Spirit and the entrance of His Word, creation happened. He brought order, light, life, and beauty out of chaos and darkness. He said, “Let there be...” and it happened.

Then He became personally involved with making humans. Other places in Scripture describe God as a “potter” and human beings as the “clay” (Isaiah 64:8), making us think of our heavenly Father bent over a potter’s wheel, forming mud figures into the design He had in mind for us. The finishing touch was to breathe into us His breath of life. God got personal, right from the start.

But He didn’t stop there. God’s action in giving us breath also gave us the ability to speak. The act of breathing that keeps us alive is the same act that we use to communicate. We breathe out to speak (and some languages in the world even breathe in to speak). We are God’s image bearers (1:26-27). We breathe and speak because of His breath given to us.

We should be in awe of the privilege we have to use the breath of life to speak to our Creator. We were made to communicate with our Maker. Even though we may not start out doing it very well, He still wants to hear us speak to Him. Just as we are delighted when

our babies make their first tiny sounds, so our heavenly Father is delighted when He hears the sound of one of His children speaking words intended for His ears.

So breathe a prayer to God often. If words don't come to mind right away, start by saying, "Thank You." As you say those two words slowly, begin to add "for..." until different ways to end the sentence begin to flow. Once you do this a while, you will realize that you can use your inspiration (breathing in) as time to think of the next words and your expiration (breathing out) to express your gratitude. All the way back to the first breath of the first person, you and I were made for this. Giving us the "breath of life" is God's connection with us, and prayer is our connection with Him.



Lord, I thank You for the breath of life You have given me. I pray You will breathe new life into me today. Just as You spoke and brought about life in Your magnificent world, help me to speak words that bring life into my own small world as well. How grateful I am to be closely connected to You in every way.

A WALK *in the* GARDEN

✿ Read and Consider ✿

Genesis 3:1-9

“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’” (Genesis 3:8-9).

Certain places just feel like this first garden. Something about the lush vegetation, the time of day, or the sounds of nature all provoke an almost overwhelming longing in us to experience what Adam and Eve enjoyed every day—a walk with God.

The world is still a wonderful setting in which to know God, but something has changed. It changed way back there, in the garden. The first two people gave up the pleasure of God’s company for their own interests. They heard the sound of God walking in the garden, looking for them, wanting to enjoy their usual walk. But they had sinned. Guilt overwhelmed them. They were ashamed to see God. They lost the close relationship they had with Him, and we’ve struggled to recapture that closeness ever since.

God didn’t hide from man; it was the other way around. Adam and Eve ducked into the bushes in shame, fear, and rebellion. But God came looking. He knew where they were, but He wanted them to know He was willing to seek their company. He was aware of their disobedience, but kept His appointment with them anyway.

What amazing fellowship they forfeited! What peace they lost! And yet, before we criticize them, remember how easily and how often we repeat their mistake. We make choices that draw us away from God. We experience overwhelming moments of His presence

that we wish we could wrap up and keep; yet hours later we turn our backs on Him, trying to shut His gentle whisper out of our lives.

The power in our prayer life flows out of God's presence with us. It's not *our* power; it's *His*. We don't experience or witness that power if we insist on our agenda and our schedules. We have to plan and hold sacred the places and times when we meet God. If we don't deliberately build our lives around these "garden walks" with the Lord, the world will rapidly and relentlessly fill our hours with other commitments. As He did with Adam and Eve, God will come looking for us. But how much better would it be if He found us waiting expectantly? I don't want Him to have to call out, "Where are you?" to me. What about you?



Lord, I want more than anything to have a close walk with You. Help me not to forfeit that wonderful intimacy by being drawn toward the distractions of this world. Enable me to hear Your voice calling me so that I will answer without even a moment's delay. Help me to never hide from You for any reason.

POWERFUL LISTENING

✿ Read and Consider ✿

Genesis 6:9-22

“Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God” (Genesis 6:9).

Noah listened well. When God spoke to him, he paid attention. Genesis tells us that Noah “walked with God.” What a beautiful way to say that Noah lived each day with an awareness of God’s presence. Beyond that, however, Noah also obeyed. What God told him to do, he did.

Noah obeyed even though God directed him to do something outlandish: “Make yourself an ark” (6:14). And Noah did. What a monstrosity he constructed on dry land, miles from the nearest body of water! How many insults, jokes, and sarcastic questions he must have endured. Yet he kept on task, obeying God’s instructions. Hebrews 11:7 lists Noah among the heroes of faith. The picture that develops out of the phrase “walked with God” reveals a person who depended on God’s faithfulness across the decades, through times of doubt, against the corruption that surrounded him.

With the exception of his family, Noah stood alone for God in his culture. The memory of God in the world had shrunk to a single man and his household. Many centuries later, Jesus described the people in Noah’s day: “For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man” (Matthew 24:38-39). In Noah’s day, as in ours, the noises of busyness can drown out the voice of God. (Little did they know that a different kind of drowning would

soon overtake them.) Jesus warned about any time when people are oblivious to the danger of going about life without stopping long enough to listen to God.

Prayer is more than talking to God. While that is vital, too many of us give God our list of requests and then dash off to our next task. What would our lives be like if we took the time not only to talk to God but to listen to Him as well? What if we then determined to obey what He tells us to do—no matter how much our society might scoff at us?

Do you want to walk with God? Then in your prayer time, *listen* carefully for His voice. You may hear Him leading you in a new direction, with a new purpose, and with courage you never knew you had!



Dear God, help me to live each day with a deep sense of Your presence. I don't want to go through life without taking time to be with You. I want my relationship with You to be so strong that other people recognize Your Spirit in me. Whenever I draw near to You in prayer, help me to hear Your voice speaking to my heart so that I will always follow Your leading.