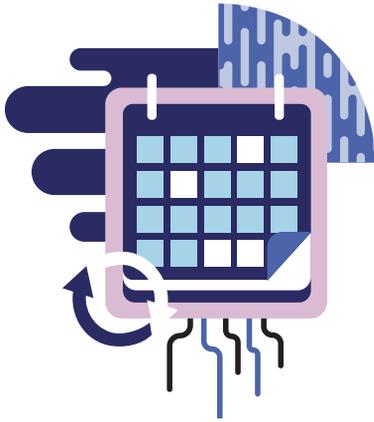


Daily Devotions

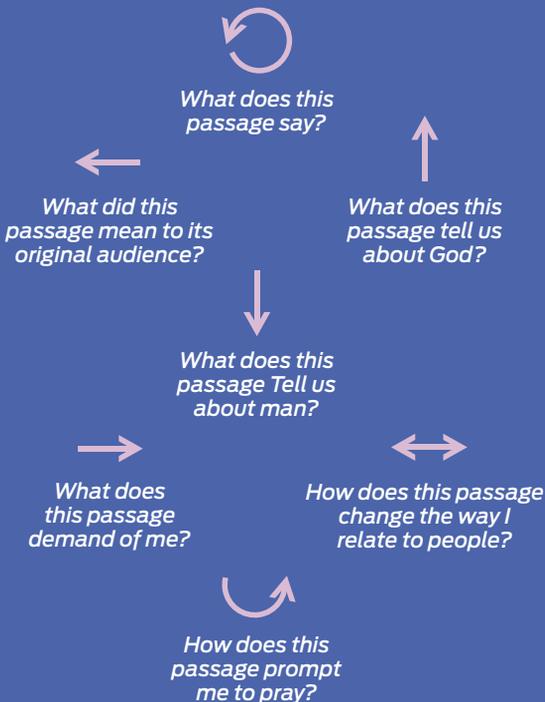


Day 1

Zechariah 1:1–2:13

I have three children. They're all teenagers. I can't count the number of times I've said to them, "Listen to me!" It can seem frustrating to get their attention. What's more, I have tried to help them not make the same mistakes that I have made in the past. In these verses God was doing the same thing. He was trying to convince the Israelites not to make the mistakes of their ancestors and to pay attention to Him. The beauty is, that if they did, He promised that they will be with Him and He will be with them. This is the promise of the Garden of Eden. Once again, humanity and God walking together, experiencing the unbroken relationship of Creator and created. God is continuing to say these things to us today. He wants us to learn from history; He wants us to learn from God's word, and He wants us to follow Him in faith. Our promise is the same; that we will walk with Him.

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Are there areas of your life that God has been trying to get your attention? Are their areas that you need to obey Him in but you have struggled to do so?

Zechariah 3:1–6:12

I love what this passage tells us about the Branch as it is grown into a full vine (3:10). It says that it will cast shade for those who gather under it. Read retrospectively, it says that the followers of Jesus are the ones who will sit under it. And then the passage calls God's people to invite others to join them, sitting under the shade of the vine. This is important because, first, it reminds us that sitting under the vine is richly satisfying. That's the picture here. There is restoration for hot and thirsty souls under the vine's shade. Beyond that, though, it speaks to our role. We don't provide shade; we just point to the One who does. The world is full of hot and thirsty people. We cannot quench their thirst, but we can give them directions to the One who can quench their thirst. God is calling His children to invite those they know who do not know Christ to join them in enjoying the comfort of the shade from the vine.

Who is someone you know who does not know Christ? How might you use this passage to witness to them?

Zechariah 6:13–9:17

We are to rejoice, and we are to shout! These are the expectations for the children of God who have enjoyed the comfort and redemption of the Messiah. Remember this principle: the manner of our worship says something about the object of our worship. We celebrate the things that mean the most to us, the things that move us the most. Can you imagine a baby's first birthday and no one celebrating? Can you imagine everyone just standing around, nodding lethargically? Of course not. Those days are fabulous celebrations that we enjoy. Why do we enjoy them, and why do we celebrate so loudly? We do this because we love the child and we understand the wonder of both birth and growth. The same type of excitement should apply to our worship of the Messiah who has redeemed us.

What does the manner of your worship say about the God you are worshipping?

Zechariah 10:1–12:14

How much hope is present in Zechariah 10:6? It's bubbling up on the page and spilling out in the life of those of us who are reading it. It's hard to not sit back and just be in awe of God's covenant-keeping. God loves His people, and the promise of God, across Scripture, is that God will love, restore, and be with His people. This is why God is referred as Immanuel – the God who is with us. All the way back in the Abrahamic Covenant God promises to be with His people. And all the way forward to Revelation 21, God promises to ultimately be with His people. The greatest promise of Scripture, from the time that Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, and from God's presence, is that God will once again be with us. This is yet another picture of God fulfilling that promise. One of the most beautiful pictures of this is Psalm 23:4. Even when we walk through the darkest valleys, we do not have to fear because God is with us.

How does God's promise of His presence give us hope? How is God's presence able to keep us from fear?

Zechariah 13:1–14:21

God promises to put His people through a refining process. He will make us increasingly into His Son's image through this refinement (Rom. 8:28-29). Refinement, though, is not easy. It is often painful and challenging. Thankfully, in this passage, God points out that we can cry out to Him as we walk through difficult moments. This guarantee is one of the beautiful realities of Jesus. He is not a God who is distant and uninterested. He is a God who loves His children, and as the passage reminds us, He is both with us and for us. The title "Immanuel," used a few places in Scripture, literally means "God with us." He knows us, He loves us, and He invites us to cry out to Him. He promises to then come to us and to be with us.

Maybe you are struggling from time to time with some particular pain. You need to hear today that God is with you, He is for you, and He wants you to cry out to Him. He is your hope.

In what areas do you need to cry out to God, sharing with Him your hurt and confirming your confidence and hope in Him?