

# **PRAISE THE LORD**

**A book of Bible messages  
with prayers**

Based on the books of MEDITATIONS produced by Northwestern Publishing House and used with permission.

Adapted for use by Multi-Language Publications of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, New International Reader's Version. Copyright © 1996, 1998 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of International Bible Society.

Copyright © 2002

ISBN 1-931891-06-0

Printed in the USA

## PREFACE

The messages from God's Word found in this book are selected from the books of MEDITATIONS published over the past six years by Northwestern Publishing House. They have been put into a simpler, more readable English. Each message has been made free of American examples. The messages speak about our salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior of all people. These messages are printed according to the order of the books found in the Bible.

In addition to these short messages and prayers there are two other parts to this book. The first part includes prayers that can be used at different times during the day. Also included are the central teachings of the Christian faith found in the Apostles' Creed, or statement of what Christians believe. In the last part of this book you will find four longer messages called *God's Gifts are for You*.

We pray all these messages and prayers will strengthen your faith in your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

*Harold A. Essmann*  
June, 2002

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **PART ONE:**

Selected prayers, the Apostles' Creed and Psalm 23 . . . . .Page 1

## **PART TWO:**

Messages from God's Word with prayers . . . . .Page 5

## **PART THREE:**

God's Gifts are for You (Longer messages) . . . . .Page 130

## PRAYERS TO USE EACH DAY

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** - *The Lord's Prayer is found two times in the Bible. This prayer is found in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount written in Matthew chapter 6 verses 9 through 13. The Lord's Prayer is also found in the gospel of Luke chapter 11 verses 2 through 4. Jesus' disciples or followers came to him and asked, "Lord, teach us to pray." Jesus taught his followers this prayer that we know as the Lord's Prayer. This prayer can be used at any time and at all times in our lives. It is a good prayer because it speaks mostly about our spiritual needs. Only one part of the prayer speaks about the needs of our body, "Give us today our daily bread." Use this prayer often.*

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the  
glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

**OTHER PRAYERS** - *A Christian is invited by God to come to him in prayer at any time in our daily lives. We should want to pray in the morning when we get up from our bed. Also, we should pray at night before we go to sleep. Before and after we eat our food is a good time to thank and praise God for the blessings he gives to us. When we have troubles in our lives, God invites us to come to him in prayer. He also promises to hear our prayers. God says in Psalm 50 verse 15, "Call out to me when trouble comes. I will save you. And you will honor me."*

### **PRAYER TO USE BEFORE EATING**

Come Lord Jesus, be our guest and  
let your gifts to us be blessed. Amen.

### **PRAYER TO USE AFTER EATING**

O give thanks to the Lord, because he is good.  
His faithful love continues forever. Amen.

### **PRAYER TO USE IN THE MORNING**

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend [place] my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe [the devil] may have no power over me. Amen.

### **PRAYER TO USE IN THE EVENING**

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously [lovingly] kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend [place] my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe [the devil] may have no power over me. Amen.

## WHAT I BELIEVE

**THE APOSTLES' CREED** - *A creed is a statement of what we believe. The word "creed" comes from the Latin language and means, "I believe." The apostles of Jesus Christ did not write the Apostles' Creed. However, it is called the Apostles' Creed because it is based on the teachings of the apostles found in the Bible. The apostles were twelve men and later also the apostle Paul who were chosen directly by Jesus and then sent out by him to preach and teach God's Word. This creed is likely based on the words used in Baptism and commanded by Jesus. That command is found in Matthew chapter 28 verse 19 where Jesus said, "Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The Apostles' Creed took the form we have today in France about eight hundred years after Jesus and the apostles lived on this earth. In this creed we say what we as Christians believe about God the Father, the Son [Jesus] and the Holy Spirit.*

### THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father, almighty  
maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.  
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**PSALM 23** - *Psalms are hymns or songs. The people of Israel sang the psalms in the days of the Old Testament. Even today some churches sing some of the psalms. One of the most beautiful of all the psalms is Psalm 23. King David wrote this psalm. David lived during Old Testament times before Jesus was born. As a boy he was a shepherd caring for sheep on the hills around the town of Bethlehem. This psalm speaks of our Lord and God as a shepherd and we Christians or believers as his sheep. This psalm praises God for all the blessings God gives us. It also reminds us of the care and comfort our Good Shepherd provides for us. Finally, the Good Shepherd leads us to heaven. In heaven we will always sing about and enjoy God's goodness and love.*

### **PSALM 23**

The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need.  
 He lets me lie down in fields of green grass.  
 He leads me beside quiet waters.  
 He gives me new strength.  
 He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name.  
 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid.  
 You are with me.  
 Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me.  
 You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies.  
 You pour oil on me head.  
 My cup runs over.  
 I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me  
 all the days of my life.  
 And I will live in the house of the LORD forever.

God said, "Let there be light." And there was light. God saw that the light was good. He separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day." He called the darkness "night." There was evening, and there was morning. It was day one. (Genesis 1:3-5)

### THE CREATOR SPOKE POWERFUL WORDS

Some people try to believe in both creation and evolution. The Bible tells us that God created the world. Create here means "to make something out of nothing." The opening words of the book of Genesis in the Bible tell us WHO created the world, WHAT he created and HOW the world was created. God spoke powerful words, and it was so.

God did not need a long time or millions of years to make the world and all that was in it. He spoke powerful words and the world was made. "He [God] spoke, and the world came into being. He commanded, and it stood firm" (Psalm 33:9). "Long ago, God's word brought the heavens into being. His word separated the earth from the waters. And the waters surrounded it. But those people forget things like that on purpose" (2 Peter 3:5).

Knowing HOW God made the world and us gives us great comfort. His word is powerful. That means when he says our sins are forgiven they are forgiven. God's Word created faith in our hearts. The God who created light in the world has shined into our hearts telling us the good news about Jesus.

Are we afraid of what will happen in the future? Do we think God will not take care of us? If such worries fill our minds, then think of how God created the world. Remember the power of the Word of God. Jesus showed that power when he healed people who were sick. He showed that power when he rose from the dead.

Lazarus was raised from the dead by the power of Jesus' word. "Jesus called in a loud voice. He said, "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:43). And Lazarus came out of his grave alive. Jesus shall speak a powerful word on the last day and we shall rise from the dead. "Do not be amazed at this. A time is coming when all who are in the graves will hear his [Jesus] voice. They will all come out of their graves" (John 5:28,29). God speaks and it is done. God created the world by his powerful word. He saves us from sin, death and hell by that same powerful Word.

**Oh God, we praise you now and always because your word created us, takes care of us every day, saves us, and will call us to life again. Amen.**

**"So tell my servant David, 'The LORD who rules over all says, 'I took you away from the grasslands. That's where you were taking care of your father's sheep and goats. I made you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you everywhere you have gone. I cut off all of your enemies when you were attacking them. Now I will make you famous. Your name will be just as respected as the names of the most important people on earth. I will provide a place where my people Israel can live. I will plant them in the land. Then they will have a home of their own. They will not be bothered any more. Evil people will no longer crush them, as they did at first....But I will give you peace and rest from all of them.'" (2 Samuel 7:8-11)**

### **YOUR KING TAKES CARE OF YOU**

King David, who lived in Old Testament times, wanted to do something good for God. He wanted to build a temple, a place for the people of Israel to worship God. But God's plans were different from those of King David. God gave David victory over his enemies. He gave David peace, but not so King David should build a temple.

For a long time God had promised to bring a Savior into the world for the people of Israel. That is why God chose David to be king of Israel. David was to be an ancestor of his greater son, Jesus. Jesus is also a king. He is the greatest and best king of all. Kings took care of their subjects or people.

Jesus takes care of us as our King. He fulfilled, or kept perfectly, all of God's law for us. He lived every minute of every day and every night perfectly. Then he gave up his life on a cross to pay for all of the sins of everyone in the world. Our King, Jesus, fought sin, Satan, and hell for us, and he died. That death was his victory. Jesus resurrection, or rising again from the dead, made our forgiveness sure. We will live forever in heaven.

While we live on earth, our King also takes care of us. He sees to it that we have what we need in our life. David was a shepherd. He took care of sheep. Jesus is our Good Shepherd and he protects and takes care of us as his sheep. What we have in our lives is the result of his perfect care.

When we worship our King, we do so out of loving thanks for all he gives to us. Our worship is not about what we are doing for Jesus, our King. Rather, it is about what our King has done and still does and will do for us.

**Jesus, we thank you for all you did and still do to care for our bodies and souls. We pray that as our Good Shepherd you will lead us safely through our lives. Take care of all of our spiritual and bodily needs. Amen.**

Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a very important man in the eyes of his master. And he was highly respected. That's because the Lord had helped him win the battle over Aram's enemies. He was a brave soldier. But he had a skin disease. Companies of soldiers from Aram had marched out. They had captured a young girl from Israel. She became a servant of Naaman's wife. She spoke to the woman she was serving. She said, "I wish my master would go and see the prophet who is in Samaria. He would heal my master of his skin disease." (2 Kings 5:1-3)

### HAPPINESS MAKES US TALK

Think about this. A child plays and has fun outside her home. Then enemies from a foreign country attack her town. She and her family are taken as prisoners. The girl is taken away from her parents and her brothers and sisters. She is sold as a slave. From that time on she is told what she should do and when she should do it. Then the girl finds out that it was her master and owner who took her from her home and family.

What would you do if your master got sick with a skin disease? Leprosy is a skin disease that causes skin and parts of the body to fall away. Would you be willing to be kind to such a man? You probably would say, no!

The girl in our reading did not say no. She spoke up. She knew how God loved her. She knew about the promise of a Savior who was to come in the future. She knew about one of God's prophets in her home country. She knew his name was Elisha. Elisha lived and worked for the God who saved her. Her joy in the faith of her coming Savior made her tell Naaman's wife where he could find help for his sickness.

We have the joy of knowing our sins are forgiven because Jesus died for us. We have the joy of knowing we will live because Jesus rose from the dead and lives. We have the joy of knowing that our Savior, Jesus, who went to heaven, will come again and take us to heaven also. "Christ's love controls us. We are sure that one person died for everyone. And so everyone died. Christ died for everyone. He died so that those who live should not live for themselves any more. They should live for Christ. He died for them and was raised again." (2 Corinthians 5:14,15). Joy makes us talk about our Savior, Jesus. Telling others about that Savior makes our joy even greater.

The slave girl in our reading was willing to tell a free man how he could be healed. How much more should we who are free be willing to tell about the healing Word of God to many people in the world who are still slaves in the chains of sin. Who do you know that needs this message of love today? You will be happy when you tell others about Jesus.

**Jesus, you loved me when I was not lovable because of all my sins. Help me to love others by telling them about your love today. Amen.**

---

**"My ears had heard about you. But now my own eyes have seen you." (Job 42:5)**

### THE LORD SHOWS YOU HIS LOVE

Many times you may hear your pastor say, "God loves you." You may hear that every time you listen to a sermon. That is the message taught in our churches Sunday after Sunday. That message of God's love for us is the center of our Christian faith.

It is a very precious message. Every one of us is a sinner. Every one of us deserves nothing good from God. We deserve only his anger and punishment. We deserve his eternal punishment in hell. But the Lord did not let us receive the punishment we should receive. Instead, Isaiah, an Old Testament prophet says, God laid on his Son, who did not sin, "the sins of all of us" (Isaiah 53:6). God's Word tells us that, because of his love, all of our sins are forgiven. Such forgiveness is possible only because Jesus paid for our forgiveness when he died for us on the cross.

Job, at the spiritual low point of his life, spoke the words written above. He did not think that God loved him. Job suffered greatly. All his wealth and all of his children had been taken away from him. Job had sores all over his body. Because of his suffering, Job doubted that God really cared for him. God saw that Job needed to be shown that God still loved him. The book of Job, in the Bible, tells us how God spoke to Job in a special way. He spoke to Job in a voice coming out of a strong wind. God wanted Job to be certain that he loved him.

We may sometimes think that God does not love us when troubles come into our lives. Our faith is being tested when such troubles come. We feel we need a strong wind to help us. We need to have some sign from God that he really loves us. God has given to us Christians such a special sign. God speaks to us, not out of a strong wind, but out of his true Word, the Bible. God's Word never changes. It is always correct, without anything wrong in it. God's Word has the power to help us and to save us.

Do you need to be made sure God loves you? Do you need to be made sure your sins are forgiven? We all need to be sure. That certainty comes from God. We can be sure God loves us by reading the Bible. Read the Bible often. Remember, only God's Word can tell you what God is really like. Only God's Word can tell you how much he loves you. Only God's Word tells you how you are saved through Jesus. Only God's Word shows you how you can go to heaven.

**Dear Lord, help me to be sure that you love me by the reading of your precious Word. Amen.**

**Blessed is the one who obeys the law of the Lord. He doesn't follow the advice of evil people. He doesn't make a habit of doing what sinners do. He doesn't join those who make fun of the Lord and his law. Instead, he takes delight in the law of the Lord. He thinks about his law day and night. He is like a tree that is planted near a stream of water. It always bears its fruit at the right time. Its leaves don't dry up. Everything godly people do turns out well. The Lord watches over the lives of those who are godly. But the lives of sinful people will lead to their death. (Psalm 1: 1-3,6)**

### GOD BLESSES US

Who blesses us? God does. But do you know what it means to be blessed by God? First of all, it is wonderful to think what the all-powerful God does. He is the Creator of heaven and earth. He is the Lord of lords. He is the King of kings. It is such a God who sees us and takes care of us. The psalmist writes, "I think about the heavens. I think about what your fingers have created. I think about the moon and stars that you have set in place. What is a human being that you take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings?" (Psalm 8:3,4).

It is more wonderful when we think about WHOM God blesses. We are sinful human beings. We are conceived and born in sin. We are people who want to do evil things all the time. We fight against what God tells us. Yet God blesses us.

There can be only one answer to the question, why does God bless us? It is because of God's grace, that is, his undeserved love and mercy. "God so loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life" (John 3:16). Because we do not do what is right, God demands that sin be punished by death. However, God's love finds a way to satisfy his justice and save his creatures. He sent his Son Jesus Christ to take our place. Jesus kept the law perfectly. Jesus died on the cross. That sacrifice is necessary to pay for the sins of all the people in the world. Now God says we are all righteous, that is, we are without sin through faith in Christ Jesus. Even our faith is a gift of God.

The result is Christians, believers, are the adopted children of God. Believers do not live like the ungodly. They are happy to listen to God's law and gospel. The believer reads and thinks about God's Word day and night. As a result, God blesses believers. They know peace because their sins are forgiven. They are winners over sin, and the grave. Christians are certain that their prayers are heard by their Father in heaven. Believers have a sure hope of eternal life with Jesus in heaven. Give thanks to God for leading you on the right path of believers.

**Dear Lord, I am blessed. You have made me walk on the path that leads to heaven for believers. Make it possible for me to stay away from sinful thoughts, words and acts. May I always live the life of a believer. Amen.**

**He is like a tree that is planted near a stream of water. It always bears its fruit at the right time. Its leaves don't dry up. Everything godly people do turns out well. (Psalm 1:3)**

### **A BELIEVER IS LIKE A TREE PLANTED BY A RIVER**

You learn some interesting things when you study a map of the land where Jesus lived. That land is a small country. It is only 80 miles (130 kilometers) wide and 140 miles (225 kilometers) long. Yet in the north part of that country you can see snow on the top of Mount Herman. In the south you can see the emptiness of the hot Negev desert. The fields of Samaria grow many good crops while east and south of Jerusalem there are hills without trees or grass. There are few places in the country where you can find fresh water except for the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River. Most of the other rivers are small. The land where Jesus lived was called the land of milk and honey. But no one would say that it is a land with a lot of water.

This land often experienced a lack of rain. As a result there were times of lack of food. Rains that fell early and late in the year were very important. When those rains did not come, the people were in trouble. So the thought of a believer being like a tree planted by a river where there was water had a beautiful meaning for a person living in Jesus' land. Such a tree planted by a river did not have to depend on the rain. During the good years it grew like all the other trees. In the bad years, when all other trees and plants were dying, the tree by the river still grew.

Just as water is important for a tree to live and grow, so the Word of God is important for the spiritual life and growth of a believer. God's Word brings life and salvation. The Word flows from God like a river. "God's blessings are like a river. They fill the city of God with joy" (Psalm 46:4). The believer who is planted in God's Word enjoys the wisdom, grace and goodness of that Word. The believer is full of life. People can see that the believer is full of life by the good things he does in his life. People of this world may not look at what a believer does as being successful. But the Apostle Paul tells us, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28).

The believer is faithful in using the Word of God. Believing in Jesus the believer does good things. Therefore, God blesses the believer.

**Dear Lord, thank you for planting me in your Word. Through study of your Word may I always be strengthened in my faith, even in difficult times. May the refreshing water of the gospel always keep me willing to do good things. Amen.**

---

**Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in the whole earth! (Psalm 8:9)**

### **WE HAVE SEEN GOD'S GLORY**

Why do people praise and worship God? Why do they give gifts of thanksgiving to God? Some people do it because God has been very good to them. When people see the great mountains or the beautiful flowers they say, "God is good to have made all these wonderful things."

But what should be our main reason to worship and praise the Lord? King David, who wrote many of the psalms, saw God's glory in what God made. The Lord helped King David to win great victories over his enemies. King David had great riches. But King David was taught to see God's glory someplace else. He tells us to look at the name of God and what that name means.

God's glory is seen in his Son, Jesus Christ. The humble Savior, Jesus, shows us God's love and mercy. Jesus won that love and mercy for us. The apostle John wrote, "The Word [Jesus] became a human being. He made his home with us. We have seen his glory. It is the glory of the one and only Son. He came from the Father. And he was full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

You have never seen Jesus. Yet you know he is real. You believe what the Bible tells you about Jesus. You see every day how he helps and feeds your faith through the power of the gospel found in the Bible. You know you are saved by faith in Jesus. You see Jesus in the Lord's Supper. The Holy Spirit tells you that you are a child of God. Yes, you have seen the glory of God in Jesus.

God comes to you each day through his Word, the Bible, and the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. Therefore, praise God that you see his glory as seen in Jesus, the Son of God. Praise God that together with King David in Psalm 8 you see God's glory.

**We praise you Lord of heaven and earth because you come to us through Jesus. He lived on earth, died for us, and rose from the dead so we might share your glory now and forever. Amen.**

**My strength is dried up like a piece of broken pottery. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You bring me down to the edge of the grave. (Psalm 22:15)**

### **THE LORD SAVES ME FROM ETERNAL DEATH**

Some people are afraid of death. Some people are afraid of how they will die. People who are afraid to die usually are not sure if they will go to heaven or to hell. These people usually doubt they will go to heaven and are sure they will go to hell. Then there are those who are afraid of how they will die. Will they die in an accident? Will they die after a long painful sickness? These people are not sure how they will die.

Our reading above gives hope to all people. Psalm 22 speaks about Jesus Christ. Jesus died to take away the fear of death for all who believe in him. He also takes away the fear of how we will die. Believers, or Christians, do not have to be afraid of going into eternal death in hell. Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life in place of our very sinful lives. On the cross he paid for the punishment God demanded for our sins. Jesus was forsaken [forgotten] by his Father and suffered hell for us. Through Jesus perfect life and innocent death, the punishment for sin was paid. When Jesus died on the cross and cried out, "It is finished," we were justified. To be justified means God declared, or like a judge said, we are not guilty.

Through Jesus we receive the forgiveness of all of our sins. Because our sins are forgiven, God now looks on us as holy, or sinless, for Jesus' sake. The result is that we can be sure we will go to heaven and not go to hell. "God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life" (John 3:16). This is a wonderful promise God gives to believers. Those who believe in Jesus and what he did for us will go to heaven!

Jesus also takes away the fear of dying a painful death. Nothing can be like the suffering Jesus felt when he died on the cross. Nothing can be like the hell he experienced on that cross. Jesus' death brings us hope of life with God. This hope is given to all who have faith, that is trust, in God. God brings good out of the darkest hours of our lives. "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28). We must never forget that because of how Jesus died, we can be sure "what we are suffering now is nothing compared with the glory that will be shown in us" (Romans 8:18). The wonderful things in heaven will make all our suffering on earth seem small.

**Lord, thank you for dying on the cross for me. Now I will never need to fear death or how I will die. Amen.**

---

**God's blessings are like a river. They [God's blessings] fill the city of God with joy. (Psalm 46:4)**

### **GOD GIVES US THE WATER OF LIFE**

Many years ago cities were protected by high walls. Food could be kept behind the walls. But water was very important. If the people did not have water, they would not be able to fight their enemies. Soon the enemies would take the city.

The "city of God" in today's verse above stands for the holy Christian Church. This church is made up of all believers. Like cities many years ago, God's people are attacked by their enemies. Those enemies are the devil, the evil people of this world, and their own sinful bodies. But it is God who defends the city of God. He gives us the water we need to live.

The psalm writer tells us that "God's blessings are like a river." The water in this river is the salvation God gives to us. This salvation is found in the Bible, God's Word. Jesus said, "Anyone who drinks the water I give him will never be thirsty. In fact, the water I give him will become a spring of water in him. It will flow up into eternal life" (John 4:14).

The water of life for believers is the gospel. This water is the good news about Jesus our Savior. The water of life defends us against our spiritual enemies. This water keeps our faith strong. Through the gospel in God's Word and in the sacraments our soul is refreshed. The good news is that our sins are forgiven.

This Word of God makes his people happy. The psalm tells us that the gospel fills the church with joy. God will destroy the power of the devil. When temptations come into our lives, the Lord will protect us. When our sinful bodies try to lead us into sin, God puts a stop to its sinful work. With the gospel in our lives God's people live in joy and are safe.

**Thank you, Lord, for giving me the message of the gospel. Help me be thankful and full of joy because of the blessings the gospel brings to me. Amen.**

**To you [God] a thousand years are like a day that has just gone by. They are like a few hours of the night. (Psalm 90:4)**

### SAFE WITH GOD

On November 10, 1483, a man named Martin Luther was born in the country of Germany. If someone would ask you, "Why was he born in 1483?" or "Why was Luther born in Germany?" you might answer, "Because it was God's plan." We are all safe because God is in control of time. God made the sun, moon and stars in the sky to create, or make, time. These heavenly bodies give us light, but they also "serve as signs to mark off the seasons and the days and the years" (Genesis 1:14).

Since we are all part of God's creation, we are all ruled, or controlled, by time. However, God is not ruled by time. To stress how our lives are short and show us the eternal power of God, Moses wrote, "To you [God] a thousand years are like a day that has just gone by. They are like a few hours of the night" (Psalm 90:4). A day goes by very quickly and a few hours of night even faster. That is what a thousand years are like to God. God is not controlled by time. God controls time.

The apostle Paul writes, "From one man [Adam] he [God] made all the people of the world. Now they live all over the earth. He decided exactly when they should live. And he decided exactly where they should live" (Acts 17:26). God chose our birth dates and the times in which we live. God also chooses how many years we will live. God picks the day and hour of our death. He has also picked the time for judgment day. Those days mark for us the beginning of eternity in heaven.

God tells us all this to comfort us. We also want to thank and praise God because he rules our lives. We say with the writer of the psalm, "I trust in you, LORD. I say, 'You are my God.' My whole life is in your hands" (Psalm 31:14,15). Some people want to plan their lives. They feel they have the freedom to make such choices. But God, not human beings, is in control of time. It is a comfort to believers that God is in control. Believers fight the good fight of faith. Believers spread the message of the gospel or good news about Jesus Christ. Believers can be sure God controls their lives.

**Almighty God, my life is in your hands. Lead me each day of my life so I will be safe. In Jesus' name I pray to you. Amen.**

---

**You have put our sins right in front of you. You have placed our secret sins where you can see them clearly. (Psalm 90:8)**

### **WE ARE SAFE WITH OUR SAVIOR GOD**

Moses, who wrote the words of Psalm 90, had seen much sin and death. He was the leader of the people of Israel for many years. He saw how these people continued to fight against God. But Moses was also a sinner. He would not enter into the Promised Land because of his sin. Moses knew his God was a merciful God. God is also just, doing what is right. Therefore God lays our sins in front of him where he can see them. Who can feel safe standing in front of such a God?

To stand before God should fill us with fear. God tells us in his Word that he is just and holy. He wants us to be perfect and holy too. We must die because we have sinned against God. When we look into God's law, we see we have not done what God wants us to do. We fight against God. We do not do things God wants us to do.

Moses knew we cannot satisfy God. Another psalm writer said, "The price for a life is very high. No payment is ever enough" (Psalm 49:8). We cannot make up for what we have done against God.

"What a terrible failure I have been! Who will save me from this sin that brings death to my body?" asks the apostle Paul, (Romans 7:24). Paul, like Moses, saw and felt his sinfulness. Earlier in Romans chapter seven, the apostle Paul wrote how he was not able to keep God's laws perfectly. Paul wrote, "Here is the law I find working in me. When I want to do good, evil is right there with me" (Romans 7:21).

As God's people we are safe. We have the forgiveness of our sins because Jesus died in our place. He covered our sins with his blood. Now God does not look at our sins. Instead he forgives them for Jesus' sake. We can be happy that we are safe because of God's mercy through Jesus Christ.

**Lord God, always have mercy on me and keep me safe in your forgiving love. Show me my sins so I am even more thankful for your forgiveness. Amen.**

---

**We live to be about 70 [years]. Or we may live to be 80 [years], if we stay healthy. But all that time is filled with trouble and sorrow. The years quickly pass, and we are gone." (Psalm 90:10)**

### SAFE BECAUSE GOD HELPS US

In the days of Moses, who wrote this psalm, people lived to be about 70 years old. If they were strong and healthy they reached the age of 80 years. Many people say that time goes by too fast. Moses said, "The years quickly pass, and we are gone." Death comes and the souls of believers go to heaven while their bodies return to dust.

In our Scripture reading we have another important thought. When Moses speaks of the years of our lives he points out "that time is filled with trouble and sorrow." Moses was a believer. He was a man chosen by God for some special work. He led the people of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land. He saw many troubles because of his sin and the sins of his people.

Think about the life of Moses. He was born in Egypt at a time when Hebrew baby boys were to be killed. Moses' mother hid him to save his life. The daughter of the ruler of Egypt found Moses in a basket among the plants by the Nile River. She asked Moses' mother to take care of him.

When Moses was older he had to run away. He had killed an Egyptian. Forty years later, God called Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. God gave Moses strength and help for all those difficult years. For another forty years Moses saw his people were unhappy because of what was happening in their lives. They were not satisfied with the food God gave them. They spoke against Moses, their leader. They had to live in the desert for all of those forty years.

Yes, our life is also full of trouble and sorrow. It passes away very quickly. But God is ready to help us. When we sin, God forgives us. When a loved one dies, God's Word comforts us. Believers have many blessings from God. These blessings come to us because God loves us. He loved us so much he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to save us from our sins. It is Jesus who leads us to heaven.

**Lord Jesus, be the ruler of my life. In this life of trouble, be with me and care for me. Help me and let me serve you each day in my life. Amen.**

---

**Satisfy us with your faithful love every morning. Then we can sing with joy and be glad all of our days. (Psalm 90:14)**

### **WE ARE SAFE WITH THE GOD OF LOVE**

Life is always changing. Life passes quickly. Sin and the results of sin are with us every day. Sin brings death. At death we face the judgment of God. Those are the very important matters Moses reminds us about in Psalm 90.

However, Moses does not want to leave us without hope. He was blessed with the love of God. Moses tells us, "Satisfy us with your faithful love every morning." God's love rests on us even though our lives and the world are filled with sin, trouble, sorrow, death and judgment.

"God is love," the apostle John writes (1 John 4:8). God's love never fails. He does not love us one moment and then forget about us the next moment. His love caused him to send his only Son to save us. His love gives us everlasting life.

Moses knew about Jesus. Like Abraham, he looked forward to the time when Jesus would be born. He knew Jesus would take away the sins of all people by dying as the sacrifice for sin. Even though Moses was the great lawgiver, he knew the gospel well. The good news about Jesus gave Moses hope and the power to pray to God. He could look beyond all the troubles he spoke about in Psalm 90 and look to God's great love.

We can also look for God's great love. That is why "we can sing with joy and be glad all of our days." There is nothing in this world that can separate us from the love of God that is found in Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 8:39). Please know that God's love is meant for you too. It is meant for all the people in the world. No matter what you have done, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15).

All of us can "know that God loves us. We can depend on that" (1 John 4:16). "How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world. He sent him so we could receive life through him" (1 John 4:9). "Taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man who goes to him for safety" (Psalm 34:8).

**Lord, show us your mercy every day. Satisfy us each morning with your love. May we sing for joy and be happy every day of our lives. Amen.**

**I will praise the LORD. Deep down inside me, I will praise him. I will praise him, because his name is holy. I will praise the LORD. I won't forget anything he does for me. (Psalm 103:1,2)**

### REMEMBER WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE FOR YOU

We get very busy in our lives don't we? Many things take up time in our lives. Was it hard for you to find time to read this devotion to yourself or to your family?

Do our spiritual lives suffer because we do not take time to praise God? Read again the words of the Psalmist printed above.

The Holy Spirit caused David to write these words. David was a very busy man. David was a shepherd, a warrior, a musician, a husband, and a father. Above all, he was a king. Truly, David was a very busy man. Yet, King David understood the importance of setting aside time each day to thank the Lord for all the good things God had done for him. David did not want to forget even one of those gracious gifts.

Like David, you have so many reasons to praise the Lord. With Martin Luther, a great leader in the church, we can say that the Lord "gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind and all my abilities" (explanation to the First Article of the Apostle's Creed). We also know that God "still preserves me (takes care of me) by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, property and home." There are so many good things God has given to you.

But we have even greater gifts the Lord has given to us. Beside all the physical gifts he has given us spiritual gifts. As the redeemed (bought back) children of God, we enjoy the gifts of forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Our sinful nature wants to overlook these great blessings.

Take time to remember all the good things God has given to you. Spend time studying God's Word. Think of how Jesus, true God, became a man to take your place and suffered and died as punishment for your sins. Listen to the words of comfort spoken by Jesus to you and every sinner, "Don't lose hope...your sins are forgiven" (Matthew 9:2).

Each time we hear the gospel, our hearts cause us to say with David, "I will praise the LORD. Deep down inside me, I will praise him. I will praise him, because his name is holy. I will praise the LORD. I won't forget anything he does for me."

**Dear Jesus, strengthen my faith that I may never forget all the wonderful things you have given to me. Amen.**

**I will praise the LORD. Deep down inside me, I will praise him. I will praise him because his name is holy....He forgives all my sins. He heals all my sicknesses." (Psalm 103:1-3)**

### THE LORD HEALS OUR SICKNESSES

New medicines to help people are found every year. But people still get sick. People still die. New sicknesses come into our lives that were not heard of before. Many of them bring death. Even the best medicine is not good enough to save such people. But God can heal our sicknesses. What a comfort this is for a Christian, a believer in Christ.

But is that statement true? Are not there many children of God who right now are suffering from many sicknesses? Do not these Christians also have headaches? Are not there many believers who suffer from cancer, heart disease or are hurt badly? Is it true, as the Psalm writer says, that the Lord "heals all your sicknesses"?

Yes, it is true! Believe it. The Lord does heal every sickness. We all know that God has the power to heal every sickness. We have read about it in God's Word, the Bible.

In the Old Testament of the Bible we read how God worked through Moses to save many people from snakebites. God healed a man named Naaman from a sickness of the skin. He answered the prayer of a king when he was about to die and gave him fifteen more years of life.

The writers of the gospels in the New Testament tell us how Jesus healed many people. Jesus took away fevers. He gave back hearing, sight and speech. Jesus even raised the dead like Jairus's daughter and the widow's son in the town of Nain. Jesus raised his friend Lazarus from the dead after Lazarus had been in the grave for four days. This same powerful Jesus gives us the promise: "I will do anything you ask in my name....You may ask me for anything in my name. I will do it" (John 14:13,14).

Yes, Jesus does heal all of our sicknesses. However, we must remember that he does it at his time and in his own way. In love Jesus might allow sickness to continue in our lives. Sickness shows us how weak we are. God often uses trouble to bring us closer to him. God even allows sickness to end a believer's life on earth. Even then we can see the healing power of our God.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has attacked sickness at its cause, namely, sin. Jesus overcame sin, death and Satan when he died on the cross and rose again from the dead. One day all believers will all be in heaven. In heaven, as the Bible tells us, there is no more pain, sorrow or death. That is the cure that will last forever.

**Dear Jesus, I praise you for the healing you bring into my life. Amen.**

**I will praise the LORD. Deep down inside me, I will praise him. I will praise him, because his name is holy. I will praise the LORD. I won't forget anything he does for me...He satisfies me with the good things I long for. Then I feel young and strong again, just like an eagle. (Psalm 103:1,2,5)**

### I WANT TO BE YOUNG AGAIN

An author once wrote, "Life would be happier if we could be born at the age of 80 and gradually go back to age 18." The older we become, the more we agree with the wisdom of that author. Adult life can become hard. Aches and pains increase with age. We see how our young life is gone. If only we could discover some medicine that would give back our youth! If only we could find true and lasting happiness!

We often wish for things we want. Rather, listening to the Psalm writer, let us look at what we already have. The Psalm writer, David, gives us more reasons to praise the Lord. He writes, the Lord "satisfies me with good things I long for. Then I feel young and strong again, just like an eagle."

David used the picture of a bird, the eagle, flying through the air to show us the change brought about in us through the gospel, the good news of our salvation. Through the gospel the Lord satisfies our every desire. The "good things" he brings into our lives include the blessings of our Baptism. Through Baptism we have a spiritual rebirth by the Holy Spirit. Baptism "works forgiveness of sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God tell us" (Luther's Small Catechism).

Together with the blessings of Baptism, the Lord also gives us the "fruit of the Holy Spirit." The blessings we show through the power of the Holy Spirit include: "love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself" (Galatians 5:22). Our sinful nature wants us to forget about these blessings we have as believers in Christ. We look for things that will satisfy our bodily needs and forget about our spiritual needs.

The people of the world look for medicines or foods that will lengthen their lives. We know that Jesus has given us a new life. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, we can say: "Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not get weak" (Isaiah 40:31).

**Dear Lord, teach me that every good and perfect gift comes from you. Amen.**