

Kingdom of Justice Daily Office
Week of June 8th

Morning

Intro

Welcome to the Practice of the Daily Office. In this season of disruption and uncertainty, we invite you to join us in a rhythm of prayer. How might our days be grounded more deeply in God's presence if we pause each morning, mid-day, and evening for silence, scripture, and prayer?

Recent events remind us of the injustice that has simmered beneath the surface in our world for centuries. But God is not silent on issues of justice. Throughout history, the Lord has spoken through the prophets calling God's people to be just people: caring for the poor and oppressed, refusing to seek our prosperity at the expense of others, and upholding the dignity of all people as beloved image bearers of God.

In the coming weeks, the daily office will be grounded in God's desire for justice. In the morning, we will reflect on a prophetic call for justice from scripture, and allow God's Word to lead us in prayer. At midday, we will pray with the words of the oppressed, and in the evening, we will join with the psalmist and lament injustice.

Silence

Let's begin in silence.

Take a deep breath.

Remember, right now, you are in God's loving presence. However you are beginning this day, whatever emotions you are feeling, the Lord is with you. Psalm 139 says there is no where we can go to escape God's loving presence.

Take another deep breath. God is closer than the air we breathe.

Take two minutes of silence now to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Now I invite you to read the word of the Lord spoken through the prophet Zechariah. This passage comes from Zechariah 7 and speaks to the Israelites returning from exile. How might the Lord be speaking similar words to us today? As you read, pay attention to how the Spirit might be stirring you to respond today?

"This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another. Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor. And do not scheme against each other.

"Your ancestors refused to listen to this message. They stubbornly turned away and put their fingers in their ears to keep from hearing. They made their hearts as hard as stone, so they could not hear the instructions or the messages that the Lord of Heaven's Armies had sent them by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. That is why the Lord of Heaven's Armies was so angry with them.

The Lord says, "Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another. Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor. And do not scheme against each other." Take a moment to reflect on these words

Judge fairly. How are you judging others?

Show mercy and kindness to one another. How have your recent words and actions shown kindness or mercy?

Do not oppress the widow, orphans, foreigners, and the poor. How are you honoring the dignity of those who are marginalized? How are you seeking to loving those who are not like you in the same way Jesus loves them?

Do not scheme against each other. How are you seeking to prove you are right or promote yourself over others?

How is the Holy Spirit stirring you to respond?

Prayer

Jesus, we look forward to the day when your reign over the earth will be complete, and a healing river will flow from your city to all the earth. Until that day, may we seek to serve your kingdom. May *your* presence in us be a spring of living water to all people. May the world know your love and your justice through us. Amen.

Mid-day**Silence**

We pause now in mid-day. Perhaps much has happened already today, or maybe the day has begun slowly. However, this day is unfolding. Let us begin our mid-day prayer in silence. Take a deep breath. Remembering what Paul says, "In God we live and move and have our being."

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence now to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Prayer for the Kingdom

Would you now join me in this prayer written by Dr. Martin Luther King?

O Thou Eternal God, out of whose absolute power and infinite intelligence the whole universe has come into being, we humbly confess that we have not loved thee with our hearts, souls and minds, and we have not loved our neighbors as Christ loved us. We have all too often lived by our own selfish impulses rather than by the life of sacrificial love as revealed by Christ. We often give in order to receive. We love our friends and hate our enemies. We go the first mile but dare not travel the second. We forgive but dare not forget. And so as we look within ourselves, we are confronted with the appalling fact that the history of our lives is the history of an eternal revolt against you. But thou, O God, have mercy upon us. Forgive us for what we could have been but failed to be. Give us the intelligence to know your will. Give us the courage to do your will. Give us the devotion to love thy will. In the name and spirit of Jesus we pray.
Amen

**Evening
Silence**

This evening we pause once again to recognize and rest in the loving presence of God. Take a deep breath. In Matthew 28, Jesus promised, “surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence now to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Lament is the practice of crying out to the Lord in our pain. Though many of us are unfamiliar with this practice it has been a common one throughout the history of the church. In fact, a third of the Psalms are categorized as Psalms of lament.

You may be feeling the pain of this season today, and a lament feels very appropriate. If that is the case, please join me in a prayer of lament tonight. It is possible that today is not a day of sorrow for you. If lament is not a natural response to this day, would you seek to pray this prayer of lament in solidarity with those who are in pain? Perhaps you will think about a specific person who is struggling in this season, or perhaps you’ll consider a people group who are in pain, and lament alongside them.

Now, I invite you to join me in praying this lament from Psalm 5.

O Lord, hear me as I pray;
 pay attention to my groaning.
Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God,
 for I pray to no one but you.
Listen to my voice in the morning, Lord.
 Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly.
O God, you take no pleasure in wickedness;
 you cannot tolerate the sins of the wicked.
Therefore, the proud may not stand in your presence,
 for you hate all who do evil.
You will destroy those who tell lies.
 The Lord detests murderers and deceivers.
Because of your unfailing love, I can enter your house;
 I will worship at your Temple with deepest awe.
Lead me in the right path, O Lord,
 or my enemies will conquer me.
Make your way plain for me to follow.
My enemies cannot speak a truthful word.
 Their deepest desire is to destroy others.
Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave.
 Their tongues are filled with flattery.
O God, declare them guilty.
 Let them be caught in their own traps.
Drive them away because of their many sins,
 for they have rebelled against you.
But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
 let them sing joyful praises forever.
Spread your protection over them,
 that all who love your name may be filled with joy.
For you bless the godly, O Lord;
 you surround them with your shield of love

Amen