

Kingdom of Justice Daily Office
Week of June 15th

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 our world for centuries. But God is not silent on issues of justice. Throughout history, the Lord has spoken through the prophets calling the Lord'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 this season, 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 for justice, 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 to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Scripture

Now I invite you to listen to the word of the Lord spoken through the prophet Amos. This passage from Amos 5 was delivered to the people of Israel. How might the Lord be speaking similar words to us today? As you listen, pay attention to how the Spirit might be stirring you to respond today?

How you hate honest judges!
How you despise people who tell the truth!
You trample the poor,
stealing their grain through taxes and unfair rent.
Therefore, though you build beautiful stone houses,
you will never live in them.
Though you plant lush vineyards,
you will never drink wine from them.
For I know the vast number of your sins
and the depth of your rebellions.
You oppress good people by taking bribes
and deprive the poor of justice in the courts.
So those who are smart keep their mouths shut,
for it is an evil time.

Do what is good and run from evil
so that you may live!
Then the Lord God of Heaven's Armies will be your helper,
just as you have claimed.
Hate evil and love what is good;
turn your courts into true halls of justice.

Perhaps even yet the Lord God of Heaven's Armies
will have mercy on the remnant of his people.

"I hate all your show and pretense—
the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies.
I will not accept your burnt offerings and grain offerings.
I won't even notice all your choice peace offerings.
Away with your noisy hymns of praise!
I will not listen to the music of your harps.
Instead, I want to see a mighty flood of justice,
an endless river of righteous living.

The Lord says, "I want to see a mighty flood of justice, an endless river of righteous living." Let's reflect on these words together today.

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How is the Holy Spirit stirring you now to respond?

Prayer

Lord, rebuild our fallen house. Repair its damaged walls. Make space in our communities for *all* people to live and flourish. Bring us out of exile back to you, finding our home in your love and your presence. 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.

These next moments of silence are yours to rest in the presence of the Lord.

Prayer for the Kingdom

Would you now join me in the prayer written by Howard Thurman.

Open unto me, light for my darkness
Open unto me, courage for my fear
Open unto me, hope for my despair
Open unto me, peace for my turmoil
Open unto me, joy for my sorrow
Open unto me, strength for my weakness
Open unto me, wisdom for my confusion
Open unto me, forgiveness for my sins
Open unto me, tenderness for my toughness
Open unto me, love for my hates
Open unto me, Thy Self for myself

Lord, Lord, open unto me!
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 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.

Whether lament is a natural response to this day or not, I invite you to join with me in this prayer. If lament does not feel like an appropriate response to your 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 79.

O God, the nations have invaded your inheritance;
they have defiled your holy temple,
they have reduced Jerusalem to rubble.
They have left the dead bodies of your servants
as food for the birds of the sky,
the flesh of your own people for the animals of the wild.
They have poured out blood like water
all around Jerusalem,
and there is no one to bury the dead.
We are objects of contempt to our neighbors,
of scorn and derision to those around us.
How long, Lord? Will you be angry forever?
How long will your jealousy burn like fire?
Pour out your wrath on the nations
that do not acknowledge you,
on the kingdoms
that do not call on your name;
for they have devoured Jacob
and devastated his homeland.
Do not hold against us the sins of past generations;
may your mercy come quickly to meet us,
for we are in desperate need.
Help us, God our Savior,
for the glory of your name;
deliver us and forgive our sins
for your name’s sake.
Why should the nations say,
“Where is their God?”
Before our eyes, make known among the nations
that you avenge the outpoured blood of your servants.

May the groans of the prisoners come before you;
with your strong arm preserve those condemned to die.
Pay back into the laps of our neighbors seven times
the contempt they have hurled at you, Lord.
Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture,
will praise you forever;
from generation to generation
we will proclaim your praise.

Amen