Greetings friends,

I ask that as we begin our spiritual journey together we begin to take some time daily (if you are not already) to read the Scripture and pray. I thought it would be beneficial for us to focus on the same passage of Scripture for the week. This week, we will focus on Sunday's texts, of which there are many! (See below) If you were not in present on Sunday and have not yet watched it, I encourage you to do so. We are focusing on the part of the Lord's Prayer, **"Give us this day our daily bread."** Think **acknowledging that God has the power to give and that God does give, and we respond with gratitude. God is provider and sustainer, daily dependence on God and trusting in God for tomorrow.**

The passage used on Sunday was from the book of **Deuteronomy**, which is the last of the **five books of Moses**. This is part of what's known as the **Torah, meaning "teaching," or "instruction" in Hebrew. It is also called the Pentateuch, which means "five books" in Greek**. The five books of the Torah/Pentateuch are **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy**. **Deuteronomy means "second law,"** and is a revisiting of the Law. Much of it is exhortations to the Israelites as **final messages before Moses dies** and the **people cross over from the wilderness**, where they have been wandering for 40 years, **into the "Promised Land," a land of abundance.**

Format-this is a repeat from every week, and will be consistently present for anyone new and as a reminder for all. It is listed at the bottom for review and for anyone who is new to this exercise. Please remember that it is a suggestion. There is no pressure to do it in the format suggested, to do everything on the days that are listed, or to even to answer all the questions. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you. If one question takes up the time because you are moved in your spirit, then stay with it. The idea of this it to spend some intentional time with the Scriptures, in the presence of God, and in prayer and reflection- in whatever way that works for you!

Scriptures:

Deuteronomy 8

[1]Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase
and may enter and possess the land the LORD promised on oath to your ancestors. [2] Remember
how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and
test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his
commands. [3] He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which
neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone
but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. [4] Your clothes did not wear out and
your feet did not swell during these forty years. [5] Know then in your heart that as a man
disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you.

[6] Observe the commands of the LORD your God, walking in obedience to him and revering
him. [7] For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and
deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills; [8] a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig

trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; [9] a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills.

[10] When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. [11] Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. [12] Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, [13] and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, [14] then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. [15] He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. [16] He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you. [17] You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." [18] But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.

[19] If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. [20] Like the nations the LORD destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the LORD your God.

<u>Other Scriptures referenced:</u>

Jesus' temptation, where he quotes Deuteronomy 8:3, found in **Matthew 4:1-4**:
[1]Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. [2] After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. [3] The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

[4] Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

The **story of the Exodus**, where God had Moses lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and their wandering in the wilderness, etc. is found in **Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy**. It's too much to put here, obviously, but I encourage you to become familiar with it. This includes stories such as the burning bush, plagues, parting of the Red Sea, manna, the Ten Commandments, the organizing of the people in worship and religious practice, the introduction of the sacrificial system, and more.

Though just **John 6:35a** "**Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life**," was used in the sermon, the entire discourse is found in **John 6:25-59**.

<u>DAILY QUIET TIME WITH GOD:</u>

Monday: vv. 1-2 "Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your

ancestors. Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands." "Be careful" could be read as a warning and as an encouragement. How do you read it and why? Why is it important? What does being careful have to do with our free will to choose our own way? "Every command I am giving you today," which most believe points to what's known as the "Shema," which means "to hear." It is found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." Consider how this relates to remembering God, not only for ourselves, but for generations to come. What does this say to you? "So that you may live and increase," to live, not just exist, to increase, not just be stable, or worse decreasing. Consider what this says about how much God wants for you. Consider again what God asks "so that" it would happen. Ask God for revelation of his will for you. "Humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commands"- why would what is in our heart be so important and why would it effect whether or not you followed God's commands? In times of testing, the state of our own heart will often become evident. Consider if there has been a time when you felt you were being tested and you recognized that the state of your heart needed to change. What was that like? What did you do? Ask God to show you any other times when this occurred, and if there is anything in your heart now that needs change. Pray for wisdom, discernment, and strength.

Tuesday: v.2-3 "Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. **3** He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD." This is asking the hearer to remember not only that God led them in the wilderness, but *how*. How included not only providing manna, but also discipline. Why would it be important to remember the provision- what would be stirred up in one's heart, mind, and soul upon remembering God providing? Consider the many times that God has provided in your life. Begin to list and praise God! Was there ever a time when you felt you needed God's provision and what you thought you needed did not materialize? What did you feel at the time? Looking back, do you feel any different? If the thought conjures up any negative emotions, bring it to God. Ask God where he was in the situation and what was really going on. Ask for forgiveness and healing if necessary. This passage is also asking us to remember God's discipline. Why do you think remembering discipline is important- what would be the purpose? Have you ever felt as if you had been disciplined by God? What did it look like? How did it make you feel? Did anything change within you because of it? Did the way you approach God or others shift because of it? Ask God to

reveal if there are any other times when you experienced God's discipline, and reflect upon what was going on. This says that God humbled the people, causing them to hunger. How does that make you feel? God then fed them with manna, and it says it was to teach that "man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." In what way do you believe that was accomplished by disciplining in this way? What exactly does that look like in daily life? In v. 5 it says, "Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you." Does this change your response to the discipline reflected on earlier? Why would it be important to know this in your heart? How does that inform the way you perceive discipline in your own life? Ask God for a deeper understanding in your heart of the love God has that prompts discipline.

Wednesday: v.6 "Observe the commands of the LORD your God, walking in obedience to him and revering him." To "observe" is to "keep" the commandments. Knowing that God viewed the Israelites, and us, as his children, why do you believe God put commandments in place? Why would it be important? Why do you think people often resent or resist observing the commands of God? Ask God if there is any area in your life where you are not observing God's commands fully. Ask that the Holy Spirit reveal and convict you throughout every day if there is any time you stop observing the commandments. "Walking in obedience" for Christians is not only knowing God's commands through the Bible, but also following the leading of the Holy Spirit that indwells within us. Was there ever a time when you felt God was asking you to do something and you chose not to? How did that make you feel? Talk to God about it and search for a deeper understanding of what was going on within you. This passage says to not only walk in obedience but to revere God. That word can also be translated as fear and as being in awe of. Revere, fear, and in awe- do you find them to be different, and if so, which is your preferred translation and why? Consider if the word meant all three- what would it look like in everyday life? What does it look like in your life?

Thursday: v.7-10 "For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land... a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing… When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you." The Israelites are on the horizon of the "Promised Land" and preparing for a time of plenty. Consider if there have been times in your life when you felt that you too were on the edge of a good land, a promised land, in your life. What made you see it that way, what were the circumstances? What would change, if anything, if you were to see every tomorrow in that way? God has been preparing the Israelites for this transition for forty years. Look back at your life, do you recognize any times when God was preparing you? This says that when they have eaten and are satisfied that they are to "praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you." Why do you believe it's important to praise God for these reasons? In what way does doing so affect the heart, mind, soul? The next time you recognize how much God has blessed you, when you experience God's goodness and are satisfied, make sure to take the time to praise God!

Friday: vv.11-14 “Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.” “Be careful”- is a form of a warning, but can also be seen as a form of encouragement. How do you perceive it and why? What would being careful in this regard look like in your life? What is the perceived danger? In what way would becoming proud lead to forgetting the Lord? Take a moment to examine your life. Is there any form of pride, or anything else, that has led to forgetting God in any area of your life? Ask God to examine along with you and truly take the time to meditate upon it. What do you believe would be the difference between the pride spoken of here and having an esteem of self, based upon God? What about “self-esteem”- how does that relate? Which is better and why? Reflect upon the spiritual dangers of abundance and increase and consider how to avoid that danger.

Saturday: vv.15-20 “He led you through… gave you manna to eat… to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you. You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant… If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you that you will surely be destroyed…” “He led you through”- think about some times when you recognized that God had “led you through;” difficulties, hardships, pain, confusion, etc. What did that look like? What did that feel like? Did you acknowledge and praise God at the time? Did those experiences and that recognition of God’s presence change you and/or your circumstances? Ask God if there are other times when God “led you though” and you didn’t even realize it. Take some time in reflection and gratitude. Most of us have taken credit at some point for accomplishments- how can this transition to glorifying God who is the One who gave the ability? What would that look like? How would it be different- for yourself and others? “Follow other gods”- we often think about other gods as statues, etc. but really it’s anything we put above God. Look at your focus, your time, your money, your thoughts, your desires- is there anything that could be considered a “god” in your life? Worshiping a “god” doesn’t necessarily mean physically bowing down, but rather exalting it, raising it even above your love and commitment for God. How would forgetting the Lord your God lead to this? How can we make sure we remember, not forget, and avoid falling into the temptation of other gods? What do you believe the appeal of other “gods” is? Ask God if there is anything where you need to reduce your focus, step back from, or even quit. Ask God if there is anything he would like you to add to be able to “remember” with your life and faith walk. “You will surely be destroyed,” is difficult to read, yet it’s a message throughout Scripture. Consider how the choice to worship other gods, exalting other people, things, activities, etc. above God, could lead to destruction in your life. In what ways could any of that lead to destruction- in your life and in your relationship with God? Pray about your commitment level and ask God to reveal his will in every area of your life. Ask that you have courage, boldness, and a heart to live for God, walk in his ways, and have a life of gratitude.

Other items:

Responsive Reading

Leader: We consider Your great works and praise what You have done

People: Help us to always remember

L: We lift our hearts to You

P: We are humbled before You

L: We long to be filled with Your goodness

P: Revive our spirits Lord

L: Let us hear of Your unfailing love each morning,

P: For we are trusting in You daily.

L: Guide us in Your way

P: For You are our bread of life who nourishes our soul

All: We give ourselves to You, for You are our God

Unison Prayer

God in heaven, we humbly acknowledge our dependence on You. Accept our thanks and praise for meeting our daily needs. Use it to keep us focused on the purpose we have in this world to introduce our neighbors to You; by the way we live, our generosity, the words we speak, and the attitude of our hearts. Forgive us for our doubts, our gluttony, our hoarding. Keep us hungry for Your presence in our lives. Help us be an example to others of Your grace, love and peace. Amen.

Format (this is a repeat from last week, and will be consistently present for anyone new and as a reminder for all):

Find a quiet place and time to focus on the Word, and to hear from God through it. It doesn't have to be long, for some it will be longer than others. I encourage you, if possible, to do this practice in the morning. You will then find that God brings it to your mind throughout your day.

For greater impact I encourage you to get some paper and a pen and journal daily what thoughts and impressions God brings to mind. Write out also your own thoughts and your own prayers, making sure to leave space within your time for God's response. Listen intently, and notice what rises up within you- what you are thinking, feeling, memories that arise and ideas that spring up. It may be something God would want you to address within yourself and/or with others. It may be something God is inspiring you to begin or end. God's possibilities are infinite! After time, it is often beneficial to go back and read what you have written, and notice how God has been moving in your life (and praise God for it!).

Begin with prayer, quieting yourself within and opening up to hearing what God would like to reveal to you. Praise God for who he is, for loving you, being with you, and more. Then ask God to speak to you; to open your heart and mind to hear his message. (if you are journaling, you could write out the prayer)

Read the Scripture passage over twice; once as a read through, and the second time slowly, meditatively. Notice what God illuminates for you. Notice what words or ideas are "jumping off the page at you," impacting you from the Scripture. Ask God why that is being highlighted for you. What is God saying to you? What is God asking you to say, do, change, pray about, etc.? What is the application for my life today? **Most importantly- what am I going to do about it? (If you are journaling you could write it all out, which reinforces it in a greater way)

I have put together some daily questions based upon the Scripture. You may use those, but also feel free to deviate away from it if God is leading you there. They are simply offered to prompt contemplation with God. There is much more in this passage, feel free to delve in more!

At the end of your time pray again. I recommend praying throughout, but the ending prayer would include praise, thanking God for revelation, and asking for the Holy Spirit to continue to reveal, bringing to mind God's will. Ask God for the courage, empowerment, and opportunity to do what you have determined God is asking you to do.