

SUPPLICATION  
BEING MINDFUL TO PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER – for FAITHFULNESS

We make our beginning in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
Dear Lord God, Sanctify us in Your truth, Your Word is truth. (John 17:17)  
We ask that Your Word would be a blessing to our lives. Amen.

This month's Bible study continues with the theme of Supplication and Being Mindful to Pray for One Another. Last month, the focus was praying for salvation for our loved ones who are not committed in their Christian faith, or who have lost their faith and wandered away from God, or who are indifferent towards God and His offer of salvation from sin. Last month, we asked God to open their eyes so they would see God, that He would give them a heart of faith that believes and trusts in His grace and mercy, and that our unsaved loved ones would be brought to faith. This request is important because God says in **1 Timothy 2:4** that He desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth; and God says in **2 Peter 3:9** that He is not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Tonight we'll focus on another extremely important aspect of praying for our loved ones - praying for faithfulness. You might ask, 'why is it important to pray for faithfulness?' In the letter that John wrote to the church in Smyrna, which was intended for all of us to heed, God commanded in **Revelation 2:10** Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. God wants us to continually 'keep on being faithful' to Him until death do us part. Praying for faithfulness is an important request to bring to our Heavenly Father because it says in **1 Peter 5:8** Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Satan's prowling is also an ongoing continual action, meaning we are never immune to his threat. Satan desires to devour every Christian. He wants all Christians to be tempted to the point of losing their faith. He desires that all Christians let their faith die.

We will look at several men in the Bible who did or didn't demonstrate the aspect of faithfulness. We'll look at Daniel, Job, King Saul, and King Solomon. We'll see from the lives of these men that faithfulness should never be taken for granted and that, when we pray for all our loved ones, it is important to pray for their faithfulness.

We'll start by looking at Daniel

**Daniel 6:1-24** It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; 2 and over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. 3 Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. 4 Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find a ground for complaint against Daniel with regard to the kingdom, but they could find no ground for complaint or any fault, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. 5 Then these men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God."

6 Then these presidents and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! 7 All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. 8 Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the

document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." 9 Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction. 10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

11 Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God. 12 Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the injunction, "O king! Did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." 13 Then they answered and said before the king, "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or the injunction you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day." 14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him. 15 Then these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed." 16 Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" 17 And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.

18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him. 19 Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. 20 As he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish. The king declared to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" 21 Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! 22 My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm." 23 Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. 24 And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions - they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

### Questions & Comments

What political position did Daniel hold during the reign of King Darius? Daniel 6:1-2

What political plans did King Darius have in mind for Daniel? 6:3 vice-king; over the whole kingdom

Why did Daniel find such great favor in the eyes of his boss? 6:3 an excellent spirit was in him

How did the boss's plans affect Daniel's co-workers? 6:4-5 jealousy & hatred

Why could Daniel's peers (2 presidents & 120 satraps) find no complaint or fault in Daniel? 6:4-5

Daniel was faithful; no fault or error, no ground for complaint; he exceeded expectations on his performance review.

What diabolic (*devilish*) scheme did Daniel's peers devise to get rid of their competition? 6:6-8

Why did Darius go along with this plan & sign this injunction into irrevocable law? 6:6-9

*His own pride; not aware of ulterior motives behind the request; he didn't know what was at stake.*

*The King believed his most trusted men who were in agreement with this plan to 'honor' him.*

Why didn't Daniel 'go underground' rather than pray by the windows in his upper chamber? 6:10

*He demonstrated his faith by continuing to pray to the true God, as he had done before..*

As expected and as decreed by irrevocable law, Daniel was tossed into the den of lions. 6:14-17

The king declared to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" 6:16  
What does this remark reveal about King Darius? Acknowledgement that Daniel, in his work for the king, continually served God; and a hope that Daniel's God had power to deliver him.

Picture this: Daniel was surrounded by hungry lions who prowled around him all through the night, seeking someone to devour. But God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths (v 22) so they could not attack Daniel. Now picture yourself in Daniel's sandals, but in today's world, with a hungry roaring lion (Satan) prowling around, seeking someone to devour. God's angel stands between us and the lion, to guard & keep us safe, so the evil foe can have no power over us. Why did God shut the mouths of the lions for Daniel? 6:22-23

He was found blameless before God; he trusted in God.

Did Daniel's faithfulness prevent all trouble and all harassment from Satan?

Are we 'blameless before God'? God forgives all the sins of His people.

If we are not faithful to God, will He continue to 'shut the lions' mouths' and protect us from all the attacks of Satan?

What advice, support, and reassurance does God offer when we suffer from Satan's attacks?

**1 Peter 5:8-10** Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. 10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

Next let's look at Job

**Job 1:7-12** The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." 8 And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" 9 Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? 10 Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." 12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

**Job 1:20-22** Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." 22 In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

**Job 2:1-6** Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. 2 And the LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." 3 And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason." 4 Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. 5 But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." 6 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life."

**Job 2:10** "Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this, Job did not sin with his lips.

### Questions & Comments

Do these verses depict Satan as a roaring lion prowling around, seeking someone to devour?

Did God shut the mouth of the lion (Satan) who wanted to devour Job?

God set limits on Satan. Satan was allowed to 'scratch' at Job, but God forbid him to 'devour' Job.

Why wasn't Satan successful in his attempts to devour Job? Job 2:3

Job was blameless and upright, feared God and turned away from evil; he held fast to his integrity and faith.

Look at Job in the light of 1 Peter 5:8-10 (on page 3)

### Now let's look at King Saul

**1 Samuel 10:5-7** (Samuel said to Saul) as soon as you come to the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place .... prophesying. <sup>6</sup> Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man. <sup>7</sup> Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you.

**1 Samuel 10:9-10** When Saul turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day. <sup>10</sup> When they came to Gibeah, behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them.

**1 Samuel 14:47-48** When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned he routed them. <sup>48</sup> And he did valiantly and struck the Amalekites and delivered Israel out of the hands of those who plundered them.

**1 Samuel 15:1-3a** And Samuel said to Saul, "The LORD sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel; now therefore listen to the words of the LORD. <sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt. <sup>3</sup> Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all that they have.

**1 Samuel 15:9-11** But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fattened calves and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them. All that was despised and worthless they devoted to destruction. <sup>10</sup> The word of the LORD came to Samuel: <sup>11</sup> "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments."

**1 Samuel 15:17-19** And Samuel said (to Saul), "Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel. And the LORD sent you on a mission and said, 'Go, devote to destruction the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?"

**1 Samuel 15:22-23** Samuel said, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. <sup>23</sup> For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king."

**1 Samuel 15:35b** And the LORD regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

### Here's the background of the Amalekites

**Exodus 17:8-14** Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. <sup>9</sup> So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." <sup>10</sup> So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. <sup>11</sup> Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. <sup>12</sup> But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up

his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. <sup>13</sup> And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword. <sup>14</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

**Deuteronomy 25:17-19** Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you came out of Egypt, <sup>18</sup> how he attacked you on the way when you were faint and weary, and cut off your tail, those who were lagging behind you, and he did not fear God. <sup>19</sup> Therefore when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your enemies around you, in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you shall not forget.

### Questions & Comments

God gave Saul a new heart. Saul was blessed with the Spirit of God. But Saul deliberately disobeyed God's command to destroy King Agag; he refused to carry out God's command for justice against the Amalekites. Saul disobeyed the voice of the Lord, did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and rejected the word of the Lord. These verses reveal the decline of a man who had been chosen and blessed by God, but he became a man who grieved God's heart. What had become the desire of Saul's heart? 1 Sam 15:19 What should have been first in his heart?

### Let's also look at King Solomon

Before King David died, he gave this command to his son Solomon:

**1 Kings 2:2-4** Be strong, and show yourself a man, <sup>3</sup> and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, <sup>4</sup> that the LORD may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

**1 Kings 3:3** Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places.

**1 Kings 3:5-6a** At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." <sup>6</sup> And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you.

**1 Kings 3:9-14** Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?" <sup>10</sup> It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. <sup>11</sup> And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, <sup>12</sup> behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. <sup>13</sup> I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. <sup>14</sup> And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

**1 Kings 4:29-30** And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, <sup>30</sup> so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt.

**1Kings 11:1-2** Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, & Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them .... for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love.

**1Kings 11:4-11** For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. <sup>5</sup> For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. <sup>6</sup> So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done. <sup>7</sup> Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup> And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods. <sup>9</sup> And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him <sup>10</sup> and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the LORD commanded. <sup>11</sup> Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant.

### Questions & Comments

This is the 'rest of the story' about Solomon, a king who was blessed with great wisdom, who was given discernment to judge between good and evil, but who had failed to be faithful to God. Gifts from God, such as wisdom and riches, are not a guarantee that the recipient will be faithful to the Giver. The more generously God showered Solomon with wisdom and riches, the greater became his temptation to turn to other gods. Because Solomon followed the gods of his wives, God allowed his empire to disintegrate and the nation to divide. The great tragedy of Solomon's reign is that, having married many foreign women, he turned from the Lord to worship their idols. The tragic fall of Solomon is a warning to believers throughout all ages. If someone as wise and blessed as Solomon can turn from the Lord, how easily the same thing could also happen to us.

Look at Solomon in the light of the following verses:

**Deuteronomy 10:12-13** And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?

**Deuteronomy 11:16** Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them.

**Deuteronomy 13:3** For the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Do the prowling lion's attempts to devour us serve a good spiritual purpose? Deuteronomy 13:3 Satan tempts us to devour us. God allows us to be tested to know if we truly love and trust Him. Satan presents us with many opportunities to determine our grade in the subject of faithfulness. Failure, as when Peter denied Jesus, can be forgiven by our merciful God. We may not always get an A+ but our Father doesn't want us to drop out of school, nor does He want to expel us.

### A Call To Pray For One Another

**Luke 22:31-32** Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, <sup>32</sup> but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail.

This hints of a scene similar to Satan asking for Job. Jesus earnestly prayed for His disciple Peter.

St. Paul urges us to keep on praying for one another, for our loved ones, and for all the saints.

**Ephesians 6:18** Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, you created us and all our loved ones; Jesus, you redeemed us from the power of sin, death and the devil; Holy Spirit, you sanctify us and keep us in the true faith.

We lift our hearts to you in prayer for our loved ones who have received from You the gift of faith. (Ephesians 2:8) Our hearts are full with thanksgiving for this blessing of faith.

We ask You to strengthen and preserve them in true faith unto life everlasting.

We pray that they will always hold fast to You. (Deuteronomy 13:4)

We pray that they would be very careful to observe everything You have commanded them, that they will love You and walk in all Your ways and cling to You all their days, serving You with all their heart and with all their soul. (Joshua 22:5)

We pray that their faith may not fail. (Luke 22:32)

We pray that you would keep them from the evil one. (John 17:15)

We pray that, according to the riches of Your glory, you would strengthen their inner being with power through Your Spirit, so that Christ may continually dwell in their hearts through faith so they would be rooted and grounded in Your love. (Ephesians 3:16-17)

We ask that they will grow in the grace & knowledge of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18)

We ask that they be built up in faith, and kept in the love of God. (Jude 1:20-21)

We ask You to keep them from stumbling so they can be presented before You blameless and with great joy. (Jude 1:24)

Lord God, keep us in Your love and mercy until Christ comes to deliver us from all evil. Bring us to everlasting life with You. Be our guide through life, lest we lose the way.

Let Your holy angel be with us, that the evil foe may have no power over us.

Dear Jesus, Good Shepherd, for all our loved ones who are not yet dwelling within your sheepfold, we ask you to seek and find them, to rescue them and bring them home to you (Luke 15:4-5) that they may willingly and wholeheartedly share in all your blessings of grace, love and forgiveness.

We pray that all our loved ones would know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that they may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:19)

We pray that all our loved ones would always love You with all their heart and with all their soul and with all their mind and with all their strength. (Mark 12:30)

We commend to You all those for whom we pray, entrusting them to your care and your mercy.

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)

**Closing Hymn** 656 in the Lutheran Service Book A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

#### A Word of Encouragement

**1 John 4:4** Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

#### A Final Word

**Deuteronomy 11:16** Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them.

In the future, when we say 'take care' instead of 'good-bye', bear in mind that we do not just mean 'take care of yourself'. Now, more importantly, we also mean 'take care of your faith'.