

The High Priest

DAY 5—THE EPHOD

Even to your old age, I am He, and even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you. (ISAIAH 46:4)

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR THE PRAYER TIME

Praise

- Lord, we begin by praising You for who You are—You are strong, patient, and able to save.
- We praise You for carrying us through difficult times.
- We thank You that we can have lasting peace and joy in You.

Confession and Claiming Victory Over Sin

- Lord, show us the sins we need to confess openly and the ones we need to confess privately. We claim Your victory over those sins.
- Forgive us for times we tried to succeed on our own instead of allowing You to carry us.
- Thank You that You forgive us according to 1 John 1:9.

Supplication and Intercession

- Lord, please carry us when we are weak.
- May Your strength be made perfect in our weakness (1 Corinthians 12:9).
- Father, please help our hearts not to be troubled (John 14:1).
- Help us to trust the promise that You made in Isaiah 41:10—that You will strengthen us, help us, and uphold us with Your righteous right hand.
- Please carry the young people of our churches and families through these challenging times.
- Show us the people around us who may be hurting. Please carry them through their difficulties.
- Lord, show us how to submit our lives completely to You. Make us one in Christ. Unify us in proclaiming the last loud cry to the world.
- Lord, You have blessed our church with tremendous understanding of biblical truth. May we share it humbly and joyfully with the world around us.
- Father, please bless the efforts of small groups and house churches around the world. We ask You to raise up even more faithful members to witness about Jesus and His beautiful character in their own neighborhoods.
- Lord, teach us how to proclaim our beliefs with clarity, creativity, and biblical authenticity. May the love of Jesus be at the core of everything we believe.
- Lord, we pray for the seven (or more) people on our individual prayer lists. May they see their need and open their hearts to the Holy Spirit.
- We also pray for the personal needs of those gathered here.

Thanksgiving

- God, we thank You that “those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).
- Thank You that “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).
- Thank You that You are answering the prayers we pray according to Your will.

SUGGESTED SONGS TO SING

“He Leadeth Me” (SDA Hymnal #537); “I Will Early Seek the Savior” (SDA Hymnal #539); “Savior, Like a Shepherd” (SDA Hymnal #545); “Be Thou My Vision” (SDA Hymnal #547); “Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me” (SDA Hymnal #551).

The Ephod

Even to your old age, I am He, and even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you. (ISAIAH 46:4)

As the high priest carried the ephod on his shoulders, so our High Priest carries our burdens, strengthens us in our trials, and enables us to witness for Him even in difficult circumstances.

Our precious Saviour has invited us to join ourselves to Him and unite our weakness with His strength, our ignorance with His wisdom, our unworthiness with His merit. (*The Faith I Live By*, p. 96)

Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. (1 Peter 5:7)

For the disheartened there is a sure remedy—faith, prayer, work. Faith and activity will impart assurance and satisfaction that will increase day by day. Are you tempted to give way to feelings of anxious foreboding or utter despondency? In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, fear not. Have faith in God. He knows your need. He has all power. His infinite love and compassion never weary. Fear not that He will fail of fulfilling His promise. He is eternal truth. Never will He change the covenant He has made with those who love Him. And He will bestow upon His faithful servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands. The apostle Paul has testified: "He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. . . . Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10. (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 164)

The strength of those who love and serve Him will be renewed day by day. His understanding will be placed at their service, that they may not err in the carrying out of His purposes. There is to be no despondency in God's service. Our faith is to endure the pressure brought to bear upon it. God is able and willing to bestow upon His servants all the strength they need. He will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. He will give them the wisdom that their varied necessities demand. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 10, 11)

Of ourselves, we can neither obtain nor practice the religion of Christ; for our hearts are deceitful above all things; but Jesus Christ, the great physician of souls, who, with unerring skill, can read the heart of man better than he himself can, has shown us how we may be cleansed from sin. "My grace is sufficient for thee," he says to those who mourn their inefficiency. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Every burden is considered by the one who bids us follow him, before it is placed upon our shoulders. To every tried, tempted soul, Christ says, I am able to strengthen you for the duties of the Christian life. Looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, we shall catch the light of his countenance, reflect his image, and grow up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Our religion will be attractive, because it will possess the fragrance of the righteousness of Christ. We shall be happy; for our spiritual meat and drink will be to us righteousness and peace and joy. (*Review and Herald*, May 4, 1897, par. 11)

It is a great thing to be right with God, the soul in harmony with its Maker. Amid the contagion of evil example, which by its deceitful appearance would lure the soul from duty, angels will be sent to our rescue. But if we invite temptation, we can not have divine aid to keep us from being overcome. The three worthies endured the fiery furnace, for Jesus walked with them amid the flames. If they had, of themselves, walked into the fire, they would have been consumed. Thus it will be with us. If we do not deliberately go into temptation, God will sustain us when the temptation comes. (*Signs of the Times*, Sept. 2, 1897, par. 11)

The Lord will raise up men, and place his Spirit upon them, and prepare them for the work which must be done. He himself, the God of truth, will qualify them to bear a fresh, living testimony for him. They will be witnesses for God. They will not spring up from their own prompting; they will be constrained by the Spirit of God to volunteer to advocate truth. God will sustain them. He sees what is needed, and year by year he arranges for his plan of operation. He will not allow men to drift as they choose. If men will be men, God will work in and through them. (*Review and Herald*, May 25, 1897, par. 11)