

# Feeding the Hungry Heart

Find the MP3 message for Week 6 at [www.journeybiblestudy.com](http://www.journeybiblestudy.com).

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works within us, we become more and more like Him and reflect His glory even more." - 2 Corinthians  
3:17-18



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**Week Six:**

# **Feeding the Hungry Heart**

“May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it. Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God.”

~ Ephesians 3:19 (NLT)

# Discovering the Father's Heart

## Day One: In My Father's Lap



Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. *As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions, or feelings that linger.*

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*Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.*

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*What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?*

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Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement. Open your Bible and read Isaiah 51:5-16 slowly. Stop anywhere you find yourself struck by something you've read. Record your thoughts here:*



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Now read it in this translation (NLT) and **insert your name** into the blanks. Spend time with it; listen to what is going on inside of you.

(Isaiah 51:5) "My mercy and justice are coming soon. [\_\_\_\_\_]'s salvation is on the way. I will rule the nations. They will wait for Me and long for My power."

*What do you see as the theme of this verse?* \_\_\_\_\_

*Is there a room in your heart that needs this? In what way?* \_\_\_\_\_

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**God is on His way.** God's presence is always with us, but His powerful intervention is a continuing process. Help is on the way, though. The answer might not be evident today. Tomorrow it might even feel as though God isn't really paying attention. Sweet Sister, ***you will never stay in that troubled place one moment longer than our God deems it absolutely necessary. Never. What are your thoughts?***

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(vs. 7) "Listen to Me, you who know right from wrong and cherish My law in your hearts. Do not be afraid of people's scorn or their slanderous talk."

*What do you see as the theme of this verse?* \_\_\_\_\_

*Is there a room in your heart that needs this? In what way?* \_\_\_\_\_

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**The fear of what others think about us can be a powerful enemy in our lives.** Do you need a reminder today that we do not have to live in that fearful place? Remember, fear is only a threatening feeling; no matter what it feels like, it isn't truth. It is only the shadow of cruel possibilities. Even so, Sweet Sister, there is a difference between living in the fear of what might be said and the pain that results from a hurtful word that has already been spoken. Let the Great Physician tenderly bandage and heal those wounded places in your heart where words have done serious damage. ***Does a wound from careless words trouble you today?***

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**You do not have to let fear control you or steal your peace of mind.** You cannot control what others think, what others say, or what others do, but ***you can control your own thoughts***. You can turn your thoughts over to God and vow not to believe anything that has not been **proven** to be real. Fear is based on possibilities, not proven realities. Do not focus on the "what ifs" and the "but maybe" possibilities. ***You can choose to only focus your thoughts on things that are "true... and right"*** (see *Philippians 4:8*). ***What are your thoughts on this concept?***

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(vs. 11) "Those who have been ransomed by the Lord will return to Jerusalem, singing songs of everlasting joy. Sorrow and mourning will disappear, and they will be overcome with joy and gladness." ***What do you see as the theme of this verse?*** \_\_\_\_\_

***In what way does your heart need this?*** \_\_\_\_\_

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***What does it mean to be ransomed?*** When we were little girls, our fairytales were full of stories of rescue. The innocent damsel in distress was held captive by an evil foe. The story was not over until the handsome prince rode in and rescued her from her captor, bringing her home to be his bride. This is our story too. ***Your God is your rescuer.*** He has given His Son for your ultimate salvation, but ***He is continually rescuing all the lost pieces of your heart.*** His redemption plan for you is to bring all the scattered pieces of your soul back together again. He is continually ransoming, rescuing, and re-creating you. The more you experience the reality of this, Sweet Sister, the more your heart will overflow with joy. ***What are your thoughts?***

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[vs. 12] "I, even I, am the One who comforts you. So why are you afraid of mere humans, who wither like the grass and disappear?"

***What do you see as the theme of this verse?*** \_\_\_\_\_

***In what way does your heart need this?*** \_\_\_\_\_

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***The comfort of God...*** is like no other. Women almost instinctively comfort others, don't we? Yet how often do we resist asking for comfort for ourselves. How easy is it for us to assume the humble posture of receiving comfort when it seems our primary posture is that of nurturer? ***What does God's comfort mean to you?***

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***Do you allow yourself to be comforted by others and by God?*** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Discovering the Father's Heart

[vs. 13] "Yet you have forgotten the Lord, your Creator, the One who put the stars in the sky and established the earth. Will you remain in constant dread of human oppression? Will you continue to fear the anger of your enemies from morning till night?"

**What do you see as the theme of this verse?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way does your heart need this?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way do you remain in dread of human oppression or in the fear of your enemies?**

[vs. 14] "Soon all you captives will be released! Imprisonment, starvation, and death will not be your fate!" **What do you see as the theme of this verse?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way does your heart need this?** \_\_\_\_\_

**"Imprisonment, starvation, and death will not be your fate..."** Many times I have wept over the beautiful promise found in this verse. For a girl whose heart felt ravenously hungry for so much of her life, these tender words fed my empty places. It was a tremendous promise fulfilled to realize that God's plan was to free me, fill me and to bring satisfaction to my hungry heart. We all have empty places in our hearts that God is still filling, but we can increasingly be defined by our fullness of life rather than hunger. **Are there any hungers that gnaw at your heart?**

**Have you begun to experience His filling in those empty places?** \_\_\_\_\_

[vs. 15-16] "For I am the Lord your God, who stirs up the sea, causing its waves to roar. My name is the Lord Almighty. And I have put My words in your mouth and hidden you safely within My hand. I set all the stars in space and established the earth. I am the One who says to [\_\_\_\_\_], 'You are mine!'"

**What do you see as the theme of these verses?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way does your heart need this?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Stretch your heart now a little. How do you need to respond to and cooperate with God?**

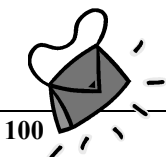
**With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.**



**God's special gift to me:** \_\_\_\_\_

**This week's theme: "God is feeding my \_\_\_\_\_."**

**(hungry heart)**



# Feeding the Hungry Heart

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*Take-Away: My God will fill and comfort my hungry heart. I need not fear others because my God is working on my behalf.*

# Discovering the Father's Heart

## Day Two: At the Teacher's Feet

Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. *As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions, or feelings that linger.*



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*Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.*

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*What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?*

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Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.* As you reflect on this story, listen to it from God's perspective. Listen as if He is right there telling you the story face-to-face and listen as if you are hearing it for the very first time. **Please read Genesis 12:4-13:4. Glance briefly over Genesis 20:12.**



Consider the individuals in the story. *How would each one tell their story? What challenges did they face and what feelings?*

*Abram might say, "I..."*

*Sarai might say, "I..."*

*Pharaoh might say, "I..."*

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From God's point of view: *Considering God's perspective, how might this event have impacted Him and what He desired?* \_\_\_\_\_



*As you consider this story as a significant moment in God's own life, what captures your heart?*

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Now consider your own life. *Are you facing any of the same challenges or feelings you recognized in the participants?* \_\_\_\_\_

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# Feeding the Hungry Heart

## Week Six

Today's story begins in Canaan, moves down into Egypt, and then returns to Canaan. Abram made the decision to leave Canaan and travel to Egypt when the going got tough. I wonder how God might have provided for Abram and his family had they just stayed put?

Do you remember when God told Abram in Genesis 12:3 that God would curse those who cursed Abram? This story illustrates that promise. God intervened when Pharaoh interfered with God's plan in Abram and Sarai's lives. God kept His word and worked to frustrate Pharaoh. One good thing about old Pharaoh, though... Pharaoh wised up. How often do we experience repeatedly closed doors or frustration after frustration in a matter we are trying to handle (often we're trying to use force); yet we don't wise up? **God is at work in every situation. We need to ask God where He is at work in any given situation so that we can position ourselves to work along WITH Him, not AGAINST Him.**

God is at work in other believers' lives just as He is at work in yours. It doesn't matter if others are living as you think they should; God is at work in their lives, and we need to respect His process. When it comes to other people's lives, we need to resist "helping" God along in His process even when we see areas *we think* God needs to address in their lives. Keep this question ever before you: **"Where are you in this, God?"** Listen carefully for God's guidance and watch closely; you might catch a glimpse of God's fingerprints. **Meanwhile, treat others carefully, always working FOR their good and never AGAINST them (to harm them). Are you trying to help God along in someone else's life? If so, confess that her and turn them fully over to God's watchful care.**

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Last week we studied that God appeared to Abram at \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 6-7). Then Abram built an altar and called out to God between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (vs.8). Today we studied that Abram moved to Egypt and then he was run out of town, loaded down with wealth that the Pharaoh had given him in Egypt. You may have noticed that Abram immediately returned to his former home, between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (13:3). There, Abram again called on the name of the Lord. When we take matters into our own hands, God will almost always bring us back full circle. We will often find ourselves back in the place we were before we took our detour. Why? God often wants to give us a second chance to follow His leading. It seems to me that God often gives us the opportunity to make a "Divine U-Turn." **Divine U-Turns can teach us something if we listen.** But goodness gracious, wouldn't it be better if we just did things God's way the first time?

**Is there any place in your life where it seems God may be calling you to a divine U-Turn?**

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**How do you need to respond to God's truth and cooperate with Him?**

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**With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.**



**God's Special gift to me:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**This week's theme: "God is \_\_\_\_\_."**

# Discovering the Father's Heart

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*(feeding my hungry heart)*



***Take Away: God is at work in every situation and we need to position ourselves to work along WITH God and not AGAINST Him.***

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## Day Three: Just Between You and Me

**Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions or feelings that linger.**



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**Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.**

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**Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement. Now please read the following:**



“Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe.” - Genesis 12:10 (NIV) **Now there was a famine in the land... and the famine was severe.** Hunger causes us to make all sorts of bad decisions, doesn't it? Physical hunger is a powerful force, a fundamental need that is so deeply wired into our physiology that we can scarcely ignore it or refuse it. Hunger demands an immediate response. It will shut down all manner of normal thought processes until it is served. **Physical hunger is a commanding need in the human body.**

**A malnourished heart will also create a commanding emotional hunger inside our bodies.** A heart that has not been loved in a healthy way will be anything but rational and content. **Until the human heart has found its nourishment in God's pure love, the heart will be driven by its voracious appetite.** The foundation for a well-loved human heart begins within the family unit. Our parents are usually the first examples of love we experience. **All parental love will be insufficient to satisfy our hearts completely.** God reserves a part of our hearts strictly for Himself and His perfect love. If your parents were unable to love you in a healthy way, God can make up for that loss. Even if your parents loved you in healthy, generous ways, you will remain partially hungry until your heart is filled with God's perfect love.

One of the first things a well-loved heart must learn is that he or she is a good creation. We are precious and valuable simply because our Creator designed us and breathed us into existence. No matter how capable we may or may not be, our value is first and foremost that **we are the delight of God's own heart.** We are precious beyond measure simply because our God wants to build a life with us. **Simply put, Sweet Sister, your God wants to build a life with you! Your Heavenly Father desires your daily fellowship!**

**Your God desires for you to be His companion.** A human heart has been loved well, will have a core of strength and flexibility. A healthy heart believes that it has intrinsic value. Intrinsic value means that one's worth does not depend upon what one does, but upon who one is... a child of the Living God. From this good foundation the well-loved heart will then be surrounded and protected by the external discipline of a loving and thoughtful Heavenly Father. **As a child of God receives loving discipline, unconditional acceptance, and intrinsic value, they will slowly begin to internalize and develop a sense of self-discipline.** While a healthy heart may not always appreciate the disciplinary boundaries erected around it, this heart will, nevertheless, grow remarkably strong and resilient in this nurturing environment God created for renovation and restoration.

**An impoverished heart often becomes fragile, frayed, and vulnerable.** Many times, that fragile heart will have internalized the core belief that it must perform well to have its fundamental

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needs met (to be loved, accepted and feel safe). When a heart has not been loved well, that heart will often be bound by the ragged cords of mistrust and fear. This frail heart will not necessarily learn self-discipline but will learn fear-based performance. This precious heart knows that it cannot consistently measure up to the set standards and often feels like a failure. When the heart believes it has to earn its value and love, it becomes a desperate pursuer of love. **Who a person is becomes eclipsed by what a person does.** What should have been a woven cord of stability (love and discipline) instead becomes the bondage of performance. ***A ravenous hunger will begin to overtake that heart and it will find that it becomes unable to consume enough reward or acceptance to fill its emptiness.***

We learned in our first Thursday night teaching session together that the Greek word, *kalos*, means “beautiful, precious, valuable, and virtuous”. In **1 Timothy 4:4** we learned that Paul said, “*Since everything God created is good (kalos: beautiful, valuable, virtuous, precious) we should not reject any of it. We may receive it gladly, with thankful hearts.*” (NLT) **EVERYTHING that God created is good, beautiful, valuable, virtuous, worthy, and precious. This includes you.** This includes those hearts that are not yet anchored by His love. Every heart is an unspeakably beautiful creation of God.

We also learned that God comes into a heart to do an *agathos*, which is an “intrinsically good” work within it through the presence of the Holy Spirit. Paul told us in **Philippians 1:6** that “*And I am sure that God, Who began this good (agathos: intrinsically good) work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished.*” (NLT) The original creation that is unspeakably beautiful becomes marred by sin. The intrinsic, good work of the Holy Spirit renews and restores our hearts through the power of His love. **God's creation never stops being precious, but its beauty is hidden by the damage of sin and the enemy.**

We also discovered, through the parable of the soil, that our hearts can become fertile fields of abundance. God's work of restoration in a human heart will inevitably bring nourishment and beauty to others in the world. ***It becomes a source of blessing and strength for the hearts around it.***

Jesus included both definitions in His words that Luke records in **Luke 8:15**. “*But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble (kalos: beautiful, valuable, virtuous, precious) and good (agathos: intrinsically good) heart, who hear the Word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.*” (NIV) This heart has had its soil plowed, and its debris painstakingly removed. We tend to our heart's soil by keeping our eyes focused on God, and by responding to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We fertilize our hearts by consuming God's living Word as the bread of our existence. ***We are no longer a ruin of the enemy; we become a shining example of God's transformational work.***



Sometimes we live our lives in the “Land of IF” (If only I could do this or If only I could be that....) When we live in this place, we cannot take God's love into the depths of our hearts. We cannot be nourished by love because it is held at bay by a single word - “IF”. **Sweet Sister, earned love is no love at all.** Real love must be freely given so that it can be freely received as nourishment for the heart. Then our hearts can genuinely receive it, be strengthened, and built up by it. To receive God's love, we must first be seen. We must feel the gaze of the one who offers us love, be seen as we truly are, not as we might like to be or for what we have accomplished. When we are seen and loved in spite of our failings, we are powerfully transformed. ***We need to be caught in the penetrating gaze of the Heavenly Father's LOVE EVERLASTING and understand that we are wanted even in our broken state.***

**God Himself is LOVE EVERLASTING and He loves us this way.** Other humans can love us in a rendering of God's love, as unconditionally as fallible humans may love one another, but earthly love is no substitute for Heavenly love. We will need both kinds of love to satisfy our hungry hearts. We will not find this nutritious love outside of those who are filled with God's love, “*for God is love*” and “*love comes from God.*” (See 1 John 4:7-8). Let us keep our hearts in the presence of God and be responsive

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to the flow of the Holy Spirit's guidance. Then, let us listen attentively as the Spirit leads and instructs us in the truths of love.

*"May you experience the love of Christ,  
though it is so great you will never fully understand it.  
Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God."  
- Ephesians 3:19 (NLT)*

May our ravenous hearts overflow with the love of our God through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. May we also find security in our earthly relationships with one another. We should know instinctively that God is the One who brings healthy hearts into our lives to love and be loved by us. ***Our goal on the journey is to become well-loved hearts that overflow with God's nourishing love in every relationship and in every area of our lives, while we stand squarely under the ever flowing fountain of God's thoroughly satisfying love.***

***What are your thoughts about what you've considered here?***

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***In what way do you need to respond to and cooperate with God?***

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***With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.***



***God's Special gift to me:*** \_\_\_\_\_

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***This week's theme: "God is \_\_\_\_\_."***



***Take-Away: I am captivated by the penetrating gaze of God's LOVE EVERLASTING. I can position myself squarely under the ever flowing fountain of God's thoroughly satisfying love.***

## Day Four: At the Teacher's Feet

**Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions, or feelings that linger.**



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# Discovering the Father's Heart

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*Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.*

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*What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?*

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**Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.** As you reflect on this story, listen to it from God's perspective. Listen as if He is right there telling you the story face-to-face and listen as if you are hearing it for the very first time. **Please read Genesis 13:1-18.**

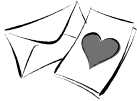


**Consider the individuals in the story. How would each one tell their story? What challenges did they face and what feelings?**

Abram might say, "I...."

Lot might say, "I...."

**From God's point of view: Considering God's perspective, how might this event have impacted Him and what He desired?**



**As you consider this story as a significant moment in God's own life, what captures your heart?**

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**Now consider your own life. Are you facing any of the same challenges or feelings you recognized in the participants?**



This story looks pretty simple overall. Lot's crew had become disgruntled and demanding towards Abram's crew. I don't think that God intended for Abram to bring Lot with him when he left Haran, especially since God said, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household." Abram, however, chose to bring Lot and Lot was becoming a grumbling burden. Abram responded to the situation by giving Lot a large portion of his own inheritance rather than send him back to Haran. He even allowed Lot to choose which property he wanted. While on the surface this seems gracious, I believe instead that Abram was taking the path of least resistance. Lot's presence there would prove to bring severe hardship to Abram, as we will see in the days ahead. Nevertheless, Abram gave him fertile land and Abram stayed where he was situated. Lot, as we can see, chose to align himself with a

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wicked bunch of people. Lot had a greedy appetite and was drawn to that which he should have avoided completely. ***Are you drawn toward something you know is not good for you?***

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**God returns to Abram to renew His original promise.** It's as if God says, *this is all your land, Abram.* (See 12:7) *You're going to need the space for your numerous descendents. There will be no room to spare.* Then He emphasizes, *Go, walk the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.* Hundreds of years later, when Abram's descendants, the Israelites, returned to this land, God issued this same directive once again. **Look at Joshua 1:2-3.** What does God tell Joshua? "I will give you every place you set your foot." If you are going to have the life God intends for you to have, ***you are going to have to walk it out with Him, one step at a time, to take possession of your promised land.*** ***Is God leading you to begin trustfully walking it out with Him in some specific area of your life? Has He been urging you to begin taking steps with Him even though you may be very afraid?***

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Returning to Genesis 13, the very last verse refers to "the great trees of Mamre". Look ahead at Genesis 14:13. Mamre is a man; part of an alliance of men, with whom Abram would eventually partner. Abram needed a human alliance. He needed to be able to stand against those people around him who would like to destroy him and take all that he had accumulated. Abram needed other people to stand with him. We need other people too. ***Women especially need other women.***

***Think for a bit about your own relational alliances. Lay them out before God and ask Him to bring to mind which relationships bless and enrich your life.*** \_\_\_\_\_

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***Which relationships diminish or frustrate your life?*** \_\_\_\_\_

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***Bow your heart before Him completely in this area; don't hold back. We'll soon discover just how damaging it is to have aligned ourselves with the wrong people. What is God asking you to do in this area of relational alliances?*** \_\_\_\_\_

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***Is there any other way that God is speaking to you?***

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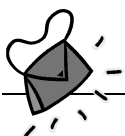
***With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.***



***God's Special gift to me:*** \_\_\_\_\_

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***This week's theme: " \_\_\_\_\_."***



## Discovering the Father's Heart

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*Take Away: My relationships can either strengthen my determination to walk out my faith with God or they can weaken my resolve to walk out my faith with God.*



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## Day Five: What He's Singing Over Me

Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. *As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions, or feelings that linger.*



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*Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.*

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*What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?*

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Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement. Open your Bible and read Psalm 7 slowly. Stop anywhere you find yourself struck by something you've read. Record your thoughts here:*



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Now read it here in the New Living Translation and **insert your name** into the blanks. Spend time with it; listen to what is going on inside of you.

(vs. 1-2) "I, [\_\_\_\_\_], come to You for protection, O Lord my God. Save me from my persecutors — rescue me! If You don't, they will maul me like a lion, tearing me to pieces with no one to rescue me."

*What do you see as the theme of these verses?* \_\_\_\_\_

*In what way does your heart need this?* \_\_\_\_\_

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**I need to be reminded continually that God is my protector. I need to know that I can run to Him and that His arms are always outstretched to me.**

Psalm 91:4 says, "He will shield you, [\_\_\_\_\_], with His wings. He will shelter you, [\_\_\_\_\_], with His feathers. His faithful promises, [\_\_\_\_\_], are your armor and protection."

*In many equally beautiful pictures, God reveals His fiercely protective heart towards us as His daughters. Do you need that picture today? You don't always have to be brave, Sweet Sister. You can run for cover. You can run to the shelter of God's wings. From what do you need shelter today?*

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*Imagine yourself all nestled under His wings. How do you feel as you imagine this?*

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**What are your enemies today? What is dogging your heels?** \_\_\_\_\_

(vs. 3-5) "O Lord my God, if I have done wrong or am guilty of injustice, if I have betrayed a friend or plundered my enemy without cause, then let my enemies capture me. Let them trample me into the ground. Let my honor be left in the dust."

**What do you see as the theme of these verses?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way does your heart need this?** \_\_\_\_\_

**If I have caused harm to someone else then it is natural that consequences will follow.** While God forgives us of our sins, He does not always rescue us from the consequences that remain. We are often left to feel the sting of pain just as the person we wronged felt the sting of pain. Discipline is meant to leave a lasting impression upon us. It can be the very best teacher of all. **Are you dealing with any lingering consequences to wrongs you have done? If so, acknowledge them here and ask God for patient endurance and a humble spirit as it slowly works its way out.**

(vs. 6) "Arise, O Lord, in anger! Stand up against the fury of my enemies! Wake up, my God, and bring justice!"

**What do you see as the theme of this verse?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way does your heart need this?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sometimes it seems that God is not responding to our cries.** It can be especially difficult for us when we believe that we have been unfairly wronged and have not yet been rescued from the situation. There are many storms in this life that God will allow. Our comfort grows as we become more thoroughly convinced that God is with us, all the way through the storm. We need to be reassured that God knew the storm was coming and that He had prepared us for it, even if we don't know how. We need to know that when God directs us through a difficult season, He will most assuredly have a valuable treasure for us on the other side. **He never asks you to make painful sacrifices without fully intending for those sacrifices to be transformed into spiritual riches.** The transformation occurs as you persevere with Him through the process. Do not get derailed! **Are you in a season of waiting for God to redeem your costly sacrifices? What were they?**

(vs. 9) "End the wickedness of the ungodly, but help all those who obey You. For You look deep within the mind and heart, O righteous God."

**What do you see as the theme of this verse?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way does your heart need this?** \_\_\_\_\_

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God looks deeply within your mind and heart. He knows every tiny corner and every closed off room. He knows about that closet you don't want to think about and He knows all the treasures you've stored in the attic. **How does that make you feel?**

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(vs. 11-13) "God is a judge who is perfectly fair. He is angry with the wicked every day. If a person does not repent, God will sharpen His sword; He will bend and string His bow. He will prepare His deadly weapons and ignite His flaming arrows."

**What do you see as the theme of these verses?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way does your heart need this?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**This reminds me of my childhood days when I knew a whippin' was a-comin'.** Know what I mean? Oh, how I hated that dreadful period of waiting! Ugh!! That was the worst feeling in the world. Later in life I'd get the same feeling if a person in authority said, "I need to talk with you..." My stomach would be in knots. As believers, we are all still works-in-process, still growing in the character of Christ. We will not always get it right, but our Father God knows that **we need to be re-trained, to learn His ways.** We depend upon the Holy Spirit to be at work within our hearts, teaching us what we need to know and growing God's fruit in our character. Our primary job is to be focused on listening and responding quickly to our Heavenly Father's voice. We can't be blemish-free while living here on Earth, but I do believe we can be free of wickedness.

The New Testament uses several different words that our Bibles mostly translate "sin". In the original Greek language, however, the listeners heard things like *hamartia* which means "offence", *hamartano* (to miss the mark), *skandalizo* (to trip up), and *paraptoma* (side-slip or error). We will never be free of these struggles entirely. However, the intentional sins, especially malicious sins, are sins we can completely avoid. While we may not live perfectly here, we can live with pure intention. A pure heart is a heart that is increasingly being restored by the Spirit and is not bent on malice. A heart that is truly being renovated is also immediately sensitive to its own sin and is quick to repent. Let's pray that God keeps our hearts tender before Him so that we never lose the ability to hear His rebuke and swiftly get back on track through repentance. **Is your heart tender to the Holy Spirit's conviction? Where are you on a scale of 0 to 10, 0 meaning completely unresponsive and 10 meaning completely surrendered?** \_\_\_\_\_

(vs. 14-17) "The wicked conceive evil; they are pregnant with trouble and give birth to lies. They dig a pit to trap others and then fall into it themselves. They make trouble, but it backfires on them. They plan violence for others, but it falls on their own heads."

**What do you see as the theme of these verses?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what way does your heart need this?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**We can count on the fact that evil ultimately does the most harm to the one with whom it originates.** We might not get to see the results with our own eyes, but if God's Word says it then it is true! It has been said that ***bitterness is like you drinking the poison and waiting on the other person to die.*** Let's be sure that is never a picture of our life!

**Is there anyone you are bitter towards?** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Discovering the Father's Heart

*What do you need to do to release your bitterness towards that person?* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Is there anyone you know that you have hurt?* \_\_\_\_\_

*What do you need to do to make peace with that individual?* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Returning to vs. 10) "God is my shield, saving those whose hearts are true and right."

*What do you see as the theme of this verse?* \_\_\_\_\_

*In what way does your heart need this?* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Notice that Vs. 10 does not say "perfect". It says "true and right." This is intentional. We want to keep our hearts focused on God and filled with His truth. Through the study of God's Word and the interaction of the Holy Spirit, you are doing both even now! ***What do you need to do today to get your heart right before God and true before Him?***

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(vs. 17] "I will thank the Lord because He is just; I will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High."

***How do you need to respond to God's truth and cooperate with Him?***

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***With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.***



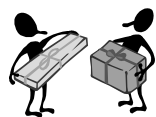
***God's Special gift to me:*** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***This week's theme:*** \_\_\_\_\_



***Take-Away: God's truths are protection and comfort for me when I keep my heart true and right before Him.***



Gathering together with other believers and sharing with one another is vital for a flourishing relationship with God. Even in our study of Adam and Eve we see the dynamic that humans need other humans. ***Spend a few minutes looking back over your week's entries. As you think back on all that has happened in this last week, where do you recognize God's fingerprints, whispers, or guidance?***

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# Feeding the Hungry Heart

Week Six

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*What is your most significant "take-away" this week? Prayerfully consider how you can share this with someone this week.*

## Discovering the Father's Heart

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