

GOING FORWARD together LIVING IN GOD'S Covenant



Daily Prayers

By Lieut-Colonel Jayne Roberts (Secretary for Spiritual Life Development)

Taken from Jan 2021 [Prayer Matters](#)

Setting the scene

At the beginning of 2021 as we greet each other with 'Happy New Year', let this traditional greeting be accompanied by a fervent prayer that in the coming year we will move forward into happier circumstances, beyond the Covid-19 pandemic with all the restrictions and challenges encountered so unexpectedly in 2020.

May God speak to us and guide us as we continue our journey of faith and prayer.

Day 1

Isaiah 43:18,19

Lord God, as we come before you in prayer on this first day of a new year, help us to perceive the new thing you are doing; to listen, to understand and be willing to participate. May we seek to let go of past fears and embrace new possibilities, guided by your Holy Spirit and strengthened by your grace.

Day 2

Isaiah 43:19b

'God will make a way where there seems to be no way' is a line from a song (SASB 492) that reflects God's enabling power and encourages us to trust him. In Scripture the wilderness is often a place of encounter with God and his transforming power. God is present with us in the darkest circumstances and the deepest sorrows. As you pray today, place your situation in God's hands and resolve to move forward in faith.

Day 3

Whether you are praying at home or able to gather with other people, the territory's theme for this season is 'Going Forward Together - Living in God's Covenant'. May we each encounter the presence of God this day, praising and thanking him that he calls us into covenant relationship with him and with each other. Pray for those with whom you worship regularly. Perhaps you could send a message this week to one or two people to let them know they are in your prayers.



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Day 4

Genesis 8:22

Isn't it amazing that God our creator invites us to partner with him in the agreement known as covenant? God's creative, sustaining and redemptive acts are promised to us, his people. In Genesis 9:8-17 God establishes his covenant, through Noah, with all life on Earth. Let us consider this day how God's covenant has been fulfilled to his creation unconditionally. God keeps his word.

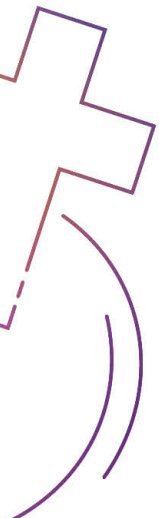


Day 5

The first covenant in Scripture that God made with Noah and for all generations to come is symbolised by the rainbow. These days we know that a rainbow can be explained scientifically as reflected and refracted sunlight shining through water droplets to create a spectrum. We may understand more about this meteorological phenomenon than Noah did but we still cannot create a rainbow. Take time in prayer to recognise God's gifts to us in creation and our response to his covenant as stewards of his provision.

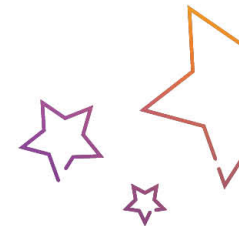
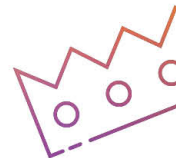
Day 6

Many words are used to define a covenant - agreement, bond and contract are among them. The Hebrew word used in Scripture meaning to seal a covenant literally translates as 'to cut'. In Genesis 15 God revealed himself to Abraham and promised to make him the father of a great nation. His descendants would eventually inhabit the land of Israel. God instructed Abraham to prepare animal sacrifices and arrange them in a particular way. Heavenly fire passed between the cut pieces of flesh, sealing the covenant that God was making with Abraham. A spiritual relationship was sealed in a practical way, although it would be many years before God's promises were fulfilled. Let this prompt us to pray for patience and faith in God's promises to us.



Day 7

'Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord was pleased with him.' (Genesis 15:6 CEV)
One week into 2021 - how are you doing with keeping any new year resolutions? We can make ourselves all kinds of promises and write long lists of good intentions as a new year approaches. On the one hand it is good to believe that significant change is possible; on the other we may place unrealistic expectations upon ourselves. When God revealed to Abraham how his life would unfold, his response was incredulity - and many questions! Through listening to the Lord and believing him Abraham saw God's will realised. May our prayer be 'O for a deeper, O for a greater, O for a perfect trust in the Lord.'



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Day 8

Unlike the covenants made with Noah and Abraham, God's covenant with Moses and the Israelites was conditional. Speaking to Moses, their leader on Mount Sinai, God made an agreement to protect them if they kept his Law and were faithful to him. If Israel is obedient, then God will bless them; but if they disobey, God will punish them. This covenant set the nation apart from all others as God's chosen people. At that time the response was 'We will do everything the Lord has said' (Exodus 19:8). The surrounding nations would know that they worshipped Yahweh, the covenant-keeping God.

Pray that your life is a witness to the Lord who keeps his promises.

Day 9

Exodus 19:5

These were the words spoken directly to Moses confirming God's choice of Israel to be his holy people, his 'treasured possession'. How could they fail to hear and obey every word from God who loved and valued them? How could they disobey the Lord who had rescued them from slavery in Egypt and given them laws to observe governing every part of life? Yet time and again they failed, they turned to other gods, they neglected the commandments. Time and again God was merciful and restored his people as they bowed in repentance.

Is there a need for personal repentance this day as you spend time with God? Pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal this to you as you turn your mind and heart to him.

Day 10

The theme of Living in God's Covenant might prompt some Salvationists to look again at their soldier's covenant, or Articles of War as it was formerly known. The opening paragraph declares: 'Having accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord... I now by God's grace enter into a sacred covenant.' A person being enrolled as a soldier is usually invited to sign their covenant in a public ceremony, having declared their intention to uphold Christian standards and values in every area of life. Yet every Christian lives out their promises to God in daily life with its challenges and temptations. Let us remember that our God is gracious and forgiving. Give thanks to him today.



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Day 11

January is often a month when days can seem dark and dreary. God has covenanted to us that winter will give way to spring and summer, but his love and faithfulness are unchanging. May we experience his presence and power today.

*Dear Lord, I lift my heart to thee,
My helplessness I own;
The way before I cannot see,
I dare not walk alone.
More clearly would I realise
Thy presence and thy power,
Not only under summer skies,
But in the darkest hour.*

John Izzard (SASB 489)

Day 12

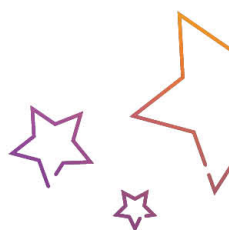
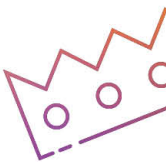
*Not only when I sense thee near
Art thou most surely nigh,
Nor hast thou, Lord, a quicker ear
Because my faith is high.
My changing moods do not control
Thy covenanted aid;
Thou hast the guarding of my soul,
And I am not afraid.*

John Izzard (SASB 489)

Let the truth of these words so beautifully expressed by John Izzard strengthen you today. May your soul find its resting place in God, our rock and redeemer.

Day 13

In the time of Nathan the prophet, God made a further unconditional covenant. This would not depend upon human obedience but on God's sovereign activity and faithfulness. It began as a promise that a permanent home would be provided for Israel and that David's son Solomon would be blessed and build the Temple. The covenant expands into the divine promise to establish an everlasting kingdom through the lineage of King David. Eventually his line of succession would result in the birth of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Having now glimpsed four of the Old Testament covenants, take time to reflect on what you have learned about God through his promises to his people. Focus on prayers of gratitude today.



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Day 14

The Gospel writers record the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, the one who came to establish God's new covenant with all humankind. Yet long before the birth of Jesus, the prophet Jeremiah speaks of the new covenant:

'The days are coming... when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel... I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.' (Jeremiah 31:31,33)

What a beautiful picture of hope and restoration this is, based in a personal relationship with God! Pray for this transforming hope to bless your family and friends this day. Pray for those you long to know the Lord for themselves.

Day 15

On the evening before his death on the cross, Jesus spoke to his disciples of the new covenant. As they broke bread and drank wine in the upper room, Christ told them, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you' (Luke 22:20). Through the sacrificial death of Jesus, Son of God, we can know forgiveness of sins and the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit. The new covenant means that we can call God 'Abba, Father'. Thank you, Lord, for your amazing love and grace. Father God, may we live in the truth of the new covenant, as your redeemed people.

Day 16

We are nearly at the end of this theme Living in God's Covenant, culminating in the new covenant established by Jesus. These days may prompt you to read Scripture and study the various covenants in more detail. The book of Hebrews, chapters 8-10, compares the Old Testament system of priestly sacrifices with the atoning sacrifice of Christ and confirms the fulfilment of God's promise to forgive sin and restore fellowship with those who seek him. Thank you, God, that the way is open to all who will respond in faith. Thank you, God, for your love and grace poured into our lives every day.

Day 17

One of the shortest songs in *The Song Book of The Salvation Army*, 604, is written by Charles Wesley. It forms the perfect benediction to these days reflecting on and praying about covenant. These verses encapsulate the joy of making and renewing our covenant relationship with God. Let us make this our prayer today:

*Lord, in the strength of grace,
With a glad heart and free,
Myself, my residue of days,
I consecrate to thee.
Thy ransomed servant, I
Restore to thee thine own,
And from this moment live or die
To serve my God alone.*

