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## Back to the Altar — Praying for a Reconnected Heart

### DAY 1 — WHERE ARE YOU?

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“Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’” (Genesis 3:9)

#### The Most Important Question

Is there a more searching question than the one God directed at the newly-fallen Adam? God, of course, knew exactly where Adam and Eve were. He is omniscient—all-knowing—after all, so God was really asking, Adam, do *you* know where you are? Adam and Eve had disobeyed God (Genesis 3, 4), and their disobedience created a breach, a break in what had heretofore been a perfect relationship between God and His crowning creation. The place where God had met them on every previous day was empty on this day. The first faces ever created bore no smile for their Creator that day. Arms He had fashioned from clay did not enfold Him that day. Hearts whose beats had often synchronized with His own were strangely distant, almost silent that day.

#### Not Enough

Ellen White comments, “Satan represented to the holy pair that they would be gainers by breaking the law of God. Do we not today hear similar reasoning?” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 54). Adam and Eve made the mistake of listening to the devil, and he convinced them that what God offered them was not enough, that communion with God in a close, trusting relationship was not enough. In an instant the mild, balmy climes of Eden now “seemed to chill the guilty pair. The love and peace which had been theirs was gone, and in its place they felt a sense of sin, a dread of the future, a nakedness of soul. The robe of light which had enshrouded them now disappeared, and to supply its place they endeavored to fashion for themselves a covering; for they could not, while unclothed, meet the eye of God and holy angels” (p. 57). Sin had changed the spiritual condition of the only creatures in Eden with whom God had shared His very image. Indeed, it had shattered God’s image in them.

#### A Time to Pray

From Adam and Eve’s broken relationship with God to the present flood of severed ties that we see etched on faces around the globe, perhaps there is nothing more important for which to pray than for a return to the place where God waits for us. Millennia may have passed, but the lies that felled Adam and Eve have not changed. Satan still claims that God is withholding something from us, that He cannot be trusted, that He is not enough. This message is especially alluring in a tech-obsessed, digital age in which more gadgets and connectedness promise a type of spiritual nirvana, a higher state in which *we* control our fate instead of bowing to the God who made us. Now is the time to reject Satan’s lies and go back to the One who has loved us with an everlasting love, back to the One who is drawing us to His side with lovingkindness (Jeremiah 31:3)!

Let’s pray together.

**Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)****A Powerful Promise**

"It is a wonderful thing that we can pray effectually; that unworthy, erring mortals possess the power of offering their requests to God. What higher power can man desire than this—to be linked with the infinite God? Feeble, sinful man has the privilege of speaking to his Maker. We may utter words that reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. We may speak with Jesus as we walk by the way, and He says, I am at thy right hand" (Ellen G. White, *Prayer*, p. 7)

***All prayer groups have different ways of praying together. We encourage you to spend the next 30-45 minutes in united prayer, in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads. Below are some examples of praying through Scripture. You may pray through other passages also. See the Leader's Guide for other prayer ideas.***

**Praying God's Word — Jeremiah 24:7**

"I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart."

**"I Will Be Their God"**

*God, thank You for coming to find us when we have done things to sever our relationship with You. Thank You for loving us with a love that lasts forever and for constantly, consistently, conspicuously drawing us to Your side each moment of every day. Thank You, God, for a love that still seeks sinners! Amen.*

**"With Their Whole Heart"**

*Precious Jesus, we thank You for the promise of a rekindled heart, a heart that seeks God and waits for Him in seasons of want and seasons of plenty. We ask You to fulfill Your promise of a new heart with a new affection for You. Amen.*

**"They Shall Be My People"**

*God, it boggles our minds that You would claim us as Your own after we have left You. Thank You for covering us with the perfect life of Jesus Christ and giving us a new name (Revelation 2:17). Amen.*

**More Prayer Suggestions**

**Thanks and Praise:** Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

**Confession:** Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

**Guidance:** Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

**Our Church:** Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

**Local Requests:** Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

**Listen and Respond:** Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

**Song Suggestions**

*SDA Hymnal:* Sweet Hour of Prayer (#478); Just as I Am (#313); What a Friend We Have in Jesus (#499); Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling (#287); Nearer, Still Nearer (#301)

*Other Songs:* Change My Heart, O God; I Love You, Lord