



Student Devotional

Reflections

During COVID-19

Reflections



“And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever.”

-Daniel 2:44
-Allison Davis

“Triune God, we thank you for your promise that suffering and injustice will not last forever. When we are tempted to despair, fill us with hope, Holy Spirit, as we await the perfect kingdom to come.”

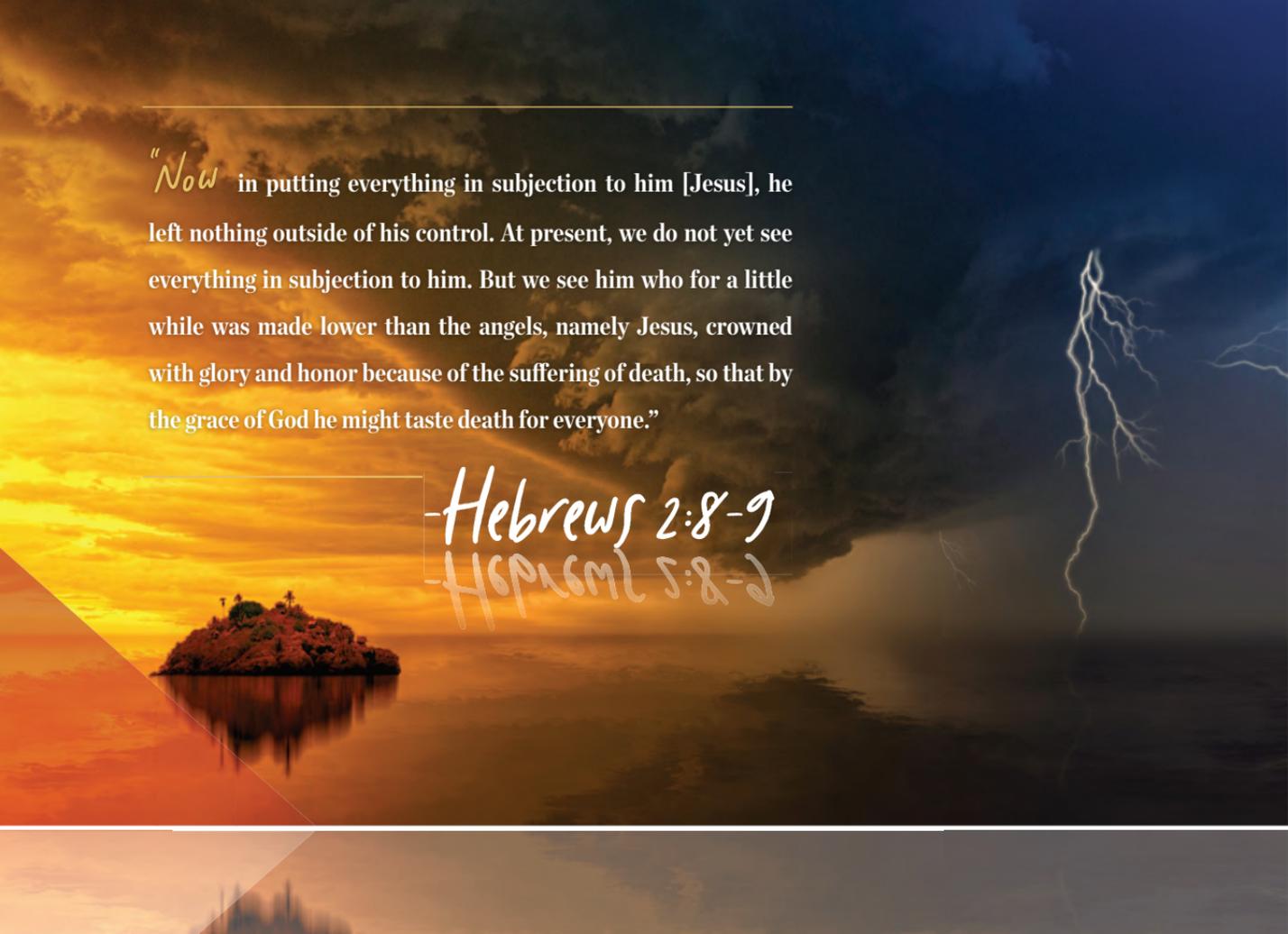
“We live in a broken kingdom—a world ravaged by disease, sin, sorrow and death. With the resurrection of Christ, however, a new kingdom has begun to rise. Let us remember that God is faithful to keep his promises and look forward to the day when we will bask in the peace, love and joy that will reign in God’s everlasting kingdom.”

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies."

-Romans 8:18-23
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"During this time, Lord we praise you for this gift to cry out to you as our loving Father—and we praise you for the great hope that we have in the death and resurrection of your Son that now we, too, are given the hope of new bodies and the restoration of creation. Draw near to us, Abba, during this painful time, and remind us of the hope of your promise to us in Christ Jesus."

"This passage speaks to our present suffering and promises the hope that is the redemption of our bodies—not in some strictly spiritual sense—but true healing of our physical, flesh-and-bone bodies from disease, from anxiety, from infection, from paralysis and all hardships that our bodies currently bear. Glory be to God for this great hope given to us in Christ."



Now in putting everything in subjection to him [Jesus], he left nothing outside of his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.”

Hebrews 2:8-9
Hebrews 5:8-9

“Lord Jesus, you did not flee from suffering and death. When I cannot recognize your sovereign hand, empower my heart to believe what I cannot see. Fix my eyes on you and on the glory of the gospel.”

The author of Hebrews articulates the tension many of us sense during this time of uncertainty: how can all things be under God’s control when so much death and chaos swirl around us? Yet our hope is not in our present circumstances, but in Jesus as the Son of God who entered into the death and chaos of the world. Though we may not yet fully glimpse his dominion, we worship him as the God who is already at work in the pain and suffering of humanity.

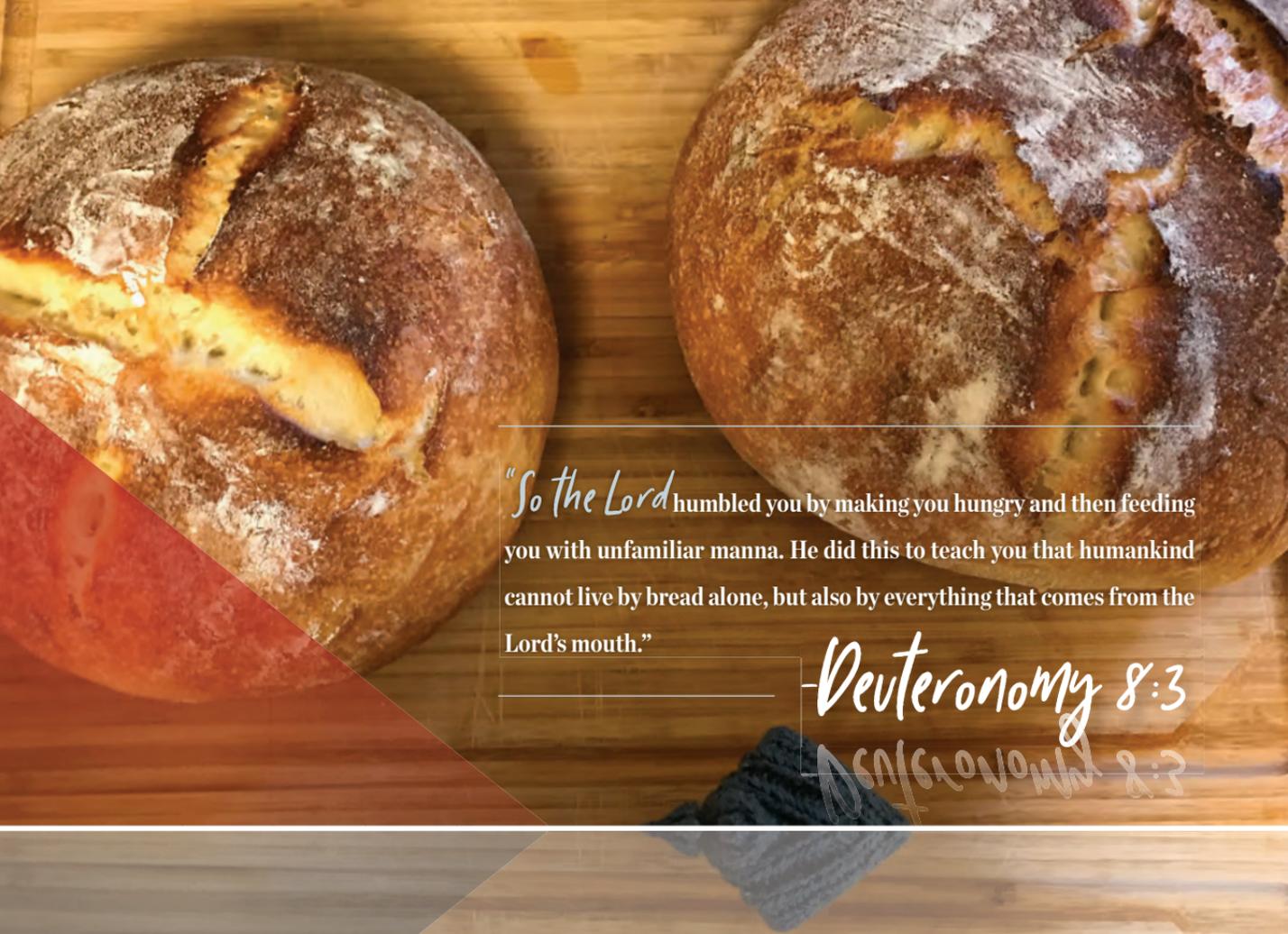
"All the nations may walk in the name of their gods, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever."

Micah 4:5
מִיכָא 4:5

"Heavenly Father, we thank you that you are the one true God who brings satisfaction to all of our longings. Help us to cling to you during this season and to not depend on ourselves. Help us to walk in your holy name, and grant us hearts of worship that give us a foretaste of the everlasting peace we will have when we are with you for eternity."

In Micah's day, there was a pantheon of gods from the nations surrounding Judah that promised to give people what they needed. In our own day, it seems like this difficult season is exposing what many people worship. May we as God's people be reminded that our ultimate allegiance is to God. As we continue to walk in the name of the Lord, we are promised the supernatural peace that only God can give, and which we will experience fully when we worship him for eternity (Micah 4:1-4).

Devotional offered by Isaiah Cruz, first-year M.Div. student, from Fairfax, Virginia.



"So the Lord humbled you by making you hungry and then feeding you with unfamiliar manna. He did this to teach you that humankind cannot live by bread alone, but also by everything that comes from the Lord's mouth."

Deuteronomy 8:3

Deuteronomy 8:3

"O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light rises up in darkness for the godly: grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what you would have us do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices; that in your light we may see light, and in your straight path we may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." (2019 Book of Common Prayer, 669)

God the Father has provided in Jesus Christ all we need, having sealed it by his Holy Spirit. Therefore, let us use this time of quarantine and self-isolation, not as a prison of panic and worry, but as a crucible in which we melt together the elements of Scripture, prayer and praise because what will emerge from this crucible is the precious metal of a faith fervent to love and serve the Lord.



“One thing have I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the
house of the LORD all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to
meditate in His temple.”

—Psalm 27:4

“LORD, show us what you are inviting us into
in these unique, attention-grabbing days.
Let us not miss this opportunity in our fear
or future-focus. We long to respond to your
invitation, to give you our attention, to dwell
in your presence.”

*In a situation of overwhelming fear and adversity (vv. 2-3),
the Psalmist directs his heart to one thing—dwelling in God’s
presence to gaze on his beauty and meditate on him. There are
many things we can’t do right now—have class in person, go
to work, gather with friends, worship corporately side by side—
and we grieve these losses. But there is no restriction against
the one thing the Psalmist directs us to. No quarantine, disease
or ordinance can keep us from dwelling in God’s presence,
gazing on his beauty and meditating on his Word.*



“... *even as* he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him.”

Ephesians 1:4

“*In this season* of ‘inconvenience’, where our failures and insecurities become all the more apparent, remind us Oh Lord, how you behold us in Christ. Amen”

Daughters and sons of the one true King, what must matter most to us in this life, is how God sees us. Through Christ’s atoning work, you are no longer a sum total of all your shortcomings. Instead, you are “holy and blameless before him.” A declared reality that manifests itself gradually in our daily lives.



"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

John 14:27

"Father, we cling to the promise of peace that you offer and claim it as a promise. Thank you, Lord Jesus for suffering in our place, bearing our sins, so that perfect peace can be established between yourself and us. Holy Spirit we pray that you would guide us into all the truth of yourself and you would extend this peace that is found in this verse. Thank you for your presence and your love."

Peace is a rare resource in the troubling days of COVID-19 and self-quarantine. There are far more questions than answers right now in our present time. But the Holy Spirit offers us peace during times like these. He offers peace that no vaccine, stimulus package or government mandate can offer. These things are temporary, but the peace of Christ surpasses all understanding. Let us seek this peace together during a time of uncertainty and instability. His peace is offered freely to all who cling to him in hope.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.”

- Proverbs 3:5-8
- Proverbs 3:2-8

Father, I am weak. Help me to acknowledge you in all my actions and trust you with all my heart. Please bring healing to the sick. Please give refreshment to the souls of all who seek you. We trust you will accomplish these things by the power of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the presence of the Spirit. Amen.”

These times have reminded all of us how dependent humans are. Where we put our hope is extremely important. Do not believe that salvation or security will come from your own actions, instead look to Christ.

During this time, we will be tempted to perceive good things (like cleanliness) as worthy of our hope. May our sweet dependence on God grow deeper, for he is our only true hope and healer.



"I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content."

-Philippians 4:11

"Father in heaven, I thank you for where you have put me during this season. I thank you for the sunshine, for those I love, and for the ways you have provided for me. Thank you for what I do have. You have been good to me. Most of all, thank you for your presence. Would you teach me true contentment and gratitude? Help my eyes to be fixed upon Jesus, and fill me with your love. Amen."

You might have many reasons to feel less than pleased with your circumstances right now. Praise be to God that contentment is possible in Jesus no matter what you are facing! The apostle Paul wrote these words having learned to be content in every situation—whether in surplus or lack, plenty or hunger. May it be said of us in these days that we learned to be content in our circumstances—whether we are working at an office or working at home, whether we are surrounded by friends and family or feel lonely, whether in abundance or in uncertainty and need. We can have contentment. Beloved, press into Christ as your source. He strengthens us to face every challenge, and satisfies our deepest longing. Fix your eyes on him. As 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Devotional offered by Misty Hopkins, third-year M.Div. student, from Birmingham, Alabama.



Jesus said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!’”

— *John 21:22*

“Father, please help me keep my eyes on you as I walk the path you have set before me. I trust that whatever happens along this road, it is leading me to where you are.”

Peter wanted to know if John would face the same kind of suffering and death that Jesus just prophesied Peter would endure. When we encounter challenges and suffering, the temptation is to compare our situation with that of others. Jesus responds that we are to turn our eyes away from the paths he has chosen for others and to keep our focus on him, the one who endured the cross for our salvation.



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