

Preparation Guide for July's Devotionals



1. Week One and Two

Ladies, I have a testimony about the importance of our **two themes** this month:

1. **We are required to look upward.**
2. **We are required to be of one heart and one mind.**

I went to hear Eric Odida preach on Wednesday night during the in-town reunion of the Conference of Restoration Elders and the Pastors of Zion.

Brother Odida preached on the two themes of "lift up your eyes" and "look upwards." He quoted the scripture from Psalm 121 and several others used in these devotionals. He also spoke about how we as a people, must become "of one heart and one mind."

It was a confirmation to both Susan Booth who had been editing the final drafts of this month's devotionals, and myself, that God has a hand in the going forth of these materials. You would have thought that Eric had read them and had taken his sermon right out of them. It was just amazing! Susan sat behind me and after the sermon we turned to each other and said, "WOW, that was amazing!!"



2. Week Three and Four

We should not have been surprised for we all know that when God wants a message to go forth he sends it forth in many a sundry and different ways. So I hope you will pay close attention to the messages of this month's devotionals, for I know they are important for us in this the Last Days.

I truthfully feel that all of our devotionals have been inspired and each one is important. I hope you will not only read them but pray about them and continue to study them out in your mind and heart.

In **Luke, the 21st chapter**, Jesus tells us the signs that we can expect to see in the Last Days preceding His second coming.

He also gave some specific instructions to those who live in this time period called "The Last Days." These instructions are for us, right now, for we are truly living in the Last Days!

Luke 21:24 Now these things He spake unto them, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. And then His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, tell us concerning Thy coming?

And He answered them, and said, In the generation in which the times of the Gentiles

shall be fulfilled, there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, like the sea and the waves roaring. The earth also shall be troubled, and the waters of the great deep.

Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. For the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh.

We can see by reading this scripture why the Patriarchs have counseled us to “Look Upwards” in this the Last Days. Jesus gave us that same instruction here in **Luke**. *(Eric used this same scripture. I already had it in this preparation page).*

Keeping our eyes on Jesus should be a daily goal. Let us not be overcome by the cares of this world but let us focus on God and His power and His wonderful promises to us.

I know a woman who had a vision of Peter walking on the water. She said, “It was when Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and looked at the water that he sank.” Let us not sink in the storms of life but let us keep our eyes focused on Jesus. *(Eric also used this example, which had already been written here).*

The future events that Jesus mentions in **Luke 21** are so devastating that Jesus says: “Men’s hearts do fail them for seeing that which is taking place upon the earth.” We are facing a time of great distress upon the whole face of the earth. Ladies, we will need to be practiced in this “looking up process” during this difficult time that is ahead.

So we need to get ready. Yes, we can get ready by practicing “keeping our eyes on Jesus.” One way we do this is by developing spiritual disciplines. In the Everlasting Covenant in Genesis we are told that when we look upward Zion will look downward. The Everlasting

Covenant speaks to our need to look upward. *(Eric also used this.)*

Genesis 9:22 And this is Mine everlasting covenant, that when thy posterity shall embrace the truth, and look upward, then shall Zion look downward, and all the heavens shall shake with gladness, and the earth shall tremble with joy.

To have Zion we must “look upward.” To keep our eyes on Jesus we must be keeping the spiritual disciplines. Without these disciplines we will not be able to keep our eyes on Him.

Monica Rush wrote about these tools—spiritual disciplines—in her devotionals. In Week Two Monica quotes an experience of Brother White where he sees three circles around Zion and a judgment of the Saints.

My own father had an experience about the judgment of Zion. In a dream he found himself up around the Independence square area and suddenly there were people running by him. They seemed in fear of their lives. He grabbed one man and asked him what was happening, the man replied, “The judgment has come and if you are not worthy to stand you better run for your life.” Then my father woke up but was given to understand that there would be a future judgment of the Saints in this area and we needed to be working on perfecting our lives. Maybe we need to ask ourselves if we were judged today what the outcome would be. My father shared this experience at his 80th birthday party and challenged our whole family to become spiritually prepared and look unto Christ.

In a message given by High Priest Leonard Smith to the Oak Grove congregation in 1994, we were told, “I would challenge you to look to the future and approach the challenge and perplexities that are about. From here we look to our Jesus for our light and

truth. Pressing times are upon you My people, put your hand in My hands and let Me lead you into new frontiers of discipleship and worship.”

Yes, let us look to our Jesus and keep our eyes focused on Him. God is calling us to look upwards in this the Last Days. A new frontier of discipleship is before us. Zion the beautiful beckons us on.

Eric Odida, in his sermon, talked about this “looking up” process and how it involves the covenant we make with Christ; keeping our eyes on Him and remembering our covenant is how we look up. He spoke of the Everlasting Covenant.

Debbie Norman, in her devotionals for Week Three and Four, also truly covers extensively and beautifully this issue of becoming of one heart and one mind, and, loving our brothers and sisters.

My sisters, these are all important topics! That’s why the Patriarchs gave them to us to consider and follow.

If we are going to be prepared to fulfill our role individually and as a people, we must begin to grow spiritually and do those things that our Patriarchs and, most importantly, our Lord Jesus Christ has asked us to do.

James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Wherefore lay aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness, the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.

But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass;

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the Work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Challenges in the guide prepared by the Patriarchs of the church:

- 3. We are required to look upward.**
- 4. We are required to be of one heart and one mind.**

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Matthew 22:36-38

Action: We are required to look upwards and to be of one heart and one mind.

This Month I will keep my eyes on Jesus through the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Scripture study, fasting and consecration of my time and talents to God. I will keep doing this daily and not give up. I will make these things a daily habit and lifestyle. I will not be overcome by the problems and trials of life because I will keep my eyes on Jesus. I will not let any contentions come between me and my brothers and sisters in the faith. I will pray for God's help in these matters. I will pray for charity to be in my heart at all times. I will ask God to help me obey and follow the first and great commandment. I will look up!

My Plan to Accomplish this Discipline:

Week #1

Week #2

Week #3

Week #4

My Partner to Assist Me & Help Me Be Accountable Is: _____

Self Evaluation:

How Am I Doing & What Do I Need to Do to Be More Successful:
