

Explanation of Selah Form

“Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.” Augustine of Hippo, Confessions

For five days in a row, after you read the passage, you will record your findings in the Selah form. There will be times when you won't have enough room or time to capture all you discover in the passage! And, there will be other times when you will not be able to fill out each section with as much of your findings. Feel free to color code your entries. For example, you may use a different color pen for each day so you can see your discoveries at a glance.

Pause (Bible Study)

Words I looked up-

This is where you will look up the meaning of names, places, or words you are curious about. This will bring a richer understanding to what you are reading. You can use a concordance, Bible dictionary, or commentaries. It is also helpful to read from different translations.

People-

In this portion you will look up the people mentioned in the verses. List all the characters mentioned.

Questions I asked-

As you read the passage you may find yourself asking questions about the text. Allow yourself time for wondering, to think deeply, and ask questions about God's Word! Record them here and discuss them with your small group or search out the answers during your personal quiet time. These may or may not be answered.

Other Scripture-

When a passage of Scripture is read and reread you will want to investigate the other verses recorded in the margin or in your footnotes. What is the benefit of reading these additional passages? Let me answer that question with a question. Have you heard the phrase "let Scripture interpret Scripture"? This is one of the most basic principles of interpretation or "what does this mean?" We can understand what the Bible text is saying by reading what it says about similar or same things in other passages of Scripture. We find these in the Cross-References and Footnotes. Record the Scripture you look up here and a note about the significance.

Reflect (Quiet Time)

Favorite verse-

Often a verse will leap off the page at you as you read or will keep coming back to you throughout the day. In this section, you will write the verse(s) that you want to memorize or that is prominent to you. Take note of that particular verse here.

Main themes-

A theme is a recurring idea, pattern or motif. As you read the verses, record the various topics that you see occurring. This is another way to help you discern the main point of the section and how it applies to your life.

God's revealed character-

Look for the aspects of God's character you see revealed in the selected reading and record them here. The Bible is a book about God and we can learn so much about His unchanging character and His intentions toward us as we sift through the passages. (See attributes of God list in the back of the book.)

Observations-

Write your observations, insights, and any other information you would like to record in this portion.

Application-

The application is when the Word gets personal! Take time to listen to what the Lord is teaching you. Record the lessons learned here and discover application to your life. We want to move from self-centered understanding to God-centered understanding. The Bible is a book about God revealing Himself to man. By focusing on who He is we see ourselves more clearly.

Prayer-

In this final section of our Selah form, we will explore and engage in prayer. Oswald Chambers said, "Prayer is

getting into perfect communion with God; I tell Him what I know He knows in order that I may get to know it as He does."

Pour Out-

Prayer is an intimate conversation that we have with the Lord, however, like any truly satisfying conversation it must be two-way. We are invited to draw near and tell the Lord what we want and need because He is our safe place and stronghold. There are numerous times that this talking to God is called "pouring out". Read 1 Samuel 1:15, Psalm 62:8, and Lamentations 2:19. Really, if you would admit it, it is easier to "pour out" or talk to God rather than listen, isn't it?

Listen-

In both the Old and New Testament there are numerous examples of God speaking to His people in the Bible. He wants to be known by His people. Because prayer is two-way communication between the Lord and us, it is appropriate and necessary for us to listen. As an example, let's look at Psalm 62:8 (ESV) "Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Selah". We are instructed to trust Him at all times, pour out our hearts because He is our refuge. What an invitation! Finally, we are to Selah. Pausing and listening might sound easy but can be so difficult because it involves being quiet and listening!

In John 10:27 (ESV) Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Our Heavenly Father's voice is different from all the other voices we hear, and it is unique. In this verse, He promises that His sheep will hear it. Let's make the time to Selah, pause and listen to His voice. As we do, our ears will be tuned to His voice, but we must pause and listen.

Following are some questions and suggestions that may be beneficial in helping you to think through each one of the above mentioned sections:

Words I looked up -

- Do you understand what the work means?
- Are there any phrases or words you don't understand?

People -

- Who are all the characters mentioned?
- What do their names mean?
- Where else are they mentioned in the Bible?

Questions I asked -

- Are there things you are wondering about? Record the questions you have about what you are reading. These may or may not be answered.

Other Scripture -

- Look up and list other Scriptures associated with the passage. (You will find them in your cross-reference and foot notes of your Bible.)

Favorite Verse -

- What was your favorite verse?
- Why?
- How does it relate to where you are in your life right now?

Main Themes -

- What are some of the "Big Ideas"?
- Are there any patterns or themes?
- Why did the people act this way?
- How did the people in this portion grow and change?

God's Revealed Character -

- How do we see God revealed in this passage?
- What did we learn about who He is?
- In what way did He interact with the people in this section?

Observations -

- Are there any observations, insight or information you would like to remember?

Application -

- What does this passage teach me about God?
- How does this facet of God's character change my view of self?
- What should I do or how can my behavior change in response to what I discovered about God?

Selah - pause and listen

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