

# spiritual caffeine

a monthly shot of encouragement and equipping for student leaders



Cadre Ministries

## blessings

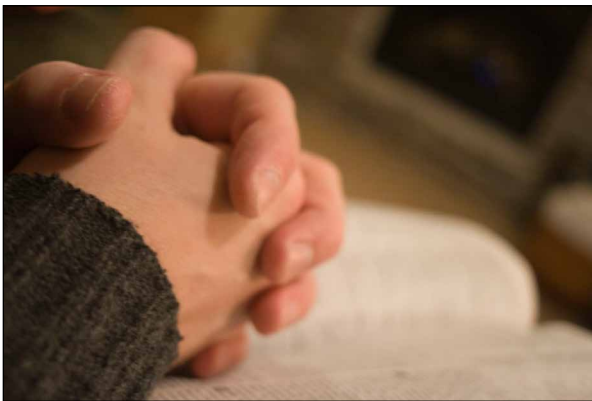
*small prayers that make a big difference*

### day 1: shema

*Read Deuteronomy 6:4–12*

Deuteronomy 6 forms the beginning of the prayer Jews call the Shema (“hear”), which they pray daily. The heart behind the command of God here is that the Israelites (and all of us) remember God’s provision in our past and not forget and think that we’ve provided all that we enjoy for ourselves. We are so quick to forget!

Pray these words back to God and ask him to help you remember that all good things are from his hand. Jews began praying the blessings in order to intentionally remind themselves that all things come from God. Keep this attitude throughout the day today, thanking God for every gift.



### day 2: bless the Lord

*Read Psalm 103*

Some of our translations say “Praise the Lord” in this psalm, but the original translation says, “Bless the Lord, O my soul.” We tend to think of blessings as coming from God to us, not from us to God. But the word for bless is related to bowing down as well as flowing down from above. It has to do with a downward motion, one that in turn exalts God. It is placing his name in the high position it deserves. Spend some time today blessing God and remembering all his benefits in your life.

### day 3: pray continually

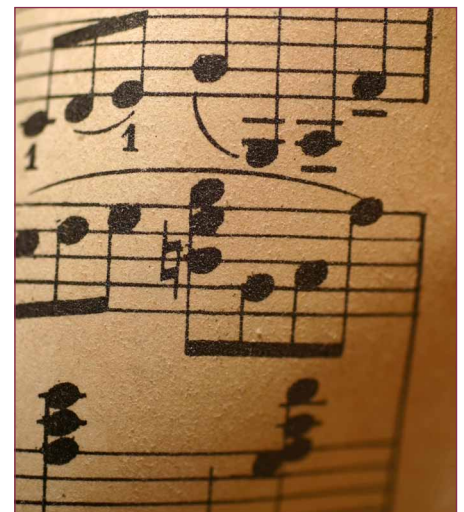
*Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18*

Does the way you think about this verse change once you understand the Jewish habit of praying blessings throughout the day? Paul isn’t envisioning that you kneel in the morning and never get up; he’s imagining that you pepper your day with prayers of thanks. Every day is full of more than enough things to keep us busy thanking God! Make it your goal to live this out today.

### day 4: sing

*Read Ephesians 5:19–20*

Maybe I’m the only one, but frequently I’ll find myself with a bad attitude—negativity, worry, distraction, or the like—and then a favorite worship song starts playing, and my whole attitude is changed. I’m realigned. I think that’s part of why Paul exhorts us to make music, and worship in particular, part of our daily lives. How can you incorporate more worship into your day and let it lead you to gratitude?



## day 5: our great God

*Read Psalm 96*

There are so many aspects of who God is for which we can be grateful! Starting with this psalm, pray back to God praises of blessing for who he is, such as “Blessed is he who does marvelous deeds!” You can use the same format every time you read Scripture in order to let it teach you about God’s character and to remind you to praise him.



## day 6: sacrifice of praise

*Read Hebrews 13:15–16*

What makes praise a sacrifice? It doesn’t take a lot of sacrifice to sing songs or say the Lord’s prayer, or even pray these blessings throughout the day, does it? Perhaps not. But note that some of the Jewish prayers (like Blessed is he who is the true judge) are intended for times of grief and difficulty. It’s easy to thank God for the good things and on good days, but when we thank him for his goodness in spite of our difficult times, that’s when praise becomes a real sacrifice—and a great honor to God. How well do you remember to bless God on days that don’t go as you hoped?

## day 7: the disciples’ prayer

*Read Matthew 6:5–15*

We would be remiss to study prayers and not look at the one Jesus taught his disciples to pray. You’ll notice that the prayer begins with “hallowed be your name”—which is a lot like “blessed is he...” Jesus also begins to pray by remembering the greatness of God. Today, try to remember to pray this prayer a few times throughout the day, and note how it alters your attitude and actions when you do.

