

SCRIPTURE | *Journaling The Bible*

We're going to spend a few minutes interacting with scripture now – for this you'll need to grab either a pen and paper, or open a notes app on your phone, just anywhere you can do some writing. There are lots of ways to encounter God through the Bible, whether studying, praying, memorizing, etc. They all have different benefits. Today we're going to engage in an exercise of taking a passage of scripture, and journaling it into our own words.

Mostly what we're wanting to do here is to shake up both over-familiarity (for those who have been reading the Bible for a long time) that can sometimes cause the Bible to feel stale, as well as to think more deeply about what some of the ancient words and metaphors really mean, and what they might look and sound like in our present day context. How they apply to your/my/our lives today. This is kind of a fun and creative way to explore God's word in a very personal way.

The passage we're going to look at is from a small book in the Old Testament, by a prophet named Micah. I'll read the whole passage first, and then we're going to go verse by verse to re-imagine Micah's words into our own personalized version.

**⁶With what shall I come before the LORD
and bow down before the exalted God?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousand rivers of olive oil?
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
⁸He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.**

Ok, ready? Now your words can be fun and lighthearted, they can be deep and thoughtful. Maybe you don't even want to use words but you're going to sketch it out as we go along. The point is to pull it apart and try to hear it – and then express it – in a fresh new way that applies to your life.

1. With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

So. Assuming most of you don't regularly offer any baby cows for your church donations... what does this one really look like in your life? What do these words really mean?

For me, this would mean something like: _____

2. Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

Ok so this one is continuing to lean into obscure metaphorical language... although I think that is actually the literal measurement of the jug of olive oil available at Costco... but what is it really trying to say? What's the heart of it? And how would **you** express it for yourself?

3. He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

The way I expressed this one was: _____

If you find it hard to engage with scripture, if you struggle to feel its relevance to your everyday life, you might want to give this practice a try for a few weeks and see if it doesn't help the Bible to spring to some new life for you.
