

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

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START DATE:

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PRAYERS

TO HELP

YOU THRIVE

**DEVOTIONS
TO HELP WOMEN
LIVE WITH JOY & CONFIDENCE**

 **ZONDERVAN®**

ZONDERVAN

Prayers to Help You Thrive
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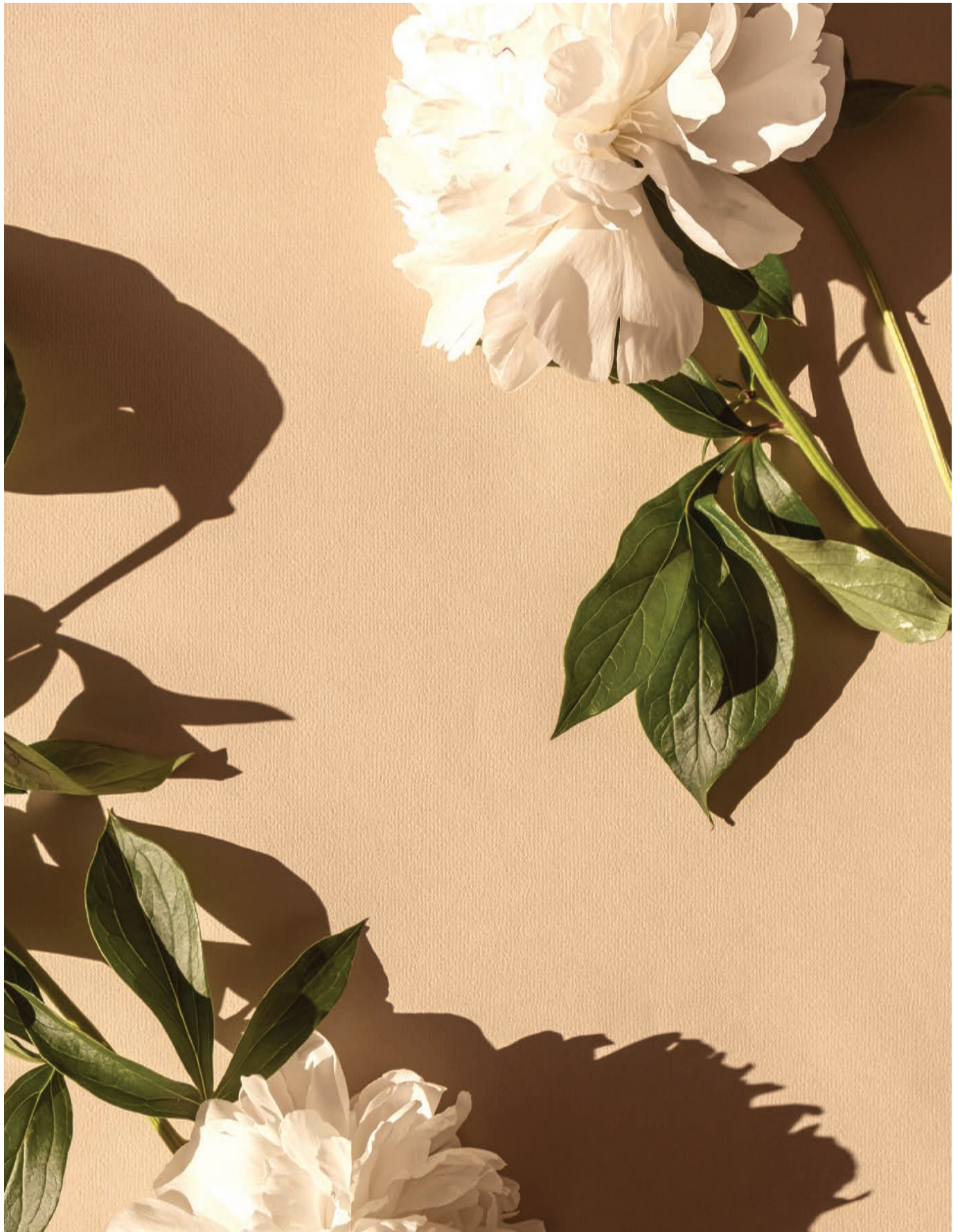




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INTRODUCTION

The idea of what it means to thrive is truly unique to the individual. To thrive to flourish, to grow strong. For you that may mean feeling good about life, being at peace with who God made you, or experiencing contentment even amid struggle. Even though we all have a different definition of what it means to thrive, the biblical concept of rejoicing is at the core.

Life doesn't always go our way, and in those times you may not feel joyful. The world is full of cancellations, changes, and a great deal of pain. But the apostle Paul reminds us to be joyful in all things and to rely on God rather than on circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18).

And what is the best way to rely on God in all things? It's invest and work to create a meaningful relationship with him. This interactive book is an invitation to grow and thrive—in your life and in your faith walk. This beautiful mix of devotions, Scripture, prayers, and prompts will help you develop or strengthen your time with God. The topics include areas of relevance to women today, such as social justice, economic equality, and social media addiction. But other topics are universal in their importance, such as prayer, fasting, decision-making, and relationships.

You can work through this individually or invite friends, family members, or your small group to join. Process each section at whatever pace works for you—daily, every other day, weekly, or monthly. After you read each entry, ask God what he wants to say to you. Ask him what he wants you to learn. What does the Lord want you to dwell on longer or to do in response to what you have read? Then listen quietly for his answer.

Our prayer is that this resource will lead you into a deeper relationship with the God who loves you and wants you to thrive.

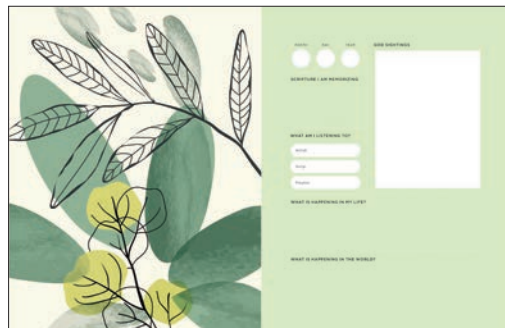
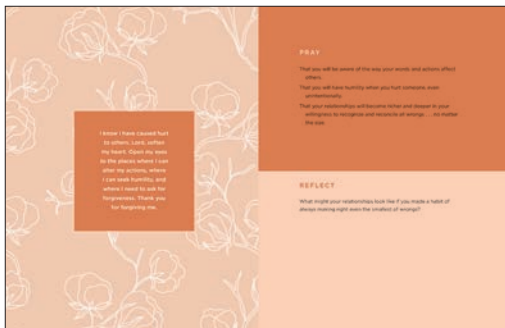


How to Use This Book



Read the entry. Highlight words, phrases, or Scripture references that speak to you. Take notes in the margins.

Read the prayer. You can pray aloud or silently. If God speaks to you, write it down. If you have additional prayers of your own, feel free to write them in this space.



Respond to the reflection prompt. If you're completing this workbook as a group, you can write down additional thoughts people share.

After you've completed a section, record how everything is going. This will serve as a check-in with yourself and help you progress on your journey to thrive.



Different and Not So Different

SHAUNA NIEQUIST

I once did a study on Exodus, which is not the kind of Bible study I'm used to. The other people in the study spoke Greek and Hebrew. I speak French, which is slightly less helpful in matters of theology, although much more helpful in fine dining and shopping. I feel good about the trade-off, generally, but this study made me reconsider.

What surprised me is that I found myself very connected to the story of Exodus. It's a great story, a big, sweeping story about the sea and the desert and the sky, but it's also a story of incredibly fine detail, like a Fabergé egg, like a large painting with teeny tiny brushstrokes. And as much as it's a very important story about big themes and pervasive truths about the nature of God and his people, a finely wrought web of ideas and ideals, it's also about blood and bones and midwives and frogs and fires and bread.

Maybe these details matter to me because even though so much of modern life and theology insists that what matters is my mind, my soul, my inner self, my heart, there is still this nagging part of me that knows on some deep level that

There is still this nagging part of me that knows on some deep level that the things we see and touch and hear and taste are spiritual too.

the things we see and touch and hear and taste are spiritual too. The dichotomy between spiritual and physical doesn't make sense to me because so much of God's work in my life has been the repairing and stitching together of the two.

It didn't make sense to the Exodus writers either. The olives and the wine and the ideas and the stones and the mountain and the soul all matter deeply and signify something important, instead of the ideas and the souls being truly important and the rest just being props on loan from the theater department.

Exodus brought to the surface and brought to life this little part inside me that whispered, "I thought so! I hoped so!" I think the best stories always do that, always resound somewhere below our stomachs with a sense of rightness, a sense of congruence with the way we were made and the way we understand ourselves.

On the mornings that we studied Exodus, I felt myself walk through the rest of the day differently. I felt like my life, my actual daily, water and wine and blood and guts life, was a little ennobled, like I could stand up a little straighter. I ate my hummus and bread and olives at lunch feeling like I was a part of something old and elemental, like eating good, fresh food made by someone's hands was something important. It made me think about the



yarn of my scarf, how someone made it with their hands, and how threads and garments and colors mattered so much when they built the ark of the covenant.

It made me feel like even though a million things are different in my life than they were then, like email and Gore-Tex and Zone Bars and dishwashers, some things are not so different, like bugs and yeast and the impulse to worship. There's still a big story, disguised as regular life, and the big story is about love, death, and God; about bread, wine, and olives; about forgive-

**Some things are
not so different.**

ness, hunger, and freedom; about all the things we dream about and all the things we handle and hold. Exodus was the Wild West, lawless and risky, and it's the cities we live in, bursting with life and meaning, and someday, when the future brings a world we can't even imagine now, Exodus will be there, in the songs and sounds and in the flesh and bones of a people who still wander and yearn for home.

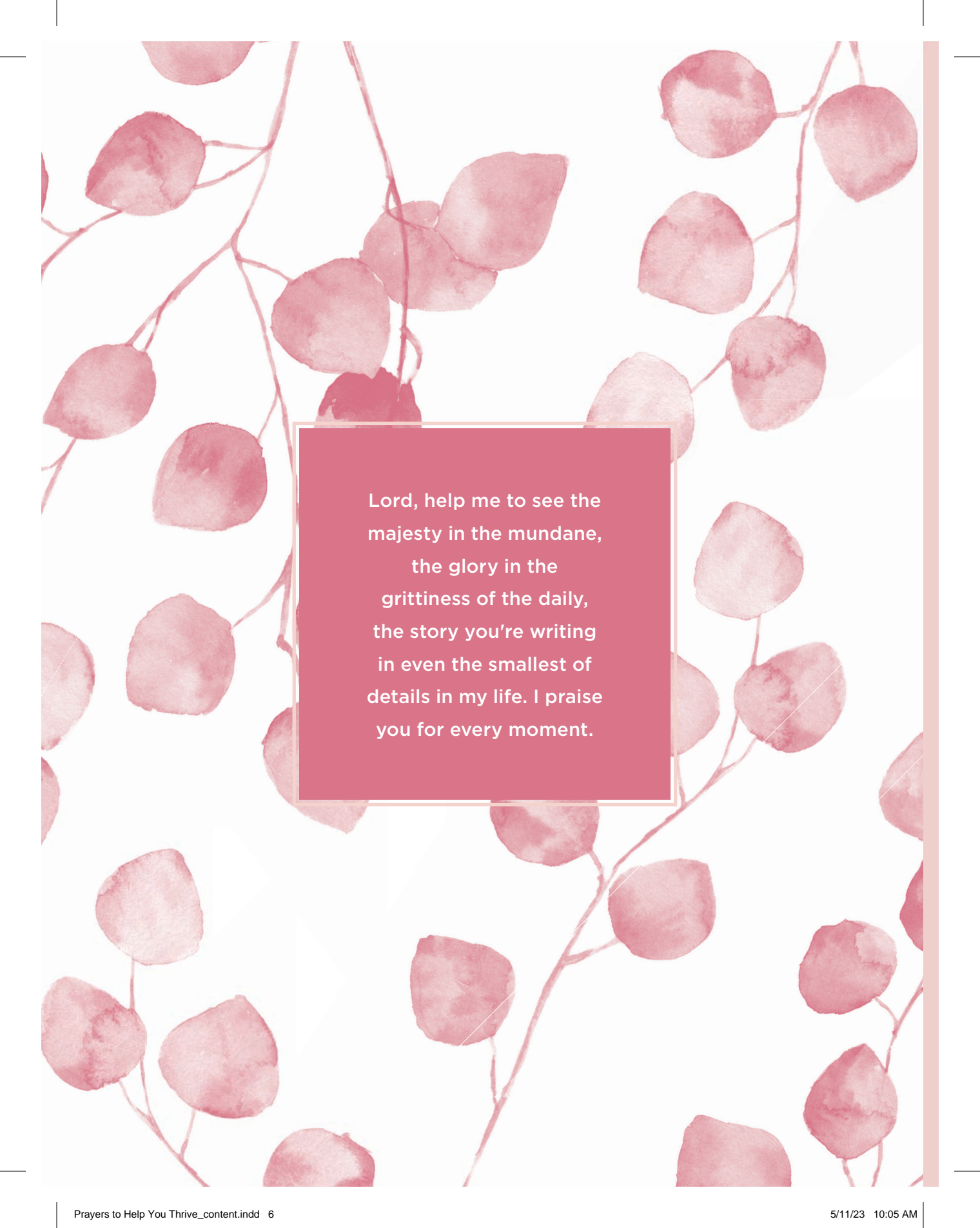
PRAY

That you will see your own life differently in light of your time spent studying the Bible.

That God will reveal how your story is connected with the bigger Story.

REFLECT

What parts of Exodus resonate deeply with your daily life?



Lord, help me to see the
majesty in the mundane,
the glory in the
grittiness of the daily,
the story you're writing
in even the smallest of
details in my life. I praise
you for every moment.

MONTH

DAY

YEAR

GOD SIGHTINGS

SCRIPTURE I AM MEMORIZING

WHAT AM I LISTENING TO?

Artist:

Song:

Playlist:

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN MY LIFE?

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD?
