

# DON'T PANIC!

The lead-up to exams is a time when it's hard not to panic! When we feel stressed and overworked, we can let God slip down our list of priorities. Bible study and prayer can become optional extras, rather than essential. But as Christians, we serve God first and foremost, and live to glorify Him. We should fit our revision in around living for God, and not squeeze God into spare moments. We all need encouragement sometimes, so we've written **Don't Panic!** to encourage you to keep your eyes fixed on God as you revise.

Through reading the Bible, God can encourage us, strengthen us and prepare us to serve Him even when we're revising. And by talking to Him regularly in prayer, we can praise God, share with Him what's on our minds, and ask for His help. But don't forget: it's still important to work hard! Being a Christian is no guarantee to passing our exams — even Christians fail sometimes! We can think that handing everything over to God means He'll help us pass, without us putting in the effort. But we need to work hard for God, so that He gets glory through our achievements and efforts.

Use **Don't Panic!** to aid your revision so that the Lord remains your number one focus through this busy time. With God on your side, you don't need to panic!

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**DON'T PANIC!** was written by Martin Cole and Andrew Roycroft, with article ideas pilfered from Helen Thorne and Kirsty Cole, and lovely designery stuff by Steve Devane.

# Revision timetable **1** WK

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
9am			
10am			
11am			
12pm			
1pm			
2pm			
3pm			
4pm			
5pm			
6pm			
7pm			
8pm			
9pm			

## WEEKEND BIBLE READING SUGGESTIONS

**Saturday: Philippians 4 v 4-9**

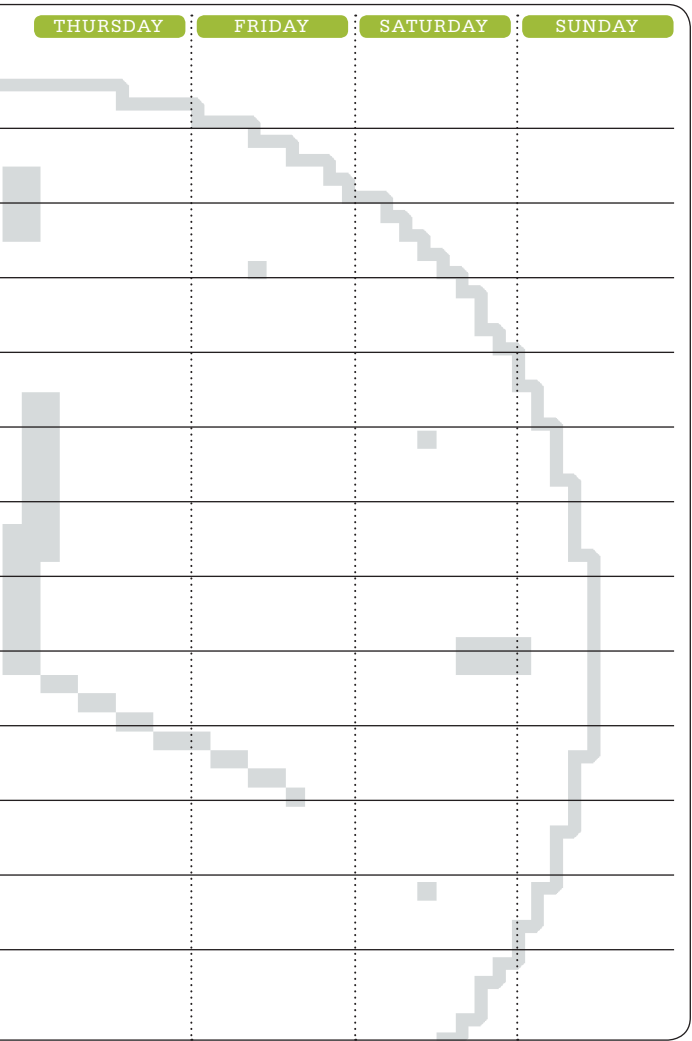
**Sunday: Proverbs 3 v 5-10**

Why not take Sunday off and have a rest from revision!

Set aside some extra time to pray and delve into the Bible.



Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. (Proverbs 3 v 5)



# Prayer diary

Under each day, write down... **1.** Things to thank God for  
**2.** Other people you can pray for **3.** Your own requests

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Oh Lord, let your ear be attentive to the  
prayer of this your servant.

(NEHEMIAH 1 v 11)

## Day 1 – Stressing: a point

### **Nehemiah 1 v 1-11**

How are you feeling about your exams? Under pressure or calm and relaxed? Nehemiah knew pressure. He had been forcibly taken with many other Jews to the kingdom of Persia. This was a heartbreaking experience for him, and for anyone who truly loved God. Nehemiah also had a very stressful job. He was responsible for making sure that the king received only the best wine, and that it contained no poison. One mistake, and Nehemiah's life could have been over. Talk about stress!

#### **Read Nehemiah 1 v 1-11**

❑ **What upset Nehemiah so much (v3)?**

❑ **What was Nehemiah's reaction to this news (v4)?**

Nehemiah was devastated. More than anything, Nehemiah was concerned for God's honour now that God's city of Jerusalem lay in ruins. Even during exam season, God's honour and people hearing the gospel should be our priority too.

What could Nehemiah do in this situation? Verses 4-11 give us the answer – he turned to God. He set aside time to pray and was open and honest before God, confessing his sins, and then seeking the Lord's help. Verse 11 sees Nehemiah cry out to the Lord, asking Him to intervene and do the impossible.

#### **SO WHAT?**

As we face exams, we can feel overwhelmed by the task that lies in front of us. It's easy to look at a crammed file of notes and wonder how we'll ever be able to memorise it all. We need help, but rarely think of turning to God for it!

#### **PRAY!**

Why not set aside ten or fifteen minutes at the start of your day, or just before you begin revising, and talk to God? Like Nehemiah, come before God and ask Him to deal with anything that might spoil your relationship with Him. And then simply pour your heart out to Him. God will listen to you and answer your prayers!

## Day 2 – Bullet-point prayers

### Nehemiah 2 v 1-6

A million thoughts rush through your head. Have I got everything I need? Where did I put my notes? I'm late!! In the middle of exam day madness, it's easy to feel helpless and have that nagging feeling that you haven't prepared or prayed enough.

#### Read Nehemiah 2 v 1-3

- ❑ **Do you bottle up your emotions or let them show?**
- ❑ **How did Nehemiah respond to the king's question (v2-3)?**
- ❑ **How honest are you when people ask 'How's it going?'**

Sometimes, as Christians, we think that we must always be smiley, never showing our anxiety. Nehemiah blows this out of the water. He just can't hide his feelings anymore. He's upset about God's city, Jerusalem, being in ruins, and the king notices. Nehemiah 2 v 1-2 show us that it's okay to admit to the world that we feel low and that we find life hard sometimes.

#### Read verses 4-6

- ❑ **What did Nehemiah instinctively do when faced with the king's blunt question (v4)?**

Between the king's question and Nehemiah's answer, Nehemiah **'prayed to the God of heaven'**. Nice one! In a split second, Nehemiah breathed a simple, sincere prayer to God, instinctively seeking God's help in a tight spot. And God answered (v6).

### SO WHAT?

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus has made it possible for Christians to approach God with the ordinary things in our lives. In your exams, make it your practice to simply breathe out split-second bullet-point prayers to God.

It's a prayer reflex. When a problem comes, we should instantly and automatically share it with God. It's a wonderful feeling, in the middle of an exam or revision, to simply cry to the God of heaven, and know that He hears and will answer even the briefest of prayers.

## Day 3 – Don't worry, be happy

### Matthew 6 v 25-34

Before you do any more revision, take a walk outside, breathe in the fresh air and look around. Go on, give it a go, and take this book and your Bible with you if it's not raining. Can you see or hear any birds? It's OK, we're not investigating the biblical principles of bird-watching, or suggesting you hug a tree – we're setting the scene for Jesus' teaching.

#### **Read** Matthew 6 v 25-30

**✓ What simple point is Jesus making here?**

Looking at birds, we can see the infinite care and intimate knowledge that God has of them, and how He supplies their every need. Now for a bit of multiplication. If God provides for such small and insignificant creatures, how much more effort and love will He show to you, who He has loved enough to send His own Son to die for!

#### **Read** verses 31-34

**✓ Which of Jesus' sentences strikes you the most?**

**✓ How do you need to apply Jesus' words to your life?**

**✓ How do we go about seeking God's kingdom?**

It's so easy to get caught up in life, and with the worries and wants of the world around us. But Jesus tells us not to chase those things, but to seek God's kingdom: actively leading people to know Jesus as their King. And to seek His righteousness: making it our ambition to live His way.

### SO WHAT?

How can you apply v33 to your own life?

#### **PRAY!**

**✓ What needs of yours can God meet right now?**

Talk to the Lord about these things and ask Him to help you seek His kingdom and His righteousness. Trust Him that the other stuff will fall into place.