

DAY 4 — SUNDAY, 5 APRIL 2026

SESSION 9: RISE AND FLOURISH

TIME: 8:00 PM – 9:00 PM



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Growing Deep, Rising Strong

Focus: Commissioning; living a rooted life.

### Roots before Rising.

Every flourishing life has a hidden story: **deep roots.**

Before God raises you, He roots you.

Before He sends you, He strengthens you.

Before you flourish outwardly, He forms you inwardly.

A rooted life becomes a rising life. A rising life becomes a flourishing life.

### 1. God Plants you to Flourish.

#### Isaiah 61:3

Isaiah describes God's people as "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord."

## A. "Beauty for ashes"

### God transforms your soil

Your past does not disqualify your future.

God plants in places others would abandon.

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## B. "Oil of joy... garment of praise"

God heals before He sends

Commissioning begins with inner restoration.

## C. "Trees of righteousness"

Stability, strength, longevity

Trees don't grow overnight.

Flourishing requires rootedness.

## D. "The planting of the Lord"

### God Himself plants you

You are not random.

You are intentionally placed.



## The Life of Ruth

**The Ashes:** Ruth's life began with total loss. Her husband died, she was in a foreign land, and she was living in extreme poverty. She was a "stump" that looked like it would never grow again.

- **The Planting:** Instead of staying in her "mourning," Ruth chose to follow the God of Israel. She "rooted" herself in faithfulness to her mother-in-law, Naomi, and worked hard in the fields.
- **The Flourishing:** God "planted" her in the lineage of Boaz. Ruth didn't just survive; she flourished. She became the great-grandmother of King David and an ancestor of Jesus Christ.
- **The Connection:** Ruth is a literal "Oak of Righteousness." God took the ashes of her past and turned her life into a display of His splendour that we still talk about thousands of years later.

## Mary Johnson and Oshea Israel

### The Ashes

In **1993**, Mary Johnson's only son, **Laramiun**, was murdered at a party. The killer was a 16-year-old boy named Oshea Israel. For years, Mary was consumed by the "ashes" of bitterness and the "spirit of despair." Her life felt like a burnt-out forest where nothing could ever grow again.



## The Planting

After Oshea had served 17 years in prison, Mary felt a nudge from God to meet him. She wanted to see if the "ashes" could be cleared. She went to the prison, and after a tense conversation, they shared a hug that changed everything.

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Mary realized that her healing was rooted in a power beyond herself. She chose to forgive him—not because he deserved it, but because she wanted to be "planted" in grace rather than in hate.

## The Flourishing (The Splendour)

When Oshea was released, Mary didn't just forgive him; she helped him. She introduced him to her landlord, and he moved in next door to her. They began traveling together to speak about forgiveness and reconciliation.

- **The Oak:** Mary became a pillar of strength in her community, founding an organization called "From Death to Life."
- **The Splendour:** Oshea became a "new planting" himself, leaving his past behind to serve others.

## The Connection

Mary Johnson is a living **Oak of Righteousness**. God took the literal ashes of her son's death and bestowed a "crown of beauty"—a story of reconciliation that has inspired millions worldwide. Her life displays "His splendour" because there is no human explanation for that kind of love; it has to be rooted in God.

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### Application:

- Let God heal your soil.
- Let God plant you deeply.
- Let God define your identity.
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You are planted by God to flourish for God.

## 2. Roots determines Fruit.

### Psalm 1:1-3

Psalm 1 shows the contrast between shallow living and rooted living.

- A. "Blessed is the one..."  
**Blessing is a path, not luck**  
Blessing flows from alignment.



**IT'S  
NEVER  
LUCK  
IT'S ALWAYS  
GOD**

**B. "Planted by streams of water"**

**The Word is your water source**

A rooted life is a Scripture-fed life.

**C. "Yields fruit in season"**

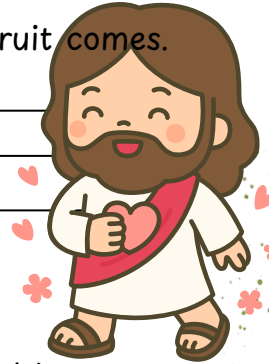
**Fruitfulness is inevitable for the rooted**

You don't force fruit; you stay rooted and fruit comes.

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**D. "Leaf does not wither"**

Resilience in every season

Rooted people survive droughts, storms, and heat.

**E. "Whatever they do prospers"**

**Prosperity is the overflow of rootedness**

Not material prosperity—**purpose prosperity.**

**The Contrast of Two Kings (Saul vs. David)**

- **The Shallow Root (Saul):** King Saul was rooted in public **opinion** and **ego**. When the "wind" of criticism blew, he withered. He stopped obeying God to please the people. Because his roots were shallow, his fruit was bitter (jealousy, anger, and paranoia).

**The Deep Root (David):** David was far from perfect, but his roots were in the **Presence of God**. Even when he was hiding in caves or facing his own failures, he went back to the "Stream" (the Word of God).

- **The Result:** David became "a man after God's own heart." His life produced the "fruit" of the Psalms, which still nourish the world thousands of years later.
- **The Connection:** David delighted in the "Law of the Lord" (v. 2), and as a result, his "leaf did not wither" even in the autumn of his life.

### **The Longevity of the Bristlecone Pine**

- **The Context:** In the White Mountains of California, there are trees called Bristlecone Pines that are over **4,000 years old**. They have survived thousands of years of freezing temperatures, high winds, and drought.
- **The Secret of the Roots:** These trees grow very slowly. While other trees "rise" quickly and die young, the Bristlecone spends its energy growing **dense wood** and **deep, persistent roots**.
- **The Fruit:** Their "fruit" is their resilience. Because they are rooted in the rocky, ancient soil and find hidden moisture, they don't rot. They are practically "immortal" compared to other plants.



- **The Spiritual Parallel:** Psalm 1 tells us that if we don't "walk in step with the wicked" but instead root ourselves in truth, we develop a **spiritual density**. We might not grow as fast as the "chaff" of the world, but our fruit—character, peace, and wisdom—will last forever.

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### **Application:**

- Stay planted in the Word.
- Stay planted in community.
- Stay planted in obedience.

Let your roots go deep and your fruit will rise.

### **3. Abiding in Christ makes you unstoppable.**

**John 15:4-5**

Jesus gives the secret to a flourishing life: **abide**.

#### **A. "Abide in Me"**

##### **Connection over activity**

You flourish by staying connected, not by striving.

#### **B. "Apart from Me you can do nothing"**

##### **Dependence is strength**

Rootedness is humility.

C. "He who abides... bears much fruit"

**Fruit is the evidence of intimacy**

Fruit is not performance, but it is overflow.

D. "I am the Vine, you are the branches"

**Identity shapes destiny**

Branches don't worry about fruit—they focus on connection.

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**The Boldness of Peter and John (Acts 4)**

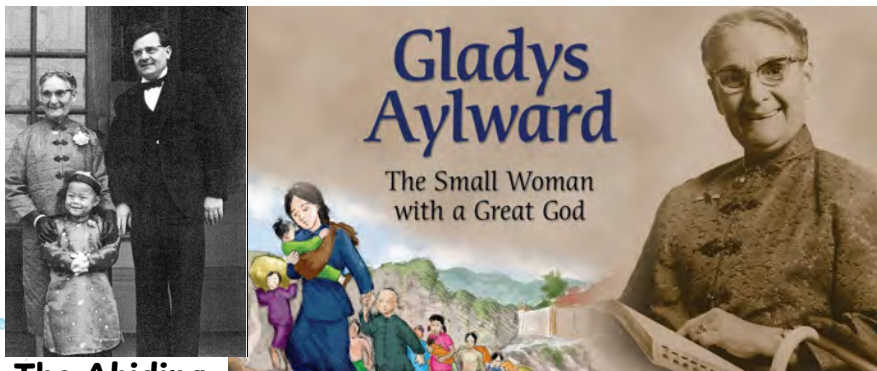
- **The Context:** After Jesus ascended, Peter and John were arrested for healing a man and preaching. They were standing before the Sanhedrin—the same powerful group that had orchestrated Jesus' execution.
- **The Unstoppable Force:** The leaders were stunned by the "fruit" they saw: courage, wisdom, and authority. They noted that Peter and John were "unschooled, ordinary men."
- **The Secret:** The Bible says the leaders "**took note that these men had been with Jesus**" (Acts 4:13).
- **The Connection:** Peter and John were "unstoppable" because they were abiding in the Vine. Even though the source (Jesus) was no longer physically there, the connection was so strong that the world couldn't distinguish the branch from the Vine.



## Gladys Aylward (The "Small Woman")

### The Pruning

Gladys Aylward was a domestic housemaid in England with a deep calling to go to China. However, she was rejected by the mission board because she was "too old" (in her late 20s) and struggled to learn the language. They told her she was a "branch" that wouldn't produce fruit.



### The Abiding

Instead of giving up, Gladys saved every penny and bought a one-way ticket on the Trans-Siberian Railway. She ended up in Yangcheng, China, during a time of war and social upheaval. She didn't have a big organization behind her; she only had her connection to the Vine. She spent her days "abiding"—praying, learning the local dialect, and caring for the "least of these."

### The Unstoppable Result

In 1938, the Japanese army invaded the region. Gladys found herself responsible for **100 orphans**. With the mountains crawling with soldiers, she led these children on a **12-day trek** across wild, mountainous terrain to reach safety.

- They had almost no food.
- They had to cross the Yellow River while under fire.
- Gladys was wounded and suffering from typhus.

But because she was "abiding," she never lost her peace. She famously told the children, "God is with us. He will not leave us." They reached the government-run orphanage with all 100 children alive.

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### The Connection

Gladys was a "small woman" (only 4'10"), but she was **unstoppable**. Her strength didn't come from her physical stature or her education; it came from her daily "remaining" in Christ. She proved that when a branch is truly attached to the Vine, the Vine's strength becomes the branch's strength.

### Application:

- Prioritize presence over performance.
- Build rhythms of abiding.
- Let Christ be your source, not your schedule.

You abide, therefore You flourish.

### 4. God promises to make you flourish again!

#### Hosea 14:5-7

Hosea gives a prophetic picture of restoration and flourishing.



**A. "I will be like the dew to Israel"**

**God refreshes what is dry**

Dew comes quietly, consistently, faithfully.

**B. "He shall blossom like the lily"**

**Beauty restored**

God brings back what was lost.

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**C. "He shall take root like the cedars of Lebanon"**

**Deep, unshakeable roots**

Cedars are known for strength, height, and longevity.

**D. "His branches shall spread..."**

**Influence grows from rootedness**

God expands those who stay grounded.


**E. "They shall flourish like grain... blossom like the vine"**

**Fruitfulness multiplies**

Flourishing becomes generational.

**The Restoration of Peter**

**Scripture Link:** "They will flourish like the grain, they will blossom like the vine..." (Hosea 14:7)



**The Winter:** After Peter denied Jesus three times, his spiritual life felt like it had been hit by a killing frost. He went back to his old fishing boat, feeling like a failure. His "leaves" had withered, and he was in a season of deep mourning.

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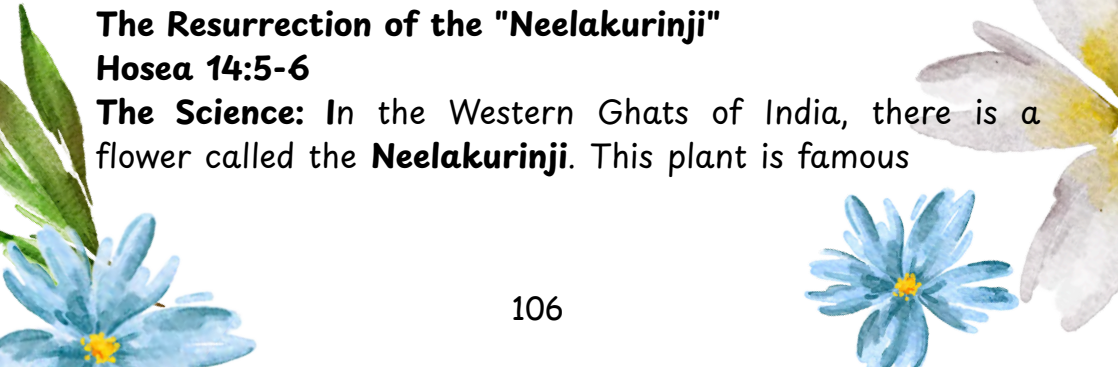


- **The Dew:** On the shores of Galilee, the Risen Christ met him. Jesus didn't scold him; He "watered" him with grace, asking three times, "Do you love me?"
- **The Flourishing:** That same Peter, who had withered under the pressure of a servant girl's question, stood up weeks later at Pentecost and spoke with the strength of a Cedar of Lebanon. He flourished again, becoming the leader of the early church.
- **The Connection:** Hosea 14:5 says God will be like dew to Israel, and they will "blossom like a lily." Peter's life is proof that a season of "withering" is not the end of your story.

## **The Resurrection of the "Neelakurinji"**

### **Hosea 14:5-6**

**The Science:** In the Western Ghats of India, there is a flower called the **Neelakurinji**. This plant is famous



because it only blossoms once every **12 years**. For over a decade, the hills look brown and barren. There is no sign of life.

- **The "Flourish Again" Moment:** When the 12th year arrives, the entire mountain range is suddenly covered in a carpet of vibrant purple flowers.



The "dormant" roots were not dead; they were simply waiting for the appointed season.

- **The Spiritual Parallel:** Many people feel like they are in a "12-year drought." They look at their lives and see no fruit, no beauty, and no growth.
- **The Connection:** Hosea 14 reminds us that God is working in the "root" even when the "shoot" isn't visible. Just like the Neelakurinji, your season of flourishing is coming because God has promised to be the "dew" that awakens what is hidden in you.

### **Application:**

- Expect restoration.
- Expect new growth.
- Expect expansion.

God is making you rise, flourish, and spread.



## Commissioning.

### A. Three Commitments of a Rooted Life

1. **Stay planted** — in Christ, in Scripture, in community.
2. **Stay watered** — prayer, worship, obedience.
3. **Stay fruitful** — serve, love, give, witness.

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### B. Three Blessings to Declare

- My roots are deep.
- My life will rise.
- My future will flourish.



### C. Commissioning Prayer

“Lord, plant us deeply, root us firmly, grow us steadily, and raise us boldly.

Make us trees of righteousness who flourish in every season and bear fruit for Your glory.”

Because God planted you, **you can grow deep.**

Because Christ lives in you, **you can rise strong.**

Because the Spirit empowers you, **you can flourish in every season.**





# Prayer Station



Station 1

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Understanding

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Scripture

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To Do

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# Prayer Station

# 2

Station 2

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Understanding

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Scripture

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To Do

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# Prayer Station

3

Station 3

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Understanding

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Scripture

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To Do

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# Prayer Station

Station 4



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Understanding

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Scripture

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To Do

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# Prayer Station

Station 5

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Understanding

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Scripture

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To Do

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# Prayer Station



Station 6

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To Do

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# Prayer Station

# 7

Station 7

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Understanding

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To Do

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*What I learned*

*Thursday*



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*Friday*

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*Saturday*

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*Sunday*

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# Schedule

Date & Time	7:00 am to 8:30 am	9:00 am to 10:30 am	10:30 am to 12:00 pm	12:00 pm to 2:00 pm	2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	4:00 pm to 6:00 pm	6:00 pm to 7:30 pm	8:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Thursday, 2 April 2026			Checkin & Arrival	Lunch	Fellowship Time	<b>Session 1: Planted With Purpose</b>	Dinner	<b>Session 2: The Soil of the Heart</b>
Friday, 3 April 2026	Breakfast	<b>Session 3: Good Friday Service The Cross: The Deepest Root of Love</b>	Prayer Station	Lunch	Fellowship Time	Activity - Quiz	Dinner	<b>Session 4: Forgiveness That Frees</b>
Saturday, 4 April 2026	Breakfast	<b>Session 5: Rooted and Grounded in Love</b>	<b>Session 6: One Body, Many Roots</b>	Lunch	Fellowship Time	Activity - Group Skit	Dinner	<b>Session 7: Standing Strong in Storms</b>
Sunday, 5 April 2026	Breakfast	<b>Session 8: Easter Sunday Service Rise with Christ</b>	Photoshoot	Lunch	Fellowship Time	Activity - Treasure Hunt	Dinner	<b>Session 9: Rise and Flourish</b>
Monday, 6 April 2026	Breakfast	Check-Out & Departure						



*On My Mind*

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