



ENCOUNTER
— WITH —
GOD

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EXTRA

scriptureunion 
HELPING PEOPLE MEET GOD EVERY DAY

A GUIDE FOR MEETING GOD DAILY IN HIS WORD

Welcome to *EXTRAS*

EXTRAS has been created as an additional resource to use with Scripture Union's daily devotional *Encounter with God*. It is an excellent tool for small group Bible study and can also enhance your own individual Bible reading. These questions will encourage you to dig deeper into the meaning of the Scripture passages you have read during the week.

Matthew 3:1-12

1. In what ways would Jesus' baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire differ from John's baptism with water?

Psalm 128; Matthew 3:13 – 5:16

- 1.** John's baptism was a call to repentance; he baptized those who came confessing their sins. Why would Jesus, who had nothing to repent of, nothing to confess, ask John to baptize Him?

- 2.** When Jesus called Peter and Andrew to follow Him and be fishers of men, they immediately left their nets and went after Him. James and John answered Jesus' call, leaving their boat and their father behind. What do you think was so attractive about Jesus that these men would, without hesitation, leave their livelihoods and family to follow Him?

- 3.** How would you describe the gospel of the kingdom that Jesus proclaimed?

- 4.** Jesus sat down on the mountain, opened His mouth, and taught his disciples and the crowds. In what other ways did Jesus teach?

Psalm 129; Matthew 5:17 – 6:24

1. Jesus taught that, to enter the kingdom of heaven, His hearers' righteousness needed to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees? How was that possible?
2. Jesus called His hearers to follow His example to love for their enemies and pray for those who persecuted them. In what current day contexts are we called to follow that example?
3. Why would Jesus tell His listeners that they must be perfect, as their heavenly Father is perfect? Knowing that they were sinners, was He asking the impossible? Why/why not?
4. Jesus taught that prayer and fasting were not to be on display but were to be actions that were motivated for God alone. What are other things could be considered as being used to impress others more that to honor God?

Psalm 130; Matthew 6:25 – 7:29; Exodus 1:1-22

1. Pray for those Jesus has called to follow Him to the hard places, leaving security and family behind, to be salt and light for Him.
2. In what context is Godly correction appropriate, and how should it be offered? Thinking back to Matthew 5:13-16, when is correction a pearl that must be withheld?
3. Jesus spoke to His disciples about false prophets within the church who bear bad fruit. What might be examples of theology, personality, or actions that can be recognizable as bad fruit?
4. God ordained that the Israelites remain in Egypt for many generations, delaying their journey to the Promised Land. As the Israelites grew into a great nation, they suffered discrimination and oppression in Egypt. Why would God have taken them to a place that would cause such suffering?

Psalm 131; Exodus 2:1 – 5:21

- 1.** Consider the ways God guided Pharaoh, Moses' parents, the currents of the Nile, the heart of Pharaoh's daughter, and his sister Miriam's actions to place him within the royal family, positioning him to play an important part in furthering God's purposes for Israel.
- 2.** God could have identified Himself in any number of ways. Why would He reveal Himself to Moses as "the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"?
- 3.** God called Moses by name – twice. Look at His call to others in Genesis 22:11, 1 Samuel 3:10, Luke 10:41 and 22:31, and Acts 9:4. What did these calls have in common that God would use their names twice?
- 4.** Why, when Moses asked, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh...," did God not answer Moses' question, but replied about Himself? What can we learn from this dialogue that can help us when we are insecure, anxious or even afraid of what is before us?

Psalm 119:153-176; Genesis 32:1 – 33:20; 35:1-29; 37:1-11

1. Consider the 7 promises God made to Moses in Exodus 6:6-8. How can they be applied to believers' lives today?
2. Pharaoh's magicians duplicated the first two of Egypt's plagues, turning water to blood and bringing frogs on the land. Why do you think that they didn't return the Nile to water and remove the frogs? Why didn't they reverse the plagues that God had brought?
3. God instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh to let His people go – so that they could serve Him. How should we be relating to God's reason for liberation in our own lives?
4. God told Moses that His purposes for hardening the hearts of Pharaoh and his servants went beyond showing them His power through the signs He had given them; Moses was to tell his son and grandson the mighty things God had done in Egypt – about His harsh treatment of the Egyptians and the signs He did among them – so they would know that He was the Lord. In what ways would the retelling encourage generations to come even today?

Psalm 133; Exodus 10:7 – 13:16

- 1.** God was intentional in the plagues He brought upon Egypt – each represented an Egyptian deity. Read Exodus 5:2. By reflecting on the 9 plagues, consider how God answered Pharaoh’s question; in what ways did they define who He is.
- 2.** God instructed that each family (or small group of neighbors) to bring a lamb or a goat into the host household on the tenth day of the month of the year and keep it there until the fourteenth day of the same month, when it would be slaughtered at twilight. Why do you think God’s instructions included the lamb’s living with the family for four days?
- 3.** The Lord gave Moses and Aaron the ordinance of the Passover. Why do you think He made such strict commands and restrictions on serving and sharing the meal?
- 4.** What reasons might be given for God’s requiring the consecration to Him of all the firstborn children and animals of Israel?

Psalm 134; Exodus 13:17 – 15:21; Romans 1:1-32

1. Rather than lead the Israelites along the easy coastal trade route from Egypt to Canaan, God led them around the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. That route was not the safer route. What were His purposes, not just for Israel, but also for Pharaoh? What things can we see in this beginning of the Exodus that we can apply to our own lives?
2. Moses told the terrified Israelites not to fear, to stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord. The Lord would fight for them. Before the people, Moses showed great faith, but before God he cried out in desperation. How was this an act of faith that is an example us to follow? Why?
3. Once they had crossed to the other side of the Red Sea, Moses and the Israelites sang praise to God. They sang of His right hand – glorious in power. Look at passages like Psalm 48:10, 77:11-13, 110:1, and Ephesians 1:19-20. How can we be encouraged today by this anthropomorphism?
4. Paul wrote that he was set apart for the gospel of God (not Jesus). How would you describe the gospel he that was set apart for? Why would it be especially important to the Jewish believers in the church(es) in Rome that it had been promised beforehand in the holy Scriptures?

Psalm 135; Romans 2:1 – 4:12

1. Where in today's culture are we tempted to be moralistic, judging the actions of others and not considering our own attitudes or actions as sinful?
2. In what ways was God blasphemed among the Gentiles because of the Jewish believers? Why did these ways need to change? In what ways is He blasphemed in the world by today's church?
3. Paul quoted from Psalm 14:1-3 when he said that no one is righteous... no one seeks after God. In what ways do we deceive ourselves into thinking that we are and that we do? In what ways do those deceptions keep us from appreciating our great need and God's great gift of redemption?
4. God accounted righteousness to Abraham because he believed God. David agreed with Abraham – righteousness was given, not earned. What place, then, do works have in the life of the righteous?

Psalm 136; Romans 4:13 – 7:6

1. What proof in Scripture is there in the Old Testament that God's promise to Abraham (Isaac and Jacob) was not through the law but by grace through faith?
2. Paul wrote that believers have peace with God and are standing in His grace. How can those two facts impact the day-to-day lives of Christians?
3. In what ways are the offence of Adam and the free gift of Jesus different in their result and application?
4. How would you answer Paul's question, "How can we who died to sin still live in it"?

Psalm 137; Romans 7:7 – 8:39; Exodus 15:22 – 16:8

1. Paul wrote that he was once alive apart from the law. In what ways was that true? In what ways did he find life through the law?
2. What good things does the law do for us? In what ways is it limited? What did Jesus do that the law could not?
3. As heirs of God, in what ways should we persevere as we eagerly wait for the coming glory of God?
4. What valuable things about God did the Israelites learn in Marah?

Psalm 138; Exodus 16:9 – 21:27

1. By providing a double portion of manna on the sixth day but no bread from heaven on the seventh day, God forced introduced the Israelites to the Sabbath and forced them to honor it. Jesus calls Himself the living bread that came down from heaven (John 6:51). In three of the gospels, He also calls Himself the Lord of the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8, Mark 2:28, Luke 6:5). Today, how should we relate to Jesus on the Sabbath?
2. In the wilderness, when there was no water for the Israelites, they quarreled with Moses and demanded that he give them water. In turn, Moses cried to the LORD. What was wrong with the Israelites' demand? What was wrong with the Israelites' questioning Moses – and with Moses' questioning God? What could they (what can we) learn about God from His response?
3. On Mount Sinai, why would God tell Moses to address the Israelites as the house of Jacob?
4. What is unique about eagles that God's saying He bore the Israelites on eagles' wings would be significant?

Psalms 139; Exodus 22:1 – 26:37

1. What can be learned by the church in reading about God's instructions to the judges for restitution rather than punishment for offences?
2. God promised to send an angel before Israel to guide the nation into the land He had prepared; the name of God would be in him. Both the angels Micha-el and Gabri-el have God's name in theirs. What do you think the name of this specific angel would be? Why?
3. The mercy seat covered the ark where, among other things, the Testimony (the tablets of the law/Ten Commandments), would be kept. From above there, between the cherubim, God would meet with a representative of the people. What was the symbolism there? Why would it be necessary for blood to be sprinkled on it by the high priest on the Day of Atonement?
4. With the four layers of curtains laid on one another, the tabernacle's only light was the one gold lampstand God had prescribed. What was God's message in this being the only source of light?

Psalm 140; Exodus 27:1-21; Haggai 1:1 – 2:23

1. What was the significance of a moveable tabernacle for the Israelites and for believers today?

2. Following 70 years in exile, Haggai was the first prophet who spoke to the remnant that returned to Jerusalem about the priority of rebuilding the temple. Why would God refer to them as “these people” when speaking to Haggai? In what ways is this a challenge for God’s people today?

3. Read Ezra 3:12-13. In many ways, the new temple would not compare to the glory of Solomon’s temple. What reasons did God offer to encourage the Israelites concerning its importance?