



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.

1 Corinthians 9:1-18

1. Apart from his claim to have seen Jesus, what else set Paul apart as an apostle? See Acts 26:12-18. Why was Paul's assertion important?

Psalms 15; 1 Corinthians 9:19 – 11:34

1. In what ways can your Christian community be a servant to all, both inside and outside the household of faith?

2. To what kinds of self-control and discipline might Paul have been referring that would be still relevant today? From what did self-control and discipline keep him from being disqualified?

3. What examples of Israel's mistakes do you see tempting those in the church today?

4. What were the important traditions Paul had delivered to the Corinthians?

Psalms 16; 1 Corinthians 12:1 – 14:40

1. In addition to spiritual gifts, about what other things has Paul expressed concern that Christians should not be uninformed?
2. Here, in 1 Corinthians, Paul spoke of believers being made to drink of one Spirit; in Acts 2, Jesus' followers were all filled with the Holy Spirit; and in Acts 10, the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on those who heard Peter's words. What is significant about the use of verbs to describe these encounters with the Holy Spirit?
3. Of faith, hope, and love—why would Paul write that love is the greatest? What is unique about the gift of love? For what reasons is love so important? Why will love never end (as will other gifts)?
4. When your church gathers for a worship service, in what ways do the different parts of your time together glorify God, edify believers, and also bless unbelievers?

Psalms 17; 1 Corinthians 15:1 – 16:12

- 1.** Paul wrote to the Corinthians who had received and were saved by the gospel he preached. What are the critical truths of the gospel that we must share with those who are lost?
- 2.** Owing to the fact of Jesus' resurrection, of what truths can we be certain?
- 3.** In light of God's promise that death will be the last enemy to be destroyed, what can this mean for each individual Christian who will face death until Jesus returns?
- 4.** Paul ordered a collection for the needy saints in Jerusalem—extra, non-compulsory, freely given from their hearts, put aside weekly. In what ways should our personal and church practices and budgets reflect that charge today?

1. In what ways are we to be on our guard, stand firm in the faith ? What should we be watching for? How do we stand firm in the faith? In what ways are we to be strong and courageous?
2. What qualities in your leadership bless your church family in general, and you in particular? How can you thank them?
3. Why did the Bethlehem elders tremble, asking if Samuel had come in peace? What would have been the significance of Samuel's invitation to the sacrifice?
4. Why do you think we are told that both Jesse and Saul speak of David's tending the sheep? What kind of a shepherd was David and in what ways would being a shepherd help prepare David to fight Goliath?

Psalm 19; 1 Samuel 19:1 – 23:13

- 1.** Jonathan not only refused to help his father kill David, he warned his friend and he also commended David to Saul; he sought reconciliation between Saul and David. What might his example teach us in our own dealings with strife?

- 2.** Why would Saul continue to call David the son of Jesse? How does this speak of his low regard for David and for David's relationship to the royal family? What does this say about Saul?

- 3.** David left Abimelech with holy bread and Goliath's sword and fled to Gath for refuge. What was it about Gath that made it especially problematic?

- 4.** David had no one to ask for help, nowhere safe to go; he found refuge in the cave of Adullam. Read Psalm 142. In his discouragement, where does he find help and safety?

Psalms 20; 1 Samuel 23:14 – 28:2

- 1.** Remember when Saul tore a piece of Samuel's robe in (1 Samuel 15:27-28). As David showed Saul the torn corner of his robe, what might the king have remembered about the earlier incident, and how would that have impacted his response to David?

- 2.** As Abigail appealed to David to dissuade him from violence against Nabal, more important than the gifts she brought, what did she do and what things did she say that persuaded him to take her advice?

- 3.** David compared Saul's dogged pursuit of him to that of a hunt for a partridge in the mountains. What did he mean by that analogy, what is significant in that comparison? What was the spiritual consequence for David?

- 4.** David fled again to Gath, this time with his wives and his 600 men with their households. For what reason, and for what advantage did Achish allow him to stay?

Psalms 21; 1 Samuel 28:3 – 31:13; Matthew 16:1-12

1. It seemed that David actually wanted to go into battle with the Philistines against Israel, but was refused by Achish. What does that say about David? What does it tell us about God?
2. What was the difference between the David going out to fight Goliath and the David who returned to Ziklag who strengthened himself in the Lord his God? What can this comparison teach us about ourselves—about God?
3. What was significant about David's request that Abiathar bring him the ephod? Why did he ask for it?
4. What was the sign of the prophet Jonah spoken of by Jesus? What similarities in Jonah's story can you see in Jesus' life and ministry?

Psalms 22; Matthew 16:13 – 18:14

1. For what reasons might Jesus have gone from Galilee to Caesarea Philippi, from a mainly Jewish region to one that was predominately Gentile?
2. Jesus revealed to his disciples that he must do 4 things: go to Jerusalem, suffer many things (from 3 different groups of men), be killed, and be raised. Why were these things “musts?”
3. In addition to their being still alive, what are some things we can see in the appearance of Moses and Elijah as they spoke with Jesus? What was significant about the appearance of these two particular men; what did they represent?
4. What is different in the intent of Jesus when he told the parable of the lost sheep here in Matthew from the one he told in Luke 15:3-7.

Psalm 23; Matthew 18:15-35; Malachi 1:1 – 3:5

1. Jesus spoke of sin within the Christian community; we are to go and speak to someone who has offended us with the heart's intent for reconciliation. What would be another Biblical response to an offence?
2. Through the prophet Malachi, God assured rebellious Israel that he loved them. In response to Israel's asking how had he loved them, why would he respond by relating to his love for Jacob? In what ways would remembering Jacob, and God's love for him, comfort Israel?
3. In addition to the horrifying thought of having God spread the dung of the priests' offerings on their faces, what was the spiritual picture God was painting for them? What comparison was he making?
4. The Israelites had wearied God with their words—"Everyone who does evil is good..." or "Where is the God of justice?" In what ways do you see those sentiments of discouragement and unbelief expressed in your culture today? Why should the fulfilled promise of the messengers give reason for different responses?

Psalms 24; Malachi 3:6 – 4:6; Colossians 1:1 – 2:5

1. God said that he does not change; looking at Israel's history and your own walk with him, in what ways do you see him as unchangeable?
2. Are there areas in the church today where God might be challenging us to "put him to the test" for provision, protection—and for blessing the nations?
3. While in Roman custody, the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Colosse to express love and concern for a congregation he had never visited. He prayed for them—always—with thanksgiving for their faith, love and hope, and concern that their walk with God be pleasing and fruitful. Following the example of Paul, where are there churches in the world that you and your own body of believers can commit to faithful prayer?
4. In response to the heresies confronting the Colossian believers, what words or phrases does Paul use in his defense for the deity and supremacy of Jesus?

Psalm 25; Colossians 2:6 – 4:1

1. Paul's arguments and warnings may well have been to refute Gnosticism, one of heretical challenges for the Colossian believers. What traditions of men attempt to distract followers of Jesus today?
2. Since we were raised with Christ, when we consider Jesus' life on earth following the resurrection, in what ways should our actions and attitudes reflect his?
3. In ways is being God's chosen ones or his elect to be seen as encouraging?
4. Notice that the things Paul encouraged the Colossians to "put on " are all things that are expressed in relationships. What does that mean for how we relate to our Christian community, as well as how we invest in our geographic and secular communities—our neighbors, our fellow students, our co-workers, etc.?

Psalm 26; Colossians 4:2-18; Luke 1:1-66

1. Looking at Paul's instructions and his personal request for prayer, in what ways should we be praying for our pastors, our missionary partners, our youth leaders?
2. Why should our conversations always be both gracious and seasoned with salt?
3. How was Luke different from all other writers of the New Testament, and as an apostle, in what ways was he uniquely qualified to present Jesus as he did?
4. Zachariah had won the lottery—he had been given the duty to burn incense at the golden altar in the temple. Gabriel appeared to him there saying that his prayer was heard. Advanced in years, Zacchaeus probably had given up that prayer long ago. He doubted, and was made mute. Consider how God responded to Gideon's (repeated) doubt—why would God have treated these two men so differently?

Luke 1:67 – 2:40; Philemon 1-25

- 1.** In fulfillment of prophecy (Micah 5:2), Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in what probably was a cave, and was laid in an animal's feeding trough. Why would God have chosen this insignificant city for the lowly birth of his son?
- 2.** The angels came, the shepherds saw and heard—and they didn't hesitate in finding the baby. Then they spread the news far and wide what they had heard and experienced. How can you and your community of believers share the wonder of Jesus' birth...far and wide?
- 3.** Writing to Philemon while imprisoned in Rome, what did Paul mean when he described himself as a prisoner of Christ?
- 4.** Paul wrote that he prayed for his friend, his brother in Christ. What can we take from Paul's prayer for Philemon as an example for how to pray for our family in Christ?