

ENCOUNTER —WITH— GOD

JAN | FEB | MAR | 2023

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.

Psalm 27; Matthew 19:1 – 20:34

- 1.** Jesus went away from Galilee and entered Judea beyond the Jordan. Large crowds followed him and were healed there. What things can we deduce about Jesus and his ministry as he moved from place to place?

- 2.** Jesus spoke of a husband and wife being joined together by God. The Greek word for “joined together,” literally means yoked together, as oxen are in a plough. What things can we draw from that translation that tell us about the partnership of a man and woman in marriage?

- 3.** Why would the disciples have been greatly astonished by Jesus’ teaching about wealth, and why would Peter ask what he and the other disciples do have since they had left everything?

- 4.** In what ways would the “cup” and “baptism” promised by Jesus to James and John differ, and what things can we learn from those differences?

Psalms 27; Matthew 19:1 – 20:34

1. Jesus entered Jerusalem on a foal of a donkey and fulfilled prophecy. What is significant about a colt? It must be important; it is mentioned in all four gospels. Why did he not choose a white horse like the one we read about in Revelation?
2. Jesus drove those who bought as well as those who sold from the temple. Why both?
3. In Genesis 3, Adam looked to the fig tree for leaves; Jesus looked for figs. What can we draw from that comparison?
4. Why would those invited to come to the king's son's wedding feast refuse? Where are their different levels of refusal seen today?

Psalm 29; Matthew 22:15 – 23:39; Numbers 3:1-16

- 1.** The powerful Sadducees controlled the Jerusalem Temple and the Sanhedrin (the body governing both religious and legal issues). They were responsible to preserve the Torah, the first 5 books of the Hebrew Bible. Why then would Jesus accuse them of not knowing the Scriptures? Why was that a crucial assessment with consequence, just as it is today?
- 2.** Jesus claimed to be both David's son and his Lord. What does that say about his person and why is it important?
- 3.** In what ways did the scribes and Pharisees "shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces?"
- 4.** Numbers 3 begins by proposing to list the generations of Aaron and Moses. Why would only Aaron's sons be named and anointed as priests? What happened to the sons of Moses, Gershom, and Eliezer, who are not mentioned? Why, do you think?

Psalm 30; Numbers 4:1-28, 5:1 – 7:11, 7:89 – 9:23

1. Kohath was the 2nd son of Levi, but God dealt with him before Gershom, the firstborn. What other siblings can you name in the Old Testament where God favored the younger over the older son? What does that tell us about God's choices?

2. What could the 3 restrictions of a Nazarite represent in our fallen world?

3. What symbolism is to be found in the lampstand of solid hammered gold with branches and lamps shaped like flowers, according to the pattern the Lord had shown Moses? (See Exodus 25:31-37, 37:17-24, 40:22-25).

4. On their journey to Canaan, God's chosen people were always guided by the cloud, the visible sign of his presence. Where he led, they followed. What comparisons can you make between the Israelites' dependence on God to deliver them to your own journey with him?

Psalms 31; Numbers 10:1-13, 33 – 13:3, 10:17 – 14:45

- 1.** In what ways was the Israelites' departure from Mount Sinai different from their flight from Egypt? What things were different about them?

- 2.** Looking back to their lives in Egypt with rose-colored glasses, the Israelites grumbled with great exaggeration. Their strength could hardly have been dried up; God would not allow that to happen. How would it have served them better to remember God's past provisions and his present leading, as well as his promises—and to look ahead? (Read Exodus 3:7,8.)

- 3.** God had already searched out Canaan for the Israelites (see Ezekiel 20:5-6). Why would he give into them (and Moses) by instructing Moses to send out spies into the land he was giving them?

- 4.** Notice how many times the author speaks of all of the people of Israel in chapter 14. What caused them to weep? Over what do you think they really wept?

Psalms 32; Numbers 15:22 – 19:22; Revelation 1:1-8

1. In what ways were Korah's accusations of Moses and Aaron unfounded and his assessments of Israel wrong?
2. For what reasons would God order the censers of the 250 men who had supported Korah be picked up from the blaze that consumed them and hammered into a covering for the altar?
3. God would make known his choice of priestly leader by causing a dead stick to sprout. Overnight, in the tent of meeting, Aaron's rod not only sprouted, it put forth buds and produced blossoms, it bore almonds—ripe almonds! What symbolism for Godly leadership can be found in those stages of growth?
4. The book of Revelation is rooted in the Old Testament. What Old Testament references can you find in the first eight verses of chapter one?

Psalm 33; Revelation 1:9 – 3:6

1. What reasons could there be for the command to write to the seven specific churches?

2. Compare John's vision of “one like a son of man” to the vision in the book of Daniel (7:13-14). In what ways do these descriptions of Jesus encourage you?

3. In what ways are the seven golden lampstands, with Christ walking in their midst, a picture of the churches? If we see the stars as the churches' leaders, what can we draw from the picture of his holding them in his right hand?

4. Knowing that Jesus is the first and the last, the one who died and now lives forevermore, what things does that say about his holding the keys of Death and Hades?

Psalms 34; Revelation 3:7 – 7:17

- 1.** John saw the throne in heaven—and saw that it was occupied. That the Lord God was seated there tells us important things. What are they?
- 2.** A scroll was held in the right hand of the one who sat on the throne, the scroll is described as being sealed with seven seals. What would be significant about those seals that secured seven strings around the scroll?
- 3.** John was told that the Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed to open the scroll, but when he looked, there stood a lamb—that had been slain, that had seven horns and seven eyes. What does that description tell us about that lamb?
- 4.** The angel ascended from the rising of the sun with the seal of the living God. What would be the purpose for the seal? (See 2Corinthians 1:21-22, Ephesians 1:13, and Ephesians 4:30.)

Psalm 35; Revelation 8:1 – 11:19; Job 22:1 – 23:17

1. An angel with a golden censer was given much incense to offer on the golden altar. The smoke of incense rose with the prayers of all the saints before God. What do we know about incense that tells us how our prayers are received by God?
2. In the references to a rainbow found in Genesis 9:12-17, Revelation 4:3, as well as 10:1, of what are we reminded about God and his promises?
3. Although Eliphaz's assumptions about Job were ill-founded, what would Job's lifting up his face to God have meant; what does it mean for any of us, regardless of our circumstances?
4. In all of the loss and agony Job was experiencing, what really was his greatest torment?

Psalm 36; Job 24:1 – 30:31

- 1.** Job could not understand why God allowed the wicked to continue in sin without judgement or consequence. In what ways did he adjust his thinking?
- 2.** Job and his friends agreed that God is just; where did they disagree?
- 3.** Job lamented the loss of his children, his health, and his wealth. But what other more important things did Job believe he no longer had from God?
- 4.** Job's argument until now had been based solely on his faith. In what ways did his defense change?

Psalm 37; Job 31:1 – 36:33

1. Job eloquently and thoroughly articulated the righteousness of his life's actions—he was innocent, both in acts of omission and commission—before demanding a response from his accuser. Where were his errors?
2. While Elihu claimed to have been listening to Job, his accusations proved that he had not really heard all that Job had said. What had he missed? (See Job's words in 7:21, 9:2, 9:28, 19:20.)
3. How might Elihu's view of suffering seem to differ from those of Job's other friends who saw his suffering as God's punishment?
4. Despite the wordiness and less-than-correct assessments made of Job, what words of his could actually have been prophetic?

Psalm 38; Job 37:1 – 41:34

1. Look at Psalm 29 as you consider Elihu's description of God's voice. What is there about his voice in these passages that gives reason to keep listening?
2. Why might God have chosen to answer Job out of the whirlwind? Also see Nahum 1:3; Isaiah 66:15; Jeremiah 4:13.
3. Regardless of the way God spoke, what do you think Job's reaction was in hearing God speak to him? Why?
4. God Almighty was powerfully present, and responding to his barrage of declarations and questions, Job was humbled; he said that he was "of small account." Because of the presence of Jesus, what does Scripture tell us about our value to him?

Psalm 39; Job 42:1-17; Matthew 24:1 – 25:13

1. The Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; God doubled the number his sheep, his camels, his yoke of oxen, and his female donkeys. And God replaced his seven sons and three daughters. Why did he not double the number of Job's children, as well?

2. In what ways do you see the promise Jesus made to his disciples about his kingdom being fulfilled today (24:14)? In what ways is your Christian community investing in the spread the gospel to all the nations?

3. Five virgins were wise and prepared for the bridegroom's arrival; they had taken flasks of oil with their lamps. In what ways does oil represent the Holy Spirit, who prepares us for Jesus' return?