



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 *EXTRA*

EXTRA was 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.

Luke 24:13-53; James 1:1-2:13

- 1.** It was Resurrection Sunday when Jesus engaged two of his followers. For what reasons would Jesus ask these confused and grieving disciples what they were discussing when he already would have known?
- 2.** What had the prophets (Isaiah, Daniel, and Zechariah, for example) spoken that Jesus' followers should have believed?
- 3.** How might the disciples' joy have hindered belief? Where else in Scripture are there examples of joy leading to disbelief?
- 4.** What significance can we draw from James' choice of the words "servant" (doulos) and "Lord" (kurios) as he opened his letter to Jewish Christians scattered throughout the world?

Psalm 87; James 2:14-5:12

- 1.** Why would James' exhortations about faith and works—that works mattered—have been especially important for believers coming from a Jewish background?
- 2.** In what ways can worldly wisdom be compared to Godly wisdom—its focus, its purpose, its priorities, its result?
- 3.** Where do you see Christian conflict that does not glorify God because of its destructive (and worldly) nature?
- 4.** In what ways does drawing near to God help us to resist the devil?

Psalms 88; James 5:13-20; Leviticus 16:1-20:27

1. Why do you think James linked confession of sin to one another with praying for one another?
2. Make a list of comparisons between the high priests' preparation and sacrifices on the Day of Atonement and Christ's preparation, and then his sacrifice on Good Friday.
3. In what ways does Leviticus 19 help us to define holiness with its practical applications? Why is this chapter relevant for Christians today?
4. Leviticus calls believers to holiness. In Hebrews 12:14, we are instructed to strive for holiness (ESV) or make every effort to be holy (NIV). In what ways can we do that?

Psalm 89; Leviticus 21:1-25:55

- 1.** Why would God's restrictions for the high priests have been greater than those for common priests or the people? Do you feel that standards for our clergy today should be higher than other church leaders or lay persons? Why or why not?

- 2.** For the Jews, the seventh day was to be a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. In what ways should that command translate for today's Christians?

- 3.** Why would constant attention to the tabernacle lamps be important? What purpose did they serve and what would they have symbolized? To what things did they point in the New Testament?

- 4.** What spiritual purposes did the year of Jubilee hold for God's people?

**Psalm 90; Leviticus 26:1-27:34; Obadiah;
Nahum 1:1-3:19**

1. In what ways is the prophetic history presented for the Israelites in Leviticus 26 instructive and relevant for believers today?
2. Although nowhere in the Bible did God require that vows be made to him, name some vows made by men and women in the Old and New Testaments and describe how they were (or weren't) kept—and God's response.
3. Why was it especially offensive to God that the Edomites did not help, but instead attacked Judeans when the Babylonians invaded Jerusalem? In what way might that be relevant for the church today?
4. Responding to Jonah's preaching, the city of Nineveh repented and was spared by God. Their repentance did not last, and 100 years later, Nahum foretold their total destruction. Israel's history was one of a cycle of rebellion, repentance, and God's continuing restoration. As God's people today, what comfort can we take from this account of Ninevah and Judah?

Psalm 91; 1 Kings 1:1-3:28, 4:20-34

1. What about David's childhood could have led to his inadequacies as a father, and what should have led to his ability to be a good one?
2. What promise of judgment against Eli, made some 100 years earlier, was fulfilled when Solomon sent Abiathar to his estate, removing him from the priesthood?
3. Why would Solomon's marriages to foreign women lead to his ruin where they had not for his father David?
4. What trajectory was beginning when the writer of 1 Kings wrote that Solomon loved the Lord...only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places?

Psalm 92; 1 Kings 5:1-8:21; Acts 1:1-26

1. The tabernacle had served the Israelites for more than 400 years. Why was it now necessary for Solomon to build a house for the Lord?
2. When God's house was built, why do you think its stones were prepared at the quarries, so that hammers, axes, and iron tools were not used?
3. After taking seven years to build the house for the Lord, Solomon took thirteen years completing his own house. What do you think that said about Solomon's priorities? Apart from its smaller size, what was different about the building of the temple that made it take so much less time to build?
4. Who were some of those that experienced Jesus' presence before his ascension and who would leave no possible doubt that he had indeed risen from the dead? (Be sure to include 1 Corinthians 15:6!)

Acts 2:1-4:12

1. How would you define or describe the last days the prophet Joel spoke about?
2. Answering the people who were cut to the heart by his testimony, Peter first told them to repent. What did he mean when he called for repentance and for what reasons was (is) that action critically important?
3. What was significant for the birth and growth of the church when the 3000, those who repented and were baptized, left Jerusalem and returned to their homes?
4. Why would the Sadducees, in particular, have been greatly disturbed because the apostles were proclaiming Jesus' resurrection from the dead?

Psalm 93; Acts 4:13-5:26

1. On the release of Peter and John from jail, fellow believers joined their voices together in prayer. Make note of the things they prayed for and notice what things were missing from their prayers.
2. Read Joshua 7. What “big picture” similarities can you find in the story of Ananias and Sapphira and that of Achan? Why do you think God’s response to their sin was so extreme?
3. Why do you think Luke chose to report that multitudes of believers were added to the Lord, rather than to the church?
4. While many signs and wonders were performed by the hands of the apostles, what can we learn from the instructions given to them by the angel of the Lord when they were released from prison?

Psalm 94; Acts 5:27-8:3

1. What would have been significant about Peter's referring to Jesus being hanged on a tree (xulon), rather than a cross? (See Deuteronomy 21:22, 23; Galatians 3:13.)
2. Both the Hebrews and Hellenists were Jews. What were their differences that might have caused discrimination in the church?
3. What do you think Luke was saying about Stephen when he described him as having the face of an angel as he faced his accusers?
4. Why would the leaders of the temple be enraged when Stephen quoted Isaiah to say that God did not live in houses made by hands?

Psalm 95; Acts 8:4–Acts 10:8

1. As Saul and those like him persecuted the church, how did God use their actions for his glory to further fulfill Jesus' prophecy and instruction to his apostles in Acts 1:8?
2. Notice how Philip shared Jesus with the Ethiopian eunuch. Where did he begin, and what was his emphasis to which the eunuch wholeheartedly responded?
3. Ananias received a vision from God—what credentials did he have that qualified him to share the gospel with Saul the Pharisee, the persecutor of Christians?
4. What were ways, both explicit and inferred, that Saul had been prepared to carry God's name before the gentiles and kings and the children of Israel? (Where might he have witnessed Jesus himself or his apostles teaching about God's kingdom?)

1. What was extraordinary about Peter’s invitation for Cornelius’ men to be his guests and then, his going into Cornelius’ home? The mention of Joppa brings to mind the story of Jonah. Compare the heart’s attitudes and responses of these two men when God called them and they needed to reexamine their prejudices.
2. When the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on the gentiles, why would the Jewish believers have been amazed? What significant things was God teaching them? Recall prophecies, beginning in Genesis and ending in the New Testament, that were being fulfilled before their eyes.
3. In what ways do you think Barnabas saw the grace of God expressed in Antioch that should be seen among us in the church today?
4. Herod Agrippa I (grandson of Herod the Great, who ruled when Jesus was born, and nephew of Herod Antipas, who participated in Jesus’ trial), pleased the Jews by harassing believers and killing James, the first of the twelve to be martyred. In what way was this a fulfillment of James’ request and of Jesus’ response, and why do you think James was not replaced as an apostle as Judas was?

Psalm 97; Isaiah 1:1-5:7

- 1.** Following God's indictment of his people for their sin, what was useless to him and what did he require they do so that he would again hear their prayers and bring prosperity?
- 2.** Why would God's being called the Lord of hosts (of the armies of heaven) be seen as both bad and good news for the Israelites?
- 3.** In what ways did Isaiah say that God's leaving men to their own devices without him would bring Judah to collapse, carrying out his judgment?
- 4.** Isaiah spoke of the branch of the Lord. Where else in Scripture is this image repeated, both in the Old and New Testaments? In what ways would that branch be beautiful and glorious, not just for Israel, but for the whole world?