

TOP PRIORITY
MANNA

A DAILY DEVOTIONAL

TOP PRIORITY: MANNA 5

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Look for God in the Bible! That shouldn't be difficult, should it? From beginning to end, the Bible is a revelation of the majesty and glory of God. Yet, seeing God in His Word is perhaps the most overlooked aspect of our personal Bible study. The Pharisees studied the Old Testament with a fervor few have ever had. They dissected every letter and word, but they failed to see what it was all about. Jesus rebuked them by saying that though they studied it diligently, they didn't see Him in it (John 5:39). Sadly, they saw everything in the Old Testament **except** what they were supposed to see.

Can the same be said of us? We read passages to look for a verse to "help me get through the day," or to "help me live a better life." But that was not why God's Word was written. The Bible was ultimately written to reveal the Godhead in all of its splendor. The Bible is not simply a manual for living. Rather, it is a revelation of the splendor of God! My Bible study should cause me to deepen my love and awe of my glorious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The study form in MANNA 5 is designed to do just that. You will read each short passage looking for three different aspects of God's person and work: what God does, who God is, and how God works. A word of explanation is in order:

What God Does. What God does is the obvious actions He takes in the passage. Sometimes this is clear: "And God said,..." (He spoke); "Now when Jesus heard that ..." (He heard). Sometimes, God's actions in a passage appear to be non-existent, as in the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1. When you fail to see any evident work that God/Christ accomplished, read the passage again and look for God's providential hand. His plan is at work even in those passages that do not mention Him. His name does not appear in the book of Esther, but His character—His providence and covenant love for His people—is inescapable. Record all that you see He did and the verse(s) where you see it. Even simple things need to be recorded: "He spoke, He walked, He sat, He saw, etc."

Who God Is. In this section of the form, record what you learn about God's character and person (He is sovereign, He is omniscient, He is compassionate, He is interested in us, He is involved in our lives, etc.). Again, you may have to think about the big picture to see His character – but it is there! Carefully reading and pondering a passage to find all that you can about the Lord is called "meditation." Work at it, and you will be blessed.

How God Works. This may be the most difficult element to see. It will require you to step back and look at the entire passage as one whole unit. What does the passage show about how God does things (He takes His time, He works when we don't know He is working, He prepares things ahead of time, He never sleeps, etc.).

Some suggestions:

- Work slowly. Don't be frustrated if answers don't immediately leap to mind.
- Don't force it. Resist the temptation to make something up just so you have words on the page. If you worked hard and you still don't see it, that's okay. Just come back tomorrow and work hard again.

- Set a goal of finding just one or two answers per day as you're getting started. When you catch on, it will come more easily.
- Keep pushing yourself. Don't be satisfied with where you are right now, but recognize that only God can shed light on His Word so that we understand it. Trust Him for help.
- If you get stuck, ask yourself what this passage contributes to the message of the entire Bible. If you can figure out what the passage adds to God's story about what He's doing in the history of His Creation, it might help you think about how God works.

After each reading, you should record your thoughts and insights in the appropriate section. The page to the right provides an example of how this is done with a single passage of Scripture. Our prayer is that through the faithful, daily commitment to this discipline, you will gain a richer and fuller understanding of God in His Word, and therefore a deepening love and admiration for His glorious person.

Be God-focused in your approach to His revelation of Himself. Don't just study the Word of God; study the God of the Word. If we focus solely on what the Bible says about how people used to live and how we ought to live, we will fail to tune our hearts and minds to what the Bible says about God Himself. God wrote His Word to reveal Himself to us! That is the central message of God's Word. Don't miss the whole point.

Passage: 1 Kings 17:8-16

Date: March 3

FOCUS ON GOD

What does God do in this passage?

Spoke to Elijah—vs. 8
 Gave directions to Elijah—vs. 9
 Prepared a total stranger for him—vs. 9
 Caused their paths to meet—vs. 10
 Promised the widow her food would last—vs. 14
 Kept His promise—vs. 16
 Miraculously supplied all the widow needed to support God's prophet

What does God reveal about Himself in this passage?

Personal, involved, immanent
 Sovereign, Lord
 Provider/sovereign in our lives
 God of providence
 Divine arranger
 Faithful, true
 Omnipotent sustainer

What does this passage teach about how God works?

1. Often waits until the very last moment to work and in that way tests our faith—vss. 7-9. (He waited until the water completely dried in the brook.)
2. He prepares the road ahead of us.—vs. 9
3. He often uses unconventional means to care for us (a woman, widow, stranger, foreigner, heathen; a poor, unknown person).
4. He will never let us lack when we are obedient to His will.
5. He acts for our good and for His glory.

MANNA 5 PASSAGES

Check off each day upon completion.



WEEK 1

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 1:1-17
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 1:18-25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 2:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 2:13-23
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 3:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 3:13-17
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 4:1-11

WEEK 5

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 11:7-19
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 11:20-30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 12:1-8
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 12:9-21
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 12:22-32
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 12:33-50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 13:1-9

WEEK 9

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 20:17-34
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 21:1-11
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 21:12-22
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 21:23-32
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 21:33-46
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 22:1-14
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 22:15-22

WEEK 2

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 4:12-17
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 4:18-25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 5:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 5:13-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 5:21-30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 5:31-48
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 6:1-15

WEEK 6

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 13:10-17
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 13:18-23, 32-35
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 13:44-58
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 14:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 14:13-21
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 14:22-36

WEEK 10

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 22:23-46
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 23:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 23:13-39
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 24:1-14
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 24:15-28
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 24:29-35
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 24:36-51

WEEK 3

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 6:16-24
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 6:25-34
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 7:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 7:13-23
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 7:24-29
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 8:1-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 8:14-27

WEEK 7

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 15:1-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 15:21-28
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 15:29-39
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 16:1-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 16:13-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 16:21-28
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 17:1-13

WEEK 11

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 25:1-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 25:14-30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 25:31-46
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 26:1-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 26:14-25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 26:26-35
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 26:36-46

WEEK 4

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 8:28-34
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 9:1-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 9:14-38
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 10:1-15
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 10:16-25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 10:26-42
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 11:1-6

WEEK 8

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 17:14-27
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 18:1-14
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 18:15-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 18:21-35
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 19:1-15
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 19:16-30
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 20:1-16

WEEK 12

<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 26:47-56
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 26:57-68
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 26:69-75
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 27:1-10
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 27:11-26
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 27:27-32
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthew 27:33-44