

2017 Midyear Prayer and Fasting Guide

JULY 4-6

# KNOWING GOD





# KNOWING GOD

Midyear Prayer & Fasting

July 4-6, 2017

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# A Practical Guide to Prayer and Fasting

*“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? <sup>7</sup>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? <sup>8</sup>Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. <sup>9</sup>Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’ . . .”*

**ISAIAH 58:6-9**

## PLANNING FOR THE FAST

*Then Joshua said to the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.”*

**JOSHUA 3:5**

**Pray**—Spend time reading the Bible before the fast. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your prayers. On the next pages, write down your highlights and answered prayers so far for 2017, and what you are believing God for, for the rest of the year.

**Commit**—Pray about the kind of fast you will undertake and commit to it ahead of time. Do not decide on a day-to-day basis. Ask God for grace.

**Act**—Start eating smaller portions a few days before the fast. Avoid food high in sugar and fat. Plan to limit physical and social activities for the week of the fast. Ask someone to be your prayer partner and support throughout the fast.

**NOTE:** Consult a physician, especially if you are pregnant, nursing, or taking medication. If your situation does not allow you to do a full fast, determine what will work best for you.

## WHILE FASTING

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*But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

**MATTHEW 4:4**

**Focus**—Set aside time to work through the devotional. Be ready to respond to God's Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

**Pray**—Join at least one prayer meeting in your local church. Intercede for your family, church, pastors, nation, campuses, and missions throughout the week.

**Replenish**—During mealtime, read the Bible and pray instead. Drink plenty of water and rest as much as you can. Be ready for temporary bouts of physical weakness and mental annoyances like impatience and irritability.

## BREAKING THE FAST

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*"Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'"*

**ISAIAH 58:9**

**Eat**—Reintroduce solid food gradually. Your body will need time to adjust to a normal diet. Start with fruits, juices, and salad, then add more vegetables. Eat small portions throughout the day.

**Pray**—Don't give up! Trust God's faithfulness and timing. Carry your newfound passion for God throughout the rest of the year. Be in faith that God will continue to answer your prayers.

# Schedule

## DAY 1

### FASTING OPTIONS

- Water only
- Liquid only
- One meal only
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer meeting to attend:

\_\_\_\_\_

## DAY 2

### FASTING OPTIONS

- Water only
- Liquid only
- One meal only
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer meeting to attend:

\_\_\_\_\_

## DAY 3

### FASTING OPTIONS

- Water only
- Liquid only
- One meal only
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer meeting to attend:

\_\_\_\_\_

## PRAYER TIMES

List what times and how long you are planning to pray.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# I am thankful to God for . . .

## **2017 HIGHLIGHTS AND ANSWERED PRAYERS**

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*List highlights, answered prayers, and lessons learned so far in 2017.*

*Thank God for His faithfulness, provision, and grace in your life.*



# For the rest of 2017, I am continuing to believe God for . . .

## **PERSONAL FAITH GOALS**

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*Spiritual Revival • Physical Healing • Prosperity and Abundance • Rich Generosity*

## **MY FAMILY**

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*Restoration of Relationships • Household Salvation • Physical Healing*

## **MY SCHOOL/CAREER**

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*Excellence • Promotion*

## **MY MINISTRY**

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*Small Group Growth • Salvation of Colleagues, Classmates, Bosses, Employees*

## **MY PRAYER PARTNER**

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# Knowing God through Times of Testing

DAY  
0

**READ DEUTERONOMY 8:1-18**

*<sup>2</sup>“And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. <sup>3</sup>And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”*

**DEUTERONOMY 8:2,3**

On the way to the Promised Land, God brought the Israelites to a vast wilderness where they had no choice but to depend on Him for food, water, and protection. In this time of testing, the Israelites were charged to obey the commands of the Lord their God *by walking in His ways and fearing Him* (Deuteronomy 8:6). Why? The Lord their God was bringing them into a good land where food was plentiful, and in which they would lack nothing (Deuteronomy 8:6-10). God wanted the Israelites to know and obey Him in the wilderness—a time of testing—so they would keep walking with Him when they entered the place of abundance.

“ ***God is always faithful,  
no matter what test  
we face.***

” God faithfully provided for the Israelites in the wilderness by giving them manna, which is miracle bread from heaven. Also,

their *clothing did not wear out* and their feet did not swell despite forty years of walking in the desert. God was faithful throughout the whole

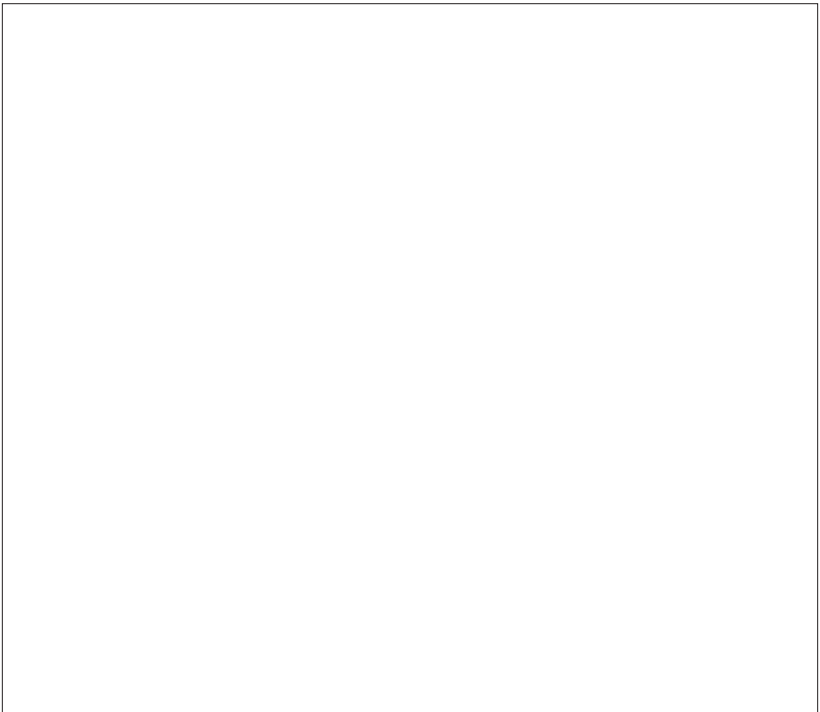
journey in the wilderness. He provided them with everything they needed—big and small.

In times of testing, we come to know God’s faithfulness. He is a gracious Father who faithfully provides for His children, in spite of the tests we are facing. We can know God in ways we wouldn’t have if we didn’t go through these tests. When we trust His faithfulness in times of testing, we will know His goodness in times of plenty.

**APPLY**

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- Are you currently going through a time of testing? Write out or draw what you are going through and what God is teaching you through it. Read Deuteronomy 8:2,3 out loud and with conviction, then meditate on this passage. Declare God’s faithfulness over your life, and pray that you will know and trust Him through these times of testing.





# Knowing God through Diverse Challenges

DAY  
1

**READ 1 KINGS 20:13-30 • PSALM 23**

*And a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, "Thus says the Lord, 'Because the Syrians have said, "The Lord is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys," therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the Lord.'"*

**1 KINGS 20:28**

Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, allied with thirty-two kings, and attacked Israel with over 100,000 men. It was a show of Syrian power, and a test of Israelite strength. In response to Ben-hadad's challenge, the Lord told King Ahab of Israel, "Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will give it into your hand this day, and you shall know that I am the Lord" (1 Kings 20:13). King Ahab, with 7,000 men, put Syria's 100,000 to flight. The victory was the Lord's.

“ **God displays His great power and infinite ability in and through our challenges.** ”

The servants of King Ben-hadad comforted him by saying, "Their gods are gods of the hills, and so they were stronger than we. But

*let us fight them in the [valley], and surely we shall be stronger than they"* (1 Kings 20:23). They belittled God by thinking it would be easier for 100,000 soldiers to overwhelm 7,000 in a valley, where there was nowhere to hide. To be sure of victory, King Ben-hadad replaced all he had lost, *horse for horse, and chariot for chariot* (1 Kings 20:25).

During this second round, Syria's army filled the valley, while the Israelites were so few that they looked like *two little flocks of goats*. At that moment, the Lord promised to demonstrate His unlimited power

and victory to King Ahab. He said: “. . . ‘Because the Syrians have said, “The Lord is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys,” therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the Lord’” (1 Kings 20:28).

With this guarantee, the Israelites killed 100,000 foot soldiers in one day, forcing the Syrians to run to the nearest city. There, a wall fell on and killed 27,000 more. The Syrian army was defeated, and this time they knew, without a doubt, that the victory was the Lord's. The Lord showed Himself as the God of both the hills and the valleys. He protected His people and displayed His power in a way the Syrians could not ignore.

Often, we believe the same lie the Syrians believed: That God is with us in the hills (our high points) but not in the valleys (our low points). We believe that if we are to get through the valleys, we will do it through our own massive efforts, just like the Syrians tried to. We limit God, often because we are afraid to trust and obey Him at the lowest points of our lives.

God displays His great power and infinite ability in and through our challenges. Often, we may feel as though we are trapped in a valley, surrounded by never-ending waves of enemies. But it is in those valleys that we will know Him more. That is the perfect time and place for God to show His power. If we do not limit God to the hills, and do not forget to trust Him in the valleys, we will see His power as we go through life's challenges.



- Take time to read Psalm 23 carefully. Write the whole psalm below, and begin to meditate on what it means. Underline and encircle key words, and write your thoughts, insights, and meditations around the psalm. What can you learn about God's power and infinite ability from this psalm? Take time to memorize it, so you can claim it whenever you find yourself in a valley.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to write the psalm and their reflections on it.



## PRAY

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- In prayer, claim and declare Psalm 23 in your life. Ask God to reveal Himself to you in a greater way through the diverse challenges you face. Pray that you will not limit God. Instead, pray that you will know and trust Him more in both the hills and the valleys of your life.
- Think of a family member or friend who does not know God, and is currently undergoing challenges. Pray that God would make Himself known to them, as a God of both the hills and the valleys.
- Pray the same over your church and over missionaries sent out from your church.

# Knowing God through Adversity

DAY  
2

## READ DANIEL 3

*<sup>24</sup>Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." <sup>25</sup>He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."*

**DANIEL 3:24,25**

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon set up a golden image to make his people know him, and for his descendants and future kings to remember him. All the governors, magistrates, and officials, as well as peoples and nations, were commanded to bow down and worship the statue. If they refused, they would be burned alive in a furnace.

**“ When we face adversity  
and trust God to deliver us,  
many others will come to  
know God and acknowledge  
Him as well. ”**

Among these officials were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, exiles of Israel. The king had appointed them over the affairs of the Babylonian province, giving them positions

and privileges no exile would expect. Despite this, when the command was given to bow down and worship the golden image, they remained standing. They refused to compromise their devotion to God by bowing down to an image made to honor someone else as a god. And they were willing to face the consequences of their decision.

The three men told Nebuchadnezzar, *“Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your*

*hand, O king*” (Daniel 3:17). Infuriated, the king had them thrown into a furnace so hot it killed the soldiers who threw them in. The three men should have died almost instantly. Instead, in the fiery furnace, they encountered a physical manifestation of God and they were loosened from their bonds. God was with them, He spared them from the fire of the furnace, and He kept them safe.

The king, watching from outside the furnace, saw this *son of the gods* as well, walking around with the three men. Nebuchadnezzar saw how God delivered them from a fire not even his soldiers had survived. When the three men came out to the king and his advisers, they did not even smell of smoke. The presence and protection of God was so complete, it covered them even before they went anywhere near the furnace and after they came out.

As a result, the king, *the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king’s counselors gathered together and saw* how God protected and delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Daniel 3:27). Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged it was God who had saved them, saying:

*<sup>28</sup> . . . “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king’s command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. <sup>29</sup>Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way.”*

**DANIEL 3:28,29**

When we face adversity and trust God to deliver us, many others will come to know God and acknowledge Him as well.



## PRAY

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- Pray that you will remember God is present in every situation, whether good or bad. Pray that when facing adversity, you will have firm and immovable confidence in the presence of God and His power to deliver you from whatever situation you are facing.
- Pray that your pastor, leadership and Victory groups, and church will remember that God is present in every situation, especially when they face adversities, or are thrown into the flames. Pray they will confidently trust Him to deliver them from adversity.
- Pray that as you trust God in adversity, people around you will come to know Him. Pray for the salvation of family members and friends who don't know God yet. Pray for opportunities for God to use you so others may encounter Him.

# Knowing God and Being Known by Him

DAY  
3

**READ ACTS 9:1-5 • GALATIANS 1:15,16; 4:7-9**

*<sup>3</sup>Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. <sup>4</sup>And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" <sup>5</sup>And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."*

**ACTS 9:3-5**

Before Paul became an apostle to the Gentiles (non-Jews), he was a Pharisee who persecuted the Jewish Christians (Acts 22:3; Acts 26:5). He may have thought he knew God well on the basis of a list of qualifications that made him righteous before God: his Jewish heritage, education, blamelessness under the law, and zeal to persecute the Christians (Philippians 3:5,6). In his passion and zeal, he breathed threats against the Christians which he put into action, and got permission from the high priest to bring any that he found in Damascus to Jerusalem by force.

“ ***The Christian life is about coming to a deeper realization of what it means to be known by Him.*** ”

However, on the road to Damascus, Paul had an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ that changed him forever. *A light from heaven shone around him, such*

that he fell to the ground. A voice called him by name. *"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"* Paul asked, *"Who are you, Lord?"* The answer was, *"Jesus, whom you are persecuting."* Paul declared that he saw Jesus Christ in the light, and he was forever changed by this. He realized who God was, what He had done, and what His purpose was for Paul's

life. God had revealed Himself to Paul, and then called him by grace for His purpose (Galatians 1:15,16). As he came to know God, Paul came to understand that God knew him.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul writes that *those whom [God] foreknew he also predestined* (Romans 8:29). God *foreknew*, loved, and called us according to His purpose, since the beginning of time—before we ever knew Him or could love Him back. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul said that, when God chose us, He freed us from the slavery of sin and made us His children and heirs through faith. The Christian life is not just about knowing God through testing, diverse challenges, and adversity, but about coming to a deeper realization of what it means to be known by Him.

In times of need and in times of plenty, in the hills and through the valleys, in the midst of the fiery furnace itself, we do not just *come to know God* in a deeper way; we find ourselves known by Him (Galatians 4:9).

**APPLY**

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- Like Paul, have you had an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ that has changed you forever? Share your testimony of how you came to know God, and how the revelation of His love, purpose, and calling changed your life.

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- Read Galatians 4:7-9. Reflect on what it means to be known by God as His child. Write down the passage, and creatively record your insights. Reflect on how your new status in Christ lets you know Him as faithful, powerful, and present. Write a prayer of thanksgiving for this.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to write their reflections and prayer.



## PRAY

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- Thank God for knowing you. Pray that this will give you a deeper sense of confidence, security, faith, and comfort as you go through daily life. Pray that as you face tests and challenges, you will gain a deeper knowledge of God's faithfulness, power, and presence. Pray that as your family members and friends see these in your life, they will come to know Him and come to a realization that He knew and loved them first.
- Pray that, as you grow in the knowledge of God, you will be bold in preaching the gospel to your community. Ask God for open doors, wisdom, and courage. Pray for the salvation of your family members and friends, as well as acquaintances and strangers.
- Pray for the church to grow in its knowledge of God as faithful, powerful, and present. Pray that we will not back down from the tests and challenges we are facing or will face. Thank God that, because He knows us, and we come to know Him more and more, we have victory in His name.



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“Then you shall call,  
and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry, and he will say,  
‘Here I am.’ . . .”

ISAIAH 58:9



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