

## Deuteronomy 17:18-20

(This was written by Moses about 300 years before the first king of Israel was chosen.)

**WHEN** he takes the throne  
of his kingdom  
he is to write a copy  
for himself of this law  
on a scroll taken from that of the priests  
who are Levites.

It is to be  
with him,

**AND**

he is to read it  
all the days  
of his life

**SO THAT**

he may learn to revere the LORD, his God  
**AND**

(he) (may) follow all the words  
carefully of this law  
**AND**  
(of) these decrees

**AND**

(he) (may) not consider himself (to be) better  
than his brothers

**AND**

(he) (may not) turn  
from the law  
to the right  
**OR**  
to the left.

**THEN**

He and his descendents will reign  
a long time  
over his kingdom  
in Israel.

# YOUR TIME WITH GOD

**"I love the Lord because He  
hears my prayers and  
answers them. Because He  
bends down and listens, I  
will pray as long as I  
breathe!"**

**(Psalm 116:1- 2 *The Living Bible*)**

## **A simple plan for the most important time of your day**

How do you plan your time? Do you carry around a "daily planner" or "date book," listing all the things you hope to accomplish on a particular day?

Maybe you've gone "high tech," keying all your hopes and dreams into your computer and letting a "printout" guide your life.

Or maybe you just rush through the day with no particular plan, hoping you can accomplish everything you're expected to do. What about the most important time of your day? Do your daily plans include a time to meet with God?

Christians through the ages and from all walks of life have found great value in setting aside a daily "quiet time" for personal fellowship with God through worship, prayer and Bible study. In His Word, the Bible, God urges His people to

*"Be still, and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10).

As life seems to become more busy and complicated with each passing day, the idea of a daily "quiet time" sounds more relevant than ever! And if you are a Christian, you have an open invitation to spend your daily time of peace and quiet with the very God who created you. It can be a rich time of fellowship with Him, of learning from Him, and of expressing your greatest joys and deepest concerns to Him.

## **Does God want to meet with me?**

But why, you may ask, would the God of the universe want to spend time with me? Why would God care that I, among the

billions of people on planet earth, want to communicate with Him?

There's actually nothing very strange or mysterious about God wanting to meet personally with you. When you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, God became your heavenly Father. You are His child, which means that He has a special love and concern for you. He desires to share with you all the resources of His great love. Jesus described God as a loving Father, eager to give good things to His children (Matthew 7:11).

As with all relationships, however, your relationship with God must be a two-way street. In order for God to spend time with you, you must allow Him a regular place in your daily plans.

## **When and where can I meet with Him?**

Many devoted disciples of Christ have found the early morning hours to be "prime time" for their meetings with God. The early morning just seems to be more free from distraction than later hours.

Jesus chose the morning hours for prayer:

*"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed"* (Mark 1:35).

By meeting with God in the morning, your mind will be fresh. And you'll get a running start on the day, before all its activities press in upon you.

If, however, you are not a "morning person," evening might be a better time. You can reflect on the day's events in the light of God's Word; and you can set goals for the next day.

The length of your daily time with God is optional as well. It may be determined by the amount of sleep you require and the other responsibilities you face. Parents of small children, for instance, may have less time for devotions than single people or retirees. Whatever your own situation, aim for at least fifteen minutes.

(But be warned: Many people who start out with fifteen minutes or a half-hour of

quiet time soon find themselves wanting more and more of the spiritual refreshment they find in those few minutes!)

Concerning the *place* for your meeting with God, you can again follow Christ's example in the verse you just read. Try, as He did, to find a "solitary place" where you can focus your mind—a place where you know you will not be distracted or interrupted.

### THE PLAN, PART 1:

#### Pray, then read your Bible

You don't need a "program" for your time alone with God, any more than you would need a program when spending time with an earthly friend. Start with a short prayer, asking His blessing on your time. You could recite the psalmist's prayer:

*"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law"* (Psalm 119:18).

Once your eyes are open and your mind is alert, open your Bible and start reading! Since the Bible is such a long book, you may want to ask your pastor or a Christian friend to recommend a devotional guide or Bible reading plan. If you live near a Christian bookstore, inquire there for help.

Many new Christians have benefited from starting their Bible reading with the gospel of John. There you will find a beautiful summary of God's plan for your Christian life. After reading John, try the book of Acts, the story of the world's first Christians. The memorable people of Acts will inspire you to be a bold witness for Christ!

If the language of the Bible you are reading seems unclear or confusing, do what many Christians have done: Find a newer version, where the language has been adapted to the times in which we live. Again, ask your pastor or the clerk at the bookstore for recommendations.

As you read, take time to meditate, fixing God's truth firmly in your mind. Ask questions:

- What is this passage saying?
- What is it saying to *me*?
- How can I apply it to my life?

Because the Bible was written to reveal Jesus Christ, look for Him on every page. Even the most ancient books of the Old Testament point to Christ!

As you faithfully continue your daily Bible study, you will begin to think seriously and deeply about God...

- how wonderful He is
- what wonderful things He has done for you

- what He is going to do for you
- what He wants from you in return

You will begin to notice other exciting things as well; for example, the passage you are reading may include:

- a special promise for you to claim
- an encouragement to help you in your daily life

- a command you should follow
- a searchlight pointing out some sin for which you need to ask forgiveness
- an exciting verse to memorize

Don't rush through your reading. Don't try to cover too much at one time. Pace yourself, so that nothing God has in store for you will escape your attention,

### THE PLAN, PART 2:

#### Pray again!

After you have read and meditated on God's Word, talk with Him in prayer. Prayer is the inseparable companion of Bible reading. Talk with God as you would with an earthly parent who loves you and wants the best for you.

If you are inexperienced in how to pray, here's a method that has helped Christians young and old. It will be easy if you just remember the book of ACTS:

- A Adoration (worship)
- C Confession
- T Thanksgiving
- S Supplication (asking)

**Adoration.** Start your prayer time by praising God. Praise Him for all that He is and for all that He has done for you. God is the great Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He is the one who gives eternal salvation through Jesus Christ. He desires your highest good, and places within your reach all the resource you need for a rich and full life. It is certainly fitting to spend time each day—not just on Sunday—worshiping such a majestic God!

**Confession.** Prayer is the time to express to God your sorrow for all that you have

thought, said, or done that displeases Him. When you regularly ask God's forgiveness, you are renewed in spirit, ready to continue growing in your faith and to help others grow as well. God's daily cleansing will remove any barrier to your fellowship with Him.

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).*

**Thanksgiving.** Always take time to thank God for all that He is and for all that He has done for you. Thank Him for His love, for His protection, for your daily bread, for His great and precious promises, and for Jesus. The apostle Paul reminds us that our prayers should always be *"with thanksgiving"* (Philippians 4:6).

**Supplication.** Finally, pray for your needs and the needs of others. Pray for things such as:

- God's guidance for each new day
- wisdom to confront problems
- opportunities to serve
- blessings for family and friends
- wisdom for world leaders
- the needs of your pastor and of the missionaries you know
- the spiritual and physical needs of friends and neighbors

Because God's resources are infinite, there is no limit to the things about which you can pray to Him. You must remember, however, that God will answer your requests according to His timetable, not yours:

*"Morning by morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; morning by morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation" (Psalm 5:3).*

Here's a helpful idea: Many praying Christians prepare a **prayer list** to help them remember the things they want to pray about:

- A prayer list will help you pray for all the many concerns that cross your mind each day.

- It will also build your faith, as you record God's answers to your prayers. Keep your list in a small notebook or on file cards, so that it can go wherever you go.

**"Let's meet more often!"**

You may find, eventually, that meeting God just once a day is not enough – that you would benefit from time alone with Him both morning and evening. Remember also that you can pray and praise God anywhere and at any time during the day!

With the passing of time you will begin to realize that your meeting with God is the most important event of your day – the most important entry in your daily planner. You will find yourself getting to know Him better and better, just as you do when you spend time with a good friend.

You will find yourself tapping more and more into the flow of His unending resources and energies, in order to meet your needs as a growing Christian. In the words of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah,

*"Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31, NKJV).*

And it all starts with just a simple plan . . . for the most important time of your day!

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