



LET HIM BE KNOWN





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EveryNation.org/Fasting #ENfast2023

**EVERY NATION JOHANNESBURG - 21 DAY FAST** 

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## **Preparation for the Fast**

## Why Fast?

Fasting is a spiritual tool God uses to advance his kingdom, change the destiny of nations, spark revival, and bring victory in people's lives. Every Nation churches and campus ministries begin each new year with five days of prayer and fasting to humble ourselves before God, consecrate ourselves to him for the upcoming year, and corporately agree for breakthroughs.

#### Jesus fasted.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. Matthew 4:1–2

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. Luke 4:14

Jesus knew he was going to need spiritual strength to fulfill his purposes. Fasting makes us spiritually strong and prepares us to do God's work.

## Fasting is an act of humility and consecration.

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods. Ezra 8:21

As we humble ourselves through prayer and fasting, we receive God's answers to our prayers.

## Fasting helps us become sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Acts 13:2

When we deny ourselves of natural cravings and worldly distractions, we become more sensitive to God's voice. Then we are better able to focus on God and submit to his will.

#### Fasting brings revival.

And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in. Isaiah 58:12

Throughout history, God has brought revival and delivered nations from destruction in response to prayer and fasting. Fasting helps us prevail in prayer and intercession.

### Fasting is healthy.

Fasting cleanses your digestive system from toxins. Doctors consider fasting a cure for certain allergies and diseases. The discipline of fasting helps break unhealthy addictions in our lives.

## **Planning Your 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 pages 7–9, write down your faith goals and specific prayer requests for your family, friends, church, and nation.

**Commit**—Pray about the kind of fast you will undertake and commit to it ahead of time. Record your plan on page 5. Ask God for grace to help you follow through with your decisions.

**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 throughout the fast and have that person sign page 5.

**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

[Jesus] 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 devotionals. 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. 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**

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. 1John 5:14–15

**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 stop praying! Trust God's faithfulness and timing. Carry your newfound passion for God throughout the year. Be in faith for God to answer your prayers.

## My Plan

DAY 1  ☐ Water only ☐ Liquid only ☐ One meal only ☐ Other:
Prayer meeting(s) to attend:
DAY 2
□ Water only □ Liquid only □ One meal only □ Other:
Prayer meeting(s) to attend:
DAY 3
□ Water only □ Liquid only □ One meal only □ Other:
Prayer meeting(s) to attend:
DAY 4
□ Water only □ Liquid only □ One meal only □ Other:
Prayer meeting(s) to attend:
DAY 5
☐ Water only ☐ Liquid only ☐ One meal only ☐ Other:
Prayer meeting(s) to attend:
If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. Matthew 18:19
My Prayer Partner:

## I am thankful to God for . . .

## **Answered Prayers**

List highlights, answered prayers, and lessons learned in 2022.

# In 2023, I will seek God and trust him in these areas:

Personal Faith Goals  Spiritual Revival • Physical Healing • Prosperity and Abundance • Rich Generosity																	
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	•				•					•				•	•		
My Education/Career  Excellence • Promotion																	
•	My Ministry Small Group Growth • Salvation of Colleagues and Classmates																
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## I am committing to pray for ...

Name Request(s)

## I am committing to pray for ...

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Μy	, Co	omr	nur	nity														
_						l Inst	itutio	ns•	Loca	l Go	verni	ment	• Ou	ıtrea	ch O	ppor	tuniti	es
Μy	, Na	atio	n															
_		nent		ials	• Spi	ritua	l Rev	vival•	Eco	nom	ic Pr	ospe	rity •	Pea	ce			



Continue to pray for the remaining 115 nations without an Every Nation church and believe God for

open doors to plant more churches.

Albania Algeria Andorra Angola Antigua and Barbuda Argentina Azerbaijan Bahamas Barbados Belarus Belize Benin Bosnia and Herzegovina Bulgaria Burkina Faso

Afghanistan

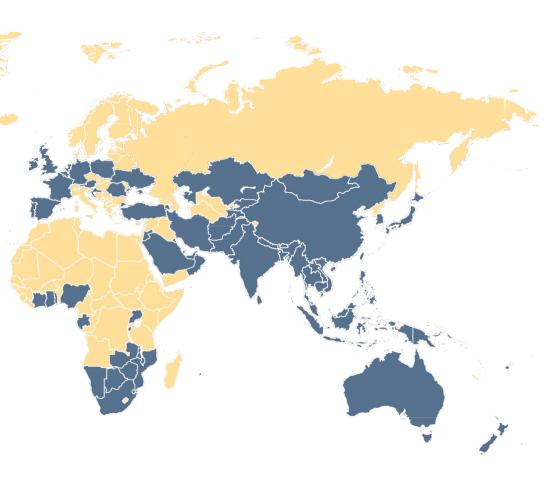
Central African
Republic
Chad
Chile
Comoros
Congo
Costa Rica
Cuba
Cyprus
Democratic Republic
of the Congo
Denmark
Djibouti
Dominica
Ecuador

Cabo Verde

Cameroon

El Salvador **Equatorial Guinea** Eritrea Estonia Ethiopia Finland Gambia Georgia Greece Grenada Guatemala Guinea Guinea-Bissau Guyana Haiti Honduras

Egypt



Hungary Iceland Iraq Israel Italy Jamaica Kenya Kiribati I atvia Lebanon Lesotho Liberia Libya Liechtenstein Lithuania Luxembourg Macedonia

Mali Malta Marshall Islands Mauritania Micronesia Moldova Monaco Montenegro Morocco Nauru Niger North Korea Norway Palau Palestine Paraguay

Madagascar

Rwanda Saint Kitts and Nevis Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Samoa San Marino São Tomé and Príncipe Senegal Serbia Sevchelles Sierra Leone Slovakia Slovenia Solomon Islands Somalia

Russia

Sudan Suriname Sweden Switzerland Syria Tanzania Tonga Trinidad and Tobago Tunisia Turkmenistan Tuvalu Uruguay Uzbekistan Vanuatu Vatican City

Yemen

South Sudan

# 466 established churches globally 119 active church plants

### Pray for more churches to be planted.

Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. Psalm 2:8

Pray for our church plants as they make disciples, meet the needs of their communities, and share the good news of the gospel in new cities.

## Pray for these nations and territories with active church plants:

Armenia

Australia

Botswana

Brazil

Cambodia

Canada

China

Colombia

Croatia

Czech Republic

France

**Hong Kong** 

India

Indonesia

Iran

Kazakhstan

Malawi

Malaysia

Maldives

Mauritius

Mexico

Mozambique

Netherlands

New Zealand

Nicaragua

Pakistan

Panama

**Philippines** 

Portugal

Romania

South Africa

Taiwan

Tajikistan

**Thailand** 

Timor-Leste

**United Arab Emirates** 

**United Kingdom** 

United States of America

Vietnam

Zambia

Numbers as of October 2022.

## 1,074 established campuses and outreaches

### A vision to reach the whole world through the university campus.

Pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

Matthew 9:38

We plant churches that reach the campus because we firmly believe that if we change the campus, we will eventually change the family, the nation, and the world. Campus ministry is a dedication to take the gospel to college students, right where they are on campus. It's a calling to serve, to impact, to go.

#### Pray:

- · For new students to be engaged with the gospel this year
- For wisdom for campus missionaries and churches as they evangelize and disciple college students
- · For favor with university faculty to engage students
- · For open doors at new campuses



## Pray for the 2023 Go Conference.

In 2023, Every Nation leaders from around the world will meet in Cape Town, South Africa, for our triennial Go Conference. This will be a time of celebration and equipping. We look forward to what God will do as we gather together in faith to plant more churches that reach the campus.

Visit everynation.org/go2023 for more info.



<sup>5</sup>"[...] John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." <sup>6</sup>So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" <sup>7</sup>He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

### **Additional Reading:**

Matthew 28:16-20; Jeremiah 32:27; Luke 18:27

Acts 1:6–11 is often referred to as the thesis statement of Acts, setting the stage for the rest of the book. The themes found in this passage continue throughout the rest of Acts—the Holy Spirit will empower, lead, and guide God's people as they advance his kingdom. In Matthew 28, Jesus gives his disciples the Great Commission to "go make disciples of all nations," but in Acts 1:8 he gives them the power necessary to fulfill such a mission.

Throughout the Old Testament, the Spirit of God would come upon people for a specific time to do miraculous things and then depart from them. But after the miracle of Christ's resurrection in the New Testament, the Spirit was given to remain with God's people. He was sent to stay with us.

Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, Jesus gives his disciples the supernatural power to be his witnesses and live a life that honors God.

The stories we see throughout Acts are marked by the miraculous. Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines a miracle as a "divine intervention in human affairs." God is still intervening, even today. He still loves to cause a miracle to testify to the truthfulness of the gospel. He demonstrates his power to show his love to his people, through his people, and for the world.

The miraculous is always tied to the mission in Acts 1—that we would be witnesses of God, his goodness, and his power. God performs miracles so that we can know God and let him be known.

Has there been a time when God divinely intervened in

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into our broken world to change our circumstances for good. Your Word is full of miracles that display your love, power, and goodness. I pray that you would open my heart to truly believe you can do all things. You are the Almighty, kind and worthy of praise, and I am ready to see you at work in my life and through my life this week. In Jesus' name I pray,

AMEN.

## *DAY 1:*

# entecost

## Acts 2:1-8, 14

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. <sup>4</sup>And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. <sup>5</sup>Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup>And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. <sup>7</sup>And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? <sup>8</sup>And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?"

<sup>14</sup>But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words."

#### **Additional Reading:**

Acts 2:9-41; Exodus 4:10-12; Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:14-17

In Jewish tradition, the Feast of Pentecost was a time to thank God for the firstfruits of the wheat harvest. In Acts 2, the disciples celebrate a different kind of harvest at Pentecost: a harvest of people who respond to the gospel.

Jesus tells the disciples in Acts 1 that they will be his witnesses to the ends of the earth, and then in Acts 2, he gives them the power of the Holy Spirit, a gift necessary to fulfill that calling.

The Holy Spirit is the gift of God himself, dwelling within believers and empowering us not only to live a Christian life but also to be conduits for miracles. Each sign and wonder that the Holy Spirit does through believers points us back to the miracle of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

But let's rewind to the Great Commission. Jesus gives his followers the command to go and make disciples of all nations. That may sound impossible, but here's where we rely on God's power with faith and obedience. The Holy Spirit empowers us to do what we cannot. On the day of Pentecost, the disciples receive this incredible gift.

What we see at the beginning of Acts 2 is a miracle. The Holy Spirit falls on the disciples and they begin speaking in new tongues—new languages—in such a way that everyone hears the gospel. The crowds are amazed as each person hears "the mighty works of God" (Acts 211) spoken in their native tongue. More people begin to gather and, even as some skeptics doubt what's happening, God gives Peter the ability to preach effectively, and through preaching, 3,000 people repent and accept the gospel!

This same gift—the indwelling and empowering of the Spirit—is available for us today. But this gift isn't just for us. It's so the world would know the one true God. He gives us the ability to share his gospel with accuracy and boldness.

The call of the Great Commission may make us feel ill-equipped or unqualified, but God doesn't give us his mission without the Helper, the Holy Spirit. Through this gift, God can use us in miraculous ways to advance his kingdom.

Have you ever had a personal encounter with the Holy Spirit?

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W	ay y	ou	thi	nk	end abo	ut s	haı	ring	j th	e g	osp	el?						e the	•



God, thank you for the gift of your Holy
Spirit. I welcome him into my life by faith
and with expectation. Thank you for the
power to live a fruitful Christian life with
boldness and sincerity. I receive your call
to take the gospel to my neighbors and the
nations. I know that you are with me. Show
me how to live a missional life so others
would know the grace and goodness of your
gospel. In Jesus' name I pray,

AMEN.

# realing

### Acts 3:1-10

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. <sup>2</sup> And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. <sup>3</sup> Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. <sup>4</sup> And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." <sup>5</sup> And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. <sup>6</sup> But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" <sup>7</sup> And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. <sup>8</sup> And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. <sup>9</sup> And all the people saw him walking and praising God, <sup>10</sup> and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

#### **Additional Reading:**

Luke 5:17–26; James 5:14–15; Jeremiah 17:14

When we read passages like this in scripture, it's easy to identify with the disciples, but how does the story change if we read it from the perspective of the beggar?

For years, he had been carried by other people to the temple gate to ask for money. Since he couldn't work, that was his only way of sustaining himself. The law at the time forbade anyone who was "unclean" from fully entering into the temple. He couldn't go beyond the gate.

Imagine what your view of God might be if that was your reality. Does God really exist?

Does he see me? Does he care about me? Could he even change my circumstance if he wanted to? For the lame man, each day was the same as the day before. But in one encounter, everything changed.

"Look at us," the beggar hears as Peter and John engage him in conversation. He likely assumes that they are about to give him some money, but little does he know, he's about to get something so much better. Peter tells him, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" (Acts 3:6)

Through God's intervention, he is healed! But this moment of the miraculous does far more than just heal his body.

His physical healing gives him the ability to leap and praise and go further into the temple than he could before. More than that, it reveals to him and to others that God is not only powerful, but he's also good. He doesn't forget about his children. He steps into our reality to bring heaven to earth.

Those who recognize the beggar and see the miracle are filled with wonder and amazement, and that's just the beginning. This encounter opens the door for Peter to preach to a much larger audience, and through that ministry, Acts 4:4 tells us that over 5,000 people come to believe.

As we see in this story, the outcome of the miraculous is always God's revelation of himself so that the world might know who he is.

What reservations could be keeping you from praying for someone's physical healing?	Reca mira			•		life	wh	en <u>y</u>	you	or	sor	nec	ne	yοι	ı kn	IOW	was
What reservations could be keeping you from praying for someone's physical healing?																	
someone's physical healing?																	
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Write the names of people you know that are in need of physical healing and pray for them. If God leads you, call them and pray with them over the phone.

Lord, I trust you as my healer. You are good and able to heal my sickness, pain, brokenness, and hurt. Open my eyes to see the people around me who need you. I ask that you would give me faith to pray boldly for their healing. I pray that you would be glorified and that the world might see your goodness and power. In Jesus' name, AMEN.



#### Acts 4:32-37

<sup>2</sup>Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. <sup>3</sup> And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. <sup>34</sup>There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold <sup>3</sup> and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. <sup>36</sup>Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, <sup>37</sup> sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

### **Additional Reading:**

Luke 12:22–31; Exodus 16:4–16; Philippians 4:18–19; 2 Corinthians 9:6–8

Miracles of provision are all throughout the pages of scripture, from manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16:15) to the coin in the mouth of a fish (Matthew 17:27). In fact, Jesus taught us to pray and depend on God to meet our daily needs (Luke 11:3).

When we really believe that God is our provider, it becomes easier to hold our resources with open hands.

As we grow as believers, our understanding of possessions changes. Instead of seeing what we have as things that we earned or deserved, we begin to see that God has graciously given us possessions and resources to steward. He meets our needs so that we can be a blessing and meet the needs of others. What I have been given by God isn't only for me but for the good of my brothers and sisters around me, the family of God.

In a family, everything more or less belongs to everyone. Sure, you may not share your toothbrush or socks, but it's rare that one sibling owns the couch and another owns the chair or that the parents tell their kids to ask before using the dining table. The family has those things "in common," much like the believers in Acts 4.

The miracle in this passage, that there "was not a needy person among them" (Acts 4:34), seems rather unremarkable. There's no rush of wind, no angels, no shaking meeting place, but in a sense, that's what makes it so extraordinary. This generosity makes them stand out against the culture around them—in a city where providing for others wasn't the norm, their generosity is a powerful demonstration of Christ's supernatural love and provision.

Each of us can evoke an environment like this when we live a Spirit-filled life. An outcome of the grace of God being "upon you" (Acts 4:33) is radical generosity. God will supernaturally provide for us to meet our needs, the needs of others, and to advance his kingdom.

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## **Faith Step**

Do you know someone who is currently in a difficult situation and is in need? Ask God how you can be part of his supernatural provision for that person.

Jesus, you are the greatest provision of all time: a Saviour when we were helpless to save ourselves. Strengthen my trust in you to provide in every area of my life. You give me blessings so that I can be a blessing to others and show them your grace. I pray that your glory would be revealed as you bring miraculous provision to me and through me. In Jesus' name,

AMEN.

# Guidance

#### Acts 8:26-31, 34-39

<sup>26</sup>Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place. <sup>27</sup> And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup> and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup> And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." <sup>30</sup> So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" <sup>3</sup> And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

<sup>34</sup> And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" <sup>3</sup> Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup> And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" <sup>38</sup> And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. <sup>39</sup> And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

### **Additional Reading:**

Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 3:5–6; Acts 9:10–19; Acts 16:6–10

In Acts 8, God uses Philip to perform miracles and preach in Samaria (vv. 4–25). Signs, wonders, and the gospel lead many people to repentance, and it's clear that God is moving in significant and powerful ways. After such a fruitful time of ministry, you would

think that he would guide Philip to a larger city or bigger group of people, but that's not what happens.

God guides Philip down a road that is isolated and rarely traveled. As we learn in verse 26, Gaza was a desert place.

Philip comes out of a powerful time in Samaria and is sent on his next mission on an unpopular road towards an unpopular place. It doesn't seem to make sense, but God's guidance surpasses human logic. When Philip decides to follow his lead, God guides his path beyond anything he could have planned on his own.

Most people make big and small decisions every day. What would it look like if you asked the eternal God what his plans for your life are? Where might he send you? Who might you meet, and what might he accomplish through you?

In this story, God guides Philip away from the crowds to reach the one. Not only does he encounter a high-ranking court official on this desert road but God gives him the wisdom to explain the scriptures. God—the all-knowing Alpha and Omega—gives us guidance to be effective witnesses in the places he sends us.

The Ethiopian court official, a person of influence, was reached by an unlikely person in an unlikely place. In fact, history suggests that he took this encounter back home, impacting his city and nation with the gospel. God's plan for our lives goes beyond any plan we could make for ourselves. When we let him lead us, he brings us into situations we wouldn't have expected in order to accomplish his purposes here on earth.

Through the miracle of guidance, God gives us direction and the words to say when we need them.

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Heavenly Father, you are the Alpha and the Omega, the eternal God who planned history before it began and knows all my days before they happen. Give me guidance and confidence to walk in your will and accomplish your purposes for my life. Help me to hear your voice and obey. Thank you for your grace when I stumble and for your word that lights my path. Guide me as I go through this life and live for you.

In Jesus' name,

AMEN.

### Deliverance

### Acts 16:25-32

<sup>25</sup>About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, <sup>26</sup>and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. <sup>27</sup>When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. <sup>28</sup>But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." <sup>29</sup>And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. <sup>30</sup>Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" <sup>31</sup>And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." <sup>32</sup>And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.

### Additional Reading:

Psalm 150:1–6; Colossians 3:16; Psalm 28:1–9; Exodus 14:13–22

Paul and Silas are imprisoned for ministering in Philippi. They are beaten and held captive in a prison cell, their legs fastened to the floors, surrounded by other prisoners. With no windows to the outside, the inner cell where they were being kept was dark even during the day, so as midnight drew near all they could hear was the sound of chains and shackles.

For many Christians around the world today, religious persecution and imprisonment is a very real threat. Others might not experience physical imprisonment, but an emotional or mental one. We all go through desperate times that we can't overcome on our own. But in these dark times, God meets us with the miraculous.

When Paul and Silas choose to trust God in the midst of their circumstance, the prisoners' chains come undone, but that's not all that happens. Through this miracle, the jailer is also set free.

After witnessing this miracle and seeing the prisoners still in their cells, the jailer asks, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He had seen the power and love of God firsthand. This miracle made an eternal impact in the life of the jailer and his family. It opened the door for the entire household to receive the gift of salvation. God has the power to set us free both physically and spiritually.

What's amazing is that, as we continue reading the story, we see the Holy Spirit divinely orchestrates for Paul and Silas to be released the next morning. Even in the most impossible situations, God does not forget about us. As Paul and Silas trust God, not only does he deliver them from prison but he also uses them to proclaim the gospel to an entire household.

Think of a time when God resound you from a dark and

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### **Faith Step**

In this passage, Paul and Silas worship and pray. Spend time in worship and prayer as you intercede for someone you know who is going through a desperate situation.



God, there is nothing too difficult for you. I pray that those in dark situations would experience your complete deliverance. I pray that they would be rescued from whatever is imprisoning them and that the world would see you, the great rescuer, through their testimonies. I accept the freedom that Christ has won, and I believe that you can bring freedom in the spiritual and the natural here on earth.

In Jesus' name I pray,

AMEN.

### Protection

### Acts 28:1-9

¹After we were brought safely through, we then learned that the island was called Malta. ²The native people showed us unusual kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold. ³When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. ⁴When the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." ⁵He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw no misfortune come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

<sup>7</sup>Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. <sup>8</sup>It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him, healed him. <sup>9</sup>And when this had taken place, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured.

### Additional Reading:

Numbers 21:6-9; Psalm 91:13-15; Daniel 6:1-22

As this week of prayer and fasting comes to an end, we've surveyed several miracles in the book of Acts. They serve not as spectacles but as a means of accomplishing the mission of God: for us to know him and make him known.

But when you live as a follower of Jesus on mission with God, you will naturally attract opposition. The miracle of God's protection gives us comfort and confidence to live on mission.

We read in Acts 28 that while Paul is heading to Rome, he's shipwrecked on the island of Malta. He's bitten by a viper but miraculously survives. Just like every miracle has shown us, God is intentional. There's a purpose underlying each miracle he performs. God protects Paul, but that's just the start of what he does in Malta. Paul goes on to heal Publius' father, then people from across the entire island, showing the power of God and preaching the gospel.

This "divine intervention in human affairs" goes far beyond protecting Paul from a snake bite. It extends to the healing of many to the glory of God. Paul then continues on to Rome, trusting in God's protection and preaching the gospel with boldness and without hindrance

When we live as followers of Jesus, we attract opposition, but we also invite God's protection. God protects us from the schemes of the enemy in the same way he protected Paul from the viper's venom. He is with us so that we can continue to live for him—to know God and make him known.

With thanksgiving reflect on a time when God protected you

Are there areas in your life where you are believing God for a miracle? Take time and thank God for his love and power.

# **Faith Step** Expect God's divine intervention in your life as you live to know God and make him known to others. 40 | Miracles: Let Him Be Known

God, thank you for intervening in this world with your miraculous power. Thank you for the gift and empowering of your Holy Spirit. You are the mighty healer, provider, guide, deliverer, and protector that I need. You show your love to me through miracles—open my eyes that I would see your hand move. Give me boldness to be your witness in this world and share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you for being with me as I live on mission with you. In Jesus' name,



Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

### Additional Reading:

Exodus 14:21; Mark 16:18

Turning on a light bulb is so simple. Anyone can do it. You simply press a button and the light goes on. Yet this simple act of pressing a button has the power to dispel darkness.

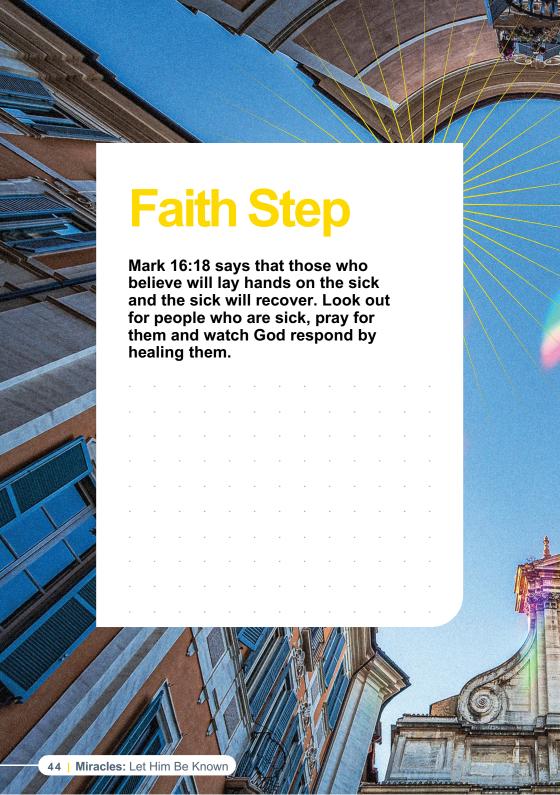
God said to Moses, "Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground" (Exodus 14:16). Moses did not need to know the mechanics of how any of this would work. He simply had to obey and the miracle happened. His simple obedience brought about one of the most famous miracles in the Bible.

You don't have to know the full nature of atoms or have a physics degree for you to turn the lights on, but you do have to press that button to get light (if Eskom is playing along). Similarly, you don't need to fully know how God will perform the miracle you are asking for, but you do have to act in obedience to His Word.

When the Israelites realised that they were in trouble – that the army of Egypt was closing in on them from behind and the Red Sea was blocking their only escape route – they were overcome with fear. After all the miracles they had been experiencing, you would think that they would believe that God would protect them, but instead they responded with fear and complaining. Thankfully, Moses responded in obedience instead of fear, and he was able to partner with God in an amazing miracle where the waters parted, and they escaped unhurt.

When you experience overwhelming situations do you

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Lord, I pray that you will empower me to obey your Word. I pray that you will remind me of your goodness and that I would not be overcome by fear. I ask that you part my Red Sea and that I would see your deliverance in my situation. In Jesus' name,



The people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

### **Additional Reading:**

Exodus 16:1-36; Exodus 13:17-22; Philippians 4:19; Hebrews 13:8

The Israelites had been in the wilderness for less than two months. They had already seen miracles coming from the hand of God. They had prospered as slaves, been spared from the plagues, been given wealth by the Egyptians, crossed through the Red Sea unharmed, witnessed their enemies drown and experienced bitter water made sweet. They had the physical presence of God with them as a pillar of cloud by day and as a pillar of fire at night. Yet, as their stomachs began to grumble, so too did they, complaining that Moses had led them into the wilderness to die. They could not conceive how there would be enough food to feed the one million mouths in the camp.

How quickly had they forgotten the faithfulness of the Lord in leading them to this point in the wilderness? Yet, God in His great compassion provided miraculously for His grumbling people by sending manna from heaven. In Exodus 16:14 we read, "and when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground". This is probably the first instance of people having Mountain Dew and Frosted Flakes for breakfast. Seriously, this miraculous provision of food became a

life source for God's people for the next 40 years. He faithfully and miraculously provided for their needs every day, until they reached the border of Canaan.

There are so many amazing things about this story: sustenance falling from heaven (v 14); the manna miraculously dividing perfectly among the people (v 18); the manna tasted like honey, one of life's greatest luxuries (v 31); and it was God's sustained provision for 40 years (v 35).

When you find yourself in a wilderness, what do you do? How do you keep faith alive when the circumstances surrounding you seem insurmountable? Do you grumble or do you recall the goodness of God?

I have learnt that the best way to keep faith in the wilderness is to recount how God has been with me in the past and to be thankful, knowing that He will provide for all my needs because He remains the same yesterday, today and forever.

What are the things that God has done for you that you have

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## **Faith Step** Make a list of the things God has done for you in the past and refer to it when you feel lost and alone in your wilderness. Miracles: Let Him Be Known

Father God, thank you for your faithfulness. I am grateful for your constant presence at my side. Forgive me for the times that I have so quickly forgotten the ways in which you have provided 'manna' in my life, and for those times when I have failed to remember how you are the One that sustains me.

Thank you that I can rest in the knowledge that you remain the same and that you will provide for my needs, just as you miraculously provided for the Israelites in the wilderness. In Jesus' name,

# Water from Line Colon Numbers 20:11

And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock.

### **Additional Reading:**

Mark 11:23

In what season do you find yourself? Are you walking in the promised land or are you wandering in the wilderness?

The past couple of years have been significant wilderness experiences for many. Some of us lost loved ones during the pandemic, while others lost their businesses, jobs or homes. The promises of God felt far away at times while we wrestled with fear and doubt. Today's verse tells the story of the Israelites stuck in a wilderness.

When they had no drinking water, they cried out to Moses and God said to Moses: "Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water. So you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle.' And Moses took the staff from before the Lord, as he commanded him. Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, 'Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?' And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock." (Numbers 20:8-11)

The people were angry at God. They saw the wilderness through the eyes of their suffering, not through the eyes of God's faithfulness. Do you need to reframe how you are looking at your wilderness experience? Are you focusing on your suffering, instead of looking to God's faithfulness? The Israelites could not enter the place of God's abundance until they learnt to trust God in their wilderness season. Are you trusting God in the midst of your wilderness?

God commanded Moses to hold the rod – the symbol of the authority God had given him – and speak to the rock, commanding it to yield its water. This echoes the sentiment we see in Mark 11:23, where Jesus says: "Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him."

Our speech has power when we speak from a place of faith, based on the authority we carry as God's children. However, we see that Moses disobeyed God and instead of speaking to the rock, he struck it twice. It feels like Moses was taking out his frustration against either God or the people (or perhaps both) by striking the rock that way. The miracle still happened, but God was angry at Moses and punished him for his disobedience. We all want the miracle, but are we willing to trust God and follow His direction, even when it doesn't make sense to us?

God wants to teach us that we can believe Him for the miracle, but we need to trust Him in the wilderness, knowing that He will sustain us along the way. Will I trust Him and obey Him no matter what?

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Is there an area of your life where God is speaking to you, but you are not obeying?



Think of an area where you are struggling to obey God and think of one step you need to take to walk in obedience.

Lord, please help me to listen to your voice and to walk in obedience today. Thank you that you are faithful to me and interested in meeting my needs because you love me. I love you, Lord. In Jesus' name, AMEN.



So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city.

### Additional Reading:

Joshua 6:6-20, Joshua 1:1-20, Exodus 23:20-33, Deuteronomy 7:1-26

The battle for Jericho mirrors many of the battles that we fight in our lives. Israel had been given promises by God, stating that they should go in and possess that land. One would think that a promise from God would mean smooth sailing, but as we track their journey through the promised land we see quite the opposite. The promised land was full of giants, difficulties and seemingly impossible situations.

God loves to do the impossible. Moving in the miraculous is a journey of learning to partner with God in order to see what seems impossible to us become possible. Israel's approach to the battle for Jericho gives us some keys to partner with God to unlock miracles in our lives.

The first key is engaging in unconventional warfare. God's ways are not our ways; His thoughts are higher and better (Isaiah 55:8, 9). God's first military manoeuvre for them was not to get the latest weapons to Israel but to instruct them to march around the city

for six days (see Joshua 6:1-3). Walking with God requires us to be willing to listen and obey what He tells us to do in various situations. This is a test of trust because obedience does not always make sense in the natural.

The second key is embracing unconventional wisdom. Next, God tells them to walk around the city seven times, and then shout wildly so that the walls will fall down (see Joshua 6:4-6). I'm sure that this must have felt awkward and looked silly. This was a test of faith: Do we believe that God is able to do what He has promised to do? Hebrews 11:6 points out that God loves to reward us for believing Him.

This true story ends with the walls of the great city falling and Israel winning a great victory. Imagine what would happen in our lives if we took our trust and faith to the next level like they did?

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In a challenge you are facing, is it time to keep walking or is it time to shout?

### **Faith Step**

Nothing is too difficult for the Lord (Jeremiah 32:17). Is there anyone in your life who seems closed to the gospel? Ask God for a unique strategy to share the gospel with them and for courage and boldness to follow through.

Father, today open my ears to hear what you are saying about the impossible situations in my life. Please give me the courage to trust your voice of wisdom, the patience to keep obeying what you say and the faith to believe for victory in the situations, so that you may be glorified.

In Jesus' name,

# The wickow's oil 2 Kings 4:6

When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not another." Then the oil stopped flowing.

### Additional Reading:

2 Kings 4:1-7; Ephesians 3:20-21; Matthew 6:10; Ephesians 3:17

"This is a historical event, it is something that happened and was recorded in Scripture." Someone recently opened their sermon with this line, and I absolutely loved it, because it is the truth. The stories in the Bible are historical events. They happened as they were recorded. While we can easily find metaphorical meanings in them, the truth is that they were events that took place.

The widow was about to have her sons taken into slavery due to debt, so she turned to Elisha for help. The answer was a jar of oil that would not run out until she had filled the very last vessel. "Bring me another vessel," she said, but there were none. Her expectations were exceeded. She could make enough from the sale to pay off her debt and be able to live on the remaining sum.

Does this sound familiar – a story of owing a debt one is unable to pay? God stepped in through Jesus to pay for our debt, pouring Himself out to us without measure. How far can God's measure of grace and goodness extend?



Imagine a city ruled by God as King. On every side, the city is protected. The streets are called righteousness, the walls are called joy and the borders are justice. Everyone has work and a great sense of purpose. The children's laughter is the music, and praise is the song on everyone's lips. A dream. You would be right to think that is all it is.

What if God, through Christ, poured into every 'vessel' His anointing oil and presence? What if every individual in a city was filled with the fullness of God? What would that city look like? Could our city be such a city? It most certainly can, because God is able to do far more abundantly than we can ever think or imagine! If one can imagine something, God can do beyond that.

What would your family, workplace and community look like

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Heavenly Father, I thank you that your Word is upright and true, and all your work is done in faithfulness. You love righteousness and justice, and the earth is full of your steadfast love. I ask that out of your glorious riches, you may strengthen me with power through your Spirit, that Christ may dwell in my heart through faith. I ask that I may know your great love that surpasses knowledge and be filled with your anointing oil to do good works, which you prepared beforehand for me to do. Father, I pray that your name will be glorified in my family, workplace and in our city. Let your kingdom come and your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. In Jesus' name,

# The multiplied loaves

A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing the man of God bread of the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. And Elisha said, "Give to the men, that they may eat." But his servant said, "How can I set this before a hundred men?" So he repeated, "Give them to the men, that they may eat, for thus says the Lord, 'They shall eat and have some left." So he set it before them. And they ate and had some left, according to the word of the Lord.

### **Additional Reading:**

Kings 4:42-44

Matthew 14:13-21; John 6:1-15; Matthew 16:9; 2 Corinthians 5:7

What can we learn from this fascinating account that is so similar to the miracle of the five loaves and two fish in the New Testament.

Firstly, who was the man from Baal-shalishah anyway? His identity is not given, and he is never mentioned in Scripture again. What we do know is that he was a faithful believer who came to offer the first fruits to the man of God. He didn't bring a great amount, he simply brought what he had, but God used it to perform a miracle. What can I bring to God today? It doesn't matter how big or how small it is, what matters is that I bring what I have to God. Whether I give financially or of my talents and time, the Lord will multiply it to bless many.

Secondly, the servant looked at what was possible in the natural, focusing on what his eyes could see. He doubted because he focussed on his inability to feed so many people, rather than on who God was. In vast contrast to this, Elisha was leaning into God, listening for His Word. The Lord told Elisha that He was going to multiply the loaves and Elisha stepped out in faith.

Thirdly, after they ate, there were leftovers! God's provision is always more than enough for the real needs of our lives. George Müller's life illustrates one who truly believed God's Word and His promise to provide our needs. He established several orphanages solely by faith and he believed God's promise that He would provide for their needs. Needs were never made known, no indirect hints were made that funds were needed, and even when in dire straits, those who inquired about the needs were never informed, so that the ministry would be a testimony to God's faithfulness. Mr. Müller said he was kept in peace by "not looking at the little in hand, but at the fulness of God." His desire was to prove to all men that it is safe to trust only in God.

Let's take whatever God has given us and entrust it to the will and power of God, knowing that God is able to multiply it above all that we can ask, think or imagine. May we not hold back.

instead o	ny trust in Go	r who provides
for me?		

### What can I do to lean in more to His Word in my situation?

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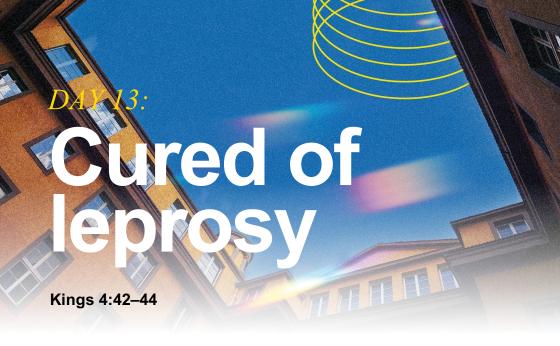
### **Faith Step**

What can I start doing today to trust the Lord more to provide for my needs, whether financial, emotional, relational or spiritual?



Dear Father, you provide for all my needs. Help me to learn to lean into you more, to enquire of you what your Word is in every situation I face. Help me to look through the lens of your Word, not through the lens of my natural eyes. I trust you and know that you love me and care for me in every area of my life.

In Jesus' name,



So he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

### **Additional Reading:**

2 Kings 5:10-14; Matthew 6:33

God wants relationship. This is the whole point of creation, of Jesus's death on the cross, of His resurrection and of every single thing God has ever done – that we might know Him and know that He knows us and loves us.

Every healing in the Bible happened in its own way. There is no formula, ritual or mantra given to us to guarantee a miracle. Time and again, we see someone in need reaching out to someone who knows God, followed by a request for the Lord to move, and then waiting on the Lord.

Naaman was not a believer, but on the word of a young girl, an Israelite slave in his home who obviously loved him and who was believer, he endeavours to seek out the prophet of God. All Naaman wanted was a cure, a solution and end to the deathly disease of leprosy. He was not interested in an encounter, in a confrontation with the One True God. He was not interested in confession, repentance or conversion. He was

used to being in a high office, to receiving honour and respect, and to getting his own way. Elijah was only interested in what God wanted, and God was only interested in Naaman, knowing who He is. A strange instruction was given through a messenger of the prophet: "Wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and you will be clean".

Naaman was outraged, because all he could see was how he had been treated, all he heard was what was required of him. Thankfully, his wise servants helped him understand that the point of the seven washings was that he "will be clean".

God does not make us jump through hoops, or complete difficult quests and then reward us with healings or miracles. We come to Him with expectations, with demands, bargaining, negotiations, excuses and reasons, when all He wants to receive from us is our love, trust, faith and relationship with Him.

Naaman did not know who was going to make Him clean, but by the seventh dip in the Jordan River, Naaman realised that the God who was cleansing him was way beyond his understanding. As we seek and trust the Lord for miracles, may we always make Him the first priority, the first goal and the first purpose of everything we are hoping for.

In which areas of yo will only move on yo	•		
or performance?			

What can you do to know God's heart and character more fully, to trust that your simple requests will be heard and that He will move according to His will?

## Faith Step Look for a Scripture in the Bible that

Look for a Scripture in the Bible that speaks to God's character of kindness and goodness. Memorise it by heart and repeat it to yourself daily.

Father, today as I am trusting you to move in my life – as I am – I am hoping for and expecting your supernatural presence to flow in my everyday experience of you. May I never seek the gift more than the Giver. May I never want the result more than I want You. you are my Healer and my Provider. You are the One whose plans and purposes are set in eternity for me. I love you and I trust you, Lord Jesus. Help me to know the Father more. Holy Spirit, help me to know Jesus better. Holy Spirit, inspire my understanding as I read the Word of God concerning His thoughts, feelings and intents for my heart. In Jesus' name,



And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counsellors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them.

#### **Additional Reading:**

Daniel 3:10-27; Job 42; Romans 12

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow to the golden image and were thrown into a burning furnace. Their heroic actions are passed down to us to emulate. The fire was a huge public test and we all want to pass big tests. However, you can't pass a huge test if you've been compromising smaller, private ones. We need to embrace small victories with God that no one sees. Let God show you who He is in a secret place, and He will make you stand publicly. If Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego bowed to the idol that one time, how could they have ever proclaimed the power of God again?

These Hebrew men knew God's power, but they did not presume to know His will. Praying doesn't guarantee desired results. If we know the outcomes, why would we need faith? This account doesn't teach us what to do to get what we want. Instead, it teaches us obedience.

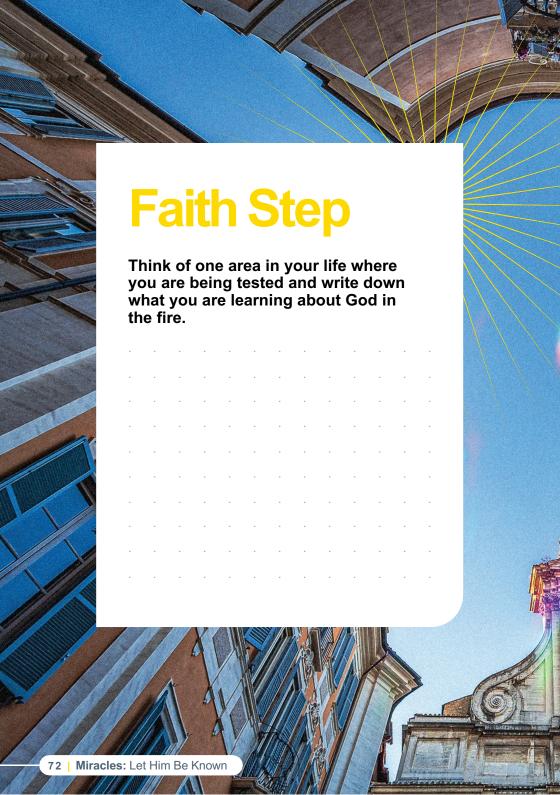
Even though their actions were exemplary, the miracle was God's faithfulness to them. Our responsibility is to do what is right and leave the results to God, even if they are not the results for which we hoped. If God chooses to use our test to reveal Himself to the world – to the satraps, the King and crowds of our day – then may His will be done. God does not save us from the fire; He uses the fire to reveal to us that He is always with us.

Who is God to you? During the test of his life, Job knew of God, but only in the last chapter did he confess, "I had heard of you by hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you" (Job 42:5). As Paul says in Romans 12:1, "I appeal to You therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present Your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is Your spiritual service."

When the fire intensifies, it only increases the opportunity for God's miraculous intervention in your life. Be obedient, even if you don't know what the outcome will be. When you are faced with threats or incentives to bow to anything other than the Most High God, remember Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of Your mind, that by testing You may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

When have you compromised your fait	th to preserve your life
or relationships, or to gain favour?	

How has God delivered you from your testing times in the past? What can you do to step out of comprise?





Dear Father, I pray that as I seek your will for my life, that I may accept what you reveal to me. Even though it may not be what I want to hear, may it be what I need in order to live a life that pleases you and is a testimony of your goodness to those around me. Please help me to understand that whatever you allow is for my good. I pray for a heart that is obedient to your Word. Help me to discern your will and give me the right response to your revelation. May other people see your power that they too may be saved. Father, thank you that you are with me even in the fire. In Jesus' name,



And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land. (v 10)

#### **Additional Reading:**

2 Corinthians 1:8, 9; Psalm 69:1; Isaiah 40:27; Psalm 68:19, 20

As I set out to write this devotional, I couldn't help but try and picture what Jonah must have gone through. I picture him waking up from a deep sleep, staggering to his feet – the song of Moses still sounding in his ears. He clearly remembers the images of the Red Sea parting and how he had an encounter with God in a very vivid dream, being a prophet himself.

"The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation," he softly whispers to himself, standing upright with all the strength he could muster. Still a bit disorientated, he slowly opens his eyes only to see matter breaking away by his feet. He is floating in a strange liquid gently splashing at his sandals.

"Disobedience," he thinks to himself, his heart now racing, "Disobedience has landed me in Sheol". "No," he whispers, but it's more like a sigh of relief, with tears starting to swell up in his eyes. "It is the LORD's miracle. It is the LORD's deliverance," he humbly declares.

Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of a fish. It could only be a miracle of God that his life was preserved for that long! Years later, Jesus used this imagery as an illustration of his crucifixion, burial and resurrection. As a result of His work, we are able to experience the greatest miracle anyone could ever experience being born again and becoming a new creation in Christ. And our Lord Himself preserves us in our salvation, as we keep looking to Him and keep doing His Word.

After spending days and nights in the belly of the fish, Jonah prayed to God, and not only did God hear him, but He re-directed his path and used him to fulfil a great task that is still spoken of to this day. No matter how far you are from God, when you turn to Him in repentance, not only will He forgive you, but He will also place you back on the right path and use you for His glory.

Jonah's obedience saved a city – full of souls loved by God – from being completely destroyed. Not only do we see how loving and merciful God is, but we also witness that our obedience can bring salvation to many and have an impact that could last for generations.

Where hav because of	_	-	in	а	place	of	needing	а	miracle

Is there a situation in your life where God may want to do a miracle for you, so that others can be saved?



Dear loving Father, thank you that your mercies are new every morning. Thank you for your daily providence. Thank you that you are faithful and just to forgive us when we turn to you in repentance. I pray that you may grant me the wisdom to navigate life's challenges, to recognise where I may be walking in disobedience, and to fulfil all that you have called me to do. In Jesus' name,



And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. (v 26)

#### Additional Reading:

Hebrews 1:3; Psalms 89:8-9

Once, many years ago, we were on a small ferry returning to the Malaysian mainland from one of the islands off the coast. The waves became bigger, rolling parallel to the ferry as we made our way across the sea. The captain had to change course heading into the waves to prevent us from being pushed over. It seemed like an adventure at the time, and thankfully we arrived safely despite the storm. But not long after its return journey, we heard that the ferry had capsized!

One of the best known stories in the Gospels is that of Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee. Because the sea is located in a basin 700ft below sea level (one of the lowest points on earth) and has a deep, cliff-lined valley on its southern end, the size and shape of the area cause a vortex effect, leading to sudden violent storms without warning. Some of the men with Jesus were seasoned fishermen, who knew the sea, but they were still afraid, indicating

the severity of the storm. The disciples were in a panic, but Jesus was asleep.

Have you ever felt alone in a desperate situation? Waking Jesus, they cried out and He responded to them. But first, He addressed their faith and fear and then immediately Jesus rebuked the winds and waves and they became calm. Here we clearly see the power of His word over nature.

Jesus didn't rebuke them for coming to Him, He wants us to come to Him. And even though there are many things in life that threaten us and cause us to fear, the more we know the Lord and His power, the less we will be afraid. Our prayers will be less and less out of fear and desperation and more out of confidence in who God is. Often He answers our prayers in ways that we can only marvel at and say, "What kind of God is this!" We follow and obey Jesus, building faith and partnering with Him. Nothing is impossible for Him!

Why are	you afraid		

Where do you need to trust and obey Jesus to grow	w?
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### **Faith Step**

What actions can you take to remain joyful when you face challenges?

Lord, help me to trust You fully in the faith. In Jesus' name, AMEN.

storms of life, so that I don't give into fear, causing me to become stuck or sink. I desire confidence in You, so that You can take me where You will, so I can learn and grow and exercise impacting



Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. (v 29)

#### Additional Reading:

Mark 9:23-24

Isn't it funny how someone can achieve an athletic feat like winning an 800m Olympic gold medal or receiving the award for best actress at the Oscars and immediately after the fact tell the awaiting press, "I can't believe it happened"? Is that person trying to be cute and humble in their statement of disbelief or are they genuinely unable to comprehend a reality where they have succeeded? Left unchecked, this kind of thinking from contemporary society could jeopardise our faith walk.

When two desperate blind men approached Jesus seeking healing, He asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" He didn't ask, "How long have you been blind?" or "Is there sin in your life?" He simply asked, "Do you believe that I, Jesus, can heal you?" At this point, the duo probably thought, "It's now or never if we are going to get our sight" and they rightly responded, "Yes, Lord [we do]". He then touched their eyes and declared, "According to your faith let it be to you," and the text says, "...their eyes were opened".

Now imagine that, as light registered for the first time on their retinas, the formerly blind men proclaimed, "We can't believe it happened!" Why would they have said that, having come so far to receive what they so desperately desired for so long?

Like the blind men, when going out of our way to seek the Lord's intervention regarding our lives, the posture of our hearts should start with that "Yes, Lord" before receiving the miracle. It was and still is faith in Jesus that precedes the eyes of the blind being opened. Jesus is the object of our faith. "According to your faith be it done to you" is a potentially scandalous statement, however, it isn't a license to believe for things that are contrary to God's will or nature. It is rather an invitation to trust in the person of Jesus to bring light where there has been darkness, healing where there is brokenness and His presence into every situation.

When you find yourself second-guessing y	our prayers to
God, what can you learn from the story of t	he two healed
men's encounter with Jesus?	

Imagine Jesus standing in front of you and saying, "According to your faith be it done to you". What would you bring before Him that you have previously stopped believing for?

## **Faith Step**

Starting with a posture of heart that says, "Yes, Lord", write down a disappointment you are carrying. Bring it before the Father and write a faith step to take in agreement with the miracle you are trusting God for.

Lord, I'm grateful that You invite me to exercise my faith as one called and loved by You. I'm also grateful that miracles are not dependent on my will power but on Your faithfulness. Jesus, may I continually be reminded that You are the object of my faith when I am tempted to waver. You are the one who died for me, saved me and continues to sanctify me. Thank You, Lord.

In Jesus' name,



This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him. (v 11)

#### Additional Reading:

2 Kings 4:1–7

I'm fascinated by how Jesus always manages to write Himself into the history, culture and tradition by how He responds to many of our requests. We observe this at the wedding in John 2. The fact that this happened at a wedding also gives us a picture of how this was probably going to be spoken about for months to come. In social media terms, we would say that this miracle would be on the trending list! Imagine these hashtags on Galilee Twitter: #WaterToWineWonder or #GalileeGallonsBecomBev

Let's zoom in to a verse that stood out for me in terms of the environment for this miracle. I think a big part of why it grabbed my attention, is because of how it clarifies the context of this miracle in less than five words. The verse is the third verse and it simply says "When the wine ran out..." It was on this update from the narrator that Jesus was required to be more than just an attendee at the wedding. Please note that Jesus was already there at the wedding – He was invited and He honoured the invitation. Had the wine not run out, they would not have experienced this side of Jesus. They would not



have experienced the glory of Jesus. He was present in this gathering, but this moment of need provoked them to have to make a request of Him.

The lack and desperation they experienced became the platform for the introduction of Jesus. Something had to run out for this miracle to happen. And the end point of that miracle wasn't just provision for what they needed, but an introduction to who Jesus truly was. "This, the first of his signs, manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him." We can safely say that God moved, and He addressed more than just the need for wine at a wedding. He opened the door to a new dynamic of their faith.

When God moves, He normally addresses more than just one need at once! There are many moments when the need we are aware of is just a doorway into a new dynamic to our faith.

How can God use a lifestyle of miracles to write the Gospelinto the history, culture and tradition of our nation?						

What need are you currently confronted by that is provoking you to believe God for a miracle?





Lord, I pray that I may be led to a
lifestyle of running to You when
resources run out in my life. Help me to
see a lack that I am experiencing as a
platform for You to do a miracle in my
life. I bring my needs before you today
and ask You to perform a mighty
miracle. In Jesus' name,

# Miraculous catch

Luke 5:1-11

And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. (v 6)

#### Additional Reading:

1 Kings 17:7-16

I have often hoped and prayed for a miracle of provision – ideally the kind that sounds like someone saying, "The LORD laid you on my heart and I want to bless you with (large sum of money / overseas holiday / shiny new SUV / a beachside house)." I've hoped, prayed and had great faith for it. Unfortunately, that miracle has not been despatched to me, yet. I live in hope.

In this passage, we read how the fishermen toiled all night, yet caught nothing. Like me, they also hoped for a miracle of provision. Unlike me, who merely hopes and waits, they were part of a context that helped create an atmosphere for the miracle of provision:

- **1. A posture of submission.** This passage is filled with actions of submission. They obeyed Jesus when he told them to "into the deep" and then to "let down" the nets. Submission to God opens our hearts to see Him move in ways He alone can.
- 2. A desire to press into Him. The crowds were not standing idly by. The guy in the

middle wasn't content to get a broken-telephone version of Jesus' words. The youngsters at the back weren't willing to wait for the retweet. The entire crowd "pressed in" to get their own first-hand account of His words.

- **3. A life in community.** We often want a miracle of provision for ourselves. This passage reminds us that God's provision goes beyond our needs alone. He is able to bless and provide exponentially, in a way that "all will be astonished" (Luke 5:9).
- **4.** A knowledge of who we are and who He is. Simon, like us, recognises he is a "sinful man". But that's not all. More than that, He recognises Jesus as "LORD" and responds to Him in reverence and awe (Luke 5:8).

I wish I could say, do these four things and you'll receive a miracle of provision today! I can however confidently say that doing these things will create an atmosphere to invite the miraculous into our lives – and the lives of those around us.

How am I creating an atmosphere for the miraculous in my

lite?		

Which one of the four points above can I do something about today?

### **Faith Step**

Take a few post-it notes and write down anything (or everything) in your house, office or workspace that reminds you of a time when God provided miraculously. Each time you pass the note, take a minute to thank God for His provision.



Jehovah Jireh, You are the ultimate provider. You provide after a long night of toiling and catching nothing. You provide when we least expect it, or least deserve it. You also provide in a way that goes far beyond us. LORD, help us to not be so obsessed with the miracle of provision that we miss what You are ultimately calling us to. A life of submission, of pressing into You, of recognising who we are, and who You are. Thank You that Your miracles of provision in the past (and those I'm still trusting You for) are both for me personally, and for the blessing of those around me, that all may stand in awe of who You are. In Jesus' name,



And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. (v 14)

#### **Additional Reading:**

Genesis 1:3; Hebrews 11:6

This dramatic miracle where a young man is raised from the dead back to life again has three life changing lessons for us to learn about miracles.

The first lesson is seen in the word: "arise". Jesus said one word and the miracle took place. He spoke and it happened. We see the same thing in Genesis 1 where God spoke and creation happened. Do we speak with faith? When we talk, does our faith carry the weight of our words? If one word can raise a boy from death, there is nothing on this earth that can stop us if we put our complete faith behind everything we do.

The second lesson is seen in the sign of life. If the young man decided not to sit and talk, and decided to nap or stay still instead, they wouldn't know the miracle had taken place. Clearly, a miracle needs action. Whether it is a miracle for finance, healing, relationships or whatever. You need to act and not just pray. Stand up. Talk to that person. Go out and do your best and trust that God will do the rest.

The third lesson is seen in the words: "Jesus gave him to his mother". You should not experience a miracle on your own. Go out and share what God has done. Show them the testimony that you carry. Be in community that cares and wants the best for you. Be the faith that others need.

Let your faith become someone else's miracle. God loves a faithful servant, so let your faith be the bridge that people can cross to reach God. Let your faith be the miracles in your life and in the life of others.

How well do your words and your actions express you
faith? Does anything stand out that you can change?

Do people see you as a faith-filled person who puts God first above all else? How can you grow in this area?

## **Faith Step** Write down some action steps you can take in an area of your life where you need a miracle. Miracles: Let Him Be Known

My Father, your blessings are endless.

Your love is all we need. Thank you,
Lord, for your mercy. I pray today that
my faith will grow by the second. I pray
that I will walk a path where my words
will remove mountains by the power of
your Spirit. I thank you Lord, that I can
live a faithful life, knowing that you will
never leave me. I love you Lord, and I
stand in awe of your grace.

In Jesus' name,



Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. (v 18)

#### **Additional Reading:**

Matthew 10:8; Mark 16:17; Luke 11:14; James 4:7; Luke 10:19

I still remember the room that I was sitting in. I was on a couch, with a cup of tea in front of me, getting counselling over some real struggles I had faced for many years. While we were talking, God revealed that my problem was actually demonic. My heart and mind leapt with hope as the questions revealed God's heart of love, and this unlocked a light in my soul. Suddenly, I heard the very same words as shared in this Scripture, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." The demon was silenced, rendered powerless and removed by the power of the name of Jesus. It came out and by God's miraculous grace, mercy and love, has never come back. I had not realised that this demon had been really messing up my life and I was now free.

In the Scripture, the slave girl had been bound by a spirit, her owners were using her misfortune to make a fortune of money. In a moment, God removed the spirit from her and the change was decisive, quick and long lasting.

What has stayed with me from my encounter many years ago was how quickly, in the name of Jesus, love can replace fear and truth can replace lies. I remember how firm and direct the command came across and how powerlessly the evil spirit responded to the name of Jesus. It was simple and powerful.

God hates it when people are being tormented by the demonic and loves to bring His Kingdom on earth through His children. I am still determined today to help others in the same way God used someone then to help me.

In which situations of your life, family or workplace do you need to take up authority in the name of Jesus?								

When was the last time you used your authority? Jesus has given you authority to tread on serpents, scorpions and the power of the enemy. The name of Jesus will protect you. (Luke 10:19).



Think of situations that you need to take authority over and use the 2-step principle from James 4:7:

Step 1: Submit yourself to God by surrendering to His Lordship, repenting of any sin in your life and forgiving anyone you may need to forgive.

Step 2: Resist the evil spirit in Jesus' name until it flees.

Lord, thank You that You have authorised me to go and help free people tormented by demons. Thank You that I need not fear the demonic, knowing that God is always with me through the Holy Spirit and I have access through Jesus and the name of Jesus to God's miraculous power over the spirit world.

In Jesus' name,



And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

#### Additional Reading:

Colossians 3:1-4; Romans 10:17; Mark 9:23

When Jesus says, "Come!" all of creation bends to accommodate His command. When Peter and the other disciples were battling the wind and the waves in an attempt to cross the Sea of Galilee in a small fishing vessel, Jesus came walking toward them on the water. Yes, He was walking on water! The disciples were as shocked as any of us would have been. This shock turned to relief as they realized it was Jesus, and in Peter this shock expanded into the adventurous desire to be with Jesus on the water. He asks to come to Jesus, and Jesus says, "Come!"

What has Jesus told you to do? Do you, like the disciples find yourself in the midst of turmoil and challenge where it seems hard or even impossible to obey Jesus? In the middle of just such a moment Peter obeys and the water turns hard and flat beneath his feet. Because, yes, all of creation bends to accommodate Jesus' commands. Water changes its properties to allow water walking when Jesus says so. There are circumstances in your life that are seemingly working against the instructions of Jesus to you, and yet, when you step out in obedience these circumstances will have no choice but to facilitate what Jesus said.

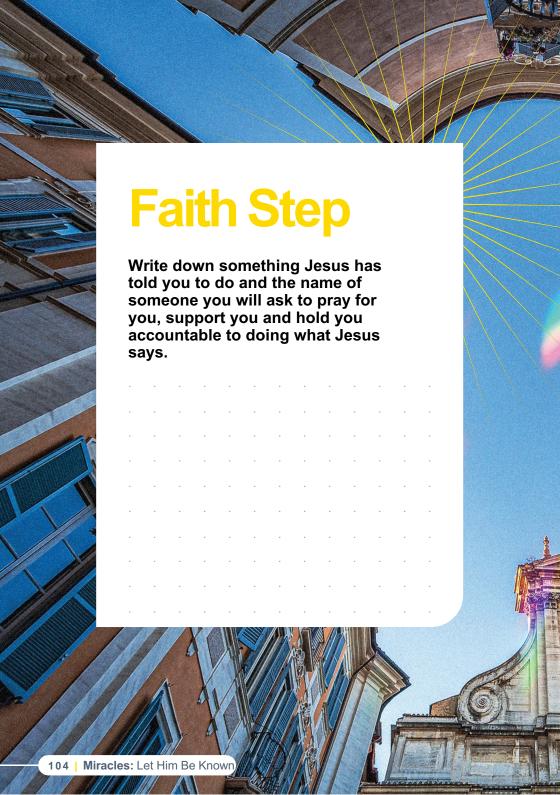
Yes, there will be wind while you are standing firmly on God's promises – the wind of doubt and fear. Even while you are doing successfully what Jesus said, there will be voices that say, "You shouldn't be doing this, you aren't strong enough, clever enough or godly enough for this." But the voices are wrong, and Jesus is right. Listening to Jesus above everything else will keep you walking on water. Listening to the wind and watching its effects on the water around you will cause you to sink under the weight of worry and unbelief. Stepping out of the boat takes courageous obedience and remaining on the water and not under it, takes disciplined, consistent, listening to Jesus' voice.

What has Jesus	told you to do	that you mig	ht feel hesitant to
attempt?			

Are voices of doubt and fear interfering with your obedience?

How can you focus on Jesus' word to you and ignore the winds of doubt and fear?

What do you stand to gain by obeying Jesus?





Lord, today I acknowledge the wind and waves around me, but above that, I acknowledge your word to me. Lord, help me to hear you louder than I hear any other voice and help me to be obedient to what you say. Lord, I ask for the grace, your empowering presence with me, to give me the courage and the wisdom to do what you say. I thank you that your plans for me are for good. You desire my success even more than I do and therefore I can trust You.

In Jesus' name,

## Miracles



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