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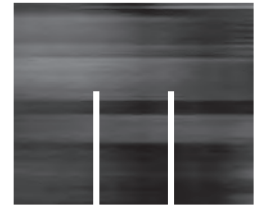
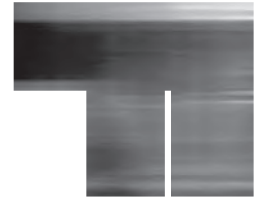
**TEEN  
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APPLICATION<sup>®</sup>  
STUDY  
BIBLE**

GO WHERE  
GOD LEADS

..... THE ONLY TEEN BIBLE BASED ON THE #1—SELLING LIFE APPLICATION STUDY BIBLE .....

GO WHERE GOD LEADS

**TEEN**



**APPLI-  
CATION<sup>®</sup>  
STUDY  
BIBLE**



New Living  
Translation<sup>®</sup>

TYNDALE HOUSE PUBLISHERS, INC.  
... CAROL STREAM, ILLINOIS ...

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## OLD TESTAMENT

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## NEW TESTAMENT

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# USER'S GUIDE: WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

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*Welcome to the Teen Life Application Study Bible. Most power tools come with a user's manual or instructions of some kind. This book is no exception! God gave us his Word to tell us about himself: how he operates, what he's done, and what his plans are for the people he created. This book is a "power tool" you can use. Wanna know more? Check this out: "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).*

*So, what're we to make of that? For starters, it reminds us to make Bible reading a priority. That's why the Teen Life Application Study Bible was written—to help you understand and apply God's Word. It's easy to use and packed with helpful notes and other features. You'll find the notes within the text, at the beginnings and endings of books, and at the back of the Bible.*

*At the back of the Bible you'll find . . .*

## **LIFE CHOICES INDEX**

You'll face many choices and questions in life—questions that need answers; choices that need wisdom. More than 100 topics are listed in this index. Each topic has a selection of relevant Bible passages and notes that relate.

## **INDEXES FOR "CHOICES," "I WONDER," ULTIMATE ISSUES, CHARTS, PERSONALITY PROFILES, MAPS, AND "MY STORY"**

Again, Scripture references listed for these notes are to help you locate the notes easily. The notes may or may not actually relate to the Scripture listed.

## **"WHERE TO FIND IT"**

More than 70 of the best-known Bible stories are listed in this index, along with Jesus' parables and miracles. Use either the Scripture references or the page numbers to quickly and easily find the story, parable, or miracle you want.

*It's all here. Just about everything you'll need to understand and apply God's Word. The next step—actually taking time to read and study the Bible—is yours. So, what are you waiting for?*

*The following spread is a quick look at each of the special features.*

# EXPLANATION OF FEATURES

*The Bible isn't a textbook; it's God's way of communicating himself to us. The Bible gives us hope and encouragement and shows us how to love and follow him. Sometimes God's Word can be hard to understand. The features in the Teen Life Application Study Bible have been adapted from the best-selling Life Application Study Bible and connect to the stories and issues that real teens face. Each feature has been chosen to answer the question, "So what?"*

## BOOK INTRODUCTIONS

Each introduction quickly introduces you to the who, what, when, where, and why of that book. Helpful background information about the author, audience, and purpose are found in the Stats section. The timeline will help you see how the events in the book connect to other related events, and Key Points will show you some of the book's important themes. Some books also include a map of major events.

## LIFE APPLICATION NOTES

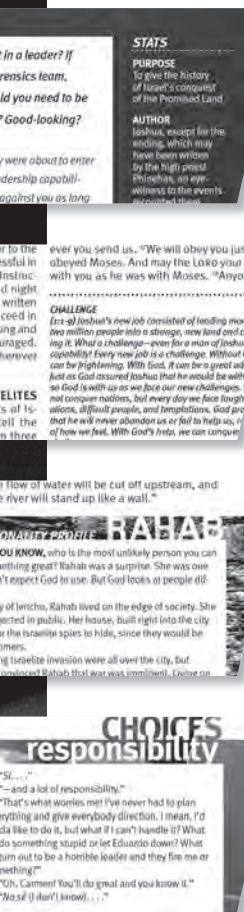
We've included 1,000 notes to help you understand what the Scriptures are saying and to help you apply them directly to your life. Look for them in the bottom corners of each page, below the dotted lines.

## PERSONALITY PROFILE

The Bible is full of the stories of people and their interactions with God. We've included profiles of more than 50. Each profile gives some basic information on the person, the ups and downs of their life, and a practical look at why their life matters to us and what we can learn from them.

## CHOICES

Over 60 Choices articles show teens in real-world situations that you have faced or will. Each one is anchored in a nearby Scripture passage, which you are asked to apply to your life. Topics include things like anger, friendship, sex, and serving God.





## MAPS

Sometimes you need to know where you're at to get the most out of a passage or book. We've included maps in key places and in the introductions of Bible books that are filled with historical accounts to help you get a clearer picture of what's going on.

## THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL

### OTHNIEL (40 YEARS)

He captured a powerful Canaanite city.  
Judges 3:7-11

### DEBORAH (40 YEARS)

She defeated General Sisera and the Canaanites and later sang a victory song with Barak.  
Judges 4-5

### JAIR (22 YEARS)

He had 32 sons.

### EHUD (80 YEARS)

He killed Eglon and the Moabites.  
Judges 3:12-31

### GIDEON (40 YEARS)

He used a fleece to test God's will and defeated Midianites with 300.  
Judges 6-8

### JEPHTHAH (6 YEARS)

He made a rash vow.

## CHARTS

Nearly 70 charts throughout the Bible offer an easy and systematic way to understand how things fit together or to figure out the "so what?" of things like the various sacrifices, reasons to read the Psalms, or what Paul is talking about when he uses metaphors like the "armor of God."

## THERE ARE "FRIENDS" WHO DESTROY EACH OTHER, BUT A REAL FRIEND STICKS CLOSER THAN A BROTHER.

PROVERBS 18:24

Wise words are like deep waters; wisdom flows from the wise like

## KEY VERSES

Eighty-eight Key Verses throughout the Bible remind you of the hope and strength God provides.

## MY STORY: Steve

When I was in first grade, I memorized Joshua 1:9: "This is my command—the strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Recently I took part in a school play, I developed a bad case of stage fright before the performance. I didn't think I was going

## MY STORY

Everyone has a story, but sometimes it's hard to see how our stories connect to the Bible. This Bible includes stories from real teens who are doing their best to follow God in the real world. Their names have been changed, but their situations are real.

## ULTIMATE ISSUES

As you read the Old Testament, you may wonder, Why did God select the people of Israel as his chosen people? That's a good question, and one that's not easy to answer.

First, God singled out a man named Abram (later called Abraham) from the ancient city of Ur and promised to bless him and his descendants (Gen 12:1-3). (But there was a condition attached: Abram had to remain faithful to God. Even though he had numerous lapses, Abram kept his end of the bargain, and God

## ULTIMATE ISSUES

Some things that we think are important are really pretty minor. Others, not so much. Ultimate Issues deal with some of the big ones—hard questions about God, the Bible, and life.

## I WONDER

If Christ controls my life, where does my freedom of choice fit in?

One way that God demonstrated his love for us was by giving us freedom of choice. Someone once said, "Your heart has a door that can be opened only from the inside."

You make the choice to open the door of your heart to Jesus Christ when you receive him as Savior and Lord. Although the Spirit is at work prompting you to respond to his love, the choice is yours. Picture your life as a house. Jesus Christ knocks on the door and you decide to let him in.

## I WONDER

Is there a sin that God cannot forgive? Why should I go to church? Does God get tired of hearing about my problems? If you've ever asked a question like these, then the I Wonder articles are for you. We all struggle with questions about what it really means to follow after God. These articles will help you understand what the Bible says and then make it stick in your life.



# A LOOK AT THE BOOK

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## INTRODUCTION

*We usually think of the Bible as one book. That's logical because it looks like one book and comes from one Author. We also speak of it as God's Word. But when we read and study the Bible, we discover that it is actually an entire library between two covers. Not one book, but 66 (39 in the Old Testament; 27 in the New Testament)! Each book has its own style and uniqueness—yet each book contributes to the message God wants to get across with the whole Bible. What's more, though we use the word book, some parts of the Bible are letters (like Paul's letter to the Romans) or collections (like the Psalms). Still, the overall message of the Bible is one message because it has one unifying Author—God. The reason the styles throughout the Bible vary is because God teamed up with dozens of people to write his Word.*

## HOW THIS PLAN IS DIFFERENT

There are many plans to help you read through the Bible library. You can even start at page one and read straight through. The approach taken here, however, is designed to help you get a flavor of the whole Bible by reading selections from it throughout a year. You'll read the best-known stories and many important lessons. Some parts of the Bible offer so much help that they can be read every day. Among these are the Gospels, Psalms, and Proverbs.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Each day's reading has a title and a question. These application questions can help you as you read. So, get ready. You're about to start the awesome adventure of reading God's Word and getting to know him.

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## OLD TESTAMENT

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### Genesis 1:1–2:3 How It All Began

*Why do human beings have value and worth?*

### Genesis 2:15–3:24 Adam and Eve

*In what ways are you like those first humans?*

### Genesis 4:1–16 Cain and Abel

*How do you handle anger?*

### Genesis 6:9–22 Noah Builds a Boat

*What is the most difficult act that God has asked you to do?*

### Genesis 7:1–24 All Aboard?

*If you were alive at this time, would you have been invited to get on the boat? Why or why not? Would you have accepted? Why or why not?*

### Genesis 8:1–22 A Long Wait

*How would you have spent your time on the boat?*

### Genesis 9:1–17 Rules and Rainbows

*What could you do the next time you see a rainbow to show that you take God's covenant seriously?*

**Genesis 11:1-9** The Tower of Babel

*Is there anyone you trust more than God?  
Why or why not?*

**Genesis 12:1-9; 17:1-8, 15-16** God's Promises to Abraham and Sarah

*How do you usually make decisions? How is God involved in those decisions?*

**Genesis 18:1-15** Unusual Visitors

*How do you make guests feel welcome in your home? at school?*

**Genesis 19:1-29** Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

*How does God feel about sin?*

**Genesis 21:8-21** Hagar and Ishmael

*In what ways have you seen God work through the messes in your life?*

**Genesis 22:1-19** Abraham's Painful Decision

*Could you have made the same decision as Abraham? Why or why not?*

**Genesis 24:1-27** A Faithful Servant

*How do you approach difficult tasks?*

**Genesis 24:28-67** Isaac and Rebekah

*How has God surprised you recently?*

**Genesis 25:19-34** Jacob and Esau

*How do you treat your brothers or sisters?*

**Genesis 27:1-40** Jacob Tricks His Father

*On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being really important), how important is honesty in your relationship with your parents? Why?*

**Genesis 28:10-22** Jacob Meets God

*In what places in your life has God seemed the most real?*

**Genesis 29:14-30** Jacob's Marriages

*How do you show your love for others?*

**Genesis 32:1-33:18** Jacob Returns Home

*What happens inside you when you try to avoid a problem?*

**Genesis 37** Jacob's Children

*How are disagreements settled in your family?*

**Genesis 39** Joseph in Trouble

*How do you react when you're treated unfairly?*

**Genesis 40** Dreams in Prison

*When have you helped someone even though you had your own problems?*

**Genesis 41:1-36** Dreams in the Palace

*Whom has God used to give you guidance?*

**Genesis 41:37-57** Joseph in Charge

*How well do you handle big responsibilities?*

**Genesis 42** Joseph Sees His Brothers Again

*If you had the chance to get back at someone who wronged you, would you take it? Why or why not?*

**Genesis 43** Back to Joseph

*How quick are you to forgive? Why?*

**Genesis 44** Crisis in the Palace

*How do you react when someone points out a mistake you've made? Why?*

**Genesis 45; 46:26-30** Finding a Lost Son

*What do you appreciate about your parents? How do you show your appreciation?*

**Genesis 49** Jacob's Final Words

*What legacies have your parents or grandparents passed on to you?*

**Exodus 1:8-2:10** Moses Is Born

*How has God protected you from birth till now?*

**Exodus 2:11-25** Moses on the Run

*When was the last time you found yourself running from God? Explain.*

**Exodus 3** God's Burning Bush

*In what ways has God made himself known to you?*

**Exodus 4:1-17** Moses Isn't Sure

*How willing are you to do what you feel God wants you to do? Explain.*

**Exodus 5** Resistance

*How do you handle others' resistance toward doing what's right?*

**Exodus 6:1-13** Rejection

*What would it cost you to do what God wants?*

**Exodus 7:1-14** A Stubborn Ruler

*What decisions have you tried to resist that you knew God wanted you to make?*

**Exodus 7:15-9:7** Five out of Ten Plagues

*When do you try to bargain with God? Why?*

**Exodus 9:8-10:29** Four More Plagues

*What are the worst consequences you've seen that were a result of wrong actions?*

**Exodus 11; 12:29-36** The Ultimate Plague

*In what amazing way has God rescued you from a problem?*

**Exodus 13:17-14:31** A Narrow Escape

*When have you experienced God's protection?*

**Exodus 15:22-27; 17:1-7** God Provides Water

*When are you most tempted to complain? Why?*

**Isaiah 6** God Chooses Isaiah

*Can you relate to Isaiah's feelings in this chapter? If so, what did you do to express your need for forgiveness?*

**Isaiah 53** The Suffering Servant

*How would you describe what Jesus did for you?*

**Jeremiah 1:1-9** God Calls a Prophet

*If you were Jeremiah, how would you have responded to God's call? What do you think God wants to do through you?*

**Jeremiah 36** The Book Burning

*How much risk is involved in your relationship with God?*

**Jeremiah 38:1-13** Jeremiah in the Well

*What part of your life compares in any way with Jeremiah's time in the well?*

**Ezekiel 37:1-14** A Valley of Dry Bones

*Have you ever experienced a time of spiritual "dryness"? Explain. How can you help people who are spiritually "dry"?*

**Daniel 1** Coping with Pressure to Conform

*How do you usually respond when someone pressures you to go along with what everyone else is doing?*

**Daniel 2:1-24** A King's Dream

*What qualities do seemingly hopeless situations bring out in you? Why?*

**Daniel 2:25-49** The Meaning of the Dream

*Who gets the credit when things go right in your life? Why?*

**Daniel 3** Three Friends in a Furnace

*What examples can you give of God's protection in your life?*

**Daniel 5** The Writing on the Wall

*What message, if any, do you think God has for our society? Why?*

**Daniel 6** Daniel and the Lions

*What do you do to spend time with God?*

**Jonah 1:1-2:10** Bending God's Directions

*When did you last try to avoid doing what you knew God wanted you to do? What happened as a result?*

**Jonah 3:1-4:11** Wrong Motives

*About what things do you complain to God? Why?*

## NEW TESTAMENT

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You will read various parts of the four Gospels in order to have a fairly chronological biography of Jesus' life.

**Luke 1:1-4; John 1:1-18** The Word Was God

*What do you believe about Jesus?*

**Luke 1:5-25** The Angel and Zechariah

*How would you react to an angel's visit?*

**Luke 1:26-56** Mary and Elizabeth

*What makes you feel joyful?*

**Luke 1:57-80** John the Baptist Is Born

*What hopes have your parents expressed to you about your life?*

**Matthew 1** A Family Tree

*How has a family member's experience influenced your relationship with God?*

**Luke 2:1-20** Jesus Is Born!

*What does Christmas mean to you?*

**Luke 2:21-3:8** Anna and Simeon See Jesus

*What promise of God have you been waiting a long time to see fulfilled?*

**Matthew 2:1-12** Foreign Visitors

*What gift would you offer to Jesus? Why?*

**Matthew 2:13-23** Escape and Return

*How has knowing God brought excitement into your life?*

**Luke 2:41-52** Jesus in the Temple Again

*What four words would summarize your teen years thus far? Why?*

**Mark 1:1-13** Baptism and Temptation

*What are your most difficult temptations? How would they compare to Jesus' temptations? Explain.*

**John 1:19-34** John the Baptist and Jesus

*To whom did you last talk about Christ? Why?*

**John 1:35-51** Jesus' First Disciples

*How would someone know that you're a disciple of Jesus?*

**John 2** A Surprising Savior

*How has Christ been unpredictable in your life?*

**John 3:1-21** Jesus and Nicodemus

*How did you first meet Jesus?*

**John 3:22-36; Luke 3:19-20** John Gets into Trouble  
*When has knowing Christ gotten you into trouble?*

**John 4:1-42** Jesus Changes a Town  
*In what ways has Jesus affected your community?*

**John 4:43-54** Jesus' Ministry  
*In what practical ways has God met your needs recently?*

**Luke 4:16-30** Jesus Is Rejected  
*In what ways has Jesus been rejected by the people around you? Why?*

**Mark 1:16-39** Jesus Calls People to Follow  
*What specific things have you left behind to follow Christ?*

**Luke 5** Miracles and Questions  
*How do Jesus' miracles affect you today?*

**John 5** Honor for the Son  
*What do you find most attractive about Jesus? Why?*

**Mark 2:23-3:19** Jesus' Disciples  
*Based on what you know about Jesus' disciples, who do you most identify with? Why?*

**Matthew 5:1-16** The Beatitudes  
*Which of these attitudes do you struggle with most? Why?*

**Matthew 5:17-30** Rules for Living  
*How do Jesus' views on these subjects compare with yours?*

**Matthew 5:31-48** Jesus on Relationships  
*What part of your life could be most radically changed by these words? Why?*

**Matthew 6:1-18** The Pattern of Prayer  
*What do you find yourself praying for the most these days? Why?*

**Matthew 6:19-34** Money Matters  
*In what ways are money and worry related in your life?*

**Matthew 7:1-12** Judge or Pray?  
*Are you quicker to pray or to criticize? Why?*

**Matthew 7:13-29** Facts about Fruit and Foundations  
*What kind of fruit does your life show? What type of foundation is your life built on? Explain.*

**Luke 7:1-10** A Roman Centurion's Request  
*What is your attitude toward people from other cultures? How can you show them God's love?*

**Matthew 11** Jesus Describes John  
*How would you want Jesus to summarize your life? Why?*

**Luke 7:36-8:3** Expressions of Faith  
*How do you express your faith in Jesus?*

**Matthew 12:22-50** Troubles for Jesus  
*When are you tempted to have Jesus prove himself to you?*

**Mark 4:1-29** Jesus Seeks, Seeds, and Weeds  
*What kind of soil is your life right now? Why?*

**Matthew 13:24-43** More of Jesus' Parables  
*How concerned are you about where your friends and family will spend eternity? Explain.*

**Matthew 13:44-52** Even More Parables  
*How and where did you find the hidden treasure?*

**Luke 8:22-56** Jesus in Control  
*Which of the events in this passage gives you the greatest comfort? Why?*

**Matthew 9:27-38** The Compassion of Jesus  
*In what practical ways can you show Jesus' compassion to others?*

**Mark 6:1-13** The Mission  
*How clear an idea do you have of what God wants you to do? Explain.*

**Matthew 10:16-42** Jesus Prepares His Disciples  
*In what ways do Jesus' words speak to the fears you have?*

**Mark 6:14-29** Herod Kills John the Baptist  
*With which qualities of John the Baptist do you most identify? Why?*

**Matthew 14:13-36** Simply the Son of God  
*Would you have been more likely to step out with Peter or to stay in the boat? Why?*

**John 6:22-40** Bread from Heaven  
*How is Jesus "bread" to you?*

**John 6:41-71** Jesus Criticized and Deserted  
*How do you react when you hear critical comments about Jesus? Why do you react that way?*

**Mark 7** Purity  
*If God were to describe what you're like inside, what do you think he would say? Why?*

**Matthew 15:32-16:12** Jesus Feeds and Warns  
*How do you evaluate what you hear about God? Explain.*

# FINDING FAITH

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*Whether you're new to Christianity or a veteran of following Jesus, it's important to "know your roots." How did you become a Christian? How has your salvation changed your life? What exactly does it mean to be "saved," anyway? When you're confident with the basics of your faith, you're like a tree with roots that reach deep into the earth: healthy and hard to topple. You'll also start to produce fruit for other people to see, and they'll start asking questions about how you got that way.*

*This is the second reason to know your roots: so that you can tell other people how to be saved. One of the last things Jesus told his disciples before he ascended to heaven was, "Preach the Good News to everyone" (Mark 16:15, page 1098). God wants us to be concerned with the salvation of everyone around us, and he uses us to plant the seeds of belief in their hearts. How exciting it is for us to be God's tools!*

*Don't get us wrong—sharing your faith can be intimidating sometimes. Maybe you're worried that you won't know what to say, or that the other person will laugh at you or get angry. If you suffer from such fears, always remember that God is with you. If you've prepared yourself to have this conversation, he will show you what to say. And even if some people don't listen, you are still obeying God by talking to them. Obedience is always a good thing.*

## **MAKING YOUR FAITH YOUR OWN**

***All people are sinners who fall short of God's standard. Romans 3:23, page 1230***

We all have sin engrained in our hearts. No matter how nice we think we are, no matter how many good things we do, we cannot fully eliminate sin from our lives by our own efforts. God's standard is perfection, and we simply can't live up to it.

***The fair punishment for sin is eternal death. Romans 6:23, page 1233***

Sin is a crime against an infinite God. The result of sin is death and eternal separation from him. An infinite offense demands an eternal punishment. Because we are sinful, we have earned this fate.

***God sent Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for your sin. Romans 5:8, page 1232***

Here's the thing: God loves us. He doesn't want anyone to be separated from him forever, so he offers a solution to this dire problem. God sent Jesus, his perfect Son, to die in our place. When he died on the cross, Jesus willingly took the blame for our sins. Every wrong thing you have ever done and ever will do has been paid for by Jesus.

***Thanks to Jesus' death and resurrection, you too can have eternal life. John 11:25, page 1163***

But the story doesn't end with Jesus' death! Three days later, he rose from the dead to show that we can have eternal life. Jesus not only paid the price for sin himself, he also permanently broke the power of death over us sinful humans.



***To be saved, you need only acknowledge your need for Jesus and trust him completely for everything. Romans 10:9-10, page 1237***

God offers all of us the chance to be saved through Jesus' power. If we want to be free of guilt and have eternal life, we must confess our sins to him and ask Jesus into our lives to stay forever. A short prayer like the following is often helpful when we do this:

*"Dear God, I know that I'm a sinner who needs forgiveness. I know that Jesus Christ died for my sins, and I believe that he rose from the dead. I trust him alone as my Savior. Thank you so much for your gift of eternal life, and help me to live for you from now on. In Jesus' name, amen."*

Use this prayer as a starting point for expressing what is in your mind and heart. You may have a different way of praying, and that's okay. The important thing is that you believe in your heart that Jesus is your Savior and Lord.

## **SHARING YOUR FAITH WITH OTHERS**

The first thing to remember when you start to talk to others about Jesus is that there is no one-size-fits-all method that will guarantee success every time. Everyone has his or her own story and a unique perspective on the world and belief. One person may never have heard the gospel, while another may have grown up with Christian parents and has since fallen away from faith. One of the exciting things about evangelism is the chance to become familiar with a broad spectrum of backgrounds. Learn to love people where they are in life, and they will be much more receptive than they would if you tried to stick to some sort of script.

Also, keep in mind that no one, not even the most experienced minister, is successful 100 percent of the time when sharing the gospel. If it seems that nobody is listening to you, don't be discouraged! You don't know how God is going to water the seeds you have planted. Often he will take years to soften people's hearts. In the meantime, pray. Ask God to strengthen you and show you if you could be approaching the conversation differently.

Here are a few tips to help you prepare for the wonderful experience of bringing Christ's love to others!

**Seize the moment.** Always be on the lookout for opportunities to talk about Jesus. When one presents itself, don't be afraid to dive in! It is good to plan and prepare, but don't be afraid to be spontaneous. Just remember: you should be sharing out of love and concern for the other person, not as a way to win an argument or prove something.

**Know your stuff.** Don't let yourself be caught off-guard when a faith-sharing opportunity arises. Make sure you know the basics of salvation ahead of time so that you can accurately address any questions or misconceptions your friends might bring up. If you think that more complicated topics will come into the conversation, investigate what the Bible says about those issues. And if you don't know how to answer a question, you can always tell the other person that you'll get back to him or her as you learn more. Often you'll find yourself having many conversations about faith with a person over time.

**Ask questions, and listen to the answers.** Most of the time, your evangelism will take the form of a conversation between you and other people. A conversation is a two-way street. Get to know the other person! Ask questions about her life story, her interests and hobbies, her hopes and fears. You may learn something, and you could find the conversation opening up doors that you would not have noticed otherwise.

**Tell them your story.** Sometimes it's easy to forget that some people feel uncomfortable being asked questions about their lives and beliefs. They may feel that they are making themselves too vulnerable by opening up to you. Sometimes you can put them a bit more at ease by sharing some of your personal history or struggles. Tell them about how you first came to Christ, or about some issues—faith-related or otherwise—that you struggle with. If you are willing to be vulnerable, they may be more willing to trust you.

**Be humble.** You may be very different from the person you're talking to, but you will always have one thing in common: You are both sinners who need Jesus. The only difference between you is that you've found Jesus, you've been forgiven, and you want to share that joy with other people!

# HELP FOR NEW BELIEVERS

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*You know someone who's just started a relationship with Jesus Christ . . . so what can you do to help?*

*First of all, you can be excited about this opportunity. Second, you need to be serious about this responsibility. Read Romans 5:11. You have the privilege of helping someone grow in his or her new relationship with your friend Jesus Christ. Here are some ways you can help a new Christian and Jesus grow closer. Remember, we all need FRIENDS.*

***Follow up with your new Christian friend by getting together regularly.***

Get together within 48 hours after your friend receives Christ, and at least once a week during the next six weeks (Matthew 28:20).

***Reinforce what Christ has done in your friend's life.***

Do this by looking at Scriptures that affirm God's commitment to Christians (John 14:20; Galatians 5:25; Colossians 2:13-14; Hebrews 13:5; 1 John 5:13).

***Involve your friend in your church activities.***

Take your friend with you and help answer any of his or her questions (Hebrews 10:24-25).

***Exhibit Christ in your life through your actions and words.***

You don't have to be perfect, just someone who wants to obey and please God (Colossians 3:17).

***Nurture your friend's spiritual growth.***

A new Christian is like a newborn baby who needs spiritual food and care. Try using the 14 encounters with God included in this section (1 Peter 2:2-3).

***Do things together.***

Spending time together will give you opportunities to encourage your friend and put your faith into practice (Acts 14:21-22).

***Stand by your friend in both the good and bad times.***

Your friend will fall down spiritually. Get ready to help him or her to get up and try again (Ephesians 4:11-16).

*You have recently trusted Jesus Christ to be your Savior . . . so now what do you do?*

*First of all, you must know that through Christ you have become friends with God. Read Romans 5:11 again. Remember:*

- You realized that your sin was keeping you from a relationship with God.
- You understood that Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sin and that he rose again from the dead.
- You prayed, asking Jesus to forgive your sins and be your Savior.

# “SO NOW WE CAN REJOICE IN OUR WONDERFUL NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD BECAUSE OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST HAS MADE US FRIENDS OF GOD.”

ROMANS 5:11

*Next, please understand that you have begun an exciting and lasting friendship. As in any relationship, getting to know someone takes time—it doesn’t just happen by itself. (Make sure you have a friend who has been a Christian for a while who can help you grow in your new faith. If no one has contacted you, you should go back to the person who helped you become a Christian and ask for help.)*

*You can grow closer to God just like you grow closer to people. God created you to have a relationship with him, to be his very own son or daughter. Now that you’re his child and friend, he will patiently help you get to know him better and better.*

*Here are some ideas you can use to help you and God become close friends. Remember, all it takes is TIME.*

## ***Talk to God through prayer.***

To help you learn how to talk to God, the “14 Encounters with God” include ideas for prayer. Give them a try. God will listen when you talk to him.

## ***Investigate God’s Word.***

Decide on a time and place to read the Bible each day. The schedule for “14 Encounters with God” will help you know what to read. This will help you grow.

## ***Make it practical.***

One of the best ways to learn is by doing. The schedule includes action steps to help you make your friendship with God active and practical.

## ***Express your thoughts.***

You know how important it is to show appreciation to a friend. As you finish your daily time with God, thank him. During the next 14 encounters with God, try to keep a personal journal. Simply write down your thoughts, your questions, and, most important of all, why you’re thankful to God!

*Finally, to get to know God better, try using the following “14 Encounters with God” feature. These give you some great ways to spend time with God and find out more about who he is and who he wants you to be.*

# 14 ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD

## ASSURANCE

ENCOUNTER

01

*It's  
Guaranteed*

*You recently became a Christian. Have you had any doubts about whether or not Jesus really came into your life? Do you wonder if you'll really go to heaven someday?*

**Talk to God:** "Father, thank you for giving me a relationship with you. Jesus, thank you for giving me life. Please teach me and help me learn more about you. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Read 1 John 5:11-13. Memorize verse 13.

**Make it practical:** Check out "I Wonder"—1 John 5:10-12, page 1389, or "My Story"—Matthew 7:24-27, page 1037. How can you put the ideas presented here into action in your own life?

**Express your thoughts:** In your journal, write a description of when, where, and how you became a Christian. Say thanks to God!

## GOD, OUR FATHER

ENCOUNTER

02

*Part of the  
Family*

*Everyone knows what it's like to not feel totally accepted by others. Did you know that when you became a Christian, God adopted you into his family and accepted you unconditionally?*

**Talk to God:** "Dear God, thanks for making me part of your family. You accept me. That's awesome! Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Ephesians 1:3-8. Memorize verse 5.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—Hebrews 1:1-3, page 1349, or "My Story"—Mark 9–10, page 1086.

**Express your thoughts:** In your journal, make a list of what you like about being part of God's family. Don't forget to thank him.

# GROWTH

*OK, now that you're a new Christian, what's next? Well, the best relationships are those that grow and deepen. It's the same way in your relationship with Jesus Christ. It's time for growth.*

**Talk to God:** "Lord, help me to let my roots sink down into you. Thanks for helping me grow. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Colossians 2:6-7. Memorize the first part of verse 7.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—Colossians 2:6-7, page 1310, or "My Story"—2 Peter 1:5-8, page 1378.

**Express your thoughts:** Think of one way that you'd like to grow spiritually, share it with one friend, and write it in your journal. Then ask God to help you do what you've decided to do.

## ENCOUNTER

# 03

*New Life  
in Christ*

# PRAYER

*You know how good friends love to talk with each other. God, our heavenly Father, is ready for a heart-to-heart talk all the time. Conversation with God is a must!*

**Talk to God:** "God, I'm so glad we can talk anytime. Thank you that you'll listen to my needs. Help me learn to listen to you. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Philippians 4:6-7. Memorize verse 6.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—1 Kings 3:3-14, page 369, or "My Story"—Ecclesiastes 5:1-7, page 707.

**Express your thoughts:** Commit yourself to spending at least three minutes in prayer every day. In your journal, keep a record of your prayer requests and answers. Tell God thanks for those answers.

## ENCOUNTER

# 04

*Time to Talk*

# BIBLE

*When you get something new, you often receive an instruction manual. With your new life in Christ, you need God's instruction manual, the Bible. God communicates to us through his Word.*

**Talk to God:** "Dear God, thank you for showing me what you're like through your Word. Help me to read it, study it, and obey it. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** 2 Timothy 3:14-17. Memorize verse 16.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—John 20:31, page 1174, or "My Story"—Isaiah 41:10, page 764.

**Express your thoughts:** Commit yourself to spending five minutes a day reading the Bible. As a result of something you read, write down in your journal something you will do. Ask God to help you.

## ENCOUNTER

# 05

*Dig In*



## ENCOUNTER

# 06

*Jesus Did It All*

## JESUS, OUR SAVIOR

*Friendships get stronger when you really get to know the other person. You have trusted Christ to be your Savior and to give you new life. Really get to know who he is and what he has done! It's incredible!*

**Talk to God:** "Jesus, you are so powerful! I'm thankful that you hold everything together, including me! Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Colossians 1:15-23. Memorize verse 17.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—Hebrews 1:1-3,5, page 1349.

**Express your thoughts:** Ask a friend to tell you what he or she really likes about Jesus. In your journal, write a note to Jesus about what you really appreciate about him.

## ENCOUNTER

# 07

*Solid Rock*

## OBEDIENCE

*A good foundation is essential for a house to stand strong. Jesus wants you to realize that obeying God will give your life a solid foundation.*

**Talk to God:** "Dear God, you know what's best for me. Help me to be strong and obey you in each area of my life. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Luke 6:46-49. Memorize the first part of verse 47.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—Joshua 24:14-15, page 256, or "My Story"—Ephesians 6:1-3, page 1297.

**Express your thoughts:** In your journal, list one area of your life where you are obeying God and one where you are not. Say thanks to God for helping you to want to obey.

## ENCOUNTER

# 08

*You Have Insight*

## HOLY SPIRIT

*Nobody in this world knows you better than you know yourself. Nobody knows God like God's Spirit knows God. As a new Christian, you have been given God's Holy Spirit. He will give you insight into what God is like and what he wants you to do.*

**Talk to God:** "Thank you, God, for giving me your Spirit. You know me so well, and I will trust your Spirit to help me know more about you. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** 1 Corinthians 2:9-16. Memorize verse 12.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—Romans 7:15-8:2, page 1234, or "My Story"—Isaiah 7:9, page 732.

**Express your thoughts:** In your journal, write down one question that you'd like the Holy Spirit to help you with. Now take a couple of minutes and just listen to God. Tell him thanks.

# TEMPTATION

*The Bible says in 1 Peter 5:8 that our enemy Satan is like a lion that wants to rip us apart. Satan will tempt us to disobey God, but God will show us a way out!*

**Talk to God:** “Dear God, you know the temptations I struggle with. Thank you that you have promised me a way to escape. Amen.”

**Investigate God’s Word:** 1 Corinthians 10:13. Memorize verse 13.

**Make it practical:** “My Story”—1 Peter 3:15, page 1373.

**Express your thoughts:** List the three temptations that Satan really uses on you. Now thank God ahead of time that he will show you how to not give in next time.

ENCOUNTER

09

*Don’t Give In*

# FORGIVENESS

*As a child in God’s family, you’ll still mess up. But God’s love for you is so great that he will forgive you! He can do that because he loves you!*

**Talk to God:** “Dear God, I confess to you my sin of \_\_\_\_\_. I admit that it was wrong. Thank you that Jesus died on the cross to forgive me for this sin. Amen.”

**Investigate God’s Word:** 1 John 1:8-10. Memorize verse 9.

**Make it practical:** “I Wonder”—James 4:17, page 1367, or “My Story”—Lamentations 3:21-23, page 862.

**Express your thoughts:** Write down ways that you have disobeyed God recently. Look at each one and confess it through prayer. Cross out each sin. Let this remind you of God’s loving forgiveness. Be sure to thank him!

ENCOUNTER

10

*I’m Sorry*

# CHURCH

*Christians are part of the body of Christ, which is called his Church. Be sure you get together with other believers, members of the “body.” It’s an opportunity to love God and each other.*

**Talk to God:** “Dear God, thank you for your body of believers, the Church. Teach me how to get involved with other Christians and really worship you. Amen.”

**Investigate God’s Word:** Hebrews 10:22-25. Memorize verse 25.

**Make it practical:** “I Wonder”—Hebrews 10:24-25, page 1353.

**Express your thoughts:** Go with some friends or family to church this week. List two ways you worshiped God.

ENCOUNTER

11

*Worship Him*

## ENCOUNTER

# 12

*I Gotta  
Tell You  
Something*

## WITNESSING

*If you have a close friend, you can't keep from talking about that person. When you love someone, you can hardly contain yourself! Let your love for Christ motivate you to tell others about him.*

**Talk to God:** "Lord, you have changed my life. Give me the courage and opportunities to tell others about you. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Romans 1:16-17. Memorize verse 16.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—Luke 22:54-62, page 1139, or "My Story"—Acts 4:13, page 1187.

**Express your thoughts:** Write down the name of one person who needs to know Jesus Christ. Start praying for that person to become a Christian. Ask a Christian friend to pray with you for the person and to help you learn how to share your faith with him or her.

## ENCOUNTER

# 13

*Do You  
Remember?*

## BIBLE MEMORY

*To fight a battle you need powerful equipment. The Holy Spirit will use the power of God's Word like a sword to defeat Satan. So a great strategy is to memorize Scripture! What verses have you already learned?*

**Talk to God:** "Lord, I need your power! Help me to memorize Scripture verses. I know this will help me live for you. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Ephesians 6:10-17. Memorize verse 17.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—Isaiah 46:4, page 771, or "My Story"—Philippians 4:13, page 1305.

**Express your thoughts:** Review your memory verses from the past 12 days. In your journal, write down your favorite verse.

## ENCOUNTER

# 14

*Be like Christ*

## SPIRITUAL GOAL

*You've been a Christian for a short time now, and you're learning that you have a lifelong relationship with Christ. So what's your long-range plan? Becoming like Christ is the ultimate goal.*

**Talk to God:** "Dear Jesus, more than anything else I want to become more like you. Thanks that you'll be patient and help me. Amen."

**Investigate God's Word:** Colossians 3:10-11. Memorize verse 10.

**Make it practical:** "I Wonder"—Jeremiah 29:11-13, page 827, or "My Story"—Micah 4:6-13, page 981.

**Express your thoughts:** Make a list of at least five ways you want to become more like Jesus. Spend time asking God to help you. Remind yourself to read this part of your journal in one month to check on your spiritual growth.

The image features a solid black background. On the left side, there is a complex, chaotic pattern of thin, white, curved lines that resemble scratches or light trails. These lines are most concentrated in the lower-left quadrant and extend towards the center. The text 'OLD TESTAMENT' is positioned in the middle-right area of the image, to the right of the white line pattern.

# **OLD** TESTAMENT

# GENESIS

*Ever turned on a TV show a few minutes after it began? Chances are, you turned it off before the show ended or flipped to a different channel because you couldn't figure out what was going on. To fully understand the plot, you needed to see the beginning of the show.*

*The same truth applies to the Bible. If you're having a hard time figuring out the plot, Genesis is the right place to begin your search for answers. Why? Because Genesis is the book of beginnings. In it you see the creation of the universe, the introduction of sin into the world, the beginning of God's plan to rescue his people from the sin habit, and the birth of the nation of Israel.*

*In Genesis we also get our first glimpse into God's character. Unlike everything else, God didn't have a beginning. He has always existed. Chapters 1 and 2 showcase his creativeness and power, while chapter 3 reveals his holiness and judgment of sin. Through the sad saga of Adam and Eve and their descendants, we view God's incredible love for his people even when they constantly disobey him.*

*As you read Genesis, what other beginnings do you see? How do they enlarge your view of God?*

## KEY POINTS

**BEGINNINGS** Genesis introduces God as Creator of all that exists, from planets to plants to people. All people were created in God's own image.

**DISOBEDIENCE** Sin results when people choose their own way instead of obeying God. Adam and Eve learned this the hard way. Only God can reverse the consequences of sinful choices.

**PROMISES** God promised to protect and provide for his people. He made specific promises known as *covenants*, which are binding agreements. God made a covenant with his people as a guarantee of what they could expect from him.

**OBEDIENCE AND PROSPERITY** Obedience to God keeps our relationship with him intact and causes us to prosper like Abraham. Prosperity doesn't necessarily mean wealth or other material possessions. Rather, true prosperity means living life as God created it to be lived—in the fullness of his blessings.

## STATS

### PURPOSE

To record God's creation of the world and his desire to have a people set apart to worship him

### AUTHOR

Moses

### ORIGINAL AUDIENCE

The people of Israel

### DATE WRITTEN

1450–1410 B.C.

### SETTING

The region presently known as the Middle East

### KEY PEOPLE

Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Joseph

## TIMELINE

### Creation

(undated)  
Noah

2166 B.C.  
Abram born

2091  
Abram enters Canaan

2086  
Isaac born

2006  
Jacob & Esau born

1929  
Jacob flees to Haran

1915  
Joseph born

1898  
Joseph sold into slavery

1885  
Joseph rules Egypt

1805  
Joseph dies





Modern names and boundaries are shown in gray.

**KEY PLACES** *God created the universe and the earth. Then he made man and woman, giving them a home in a beautiful garden. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were expelled from the garden (3:24).*

### 1 MOUNTAINS OF ARARAT

Adam and Eve's sin brought sin into the human race. Years later, sin had run rampant and God decided to destroy the earth with a great flood. He wiped out everything and everyone except for Noah, his family, and two of each animal, who were all safe in a huge boat. When the floods receded, the boat rested on the mountains of Ararat (8:4).

### 2 BABEL

People never learn. Again sin abounded and the pride of the people led them to build a huge tower as a monument to their own greatness—obviously they had no thought of God. As punishment, God scattered the people by giving them different languages (11:8-9).

### 3 UR OF THE CHALDEANS

Abram, a descendant of Shem, was born in this great city (11:27-28).

### 4 HARAN

Terah, Lot, Abram, and Sarai left Ur and, following the fertile crescent of the Euphrates River,

headed toward the land of Canaan. Along the way, they settled in the city of Haran for a while (11:31).

### 5 SHECHEM

God urged Abram to leave Haran and go to a place where he would become the father of a great nation (12:1-2). So Abram, Sarai, and Lot traveled to the land of Canaan and settled near a city called Shechem (12:5-6).

### 6 HEBRON

Abram (later known as Abraham) moved on to Hebron, to "the oak grove belonging to Mamre," where he put down his deepest roots (13:18). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all lived and were buried there.

### 7 BEERSHEBA

After a dispute over ownership of the well here, Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech (21:23-31). Years later, as Isaac was moving from place to place, God appeared to him here and confirmed with him the covenant he had made with his father, Abraham (26:23-25).

### 8 BETHEL

After deceiving his brother out of both his birthright and his blessing, Jacob left Beersheba and fled to Haran. Along the way God revealed himself to Jacob in a dream and again confirmed the covenant he had made with Abraham and Isaac (28:10-22). Jacob lived in Haran, worked for Laban, and married Leah and Rachel (29:15-28). After a tense meeting with his brother, Esau, Jacob returned to Bethel (35:1).

### 9 EGYPT

Jacob had 12 sons, including Joseph, his favorite. Joseph's brothers grew jealous, until one day, out in the fields, they sold him to Ishmaelite traders who were going to Egypt. Eventually, Joseph was promoted from Egyptian slave to Pharaoh's "right-hand man," saving Egypt and the surrounding countries from famine. Joseph's entire family moved from Canaan to Egypt and settled there during the severe famine (46:5-7).

**1 THE ACCOUNT OF CREATION** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.\* <sup>2</sup>The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

<sup>3</sup>Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.”

And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.

<sup>6</sup>Then God said, “Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth.”

<sup>7</sup>And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens. <sup>8</sup>God called the space “sky.”

And evening passed and morning came, marking the second day.

<sup>9</sup>Then God said, “Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear.” And that is what happened. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground “land” and the waters “seas.” And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup>Then God said, “Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came.” And that is what happened. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>13</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the third day.

<sup>14</sup>Then God said, “Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, days, and years. <sup>15</sup>Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth.” And that is what happened. <sup>16</sup>God made two great lights—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup>God set these lights in the sky to light the earth, <sup>18</sup>to govern the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>19</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>Then God said, “Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind.” <sup>21</sup>So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that scurries and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird—each producing offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>Then God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply. Let the fish fill the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”

<sup>23</sup>And evening passed and morning came, marking the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>Then God said, “Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals.” And that is what happened. <sup>25</sup>God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let us make human beings\* in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created human beings\* in his own image.

In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup>Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the

#### TRUE WORTH

*(1:1-26) God created everything there is—the heavens, earth, plants, and animals. When God finished creating everything else, he then chose to make people in his image. The phrase “Let us make human beings in our image” in verse 26 does not mean that God created us exactly like himself, especially in a physical sense. Instead, we are reflections of God’s glory. We can reflect his characteristics like love, patience, forgiveness, kindness, and faithfulness.*

*Our worth is not defined by possessions, achievements, physical attractiveness, or popularity. Instead, it is based on knowing that God created us in his likeness. Criticizing or downgrading ourselves is criticizing what God has made. Because we are like God, we can feel positive about ourselves and our abilities. Knowing that you are a person of infinite worth gives you the freedom to love God, know him personally, and make a valuable contribution to the lives of those around you.*

1:1 Or In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, . . . Or When God began to create the heavens and the earth, . . . 1:26 Or man; Hebrew reads adam. 1:27 Or the man; Hebrew reads ha-adam.

birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

<sup>29</sup>Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food.

<sup>30</sup>And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened.

<sup>31</sup>Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.

**2** So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. <sup>2</sup>On the seventh day God had

finished his work of creation, so he rested\* from all his work. <sup>3</sup>And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

<sup>4</sup>This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

**THE MAN AND WOMAN IN EDEN** When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup>neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. <sup>6</sup>Instead, springs\* came up from the ground and watered all the land. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath

<sup>2:2</sup> Or ceased; also in 2:3. <sup>2:6</sup> Or mist.

## ULTIMATE ISSUES THE ORIGIN OF HUMANITY

“It is now commonly accepted in scientific circles that human beings have become what they are today as a result of millions of years of evolution. Beginning as a one-celled animal. . . .” So reads the textbook used in biology classes in many public high schools.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty. . . .” So begins the book of Genesis. The Christian student faces a conflict: whom to believe?

Probably no other issue has drawn a sharper dividing line between religious and nonreligious thought in our society than that of the origin of the human race. Were we, as Genesis 1 and 2 state, placed here by special divine creation? Or did we evolve from nothing into one-celled animals and on up the zoological chain into *Homo sapiens*? That’s what we’re told by proponents of Darwinian evolution, including many contemporary educators, philosophers, and others. Or perhaps there’s a third option—God created people, using the process of evolution as his “laboratory.”

Many young people feel the uneasy tension that exists among these views. Their spiritual authorities—the Bible, the church, the pastor, and the youth minister—stand firmly in the intentional design camp, while the public educational system, their biology teachers, and probably the majority of their peers lean heavily toward the evolutionist viewpoint. Who’s right?

The Bible doesn’t spell out in precise detail how human beings came to be. It does, however, give us some basic truths. First and foremost, human beings, like all the rest of the universe, are intentional creations of God. The Bible states that fact in the clearest of terms—God is mentioned performing some part of his creative work 31 times in Genesis 1 alone. The idea that we simply materialized out of nothingness is a logical and scientific impossibility. The first law of

thermodynamics tells us that energy (and therefore, matter) can neither be created nor destroyed by natural causes. For the strict Darwinist/evolutionist, this is an impossible dilemma. If only natural causes were involved, how did nothing turn into something? Next, how did it become something animated—how does life evolve from one-celled organism to plant to animal? Then, how does that animated life-form become personal? And finally, how did that living, personal something develop intelligence, morality, personality, and spirituality? By chance? Impossible. Absolutely, scientifically, intellectually, and logically impossible.

The Christian, then, turns to the supernatural: God did it. It is a simple but utterly profound rationale. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” and that sums it up. It does not rule out the possibility of some kind of God-directed evolution; neither does it give it any support. And honest Darwinists will admit that their beliefs involve as much faith and speculation—if not more—as the creationists’. Nobel Prize winner Ernst Chain said in 1970: “To postulate that the development and survival of the fittest is entirely a consequence of chance mutations seems to me a hypothesis based on no evidence and entirely irreconcilable with the facts. . . . It amazes me that [classical evolutionary theories] are swallowed so uncritically and readily, and for such a long time, by so many scientists without a murmur of protest.”

So the Bible, and Genesis in particular, gives us one bedrock fact about the origin of humanity: God created us in his own image. Exactly how he did that remains a matter of faith, open to investigation by scientific inquiry. But the creationist position is as intellectually respectable as any of the alternatives. Every Christian can draw strength and confidence—and awe for his or her Creator—from knowing that. ■

of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person.

<sup>8</sup>Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made. <sup>9</sup>The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup>A river flowed from the land of Eden, watering the garden and then dividing into four branches. <sup>11</sup>The first branch, called the Pishon, flowed around the entire land of Havilah, where gold is found. <sup>12</sup>The gold of that land is exceptionally pure; aromatic resin and onyx stone are also found there. <sup>13</sup>The second branch, called the Gihon, flowed around the entire land of Cush. <sup>14</sup>The third branch, called the Tigris, flowed east of the land of Asshur. The fourth branch is called the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. <sup>16</sup>But the LORD God warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—<sup>17</sup>except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die."

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." <sup>19</sup>So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man\* to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. <sup>20</sup>He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him.

<sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs\* and closed up the opening. <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup>"At last!" the man exclaimed.

"This one is bone from my bone,  
and flesh from my flesh!

She will be called 'woman,'  
because she was taken from 'man.'"

<sup>24</sup>This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

<sup>25</sup>Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

**3 THE MAN AND WOMAN SIN** The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals

**2:19** Or Adam, and so throughout the chapter. **2:21** Or took a part of the man's side. **3:8** Or Adam, and so throughout the chapter.

## DAYS OF CREATION

**DAY 1:**—LIGHT is created and separated from darkness

**DAY 2:**—SKY AND WATER separated

**DAY 3:**—SEA AND LAND distinguished

**DAY 4:**—SUN, MOON, AND STARS preside over day and night; to mark off seasons, days, and years

**DAY 5:**—FISH AND BIRDS fill the waters and the sky

**DAY 6:**—ANIMALS fill the earth  
MAN AND WOMAN care for the earth and commune with God

**DAY 7:**—GOD rested and was pleased

the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

<sup>2</sup>"Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. <sup>3</sup>"It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'"

<sup>4</sup>"You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. <sup>5</sup>"God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil."

<sup>6</sup>The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. <sup>7</sup>At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

<sup>8</sup>When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man\* and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from

### MARRIAGE

**(2:18-24)** God's creative work was not complete until he made woman. He could have made her from the dust of the ground, as he made man. God chose, however, to make her from the man's flesh and bone. In so doing, he illustrated that in marriage man and woman symbolically become one flesh. This is a mystical union of the couple's hearts and lives. Throughout the Bible, God treats this special partnership seriously. The goal in marriage should be more than friendship; it should be oneness. If you are planning to get married one day, are you willing to keep the commitment that makes the two of you one? What helpful habits can you begin to develop that will help you honor that commitment?





the LORD God among the trees. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

<sup>10</sup>He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."

<sup>11</sup>"Who told you that you were naked?" the LORD God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?"

<sup>12</sup>The man replied, "It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it."

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God asked the woman, "What have you done?"

"The serpent deceived me," she replied. "That's why I ate it."

<sup>14</sup>Then the LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this, you are cursed  
more than all animals, domestic  
and wild.

You will crawl on your belly,  
groveling in the dust as long as you live.

<sup>15</sup> And I will cause hostility between you and  
the woman,  
and between your offspring and her  
offspring.

He will strike\* your head,  
and you will strike his heel."

<sup>16</sup>Then he said to the woman,

"I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy,  
and in pain you will give birth.  
And you will desire to control your husband,  
but he will rule over you.\*"

<sup>17</sup>And to the man he said,

"Since you listened to your wife and ate  
from the tree  
whose fruit I commanded you not to eat,  
the ground is cursed because of you.  
All your life you will struggle to scratch a  
living from it.

<sup>18</sup> It will grow thorns and thistles for you,  
though you will eat of its grains.

<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow  
will you have food to eat  
until you return to the ground  
from which you were made.  
For you were made from dust,  
and to dust you will return."

**PARADISE LOST: GOD'S JUDGMENT** <sup>20</sup>Then  
the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because  
she would be the mother of all who live.\* <sup>21</sup>And  
the LORD God made clothing from animal skins  
for Adam and his wife.

<sup>3:15</sup> Or bruise; also in 3:15b. <sup>3:16</sup> Or And though you will have  
desire for your husband, / he will rule over you. <sup>3:20</sup> Eve sounds  
like a Hebrew term that means "to give life."

## WONDER...

*When I read about creation and miracles in  
the Bible, I get confused. How do science  
and the Bible relate?*

The Bible and science debate has raged for many years. Conflicts arise when we look for spiritual answers from science or for scientific answers in the Bible.

A former Vietnam POW told of the time he was allowed to send a tape home to his family. Realizing that this might be the last communication he would ever have with those he loved, the soldier took extensive notes on what he would cover before beginning to make the tape. His goal was to communicate the most important things that his family should know. To his wife, he talked of insurance, mortgage, child rearing, and relatives. To the kids, he personalized each message so that he touched on unique situations they would face the next few years as they grew up without him. To all of them he was careful to say how much he loved them.

That is the purpose behind the Bible. God put 66 books together to let his creation know the most important things about life, about what to do in certain situations, and especially about the extent of his love for them.

For some reason he chose to leave out dinosaurs,

fusion, and gravity (among other significant discoveries). Instead, God included stories of real people with real struggles who faced hardships and trials, many of whom conquered fears and circumstances because they realized that if God was for them, who could be against them! Many other stories are included of those who rejected God and then experienced tragic consequences.

Most of these biblical examples tell us much more about living, surviving, and prospering in a complicated society than science could ever hope to promise.

Your mind matters to God—he wants you to think. Never be afraid to ask tough questions about the Bible or the Christian faith. But also consider the appropriateness of each question. Is this the kind of question the Bible should answer? And do the same with science, asking the right questions.

Creation and the resurrection of Jesus Christ are two of the most important tenets of the Christian faith. Although neither can be duplicated in a laboratory, they also cannot be proven to be false by science.

If God can create life from nothing, as well as raise a man from the dead, he can lead us through this life and the next. We can trust him.



# PERSONALITY PROFILE ADAM & EVE

## UPS:

- *The first human male and female, husband and wife*
- *First to be made in the image of God*
- *First caretakers of creation*
- *First to know God personally*

## DOWNS:

- *Both tended to handle mistakes and sin by excuses or blaming others*
- *Acted without considering consequences*
- *Together they brought sin into the creation*

## STATS:

- *Where: Garden of Eden*
- *Occupation: Caretakers of Eden*
- *Relatives: Cain, Abel, Seth (sons); numerous other children*

**KEY VERSE:** *Genesis 1:27*

**ADAM AND EVE** were the only two humans who never experienced being young. Depending on how you feel, they may or may not have missed a lot! But try to imagine starting out life as an adult—no memories, no mistakes, no past little lessons to help you make adult decisions. . . . Most of us don't realize how much we learn or fail to learn during our growing years until it's too late.

For instance, we have many opportunities to learn as children that while there are some trustworthy people in our lives, not everyone can be trusted. We learn not to immediately trust new advice. Instead, we learn to compare it to wisdom we already have, or even to ask someone who has been trustworthy to evaluate the new advice.

Eve received some advice: "The fruit is great . . . God's being selfish . . . you will be like him if you try it." She trusted this advice even though it was contrary to what God had told her to do. She ate the fruit. She failed to trust the one who had never failed her. Adam made the same mistake. New advice, no questions, no checking—he ate the fruit. Both of them disobeyed God. They had to live with the painful consequences.

Like Adam and Eve, we often have to live with the painful consequences of accepting bad advice. But consequences are reminders of hard lessons. They are not excuses to give up or to repeat the same mistakes.

How do you evaluate the advice you receive? Why is it important to consider the source as well as the advice?

**BOTTOM LINE:** As Adam and Eve's descendants, we all reflect to some degree the image of God.

The basic tendency to sin goes back to the beginning of the human race.

God wants people who are free to sin to choose instead to trust and love him. God's design for marriage was part of Creation.

*Adam and Eve's story is told in Genesis 1:26–5:5. They also are mentioned in 1 Chronicles 1:1; Luke 3:38; Romans 5:12–19; 1 Corinthians 15:21–22, 45–49; 1 Timothy 2:13–14.*

<sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God said, "Look, the human beings\* have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!" <sup>23</sup>So the LORD God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. <sup>24</sup>After sending them out, the LORD God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

**4 CAIN AND ABEL** Now Adam\* had sexual relations with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When she gave birth to Cain, she said, "With the LORD's help, I have produced\* a man!" <sup>2</sup>Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel.

When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. <sup>3</sup>When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some

of his crops as a gift to the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Abel also brought a gift—the best of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his gift, <sup>5</sup>but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected.

<sup>6</sup>"Why are you so angry?" the LORD asked Cain. "Why do you look so dejected? <sup>7</sup>You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master."

<sup>8</sup>One day Cain suggested to his brother, "Let's go out into the fields."<sup>9</sup> And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him.

## BIG MISTAKE

*(4:3–10) Adam and Eve's disobedience (Gen 3) brought sin into the human race. They may have thought their sin (eating a "harmless" piece of fruit) wasn't very bad, but notice how quickly the sin habit developed in the lives of their children. Simple disobedience blossomed into outright murder. Adam and Eve acted only against God, but Cain acted against both God and a person. A small sin has a way of growing out of control. Feeling controlled by the sin habit? The best way to break free is to put yourself under God's control.*

3:22 Or the man; Hebrew reads ha-adam. 4:1a Or the man; also in 4:25. 4:1b Or I have acquired. Cain sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean "produce" or "acquire." 4:8 As in Samaritan Pentateuch, Greek and Syriac versions, and Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text lacks "Let's go out into the fields."

## SATAN'S PLAN

**Doubt**—Makes you question God's Word and his goodness

**Discouragement**—Makes you look at your problems rather than at God

**Diversión**—Makes the wrong things seem attractive so you want them more than the right things

**Defeat**—Makes you feel like a failure, so you don't even try

**Delay**—Makes you put off doing something, so it never gets done

<sup>9</sup>Afterward the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother? Where is Abel?"

"I don't know," Cain responded. "Am I my brother's guardian?"

<sup>10</sup>But the LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground! <sup>11</sup>Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother's blood. <sup>12</sup>No longer will the ground yield good crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless wanderer on the earth."

<sup>13</sup>Cain replied to the LORD, "My punishment\* is too great for me to bear! <sup>14</sup>You have banished me from the land and from your presence; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!"

<sup>15</sup>The LORD replied, "No, for I will give a sevenfold punishment to anyone who kills you." Then the LORD put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him. <sup>16</sup>So Cain left the LORD's presence and settled in the land of Nod,\* east of Eden.

**THE DESCENDANTS OF CAIN** <sup>17</sup>Cain had sexual relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Then Cain founded a city, which he named Enoch, after his son. <sup>18</sup>Enoch had a son named Irad. Irad became the father of\* Mehujael. Mehujael became the father of Methushael. Methushael became the father of Lamech.

<sup>19</sup>Lamech married two women. The first was named Adah, and the second was Zillah.

<sup>20</sup>Adah gave birth to Jabal, who was the first of those who raise livestock and live in tents. <sup>21</sup>His brother's name was Jubal, the first of all who play the harp and flute. <sup>22</sup>Lamech's other wife, Zillah, gave birth to a son named Tubal-cain. He became an expert in forging tools of bronze and iron. Tubal-cain had a sister named Naamah.

<sup>23</sup>One day Lamech said to his wives,

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
listen to me, you wives of Lamech.  
I have killed a man who attacked me,  
a young man who wounded me.

<sup>24</sup> If someone who kills Cain is punished seven times,

**4:13** Or *My sin*. **4:16** *Nod* means "wandering." **4:18** Or *the ancestor of*, and so throughout the verse.

## ABEL PERSONALITY PROFILE

**LET'S FACE IT.** The first time you read Abel's story, maybe you thought you knew all about him. Maybe you had him pegged as the teacher's pet—the one who got all A's in class and always raised his hand with the right answer on his lips. Or maybe he's too close in personality to someone in your family who seems "perfect." Does that sound like your view of him?

Abel was the second child born into the world, but the first one to obey God. He worshiped in a way that pleased God. That really bothered his brother Cain. Maybe Abel suspected that Cain was angry with him. Brothers and sisters know things like that about each other. Yet Abel trusted his brother even when Cain suggested they go out to the field together.

The Bible doesn't tell us why God accepted Abel's gift and did not accept Cain's, but both brothers knew what God expected. Cain seemed to take a shortcut. Only Abel fully obeyed. He is remembered for his obedience and faith (Heb 11:4), and he is called "righteous" (Matt 23:35).

When it comes to obeying God, what's your style? Wholehearted like Abel? Halfhearted like Cain?

**BOTTOM LINE:** God hears those who come to him.

God recognizes the innocent person, and sooner or later he judges the guilty. God prefers wholehearted, rather than halfhearted offerings.

*Abel's story is told in Genesis 4:1-10. He also is mentioned in Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51; Hebrews 11:4; 12:24.*

### UPS:

- First member of the "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11:4
- First shepherd
- First martyr for truth (Matt 23:35)

### STATS:

- Where: Just outside of Eden
- Occupation: Shepherd
- Relatives: Adam and Eve (parents); Cain (brother)

**KEY VERSE:** Hebrews 11:4

then the one who kills me will be punished seventy-seven times!”

**THE BIRTH OF SETH** <sup>25</sup>Adam had sexual relations with his wife again, and she gave birth to another son. She named him Seth,\* for she said, “God has granted me another son in place of Abel, whom Cain killed.” <sup>26</sup>When Seth grew up, he had a son and named him Enosh. At that time people first began to worship the LORD by name.

**5 THE DESCENDANTS OF ADAM** This is the written account of the descendants of Adam. When God created human beings,\* he made them to be like himself. <sup>2</sup>He created them male and female, and he blessed them and called them “human.”

<sup>3</sup>When Adam was 130 years old, he became the father of a son who was just like him—in his very image. He named his son Seth.

<sup>4</sup>After the birth of Seth, Adam lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup>Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

<sup>6</sup>When Seth was 105 years old, he became the father of\* Enosh. <sup>7</sup>After the birth of\* Enosh, Seth lived another 807 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>8</sup>Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.

<sup>9</sup>When Enosh was 90 years old, he became the father of Kenan. <sup>10</sup>After the birth of Kenan, Enosh lived another 815 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>11</sup>Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

<sup>12</sup>When Kenan was 70 years old, he became the father of Mahalalel. <sup>13</sup>After the birth of Mahalalel, Kenan lived another 840 years, and he had other sons and daughters.

<sup>14</sup>Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

<sup>15</sup>When Mahalalel was 65 years old, he became the father of Jared. <sup>16</sup>After the birth of Jared, Mahalalel lived another 830 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>17</sup>Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

<sup>18</sup>When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of Enoch. <sup>19</sup>After the birth of Enoch, Jared lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup>Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

<sup>21</sup>When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of Methuselah. <sup>22</sup>After the birth of

<sup>4:25</sup> Seth probably means “granted”; the name may also mean “appointed.” <sup>5:1</sup> Or man; Hebrew reads adam; similarly in 5:2. <sup>5:6</sup> Or the ancestor of; also in 5:9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25. <sup>5:7</sup> Or the birth of this ancestor of; also in 5:10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 26. <sup>5:29</sup> Noah sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “relief” or “comfort.” <sup>6:2</sup> Hebrew daughters of men; also in 6:4. <sup>6:3</sup> Greek version reads will not remain in.

## MY STORY: Tynisha

*I admit I want my own way most of the time. I'm not going to lie to you. And I want God to do things my way, rather than the other way around. Sometimes, I find myself reacting like Cain—you know, mad at God for not accepting my half-hearted efforts.*

*For me, submitting to God's will is the hardest part about being a Christian. I know it means giving up what I want and totally giving in to what God wants. It also means giving God my best instead of the least I can give. Sometimes, I want to say, “Cut me some slack, God!” But when I think about what God gave up for me and how much he keeps doing for me, I find myself wanting to do things his way.*

Methuselah, Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for another 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup>Enoch lived 365 years, <sup>24</sup>walking in close fellowship with God. Then one day he disappeared, because God took him.

<sup>25</sup>When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of Lamech. <sup>26</sup>After the birth of Lamech, Methuselah lived another 782 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>27</sup>Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died.

<sup>28</sup>When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son. <sup>29</sup>Lamech named his son Noah, for he said, “May he bring us relief\* from our work and the painful labor of farming this ground that the LORD has cursed.” <sup>30</sup>After the birth of Noah, Lamech lived another 595 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup>Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died.

<sup>32</sup>By the time Noah was 500 years old, he was the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

**6 A WORLD GONE WRONG** Then the people began to multiply on the earth, and daughters were born to them. <sup>2</sup>The sons of God saw the beautiful women\* and took any they wanted as their wives. <sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not put up with\* humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years.”

<sup>4</sup>In those days, and for some time after, giant

Nephilites lived on the earth, for whenever the sons of God had intercourse with women, they gave birth to children who became the heroes and famous warriors of ancient times.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. <sup>6</sup>So the LORD was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart. <sup>7</sup>And the LORD said, “I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.” <sup>8</sup>But Noah found favor with the LORD.

**THE STORY OF NOAH** <sup>9</sup>This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. <sup>10</sup>Noah was the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

<sup>11</sup>Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup>God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt. <sup>13</sup>So God said to Noah, “I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for they have filled the earth with violence. Yes, I will wipe them all out along with the earth!

<sup>14</sup>“Build a large boat\* from cypress wood\* and waterproof it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout its interior. <sup>15</sup>Make the boat 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.\* <sup>16</sup>Leave an 18-inch opening\* below the roof all the way around the boat. Put the door on the side, and build three decks inside the boat—lower, middle, and upper.

<sup>17</sup>“Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die. <sup>18</sup>But I will confirm my covenant with you. So enter

the boat—you and your wife and your sons and their wives. <sup>19</sup>Bring a pair of every kind of animal—a male and a female—into the boat with you to keep them alive during the flood.

<sup>20</sup>Pairs of every kind of bird, and every kind of animal, and every kind of small animal that scurries along the ground, will come to you to be kept alive. <sup>21</sup>And be sure to take on board enough food for your family and for all the animals.”

<sup>22</sup>So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.

**7 THE FLOOD COVERS THE EARTH** When everything was ready, the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth, I can see that you alone are righteous. <sup>2</sup>Take with you seven pairs—male and female—of each animal I have approved for eating and for sacrifice,\* and take one pair of each of the others. <sup>3</sup>Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird. There must be a male and a female in each pair to ensure that all life will survive on the earth after the flood. <sup>4</sup>Seven days from now I will make the rains pour down on the earth. And it will rain for forty days and forty nights, until I have wiped from the earth all the living things I have created.”

<sup>5</sup>So Noah did everything as the LORD commanded him.

<sup>6</sup>Noah was 600 years old when the flood covered the earth. <sup>7</sup>He went on board the boat to escape the flood—he and his wife and his sons and their wives. <sup>8</sup>With them were all the various kinds of animals—those approved for eating and for sacrifice and those that were not—along with all the birds and the small animals that scurry along the ground. <sup>9</sup>They entered the boat in pairs, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. <sup>10</sup>After seven days, the waters of the flood came and covered the earth.

<sup>11</sup>When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the underground waters erupted from the earth, and the rain fell in mighty torrents from the sky.

<sup>12</sup>The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights.

<sup>13</sup>That very day Noah had gone into the boat with his wife and his sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—and their wives. <sup>14</sup>With them in the boat were pairs of every kind of animal—domestic and wild, large and small—along with birds of every kind. <sup>15</sup>Two by two they came into

# **WHY WORRY?**

*(7:15-16) Many have wondered how this animal kingdom roundup happened. Did Noah and his sons spend years collecting them? Actually, God took care of that job while Noah and his sons were building the boat. They didn't have to worry about how the animals would arrive.*

*Often we do just the opposite of Noah. We worry about details in our lives over which we have no control, while neglecting specific areas (such as attitudes, relationships, responsibilities) that are under our control. What task has God given you? What aspects of your life seem out of your control? Concentrate on what God has given you to do, and leave the rest to him.*

**6:14a** Traditionally rendered an ark. **6:14b** Or gopher wood.

**6:15** Hebrew 300 cubits [13.8 meters] long, 50 cubits [23 meters]

wide, and 30 cubits [13.8 meters] high. **6:16** Hebrew an opening

of 1 cubit [46 centimeters]. **7:2** Hebrew of each clean animal;

similarly in 7:8.

the boat, representing every living thing that breathes. <sup>16</sup>A male and female of each kind entered, just as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD closed the door behind them.

<sup>17</sup>For forty days the floodwaters grew deeper, covering the ground and lifting the boat high above the earth. <sup>18</sup>As the waters rose higher and higher above the ground, the boat floated safely on the surface. <sup>19</sup>Finally, the water covered even the highest mountains on the earth, <sup>20</sup>rising more than twenty-two feet\* above the highest peaks. <sup>21</sup>All the living things on earth died—birds, domestic animals, wild animals, small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people. <sup>22</sup>Everything that breathed and lived on dry land died. <sup>23</sup>God wiped out every living thing on the earth—people, livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and the birds of the sky. All were destroyed. The only people who survived were Noah and those with him in the boat. <sup>24</sup>And the floodwaters covered the earth for 150 days.

**8 THE FLOOD RECEDES** But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and livestock with him in the boat. He sent a wind

**7:20** Hebrew 15 cubits [6.9 meters]. **8:4** Hebrew on the seventeenth day of the seventh month; see 7:11. **8:5** Hebrew On the first day of the tenth month; see 7:11 and note on 8:4.

to blow across the earth, and the floodwaters began to recede. <sup>2</sup>The underground waters stopped flowing, and the torrential rains from the sky were stopped. <sup>3</sup>So the floodwaters gradually receded from the earth. After 150 days, <sup>4</sup>exactly five months from the time the flood began,\* the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup>Two and a half months later,\* as the waters continued to go down, other mountain peaks became visible.

<sup>6</sup>After another forty days, Noah opened the window he had made in the boat <sup>7</sup>and released a raven. The bird flew back and forth until the floodwaters on the earth had dried up. <sup>8</sup>He also released a dove to see if the water had receded and it could find dry ground. <sup>9</sup>But the dove could find no place to land because the water still covered the ground. So it returned to the boat, and Noah held out his hand and drew the dove back inside. <sup>10</sup>After waiting another seven days, Noah released the dove again. <sup>11</sup>This time the dove returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. Then Noah knew that the floodwaters were almost gone. <sup>12</sup>He waited another seven days and then released the dove again. This time it did not come back.

<sup>13</sup>Noah was now 601 years old. On the first day of the new year, ten and a half months after

#### UPS:

- Only follower of God left in his generation
- Second father of the human race
- Man of patience, consistency, and obedience
- First major shipbuilder in history

#### STATS:

- Where: We're not told how far from the Garden of Eden people had settled.
- Occupations: Farmer, shipbuilder, preacher
- Relatives: Methuselah (grandfather); Lamech (father); Ham, Shem, and Japheth (sons)

**KEY VERSE:** Genesis 6:22

#### PERSONALITY PROFILE

## NOAH

**EVER BEEN DISGUSTED** by the amount of evil you hear about in the world?

Welcome to Noah's world. The story of Noah's life involved not one, but two great and tragic floods. The first was a flood of evil. The world had become so bad that there was only one person left who remembered the God of creation, perfection, and love.

God's response to this flood of evil was a 120-year-long last chance. During those years, he had Noah build a large advertisement of what God was going to do. There's nothing like a huge boat built on dry land to make a point! Of course, everyone thought Noah was crazy. Despite the jeers of his friends and neighbors, Noah continued to build. When the flood came, no one could protest that there had been no warning. For Noah, obedience to God meant a long-term courageous commitment to a project.

Many people have trouble sticking to any project, whether or not it is directed by God. (Does that describe you?) Or we back off when opposition occurs. Noah obeyed God and worked on one project longer than most people even expect to live. The only project we have that is like Noah's is our lives. What is God building in your life? A stronger faith? Perseverance? How are you aiding or hindering his building plan?

**BOTTOM LINE:** God is faithful.

God does not always protect us from trouble, but cares for us in spite of trouble.

Obedience is a long-term commitment.

A man may be faithful, but his sinful nature always travels with him.

Noah's story is told in Genesis 5:29–10:32. He also is mentioned in 1 Chronicles 1:4; Isaiah 54:9; Ezekiel 14:14, 20; Matthew 24:37–38; Luke 3:36; 17:26–27; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5.



the flood began,\* the floodwaters had almost dried up from the earth. Noah lifted back the covering of the boat and saw that the surface of the ground was drying.<sup>14</sup> Two more months went by,\* and at last the earth was dry!

<sup>15</sup>Then God said to Noah,<sup>16</sup> “Leave the boat, all of you—you and your wife, and your sons and their wives.<sup>17</sup> Release all the animals—the birds, the livestock, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—so they can be fruitful and multiply throughout the earth.”

<sup>18</sup>So Noah, his wife, and his sons and their wives left the boat.<sup>19</sup> And all of the large and small animals and birds came out of the boat, pair by pair.

<sup>20</sup>Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and there he sacrificed as burnt offerings the animals and birds that had been approved for that purpose.\*<sup>21</sup> And the LORD was pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice and said to himself, “I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood. I will never again destroy all living things.”

<sup>22</sup>As long as the earth remains, there will be

planting and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night.”

**9 GOD CONFIRMS HIS COVENANT** Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth.<sup>2</sup> All the animals of the earth, all the birds of the sky, all the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the fish in the sea will look on you with fear and terror. I have placed them in your power.<sup>3</sup> I have given them to you for food, just as I have given you grain and vegetables.<sup>4</sup> But you must never eat any meat that still has the lifeblood in it.

<sup>5</sup>“And I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person’s life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die.<sup>6</sup> If anyone takes a human life, that person’s life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings\* in his own image.<sup>7</sup> Now be fruitful and multiply, and repopulate the earth.”

<sup>8</sup>Then God told Noah and his sons,<sup>9</sup> “I hereby confirm my covenant with you and your descendants,<sup>10</sup> and with all the animals that were on the boat with you—the birds, the livestock, and all the wild animals—every living creature on earth.<sup>11</sup> Yes, I am confirming my covenant with you. Never again will floodwaters kill all living creatures; never again will a flood destroy the earth.”

<sup>12</sup>Then God said, “I am giving you a sign of my covenant with you and with all living creatures,

**8:13** Hebrew On the first day of the first month; see 7:11.

**8:14** Hebrew The twenty-seventh day of the second month arrived; see note on 8:13. **8:20** Hebrew every clean animal and every clean bird. **9:6** Or man; Hebrew reads ha-adam.

#### WHAT'S WRONG WITH MURDER?

**(9:5-6)** Here God explains why murder is so wrong: to kill a person is to kill someone made in God's image. All people possess the qualities that distinguish them from animals: morality, reason, creativity, and self-worth. When we interact with others, we interact with beings made by God, beings to whom God offers eternal life. In what ways do your actions show the value you place on human life?

## CHOICES Violence

**On Friday nights** at seven o'clock you're practically guaranteed to find Tyrice and Jordan in one of two places. Check first at Tyrice's. If they're not there, munching pizza and watching horror movies on DVD, try the mall. They probably will be standing in line at the movie theater, anxiously waiting for the chance to buy tickets for the newest cinematic tale of gore.

In the last couple of years, these guys have seen hundreds of violent movies and played video games that are even more violent. It doesn't matter what the plot is—deranged killers on the loose, murderous monsters on the rampage, the latest hit man role-play game—as long as there are some gruesome torture scenes, lots of mutilated bodies, and gallons of blood and guts, Tyrice and Jordan are satisfied.

“That one scene was so weak,” Jordan complains as he ejects a DVD on Friday.

“Which one?” Tyrice responds.

“You know, the one where he shoved the girl into that giant meat grinder. I mean, the blood didn't even look real.”

“Tell me about it!” Tyrice agrees. “Every scene in the whole movie was just ripped off from another movie.”

“Want to watch *Shredded!* now?”

“Naw, let's play *Hit Man Heist*. I wanna try out your new game system. But let me go get some more cherry soda first.”

Ever think that the violent scenes on the news, in movies, or in video games seem almost “tame”? That's what's known as being desensitized. It means you're so used to violence, it doesn't bother you anymore. Know what? Even though God has seen it all, he'll never be desensitized.

Check out God's response to violence in Genesis 6:11–13. What's your response?

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*Need answers to nagging questions? Check out the Scriptures under each topic.*

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