

NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

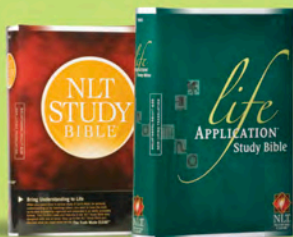


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NLT PARALLEL STUDY BIBLE FEATURE GUIDE

Meaningful Bible application is best done with a thorough knowledge of the Bible in its historical and literary contexts. In order to facilitate this, the *NLT Parallel Study Bible* combines core content from two outstanding study Bibles—the *NLT Study Bible* and the *Life Application Study Bible*—including tools that not only help to explain the meaning of the Bible text, but that also help to apply it to the concerns of everyday life. Below you will find brief descriptions of the excellent tools featured in this Bible:

In-Text Features

- **Commentary Notes in Parallel:** The extensive commentary notes appear in parallel columns, one with notes from the *NLT Study Bible*, the other with notes from the *Life Application Study Bible*. This structure makes it easy to locate notes that focus on historical and literary backgrounds on one hand and life application on the other.
- **Section Introductions:** Each major section of Scripture (Pentateuch, Historical, Poetry, Prophets, Gospels and Acts, Letters and Revelation) begins with a substantial summary article that offers extensive historical context.
- **Book Introductions:** Each Bible book has a helpful introduction, using content from both the *NLT SB* and *LASB*.
- **Running Outline:** A concise outline for each book is included in the book introduction. That outline is then expanded and run throughout the Bible text. These detailed headings describe the book's structure down to the level of individual passages.
- **NLT Textual Notes:** The NLT textual notes accompany the NLT text, highlighting translation decisions, alternate renderings, and issues related to the original-language texts.
- **Cross-References and Word-Study System:** This Bible includes a standard side-column cross-reference system, expanded to include a word-study system that features important Greek and Hebrew terms. These are tied to the Dictionary and Index for Hebrew and Greek Word Studies at the back of this Bible.

Back Features

- **Dictionary and Index for Hebrew and Greek Word Studies:** This index completes the word-study system found in the cross-reference column of this Bible. It includes word studies for 100 Hebrew words and 100 Greek words. For each word, the editors have included enough occurrences to illustrate the range of meanings for that word. Each occurrence is indicated in the NLT text with a superscript letter. The same superscript letter occurs in the cross-reference column under that verse. After the superscript letter, the Hebrew or Greek word is given, followed by a reference number that matches this index (and many other widely available study tools, such as *Strong's Concordance*).
- **Subject Index:** This Bible contains a master index to the study notes to help you locate commentary on the topics most important to you.
- **NLT Dictionary/Concordance:** A concise concordance identifies terms and proper names of special interest and points to the important occurrences of those terms in context. Each word is followed by a brief definition or description.

A NOTE TO READERS

The *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, was first published in 1996. It quickly became one of the most popular Bible translations in the English-speaking world. While the NLT's influence was rapidly growing, the Bible Translation Committee determined that an additional investment in scholarly review and text refinement could make it even better. So shortly after its initial publication, the committee began an eight-year process with the purpose of increasing the level of the NLT's precision without sacrificing its easy-to-understand quality. This second-generation text was completed in 2004, with minor changes subsequently introduced in 2007.

The goal of any Bible translation is to convey the meaning and content of the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts as accurately as possible to contemporary readers. The challenge for our translators was to create a text that would communicate as clearly and powerfully to today's readers as the original texts did to readers and listeners in the ancient biblical world. The resulting translation is easy to read and understand, while also accurately communicating the meaning and content of the original biblical texts. The NLT is a general-purpose text especially good for study, devotional reading, and reading aloud in worship services.

We believe that the New Living Translation—which combines the latest biblical scholarship with a clear, dynamic writing style—will communicate God's word powerfully to all who read it. We publish it with the prayer that God will use it to speak his timeless truth to the church and the world in a fresh, new way.

The Publishers
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INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW LIVING TRANSLATION

Translation Philosophy and Methodology

English Bible translations tend to be governed by one of two general translation theories. The first theory has been called “formal-equivalence,” “literal,” or “word-for-word” translation. According to this theory, the translator attempts to render each word of the original language into English and seeks to preserve the original syntax and sentence structure as much as possible in translation. The second theory has been called “dynamic-equivalence,” “functional-equivalence,” or “thought-for-thought” translation. The goal of this translation theory is to produce in English the closest natural equivalent of the message expressed by the original-language text, both in meaning and in style.

Both of these translation theories have their strengths. A formal-equivalence translation preserves aspects of the original text—including ancient idioms, term consistency, and original-language syntax—that are valuable for scholars and professional study. It allows a reader to trace formal elements of the original-language text through the English translation. A dynamic-equivalence translation, on the other hand, focuses on translating the message of the original-language text. It ensures that the meaning of the text is readily apparent to the contemporary reader. This allows the message to come through with immediacy, without requiring the reader to struggle with foreign idioms and awkward syntax. It also facilitates serious study of the text’s message and clarity in both devotional and public reading.

The pure application of either of these translation philosophies would create translations at opposite ends of the translation spectrum. But in reality, all translations contain a mixture of these two philosophies. A purely formal-equivalence translation would be unintelligible in English, and a purely dynamic-equivalence translation would risk being unfaithful to the original. That is why translations shaped by dynamic-equivalence theory are usually quite literal when the original text is relatively clear, and the translations shaped by formal-equivalence theory are sometimes quite dynamic when the original text is obscure.

The translators of the New Living Translation set out to render the message of the original texts of Scripture into clear, contemporary English. As they did so, they kept the concerns of both formal-equivalence and dynamic-equivalence in mind. On the one hand, they translated as simply and literally as possible when that approach yielded an accurate, clear, and natural English text. Many words and phrases were rendered literally and consistently into English, preserving essential literary and rhetorical devices, ancient metaphors, and word choices that give structure to the text and provide echoes of meaning from one passage to the next.

On the other hand, the translators rendered the message more dynamically when the literal rendering was hard to understand, was misleading, or yielded archaic or foreign wording. They clarified difficult metaphors and terms to aid in the reader’s understanding. The translators first struggled with the meaning of the words and phrases in the ancient context; then they rendered the message into clear, natural English. Their goal was to be both faithful to the ancient texts and eminently readable. The result is a translation that is both exegetically accurate and idiomatically powerful.

Translation Process and Team

To produce an accurate translation of the Bible into contemporary English, the translation team needed the skills necessary to enter into the thought patterns of the ancient authors and then to render their ideas, connotations, and effects into clear, contemporary English. To begin this process, qualified biblical scholars were needed to interpret the meaning of the original text and to check it against our base English translation. In order to guard against personal and theological biases, the scholars needed to represent a diverse group of evangelicals who would employ the best exegetical tools. Then to work alongside the scholars, skilled English stylists were needed to shape the text into clear, contemporary English.

With these concerns in mind, the Bible Translation Committee recruited teams of scholars that represented a broad spectrum of denominations, theological perspectives, and backgrounds within the worldwide evangelical community. (These scholars are listed at the end of this introduction.) Each book of the Bible was assigned to three different scholars with proven expertise in the book or group of books to be reviewed. Each of these scholars made a thorough review of a base translation and submitted suggested revisions to the appropriate Senior Translator. The Senior Translator then reviewed and summarized these suggestions and proposed a first-draft revision of the base text. This draft served as the basis for several additional phases of exegetical and stylistic committee review. Then the Bible Translation Committee jointly reviewed and approved every verse of the final translation.

Throughout the translation and editing process, the Senior Translators and their scholar teams were given a chance to review the editing done by the team of stylists. This ensured that exegetical errors would not be introduced late in the process and that the entire Bible Translation Committee was happy with the final result. By choosing a team of qualified scholars and skilled stylists and by setting up a process that allowed their interaction throughout the process, the New Living Translation has been refined to preserve the essential formal elements of the original biblical texts, while also creating a clear, understandable English text.

The New Living Translation was first published in 1996. Shortly after its initial publication, the Bible Translation Committee began a process of further committee review and translation refinement. The purpose of this continued revision was to increase the level of precision without sacrificing the text’s easy-to-understand quality. This second-edition text was completed in 2004, and an additional update with minor changes was subsequently introduced in 2007. This printing of the New Living Translation reflects the updated 2007 text.

Written to Be Read Aloud

It is evident in Scripture that the biblical documents were written to be read aloud, often in public worship (see Nehemiah 8; Luke 4:16-20; 1 Timothy 4:13; Revelation 1:3). It is still the case today that more people will hear the Bible read aloud in church than are likely to read it for themselves. Therefore, a new translation must communicate with clarity and power when it is read publicly. Clarity was a primary goal for the NLT translators, not only to facilitate private reading and understanding, but also to ensure that it would be excellent for public reading and make an immediate and powerful impact on any listener.

The Texts behind the New Living Translation

The Old Testament translators used the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible as represented in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977), with its extensive system of textual notes; this is an update of Rudolf Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* (Stuttgart, 1937). The translators also further compared the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint and other Greek manuscripts, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac Peshitta, the Latin Vulgate, and any other versions or manuscripts that shed light on the meaning of difficult passages.

The New Testament translators used the two standard editions of the Greek New Testament: the *Greek New Testament*, published by the United Bible Societies (UBS, fourth revised edition, 1993), and *Novum Testamentum Graece*, edited by Nestle and Aland (NA, twenty-seventh edition, 1993). These two editions, which have the same text but differ in punctuation and textual notes, represent, for the most part, the best in modern textual scholarship. However, in cases where strong textual or other scholarly evidence supported the decision, the translators sometimes chose to differ from the UBS and NA Greek texts and followed variant readings found in other ancient witnesses. Significant textual variants of this sort are always noted in the textual notes of the New Living Translation.

Translation Issues

The translators have made a conscious effort to provide a text that can be easily understood by the typical reader of modern English. To this end, we sought to use only vocabulary and language structures in common use today. We avoided using language likely to become quickly dated or that reflects only a narrow subdialect of English, with the goal of making the New Living Translation as broadly useful and timeless as possible.

But our concern for readability goes beyond the concerns of vocabulary and sentence structure. We are also concerned about historical and cultural barriers to understanding the Bible, and we have sought to translate terms shrouded in history and culture in ways that can be immediately understood. To this end:

- We have converted ancient weights and measures (for example, “ephah” [a unit of dry volume] or “cubit” [a unit of length]) to modern English (American) equivalents, since the ancient measures are not generally meaningful to today's readers. Then in the textual footnotes we offer the literal Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek measures, along with modern metric equivalents.
- Instead of translating ancient currency values literally, we have expressed them in common terms that communicate the message. For example, in the Old Testament, “ten shekels of silver” becomes “ten pieces of silver” to convey the intended message. In the New Testament, we have often translated the “denarius” as “the normal daily wage” to facilitate understanding. Then a footnote offers: “Greek a *denarius*, the payment for a full day's labor.” In general, we give a clear English rendering and then state the literal Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek in a textual footnote.
- Since the names of Hebrew months are unknown to most contemporary readers, and since the Hebrew lunar calendar fluctuates from year to year in relation to the solar calendar used today, we have looked for clear ways to communicate the time of year the Hebrew months (such as Abib) refer to. When an expanded or interpretive rendering is given in the text, a textual note gives the literal rendering. Where it is possible to define a specific ancient date in terms of our modern calendar, we use modern dates in the text. A textual footnote then gives the literal Hebrew date and states the rationale for our rendering. For example, Ezra 6:15 pinpoints the date when the postexilic Temple was completed in Jerusalem: “the third day of the month Adar.” This was during the sixth year of King Darius's reign (that is, 515 B.C.). We have translated that date as March 12, with a footnote giving the Hebrew and identifying the year as 515 B.C.

- Since ancient references to the time of day differ from our modern methods of denoting time, we have used renderings that are instantly understandable to the modern reader. Accordingly, we have rendered specific times of day by using approximate equivalents in terms of our common “o'clock” system. On occasion, translations such as “at dawn the next morning” or “as the sun was setting” have been used when the biblical reference is more general.
- When the meaning of a proper name (or a wordplay inherent in a proper name) is relevant to the message of the text, its meaning is often illuminated with a textual footnote. For example, in Exodus 2:10 the text reads: “The princess named him Moses, for she explained, ‘I lifted him out of the water.’” The accompanying footnote reads: “Moses sounds like a Hebrew term that means ‘to lift out.’”

Sometimes, when the actual meaning of a name is clear, that meaning is included in parentheses within the text itself. For example, the text at Genesis 16:11 reads: “You are to name him Ishmael (*which means ‘God hears’*), for the LORD has heard your cry of distress.” Since the original hearers and readers would have instantly understood the meaning of the name “Ishmael,” we have provided modern readers with the same information so they can experience the text in a similar way.

- Many words and phrases carry a great deal of cultural meaning that was obvious to the original readers but needs explanation in our own culture. For example, the phrase “they beat their breasts” (Luke 23:48) in ancient times meant that people were very upset, often in mourning. In our translation we chose to translate this phrase dynamically for clarity: “They went home in *deep sorrow*.” Then we included a footnote with the literal Greek, which reads: “Greek *went home beating their breasts*.” In other similar cases, however, we have sometimes chosen to illuminate the existing literal expression to make it immediately understandable. For example, here we might have expanded the literal Greek phrase to read: “They went home beating their breasts *in sorrow*.” If we had done this, we would not have included a textual footnote, since the literal Greek clearly appears in translation.
- Metaphorical language is sometimes difficult for contemporary readers to understand, so at times we have chosen to translate or illuminate the meaning of a metaphor. For example, the ancient poet writes, “Your neck is *like* the tower of David” (Song of Songs 4:4). We have rendered it “Your neck is *as beautiful as* the tower of David” to clarify the intended positive meaning of the simile. Another example comes in Ecclesiastes 12:3, which can be literally rendered: “Remember him . . . when the grinding women cease because they are few, and the women who look through the windows see dimly.” We have rendered it: “Remember him before your teeth—your few remaining servants—stop grinding; and before your eyes—the women looking through the windows—see dimly.” We clarified such metaphors only when we believed a typical reader might be confused by the literal text.
- When the content of the original language text is poetic in character, we have rendered it in English poetic form. We sought to break lines in ways that clarify and highlight the relationships between phrases of the text. Hebrew poetry often uses parallelism, a literary form where a second phrase (or in some instances a third or fourth) echoes the initial phrase in some way. In Hebrew parallelism, the subsequent parallel phrases continue, while also furthering and sharpening, the thought expressed in the initial line or phrase. Whenever possible, we sought to represent these parallel phrases in natural poetic English.
- The Greek term *hoi Ioudaioi* is literally translated “the Jews” in many English translations. In the Gospel of John, however, this term doesn't always refer to the Jewish people generally. In some contexts, it refers more particularly to the Jewish religious

leaders. We have attempted to capture the meaning in these different contexts by using terms such as “the people” (with a footnote: Greek *the Jewish people*) or “the Jewish leaders,” where appropriate.

- One challenge we faced was how to translate accurately the ancient biblical text that was originally written in a context where male-oriented terms were used to refer to humanity generally. We needed to respect the nature of the ancient context while also trying to make the translation clear to a modern audience that tends to read male-oriented language as applying only to males. Often the original text, though using masculine nouns and pronouns, clearly intends that the message be applied to both men and women. A typical example is found in the New Testament letters, where the believers are called “brothers” (*adelphoi*). Yet it is clear from the content of these letters that they were addressed to all the believers—male and female. Thus, we have usually translated this Greek word as “brothers and sisters” in order to represent the historical situation more accurately.

We have also been sensitive to passages where the text applies generally to human beings or to the human condition. In some instances we have used plural pronouns (they, them) in place of the masculine singular (he, him). For example, a traditional rendering of Proverbs 22:6 is: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” We have rendered it: “Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it.” At times, we have also replaced third person pronouns with the second person to ensure clarity. A traditional rendering of Proverbs 26:27 is: “He who digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone, it will come back on him.” We have rendered it: “If you set a trap for others, you will get caught in it yourself. If you roll a boulder down on others, it will crush you instead.”

We should emphasize, however, that all masculine nouns and pronouns used to represent God (for example, “Father”) have been maintained without exception. All decisions of this kind have been driven by the concern to reflect accurately the intended meaning of the original texts of Scripture.

Lexical Consistency in Terminology

For the sake of clarity, we have translated certain original-language terms consistently, especially within synoptic passages and for commonly repeated rhetorical phrases, and within certain word categories such as divine names and non-theological technical terminology (e.g., liturgical, legal, cultural, zoological, and botanical terms). For theological terms, we have allowed a greater semantic range of acceptable English words or phrases for a single Hebrew or Greek word. We have avoided some theological terms that are not readily understood by many modern readers. For example, we avoided using words such as “justification” and “sanctification,” which are carry-overs from Latin translations. In place of these words, we have provided renderings such as “made right with God” and “made holy.”

The Spelling of Proper Names

Many individuals in the Bible, especially the Old Testament, are known by more than one name (e.g., Uziah/Azariah). For the sake of clarity, we have tried to use a single spelling for any one individual, footnoting the literal spelling whenever we differ from it. This is especially helpful in delineating the kings of Israel and Judah. King Joash/Jehoash of Israel has been consistently called Jehoash, while King Joash/Jehoash of Judah is called Joash. A similar distinction has been used to distinguish between Joram/Jehoram of Israel and Joram/Jehoram of Judah. All such decisions were made with the goal of clarifying the text for the reader. When the ancient biblical writers clearly had a theological purpose in their choice of a variant name (e.g., Esh-baal/Ishbosheth), the different names have been maintained with an explanatory footnote.

For the names Jacob and Israel, which are used interchangeably for both the individual patriarch and the nation, we generally render it “Israel” when it refers to the nation and “Jacob” when it refers to the individual. When our rendering of the name differs from the underlying Hebrew text, we provide a textual footnote, which includes this explanation: “The names ‘Jacob’ and ‘Israel’ are often interchanged throughout the Old Testament, referring sometimes to the individual patriarch and sometimes to the nation.”

The Rendering of Divine Names

In the Old Testament, all appearances of *’el*, *’elohim*, or *’eloah* have been translated “God,” except where the context demands the translation “god(s).” We have generally rendered the tetragrammaton (YHWH) consistently as “the LORD,” utilizing a form with small capitals that is common among English translations. This will distinguish it from the name *’adonai*, which we render “Lord.” When *’adonai* and YHWH appear together, we have rendered it “Sovereign LORD.” When *’elohim* and YHWH appear together, we have rendered it “LORD God.” When YH (the short form of YHWH) and YHWH appear together, we have rendered it “LORD GOD.” When YHWH appears with the term *tseba’oth*, we have rendered it “LORD of Heaven’s Armies” to translate the meaning of the name. In a few cases, we have utilized the transliteration, *Yahweh*, when the personal character of the name is being invoked in contrast to another divine name or the name of some other god (for example, see Exodus 3:15; 6:2-3).

In the Gospels and Acts, the Greek word *christos* has been translated as “Messiah” when the context assumes a Jewish audience. When a Gentile audience can be assumed (which is consistently the case in the Epistles and Revelation), *christos* has been translated as “Christ.” The Greek word *kurios* is consistently translated “Lord,” except that it is translated “LORD” wherever the New Testament text explicitly quotes from the Old Testament, and the text there has it in small capitals.

Textual Footnotes

The New Living Translation provides several kinds of textual footnotes, all designated in the text with an asterisk:

- When for the sake of clarity the NLT renders a difficult or potentially confusing phrase dynamically, we generally give the literal rendering in a textual footnote. This allows the reader to see the literal source of our dynamic rendering and how our translation relates to other more literal translations. These notes are prefaced with “Hebrew,” “Aramaic,” or “Greek,” identifying the language of the underlying source text. For example, in Acts 2:42 we translated the literal “breaking of bread” (from the Greek) as “the Lord’s Supper” to clarify that this verse refers to the ceremonial practice of the church rather than just an ordinary meal. Then we attached a footnote to “the Lord’s Supper,” which reads: “Greek *the breaking of bread*.”
- Textual footnotes are also used to show alternative renderings, prefaced with the word “Or.” These normally occur for passages where an aspect of the meaning is debated. On occasion, we also provide notes on words or phrases that represent a departure from long-standing tradition. These notes are prefaced with “Traditionally rendered.” For example, the footnote to the translation “serious skin disease” at Leviticus 13:2 says: “Traditionally rendered *leprosy*. The Hebrew word used throughout this passage is used to describe various skin diseases.”
- When our translators follow a textual variant that differs significantly from our standard Hebrew or Greek texts (listed earlier), we document that difference with a footnote. We also footnote cases when the NLT excludes a passage that is included in the Greek text known as the *Textus Receptus* (and familiar to readers through its translation in the King James Version). In such cases, we offer a translation of the excluded text in a footnote, even

though it is generally recognized as a later addition to the Greek text and not part of the original Greek New Testament.

- All Old Testament passages that are quoted in the New Testament are identified by a textual footnote at the New Testament location. When the New Testament clearly quotes from the Greek translation of the Old Testament, and when it differs significantly in wording from the Hebrew text, we also place a textual footnote at the Old Testament location. This note includes a rendering of the Greek version, along with a cross-reference to the New Testament passage(s) where it is cited (for example, see notes on Psalms 8:2; 53:3; Proverbs 3:12).
- Some textual footnotes provide cultural and historical information on places, things, and people in the Bible that are probably obscure to modern readers. Such notes should aid the reader in understanding the message of the text. For example, in Acts 12:1, “King Herod” is named in this translation as “King Herod Agrippa” and is identified in a footnote as being “the nephew of Herod Antipas and a grandson of Herod the Great.”
- When the meaning of a proper name (or a wordplay inherent in a proper name) is relevant to the meaning of the text, it is either illuminated with a textual footnote or included within parentheses in the text itself. For example, the footnote concerning the name “Eve” at Genesis 3:20 reads: “*Eve* sounds like a Hebrew term that means ‘to give life.’” This wordplay in the Hebrew illuminates the meaning of the text, which goes on to say that Eve “would be the mother of all who live.”

Cross-References

This edition of the NLT includes a full-column cross-reference system. In this system, symbols differentiate between various kinds of cross-references. The parallel marker (//) designates a cross-referenced passage that is parallel in nature to the passage at hand.

The asterisk (*) designates a cross-reference whose connection involves a direct quote from the other testament. Standard cross-references in this system appear unmarked.

This cross-reference system in this edition also has been enhanced by adding a system of Hebrew and Greek word studies. This takes 100 of the most significant Hebrew words in the Old Testament and 100 Greek words from the New Testament and creates a chain reference which points to key instances of these words so they can be studied in context. In the cross-reference system, each word is attached to a modified *Strong's* number, which points to a helpful key-word glossary at the back of the Bible.

As WE SUBMIT this translation for publication, we recognize that any translation of the Scriptures is subject to limitations and imperfections. Anyone who has attempted to communicate the richness of God's Word into another language will realize it is impossible to make a perfect translation. Recognizing these limitations, we sought God's guidance and wisdom throughout this project. Now we pray that he will accept our efforts and use this translation for the benefit of the church and of all people.

We pray that the New Living Translation will overcome some of the barriers of history, culture, and language that have kept people from reading and understanding God's Word. We hope that readers unfamiliar with the Bible will find the words clear and easy to understand and that readers well versed in the Scriptures will gain a fresh perspective. We pray that readers will gain insight and wisdom for living, but most of all that they will meet the God of the Bible and be forever changed by knowing him.

*The Bible Translation Committee
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OLD TESTAMENT

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE OLD TESTAMENT is God's word to his people through the ages. It describes the creation of the world and humanity, the origin of sin, and the beginning of God's plan of redemption. Through it we gain a much clearer understanding of who God is, what he is doing, and how we should live.

The Old Testament stimulates our imaginations and arouses our emotions. It is made up of gripping stories of real events, stirring poems, and bracing exhortations. It teaches us God's plan, reveals God's will, and helps us make decisions. Reading the Old Testament is like looking into a mirror, for it reveals our soul. It plants a seed that grows, ultimately transforming our character.

Jesus emphasized the importance of understanding the Old Testament (Luke 24:25-27), and Paul was speaking primarily of the Old Testament when he wrote, "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" (2 Tim 3:16). The Old Testament provides us with a profound knowledge of God, ourselves, and the world.

Setting Israel's geography encompasses rugged *wadis* (seasonally dry river beds), agriculturally rich valleys, rolling hills, arid wilderness, and sandy coasts. The Bible describes Israel as a fertile land, one "flowing with milk and honey" (Exod 3:8, 17; Num 13:27). But a lack of rainfall can trigger devastating famines.

The land of Israel was previously called Canaan. Before the people of Israel occupied the land, Canaan was composed of a number of loosely allied city-states, each with its own king. The Canaanite people remained a political threat until the time of King David, who decisively defeated both the Canaanites and the Philistines. The Canaanite worship of Baal and Ashtoreth, however, continued to plague Israel.

Compared to the superpowers of the day (Assyria, Babylon, the Hittites, Egypt, and Persia), Israel was a small but strategically significant nation, located along the main route between Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Various nations controlled Mesopotamia throughout the OT: Assyria to the north, Babylon to the south, and Persia to the east. All three of these powers constantly tried to expand their borders.

Egypt was also a superpower during much of the OT period. The Nile River defined ancient Egypt and was the source of its wealth. During the time between Joseph and the Exodus, Egypt oppressed and enslaved the people of Israel as they grew from a family of seventy individuals to a great nation. Egypt continued to play a role in the story of Israel. Toward the end of Israel's kingdom period, the last desperate kings hoped that Egypt would save Judah from the Babylonians. Egypt turned out to be "a reed that splinters beneath your weight and pierces your hand" (2 Kgs 18:21).

Directly north of Israel was Aram (Syria), with Damascus as its chief city. Israel experienced frequent conflicts with Aram, beginning during the time of David.

Toward the end of the OT period, the Persian empire gained power. Persia occupied the region just east of Mesopotamia. Persia's rise to power began in the mid-500s BC and included the defeat of Babylon in 539 BC. Judea became a province in the Persian empire and remained so until Alexander the Great defeated Persia in 331 BC.

The Old Testament Story The Bible begins with the account of creation (Gen 1–2). God created the heavens, the earth, and the first humans, and he pronounced it all "very good." God provided Eden, a wonderful place for human beings to live. Adam and Eve enjoyed a harmonious and fulfilling relationship with God and with each other.

All this changed quickly. Genesis 3 introduces the serpent, who injected discord into this harmonious world. The serpent taught Eve and Adam to distrust God, and they chose to rebel against God in the belief that they knew better than God. This sin placed a barrier between God and humans and brought death to all humanity. God's holy presence became deadly to Adam and Eve, and God ejected them from Eden. Even in the midst of judgment for their sin, however, God remained involved, working for their redemption.

After Eden, the OT describes a split between those who chose to follow God and those who rejected him: for example, Abel and Seth versus Cain, righteous Noah versus his wicked generation, Isaac versus Ishmael, and Jacob versus Esau and Laban.

A crucial transitional point came when God offered great promises to Abraham. He called Abraham to leave Ur (around 2100/1900 BC) and "go to the land that I will show you" (Gen 12:1). Unlike Adam and Eve, Abraham trusted God and responded obediently to him. As a result, God began carrying out

his redemptive plan for humanity through Abraham and his descendants. Thus, Abraham became the father of a great nation, with many descendants and much land. Genesis 12—Joshua 24 describes how God multiplied the descendants of Abraham and ultimately brought them into possession of the Promised Land of Canaan.

God desired that Abraham's descendants, the nation of Israel, would obey God and prosper in the land he gave them and that the surrounding nations would turn to the true God. However, like Adam and Eve in Eden before them, the Israelites were not satisfied with all that God gave them, instead turning to false gods to find happiness. The rest of the OT continues the story of Israel's persistent sin and God's unwavering commitment to them. Although God consistently judged their sin, he also remained patiently involved with his people.

Following Israel's settlement in Canaan, the period of the judges was marked by political fragmentation and spiritual confusion. God then allowed the people to choose a king to rule them. The monarchy began with the anointing of Saul (around 1050 BC), and it reached a high point with David (1011–971 BC) and the early part of Solomon's reign (971–931 BC). Due to Solomon's sin, however, God divided Israel into two parts, the northern and southern kingdoms, after Solomon's death in 931 BC.

From the beginning of the divided monarchy (931 BC) to the end of the OT period (about 400 BC), the prophets called the people of Israel and Judah to return to God, but most trusted the surrounding nations and their false gods. The northern kingdom of Israel, with its capital Samaria, lasted until 722 BC, when Assyria conquered it and deported its people. The southern kingdom of Judah, with its capital Jerusalem, lasted until the Babylonians defeated it in 586 BC, destroying the Temple and taking many of the people of Judah into exile.

The destruction of Jerusalem and the Exile of the Israelites did not end Israel's story. Even as the prophets had proclaimed devastating judgment on God's people, they also announced a future hope for the remnant. The Exile lasted until 539 BC, when Persia defeated Babylon and allowed the Jews to return to Judah to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. By 515 BC, the Jews had rebuilt a smaller, second Temple (see Ezra 6:15). Ezra arrived in 458 BC and reestablished God's law in Judah. In 445 BC, Nehemiah became governor of Judah and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. During the period after the Exile, many people of Judea finally worshiped the Lord, the God of Israel, exclusively. They also came to recognize the true significance of the OT records: God had been giving them a written revelation of his will, his purposes, and his acts in Israel's history.

The prophecy of Malachi, written a little before 400 BC, closes the OT story. The OT does not end with a strong sense of closure, but with anticipation of even greater things to come. The return to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple was a "down payment" of God's redemption for his people. However, the prophets understood that these events were not the ultimate realization of hope.

The Canon of the Old Testament The text of the OT was written over a period of approximately 1,000 years, beginning with Moses and extending to the Persian period following the Jews' return to Judah from exile. God used Moses and many others—judges like Samuel, kings like David and Solomon, prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah, priests like Ezra, and other people whose names we don't even know—to write parts of Israel's history and literature.

The Order of the Hebrew Bible The order of books in the Hebrew Bible differs from the order of the books in English Bibles (see charts below). The Hebrew Bible is divided into three parts: Instruction (*Torah*), Prophets (*Nebi'im*), and Writings (*Ketubim*). Jesus referred to these divisions as "the law of Moses," "the prophets," and "the Psalms" (Luke 24:44). Jewish readers of the Hebrew Bible sometimes refer to their Scripture by taking the first letters of these three parts and forming the word "Tanak."

The Hebrew Bible combines into twenty-four books the same material that is presented as thirty-nine books in the English OT. In the Hebrew Bible, the first five books constitute the *Torah*. This section, also called the Pentateuch, is unchanged in English Bibles. The second section, the Prophets (*Nebi'im*), has two parts. The Former Prophets, called the historical books in English Bibles, are followed in the Hebrew Bible by the Latter Prophets. The third section, the Writings (*Ketubim*), contains miscellaneous books, including the books of poetry and wisdom.

In later Judaism, the "Five Scrolls" (*Megilloth*) were read at the important feasts and arranged in order of their observance in the holiday calendar: Ruth was read at the Festival of Pentecost, Song of Songs at Passover, Ecclesiastes at the Festival of Shelters, Lamentations at the anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem (the 9th of Ab), and Esther at Purim.

1. Instruction (<i>Torah</i>)	2. Prophets (<i>Nebi'im</i>)	3. Writings (<i>Ketubim</i>)
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	<i>Former Prophets</i> Joshua Judges Samuel (1 & 2) Kings (1 & 2) <i>Latter Prophets</i> Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel The Twelve: Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	Psalms Job Proverbs Five Scrolls (<i>Megilloth</i>): Ruth Song of Songs Ecclesiastes Lamentations Esther Daniel Ezra–Nehemiah Chronicles (1 & 2)

THE HEBREW OLD TESTAMENT

The Order of the English OT English Bibles follow the order of the Greek translation of the OT (the Septuagint), which groups books according to genre and places the books within each genre in chronological order. The Greek and English OT begins with the Pentateuch. Next come the historical narratives; then the poetical books, arranged in chronological order according to their setting or traditional date of composition; and finally the prophets, in two parts. The major (largest) prophets appear in chronological order. They are followed by the twelve minor (shorter) prophets, which also follow a general chronological arrangement.

Interpreting the Old Testament Christians sometimes find the OT difficult to read and understand, with content that seems strange and distant. What is the connection between Christianity and animal sacrifices, religious circumcision, strange dietary laws, the curses of the Psalms, and the history of ancient Israel? To understand the OT better, we must realize that it is an ancient book, with the oldest parts written some 3,500 years ago. It also comes from a culture, the ancient Near East, vastly different from ours. Most importantly, the books were written before the coming of Christ.

The following principles can help readers as they study the OT.

Pentateuch	Historical Books	Poetry and Wisdom	Prophets
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Minor Prophets: Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

THE ENGLISH OLD TESTAMENT

Read Each Passage in Context With the Bible, as with all good literature, gaining a grasp of the whole helps us appreciate and understand the parts. We should not treat a biblical book as a collection of isolated sayings. Rather, the books contain connected stories, instructions, and poems. The meaning of the individual verses can be discovered only in the flow of the whole literary piece, which occurs by reading large blocks at a time. While this principle does not stop us from turning to the middle of a biblical book to read a few verses, we should also seek to develop an understanding of the message of the whole book. In other words, we should exercise great caution not to distort God's message when we read small pieces of Scripture. The book introductions in the *NLT Study Bible* help with this process by providing an overview of each book's contents and message.

Identify the Genre of the Book and Passage Contemporary readers are familiar with a variety of genres such as biographies, textbooks, and newspaper editorials. The content of the OT can also be grouped into genres. The genres in the OT include history (e.g., Samuel), treaty/covenant (e.g., Exod 19–24), sermon (e.g., Deuteronomy), poetry and prayers (e.g., Psalms), wisdom (e.g., Proverbs), prophecy (e.g., Jeremiah), and apocalyptic (e.g., Dan 7–12). Different genres should trigger different reading strategies. Just as we approach a biography differently than we approach a novel, we should try to understand how to approach the different genres of the OT. The book and section introductions in the *NLT Study Bible* offer help in understanding OT genres.

Consider the Historical and Cultural Background of the Book The inspired authors of the OT lived and wrote in a time and culture very distant from ours. We should seek to understand what was taking place during the time period the author describes as well as the (often different) time period when the author was writing. For example, the book of Chronicles describes events that took place from the time of David to the Exile (about 1000–600 BC), but it was probably written in Judea following the return from exile (around 400 BC). Knowing the details and setting—both of the events that are described and of the time in which the book was written—will help us understand Chronicles and its message more clearly. The same holds true for other books of the OT.

Read the Old Testament in the Light of Christ's Coming Jesus said that the whole OT anticipated his coming, suffering, and glory (Luke 24:25-27). Jesus is the center of biblical revelation. The OT anticipates him, and the NT describes him.

NT authors recognized this, so they frequently cited the OT to explain that the glorious events happening in their day were foreshadowed and foretold by the OT. Christians, too, should read the OT from the perspective of the death and resurrection of Christ. While it is crucial first to interpret each OT passage or book in the context of its original audience, we understand the OT better when we read it in light of its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Meaning and Message Scripture describes God's nature and explains his acts in history. By reading the OT, God's people learn about who God is by observing and participating in what he does.

God's Nature, Character, and Acts God's special name in the OT is *Yahweh*. The name comes from the Hebrew word meaning "to be." God told Moses that his name means, "I AM WHO I AM" (Exod 3:14). In other words, God defines himself. Nothing else defines him, but he defines everything. In most English translations, including the NLT, this name for God is usually translated "the LORD" (capitalized).

Most often, the OT describes God by picturing him in relationship. God relates to people as savior, king, shepherd, warrior, husband, and in many other roles. God also reveals who he is by what he does: for example, dividing the Red Sea, causing the walls of Jericho to fall, establishing David as king, allowing the Babylonian army to defeat Jerusalem, and restoring his people to the land after the Exile.

The primary message of the OT is that God saves his people and judges those who resist him. He passionately pursues his sinful people in order to establish a community that is in harmony with him, a kingdom that recognizes and serves its divine King.

There Is One God The OT launches a sustained attack on the prevailing worldview of the ancient Near East, which was that the heavens and the earth, infused with deities, constitute the sum total of reality. The implications of this false worldview, which continues in much of the world today, are many and far-reaching:

- Because the heavens and the earth contain many diverse parts, many gods exist.
- Because the gods are the cosmos, we can manipulate the gods by manipulating the cosmos.

- Because humans are obsessed with sex, the gods are also.
- Because the universe exists without purpose, the gods have no purpose except survival through the acquisition of power—and so humans must pursue power as well.
- Because the gods are selfish and unmerciful, humans must seek their favor by appeasing their appetites.
- Because there are many gods, humans must seek the protection of their own gods against other people's gods.

The OT asserts the very opposite of these beliefs and all others that grow out of a pagan worldview:

- The universe is unified as the creation of the one true God.
- He alone is God, in no way comparable to other so-called gods, and he has a completely separate existence from the cosmos.
- God cannot be manipulated through the cosmos because he is not the cosmos.
- God created the world as a universe with his own unified purposes. Human beings have meaning by fulfilling God's purposes for them.
- Human beings are designed not to appease capricious and power-hungry gods but to worship and obey a loving Creator.
- Ultimate security and peace come from trusting and worshipping the Creator.

From beginning to end, the OT makes these and many related points in order to correct the seductive but incorrect and deadly pagan worldview.

God's Covenants with His People The concept of *covenant* is central to the message of the OT. From Genesis onward, the covenant becomes the most persistent metaphor for God's relationship with his people. A covenant is a relationship that gives promises and imposes obligations. OT covenants were similar to treaties between two nations, where a Great King would enter into a relationship with a vassal nation (see notes on Deut 1:31; 12:6; 26:1-15). The term *covenant* describes the relationships God established with humanity and all creation through Noah (Gen 9:1-17), with Abraham and his descendants (Gen 15:1-21), with Israel through Moses (Exod 19:3-24:11), and with David and his offspring (2 Sam 7:8-16). God's relationship with Adam also had the character of a covenant, complete with commands, promises, and warnings. Each of God's covenants builds on the previous ones; new covenants do not replace the old.

Through his covenants, God established special relationships between himself and his people. In the covenants, God made promises, stated obligations, and threatened judgment if his people did not obey him. When they disobeyed, God sent his prophets to warn his disobedient people, urging them to turn from breaking his law and return to faithful obedience. The curses stipulated in the covenant provide the basis for God's judgment (see Deut 28), which he ultimately brought: Jerusalem was destroyed and most of the Israelites were sent into exile.

Yet God was not finished with his people: He brought some of them back from exile. They had been humbled and were more obedient—they finally stopped worshipping other gods and worshiped the Lord alone. God also promised to make a new covenant with them (Jer 31:31-34). In the context of this new covenant, God would "forgive their wickedness" and "never again remember their sins" (Jer 31:34), causing all Israel finally to know and obey him.

The establishment of the new covenant came with the Messiah. Jesus Christ, God's promised Savior and King, fulfilled the old covenant (Matt 5:17-20) and initiated the new covenant, a relationship with all who trust in him (John 3:16; Acts 2:38-39) based on his own sacrifice (Luke 22:20). Those who participate in this relationship inherit eternal fellowship with God and all his people (John 3:36; 5:24; Rom 5:21; 1 Jn 2:24-25).

INTRODUCTION TO THE PENTATEUCH

THE PENTATEUCH, the first five books of the Bible, tells the story of how sin entered God's perfect world and how God responded. It introduces Abraham and his descendants as agents of blessing in a world under the curse of sin and death. This collection, Israel's foundational documents, thus offers a sobering yet inspiring picture of God's relationship with humankind.

Setting To help them remain true to God, the Israelites who had left Egypt needed a written record of their own history and mission. The Pentateuch recounts the story of God's grace to Israel. God rescued the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt, called them to a special covenant relationship with himself, revealed his will to them, and took care of them as they traveled through the wilderness. Finally, they stood on the verge of entering the land of Canaan, which God had promised to their ancestors.

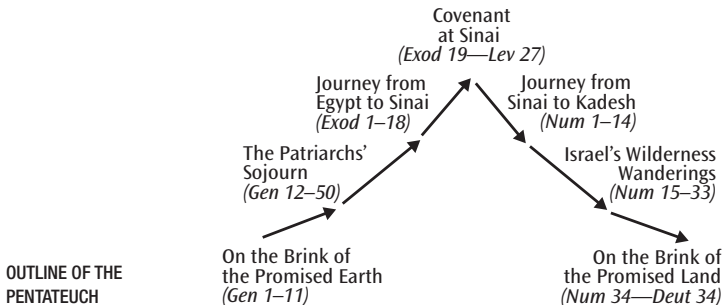
Summary The Pentateuch begins with the book of Genesis, which recounts God's grace in the beginnings of human history and in the lives of Israel's ancestors. God created humankind in his image and authorized humans to govern the world in his place (compare Ps 8). When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, he did not destroy them immediately, but their sin put them and their descendants under the curse of death. Eventually God judged humanity, but mercifully spared righteous Noah and his family. While the curse of sin and death continued to hang over the human race, God called Abraham and his family and established an eternal covenant with them that included a series of generous promises: innumerable descendants, permanent title to the land of Canaan, rule over the land, and blessing to all the nations of the earth. Often, Abraham's descendants proved themselves faithless and unworthy of the privilege. But God kept his commitment to save and bless the human race.

As the book of Exodus opens, the favored family had been enslaved by the Egyptians, and seventy individuals had grown into the nation of Israel. Then God rescued the Israelites from Egypt (Exod 1:1–18:27) so that he could establish them as his covenant people, a holy nation (Exod 19:4–6). God's revelation of himself at Sinai (Exod 19–40) is the pivotal event in the Pentateuch.

In the book of Leviticus, God revealed to his people how to maintain a relationship with him, the means of forgiveness for their sin, and how they should live.

Numbers describes Israel's journey from Sinai to the plains of Moab. God accompanied and provided for his people on their journey, despite their repeated rebellion.

Finally, Deuteronomy records Moses' final pastoral addresses to the community of Israel. Moses detailed the significance of God's covenant and urged the Israelites to stay true to their Redeemer. If the people were to enjoy the blessings of the covenant, they needed to be faithful to God. So Moses challenged them to devote themselves anew to God and God alone as they prepared to cross the Jordan River to enter the Promised Land.



Authorship Jewish and Christian tradition recognizes Moses as the author of the Pentateuch, and many scholars continue to believe that Moses wrote much of the Pentateuch and that the entire document bears his stamp and authority.

Yet this view is not universal. Critical scholars since the mid-1800s have argued that the Pentateuch was written no earlier than the 600s BC and is the product of a complex literary evolution. The prevailing critical view, the *Documentary Hypothesis*, is that Genesis—Deuteronomy were compiled

from various sources by different groups of people. This hypothesis uses the different names for God, repeated stories, and theological emphases to propose that the Pentateuch comes from four sources: J (“Jahwist,” from “Yahweh”), E (“Elohist,” from “Elohim”), D (“Deuteronomic,” from Deuteronomy), and P (“Priestly”). It is thought that these sources were written and collected between 850 BC and 445 BC, gradually being combined and edited until around Ezra’s time (400s BC). This theory has prevailed in the scholarly world since Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918) made it popular.

However, advances in literary studies are again pointing back to Moses as the primary author of the Pentateuch. Critical scholars do not agree on the underlying sources for many passages, and additional sources have been invented to cover passages that do not fit the theory. The theory also fails to satisfactorily explain the emergence of Israel’s monotheism in a totally polytheistic world. It assumes that the biblical writers borrowed most of their religious ideas from pagan predecessors. According to the biblical records, however, everything the Israelites borrowed from their neighbors was polytheistic and idolatrous. Israel’s monotheism could not have been borrowed.

Archaeological discoveries have also called into question many of the criteria used in the Documentary Hypothesis. For instance, other writings from the ancient world confirm the use of different names for God, repeated stories, and ideas that were supposedly too advanced for ancient Israel, and the stories about the patriarchs fit their surrounding culture. These discoveries give background to the texts and contradict the assumptions of the Documentary Hypothesis. Archaeological finds continue to erode the rationale for dating the writing or editing of these books to later eras.

In recent years, with increased awareness of archaeology, critical scholars have begun to study the literary forms in the ancient Near East and in the Bible. *Form criticism* proposed that there was an oral tradition that lay behind the later written texts; by comparing these proposed oral forms, we could understand both the meaning and the function of the text. Other approaches have focused on tracing how the traditions developed, how the traditions were used in religious settings, or how the literary genres functioned.

Such theories often seem unnecessarily complicated and conjectural. Evidence in the Pentateuch itself suggests that Moses did keep records of some of Israel’s experiences during the wilderness wanderings (Exod 17:14; 24:4, 7; 34:27; Num 33:1-2; Deut 31:9, 11). Many features in specific accounts point to a date of composition in the late Bronze Age (1500s–1200s BC, the era of the Exodus). The OT frequently credits Moses with writing the Pentateuch or portions of it (e.g., Josh 1:8; 8:31-32; 1 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 14:6; Ezra 6:18; Neh 13:1; Dan 9:11-13; Mal 4:4), and the New Testament strongly connects the Torah with Moses (Matt 19:8; John 5:46-47; 7:19; Acts 3:22; Rom 10:5).

Do these facts confirm that Moses wrote the Pentateuch as we have it? Not necessarily. Several difficult factors remain. First, following the custom of literary works in the ancient Near East, the Pentateuch nowhere names its author. Second, Moses could not have recorded the account of his own death (Deut 34:1-12). Further, he would not have known of a place in northern Israel called Dan (Gen 14:14; compare Josh 19:47; Judg 18:28-29), and he would not have referred to the conquest of Canaan as a past event (Deut 2:12). Thus, the text itself shows signs that it was updated for completeness (e.g., the death of Moses) or clarification for a later audience (e.g., Gen 14:14; 36:1; Deut 2:10-12). Some suggest that the reason the grammar and syntax of Deuteronomy resemble that of Jeremiah, who lived more than 500 years after Moses, is that later scribes updated the language. Such changes would be similar to updating translations of the Bible by replacing old expressions (“Behold”) with contemporary ones (“Look”).

We can conclude that Moses probably wrote down the speeches he delivered (Deut 31:9-13) and either wrote or arranged for the transcription of the revelation he received on Mount Sinai. It is plausible that he authorized others to write the stories and genealogies of the patriarchs that previously had been passed on orally. Just as the pieces of the Tabernacle were constructed and woven by skilled craftsmen and then finally assembled by Moses (Exod 35–40), so literary craftsmen might have composed bits and pieces that make up the Pentateuch and submitted them to Moses, who ultimately approved them. We can only speculate when these pieces were finally edited in their present form, although the narrative frame of Deuteronomy suggests it occurred sometime after the death of Moses. But by the time David organized Temple worship, the content of the Pentateuch as we know it was apparently fixed.

Genesis and the other books of the Pentateuch can thus be understood as the product of Moses’ genius under God’s inspiration, with later editorial adjustments. Later writers—including the New Testament authors—spoke of “The Torah of Moses,” or “The Book of the Torah of Moses,” or, as Jesus himself said, “Moses . . . wrote about me” (John 5:45-46). Moses might not have been the only author or editor of the Pentateuch, but the Pentateuch fundamentally and substantially comes from Moses, and the Israelites accepted it as bearing the full force of his authority.

Historical Reliability A number of critical scholars view the early chapters of Genesis as mythological *representations* of cosmic and human origins, like similar Babylonian accounts, rather than historical *presentations* of what actually happened. Recently, this same kind of skepticism has characterized views toward the patriarchs, as well as toward Moses and the Exodus. These scholars note that archaeological discoveries do not specifically identify any of the characters or the events in the Pentateuch. However, the issue is not quite so simple. When it comes to archaeological proof, the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Discoveries during the past century enable us to reconstruct patterns of life and an outline of ancient Near Eastern history in which the events described in the Pentateuch are quite at home.

Literary Genres We often call the first five books of the Bible the *Pentateuch* (“five containers”). The New Testament refers to these books as “the law of Moses” (Luke 24:44). This designation comes from the early Greek translators of the Old Testament, who almost always rendered the Hebrew term *torah* as *nomos* (“law”), even though the Hebrew word *torah* actually means “instruction.”

It is misleading to refer to the Pentateuch as “the law,” because large portions are not law at all. It is, however, fitting to call the whole collection *torah* (“instruction”). The Torah includes inspired narrative (Genesis; Exod 1–20; 32–40; Lev 8–10; Numbers); poems and hymns (Gen 49; Exod 15; Deut 32; 33); genealogies (Gen 5, 10, 11, 36); covenant documents (Exod 19–24; Deuteronomy); civil, ceremonial, and moral laws (Exod 21–23); sermons (Deuteronomy); and prayers (Exod 32; Num 14).

Interpretation Several principles guide us as we read and interpret the Pentateuch:

1. These texts were originally read aloud, and the reading involved large sections at a time. Chapter and verse divisions were not part of the original and can detract from our understanding. Each verse and paragraph should be read within its larger context.
2. The Pentateuch was written more than 3,000 years ago. It used ancient literary standards and addressed ancient issues. For example, although Gen 1–2 affects how Christians today respond to theories of evolution, the passage was written to address ancient rather than modern concerns.
3. The differences among genres of text require that we interpret them differently. Therefore, as we read the narratives and delight in the human interest elements, we should recognize that God is the ultimate hero in all the stories. Similarly, as we read the laws of Exodus and Leviticus, we should try to establish the theological significance that these regulations had for OT Israel and reflect on how their message applies to us today.
4. The Pentateuch records only the beginning and the early chapters of the larger story of divine revelation that ultimately culminates in Jesus Christ. The seeds of promise for a Messiah are found in God’s promise to crush the head of the serpent through the offspring of the woman (Gen 3:15); in the offspring of Abraham (Gen 22:17); in the descendants of Judah (Gen 49:10), who received eternal title to the scepter of Israel; and in the star that the pagan prophet Balaam saw on the distant horizon (Num 24:17). These seeds bore fruit later in the biblical record.

Meaning and Message The Pentateuch provided ancient Israel with an awesome picture of God, an image that separated him from the false gods of other nations. Yahweh, the God of Israel, is the only God—no other god exists (Deut 4:32-40). Yahweh, the God of Israel, is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Yahweh, the God of Israel, is a God of grace; he deals patiently with sinners, saving them and calling them to covenant relationship with himself, revealing his name and his will to them, providing for their needs, and walking with them in fellowship and love.

In the account of creation, the Pentateuch reveals important lessons about the universe. God created the world by speaking it into being. He created a perfect world, characterized by light and life and order. But the devastating effects of sin replaced light with darkness, life with death, and peace and order with confusion and pain. Yet God promised ultimate victory, guaranteeing that the head of the serpent who introduced sin to humankind would be crushed.

The Pentateuch introduces us to God’s covenant relationships with human beings. All of God’s covenants are gracious. He invites his human partners into a special relationship and calls on them to respond with holy living because of the special role they play in his plan of redemption. By grace, God drew Noah into covenant relationship by saving him from the Flood. By grace, God called Abraham out of the pagan city of Ur in Babylonia to establish a covenant relationship. By grace, God called Israel to be his people, and at Mount Sinai God confirmed for the nation his covenant with Abraham.

Although the covenants all originated in God’s gracious heart, they still called for an obedient response from the human partners. However, God never wanted this obedience to be driven by a

mere sense of duty or quid pro quo. Instead, the text of the Pentateuch reveals a consistent pattern of conduct for the Lord's people to follow in loving obedience and grateful response to God's saving work. Because God chose Israel to be his people and bound himself to them in covenant relationship, he desired that they express their faithfulness to him.

Despite the unified message of Scripture that people have never been saved by keeping the law (see Gen 15:6; Deut 7:7-8; Ps 40; 51; Isa 1:10-20; Rom 4:1-17; Gal 3:6-7), many people erroneously think that people in the Old Testament were saved by keeping the law. However, grace has always preceded law. God rescued Israel from their slavery in Egypt *before* he gave them the law. While God required the Israelites to obey the law in order to receive blessing and to fulfill the plan God had for them, the motivation for their obedience should have been gratitude that God had saved Israel and revealed his will to them.

In short, the Pentateuch contains the Torah—the instruction—that God gave Israel at its founding. Priests were to teach it and model it (Deut 33:10; 2 Chr 15:3; 19:8; Mal 2:6, 9; compare Ezra 7:10; Jer 18:18; Ezek 7:26). Psalmists praised it (e.g., Ps 19:7-14; 119), prophets appealed to it (Isa 1:10; 5:24; 8:20; 30:9; 51:7), faithful kings ruled by it (1 Kgs 2:2-4; 2 Kgs 14:6; 22:11; 23:25), righteous citizens lived by it (Ps 1:1-6), and unfaithful Israel was judged by it (Deut 28:15-68; 2 Chr 36:11-21). Only Jesus Christ kept it and completely fulfilled it (Matt 3:15).

GENESIS

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 BC

WHERE WRITTEN

In the wilderness during Israel's wanderings, somewhere in the Sinai peninsula

KEY VERSES

"So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (1:27). "I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you" (12:2-3).

KEY PEOPLE

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

GENESIS IS THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS—of the universe and of humanity, of sin and its catastrophic effects, and of God's plan to restore blessing to the world through his chosen people. God began his plan when he called Abraham and made a covenant with him. Genesis traces God's promised blessings from generation to generation, to the time of bondage and the need for redemption from Egypt. It lays the foundation for God's subsequent revelation, and most other books of the Bible draw on its contents. Genesis is a source of instruction, comfort, and edification.

SETTING

When Genesis was written, the people of Israel had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years. They had recently been released from bondage and guided through the desert to meet the Lord at Mount Sinai, where he had established his covenant relationship with them and had given them his law through Moses. Israel was now poised to enter the Promised Land and receive the inheritance that God had promised Abraham.

While enslaved in Egypt, the Israelites had adopted many pagan ideas and customs from their Egyptian masters (e.g., Exod 32:1-4). They were influenced by false concepts of God, the world, and human nature (e.g., Exod 32:1-35), and were reduced to being slaves rather than owners and managers of the land. Perhaps they had forgotten the great promises that God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or perhaps they had concluded that the promises would never be fulfilled.

Before entering the Promised Land, the Israelites needed to understand the nature of God, his world, and their place in it more clearly. They needed to embrace their identity as descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Genesis provided the needed understanding.

OUTLINE

- 1:1–2:3 Creation
- 2:4–4:26 What Happened to the Creation
- 5:1–6:8 The Account of Adam's Descendants
- 6:9–9:29 The Account of Noah's Family
- 10:1–11:9 The Account of Noah's Sons
- 11:10–26 The Account of Shem's Descendants
- 11:27–25:11 The Account of Terah's Descendants
- 25:12–18 The Account of Ishmael's Descendants
- 25:19–35:29 The Account of Isaac's Descendants
- 36:1–37:1 The Account of Esau's Descendants
- 37:2–50:26 The Account of Jacob's Descendants

TIMELINE

- 2166 / 1990 BC*
Abraham is born
- 2091 / 1915 BC
Abraham moves to Canaan
- 2080 / 1904 BC
Ishmael is born
- 2066 / 1890 BC
Sodom and Gomorrah are destroyed, Isaac is born
- 2006 / 1830 BC
Jacob and Esau are born
- 1898 / 1722 BC
Joseph is sold into slavery
- 1885 / 1709 BC
Joseph begins governing Egypt
- 1876 / 1661 BC
Jacob moves to Egypt
- 1446 / 1270 BC
Israel leaves Egypt (the Exodus), moves to Mount Sinai
- 1406 / 1230 BC
Israel enters Canaan

*The two dates harmonize with the traditional "early" chronology and a more recent "late" chronology of the Exodus. All dates are approximate.

1. Creation (1:1–2:3)

In the Beginning (1:1-2)

1 In the beginning God ^acreated the ^bheavens and the ^cearth. * ²The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the ^dSpirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

Six Days of Creation (1:3-31)

Day One: Light, Darkness

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

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

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, . . .*

1:1
Pss 89:11;
102:25
Isa 42:5; 48:13
John 1:1-2
^abara' (1254)
▶ Gen 1:27
^bshamayim (8064)
▶ Exod 16:4
^cerets (0776)
▶ Gen 9:11
1:2
Ps 104:30
Isa 45:18
^druakh (7307)
▶ Gen 45:27
1:3
Pss 33:9; 104:2
Isa 45:7
2 Cor 4:6
1:4
Ps 74:16

NLT STUDY BIBLE LIFE APPLICATION STUDY BIBLE

1:1 *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth:* This statement summarizes the entire creation account (1:3–2:3). Already a key question—Who created the world?—is answered (see also Prov 8:22–31; John 1:1–3). Although the modern naturalistic mindset rejects this question and that of creation’s purpose, Genesis affirms God’s role and purpose in creation. • **The common name for God** (Hebrew *’elohim*) emphasizes his grand supremacy. The word *’elohim* is plural, but the verbs used with it are usually singular, reflecting the consistent scriptural proclamation of a single, all-powerful God. • **created** (Hebrew *bara’*): In the OT, God is always the agent of creation expressed by this verb. It describes the making of something fresh and new—notably the cosmos (1:1, 21; 2:3), humankind (1:27), the Israelite nation (Isa 43:1), and the future new creation (Isa 65:17). • **The heavens and the earth** are the entire ordered cosmos.

1:2 This verse gives the background for the summary in 1:1 and the detailed description in 1:3–2:3. God’s creative utterances bring order to the chaotic state of the universe. • **formless . . . empty** (Hebrew *tohu . . . bohu*): This terse idiom means something like “wild and waste.” It sets a stark contrast to the final ordered state of the heavens and the earth (1:1). • **deep waters** (Hebrew *tehom*): Some scholars say this alludes to the Mesopotamian goddess Tiamat (representing chaos), but Genesis views *tehom* as inhospitable chaos, not as a deity or goddess that God engaged in cosmic battle. • **the Spirit of God:** God directly superintended the creation process.

1:3–13 In the first three days, God formed the chaos into a habitable world.

1:3 *Then God said:* Nothing in 1:1–31 is created apart from God’s powerful word (compare Ps 33:6, 9). • **“Let there be . . . ,” and there was:** God’s command enacted his will to create the world. God is not a part of creation or limited by it; he is the supreme ruler over everything (compare Neh 9:6).

1:4 *Light* is antithetical to chaotic *darkness* (1:2); the light is declared *good* but the darkness is not (compare John 1:5). God is the source of this light (compare 1:14–19). God *separated* the light, as he did water (compare 1:6–8), by his creative word. Light is associated with life and blessing (Job 38:19–20; Ps 19:1–6; 97:11; 104:19–20; Isa 60:19–20) and sets a boundary on the darkness that would destroy cosmic order. Darkness often typifies terror, death, and evil (see 15:12; Job 18:6, 18; Ps 88:12; Eph 5:11–12; 1 Jn 1:5).

1:5 *God called* (or *named*): To name something is to exercise authority over it (see also 2:19–20). • **day:** The Hebrew *yom* can refer to daylight (1:5a), to a 24-hour period (1:5b), or to an unspecified time period (2:4b, “When,” literally *in the day*; compare Exod 20:8–11). • **evening . . . morning:** The Hebrew day began at sundown, just as the first day began with darkness and brought the first morning light.

1:1 *The simple statement that God created the heavens and the earth is one of the most challenging concepts confronting the modern mind. The vast galaxy we live in is spinning at the incredible speed of 490,000 miles an hour. But even at this breakneck speed, our galaxy still needs 200 million years to make one rotation. And there are over one billion other galaxies just like ours in the universe.*

Some scientists say that the number of stars in creation is equal to all the grains of all the sands on all the beaches of the world. Yet this complex sea of spinning stars functions with remarkable order and efficiency. To say that the universe “just happened” or “evolved” requires more faith than to believe that God is behind these amazing statistics. God truly did create a wonderful universe.

1:1 *Just how did God create the earth? This is still a subject of great debate. Some say that with a sudden explosion, the universe appeared. Others say God started the process and the universe evolved over billions of years. Almost every ancient religion has its own story to explain how the earth came to be. And almost every scientist has an opinion on the origin of the universe. But only the Bible shows one supreme God creating the earth out of his great love and giving all people a special place in it. We will never know all the answers to how God created the earth, but the Bible tells us that God did create it. That fact alone gives worth and dignity to all people.*

1:2 *Who created God? To ask that question is to assume there was another creator before God. At some time, however, we are forced to stop asking that question and realize that there had to be something that has always existed. God is that infinite Being who has always been and who was created by no one. This is difficult to understand because finite minds cannot comprehend the infinite. For example, we can try to think of the highest number, but we can’t do it. Likewise, we must not limit the infinite God by our finite understanding.*

1:2 *The statement “the earth was formless and empty” provides the setting for the creation narrative that follows. During the second and third days of creation, God gave form to the universe; during the next three days, God filled the earth with living beings. The “darkness” was dispelled on the first day, when God created light.*

1:2 *The image of the Spirit of God hovering over the earth’s surface is similar to a mother bird caring for and protecting its young (see Deut 32:11–12; Isa 31:5). God’s Spirit was actively involved in the creation of the world (see Job 33:4; Ps 104:30). God’s care and protection are still active.*

1:3–2:7 *How long did it take God to create the world? There are two basic views about the days of creation: (1) Each day was a literal 24-hour period; (2) each day represents an indefinite period of time (even millions of years).*

The Bible does not say how long these time periods were. The real question, however, is not how long God took, but how he did it. God created the earth in an orderly fashion (he did not make plants before light), and he created men and women as unique beings capable of communication with him. No other part of creation can claim that remarkable privilege. It is not important how long it took God to create the world, whether a few days or a few billion years, but that he created it just the way he wanted it.

1:6

Job 26:10
Ps 136:5-6
Isa 40:22
Jer 10:12

1:7

Job 38:8-11
Ps 148:4
Prov 8:28

1:8

Gen 1:5
Job 26:7

1:9

Ps 95:5
Prov 8:29
Jer 5:22
2 Pet 3:5

1:10

Pss 33:7; 95:5

1:11

Gen 2:9
Ps 104:14
Matt 6:30

1:14

Pss 74:16;
104:19

1:15

Gen 1:5

1:16

Pss 8:3; 19:1-6;
136:8-9
1 Cor 15:41

1:18

Jer 33:20, 25

1:20

Gen 2:19
Ps 146:6
⁹*nepesh* (5315)
↳ Gen 2:7

1:21

Ps 104:25-28

Day Two: Sky, Waters

⁶Then God said, "Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth." ⁷And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens. ⁸God called the space "sky."

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

Day Three: Land, Sea, Vegetation

⁹Then God said, "Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear." And that is what happened. ¹⁰God called the dry ground "land" and the waters "seas." And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then 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. ¹²The 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.

¹³And evening passed and morning came, marking the third day.

Day Four: Sun, Moon, Stars

¹⁴Then 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. ¹⁵Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth." And that is what happened. ¹⁶God made two great lights—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God set these lights in the sky to light the earth, ¹⁸to govern the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

¹⁹And evening passed and morning came, marking the fourth day.

Day Five: Birds, Fish

²⁰Then God said, "Let the waters swarm with fish and other ^elife. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind." ²¹So 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. ²²Then God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply. Let the fish fill the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth."

²³And evening passed and morning came, marking the fifth day.

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1:6-8 The creation account describes the appearance of things from a human perspective. The *sky* is viewed as a shiny dome that is a buffer between two collections of water (compare Job 37:18; Ezek 1:22). In the ancient Near East, the cosmos was understood as a three-tier system, with rain originating from the outermost tier (see 7:11-12 and note).

1:9-10 *Let the waters . . . flow together:* Other ancient cultures viewed the sea as a hostile force. Genesis shows God as further restraining chaos (see note on 1:2) by prescribing specific boundaries for the sea. The flood—an act of God's judgment (6:7)—undid these boundaries and returned the earth to chaos (7:1-24).

1:14-31 On days 4–6, God filled the domains that had been formed during days 1–3 (1:3-13).

1:14 *Let them . . . mark the seasons, days, and years:* The movement of the heavenly bodies defined Israel's liturgical calendar, whose roots in creation gave a sacred timing to Israel's festivals and celebrations (see Exod 23:15; Lev 23:4).

1:16 In the surrounding pagan cultures, the *two great lights* were worshiped as deities, but in Genesis they serve God and humanity (see Ps 136:7-9; Jer 31:35). The sun and moon are not named; they are simply called *the larger one* and *the smaller one*. Not including their names may have reminded Israel that they were not gods. • *govern:* Compare 1:26, 28; Ps 136:9. • *the stars:* The starry heavens testify to God's creative power as they proclaim his glory (Ps 19:1; 148:3). They do not predict the future, as Israel's neighbors believed (see Jer 10:2).

1:21 Contrary to the pagan idea that the *great sea creatures* were co-eternal with God, Genesis states that God *created* them and is sovereign over them. The Hebrew word *tanninim* ("creatures") elsewhere refers to crocodiles (Ezek 29:3), powerful monsters (Jer 51:34), or the sea creature, Leviathan (Isa 27:1; compare Job 41:1-34).

1:22 *God blessed them:* God's blessing commissions and enables the fulfillment of what God has spoken. • *Let the fish . . . let the birds:* These directives define the blessing. The fish and birds are fertile by God's command, not by pagan ritual, as some of Israel's neighbors thought.

1:6 *The "space between the waters" was a separation between the sea and the mists of the skies.*

Day Six: Animals, Humankind

²⁴Then 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. ²⁵God 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.

1:24
Gen 2:19
1:26
Gen 5:1; 9:6
Ps 8:6-8
Acts 17:28-29
1:27
*Matt 19:4
*Mark 10:6
'bara' (1254)
▶ Gen 2:3

²⁶Then 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.”

²⁷ So God ^fcreated human beings* in his own image. In the image of God he ^fcreated them; male and female he ^fcreated them.

²⁸Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

²⁹Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. ³⁰And 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.

³¹Then 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.

1:29
Gen 9:3
Pss 104:13;
136:25
1:30
Pss 104:14;
145:15
1:31
Ps 104:24
2:1
Deut 4:19; 17:3
Ps 104:2
Isa 45:12
2:2
Exod 20:11;
31:17
*Heb 4:4
2:3
Isa 58:13

Sabbath Rest (2:1-3)

2 So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. ²On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested* from all his work.

1:26 Or *man*; Hebrew reads *adam*. **1:27** Or *the man*; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*. **2:2** Or *ceased*; also in 2:3.

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1:26 *Let us make* is more personal than the remote “Let there be” (e.g., 1:3, 6). • The plural *us* has inspired several explanations: (1) the Trinity; (2) the plural to denote majesty; (3) a plural to show deliberation with the self; and (4) God speaking with his heavenly court of angels. The concept of the Trinity—one true God who exists eternally in three distinct persons—was revealed at a later stage in redemptive history, making it unlikely that the human author intended that here. Hebrew scholars generally dismiss the plural of majesty view because the grammar does not clearly support it (the plural of majesty has not been demonstrated to be communicated purely through a plural verb). The plural of self-deliberation also lacks evidence; the only clear examples refer to Israel as a corporate unity (e.g., 2 Sam 24:14). God’s speaking to the heavenly court, however, is well-attested in the OT (see 3:22; 11:7; 1 Kgs 22:19-22; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; 38:7; Ps 89:5-6; Isa 6:1-8; Dan 10:12-13). • The descriptors *in our image* and *like us* are virtually synonymous in Hebrew. Humans enjoy a unique relationship with God. • **They will reign**: Humans represent the Creator as his ambassadors, vice-regents, and administrators on earth.

1:26 *In what ways are we made in God’s image? God obviously did not create us exactly like himself because God has no physical body. Instead, we are reflections of God’s glory. Some feel that our reason, creativity, speech, or self-determination is the image of God. More likely, it is our entire self that reflects the image of God. We will never be totally like God because he is our supreme Creator. But we do have the ability to reflect his character in our love, patience, forgiveness, kindness, and faithfulness.*

Knowing that we are made in God’s image and thus share many of his characteristics provides a solid basis for self-worth. Human worth is not based on possessions, achievements, physical attractiveness, or public acclaim. Instead, it is based on being made in God’s image. Because we bear God’s image, we can feel positive about ourselves. Criticizing or downgrading ourselves is criticizing what God has made and the abilities he has given us. Knowing that you are a person of worth helps you love God, know him personally, and make a valuable contribution to those around you.

1:27 The first poetry of Genesis reflectively celebrates God’s climactic feat in creating humankind. • **human beings** (Or *the man*; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*): This term is often used to denote humanity collectively (see 6:1, 5-7; 9:5-6). Though traditionally translated “man,” gender is not at issue here; both **male and female** are included.

1:27 *God made both man and woman in his image. Neither man nor woman is made more in the image of God than the other. From the beginning the Bible places both man and woman at the pinnacle of God’s creation. Neither sex is exalted, and neither is depreciated.*

1:28 **God blessed them**: See note on 1:22; see also 17:16; 48:16; Deut 7:13. • **said**: God’s message to humankind is direct and intimate; we are stewards of his delegated authority. • **govern**. . . . **Reign**: As God’s vice-regents, humans are entrusted with the care and management of the world God created (see also 9:2; Ps 8:5-8).

1:28 *To “reign over” something is to have absolute authority and control over it. God has ultimate rule over the earth, and he exercises his authority with loving care. When God delegated some of his authority to the human race, he expected us to take responsibility for the environment and the other creatures that share our planet. We must not be careless and wasteful as we fulfill this charge. God was careful how he made this earth. We must not be careless about how we take care of it.*

1:31 The Creator declares his work **good** seven times in ch 1; following the creation of human beings, God declares it all **very good**.

1:31 *God saw that all he had created was excellent in every way. You are part of God’s creation, and he is pleased with how he made you. If at times you feel worthless or of little value, remember that God made you for a good reason. You are valuable to him.*

2:1-3 Humankind is the high point of God’s creative acts (1:26-31), while day 7 is the climax of the creation week. When God **rested**, he endorsed all of creation—there was nothing more to do! This seven-day framework structured Israel’s week, with the **seventh day** as the precedent for their weekly Sabbath. The Sabbath was intended to celebrate God’s finished work; the seventh day would be set apart as **holy** and dedicated to the Creator, who also rested (see Exod 20:8-11; 31:12-17; compare Matt 12:1-8; Rom 14:5-6; Col 2:16-17; Heb 4:1-11).

2:2-3 *We live in an action-oriented world! There always seems to be something to do and no time to rest. Yet God demonstrated that rest is appropriate and right. If God himself rested from his work, we should not be surprised that we also need rest. Jesus demonstrated this principle when he and his disciples left in a boat to get away from the*

^abarak (1288)
 ▶ Gen 12:2
^bbara' (1254)
 ▶ Gen 6:7

³And God ^ablessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of ^bcreation.

2:4
 Gen 1:3-31
 Job 38:4-11

2. What Happened to the Creation (2:4–4:26)

2:5
 Gen 1:11

Superscription (2:4a)

⁴This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

2:7
 Gen 3:19
 Job 33:4
 Ps 103:14
 Ezek 37:5
 Zech 12:1
 John 20:22
¹ Cor 15:45
^cnepesh (5315)
 ▶ Deut 12:23

Creation of Man and Woman (2:4b-25)

Creation of Man

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵neither 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. ⁶Instead, springs* came up from the ground and watered all the land. ⁷Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living ^eperson.

2:8
 Gen 3:23; 13:10
 Isa 51:3
 Ezek 28:13

Creation of the Garden

2:9
 Gen 3:22
 Prov 3:18; 11:30
 Ezek 47:12
 Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14

⁸Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made. ⁹The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were

2:6 Or *mist*.

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2:3 The first six days of creation involved separation (light from darkness, day from night, water from dry land). The last act of creation separated what is ordinary from what is *holy*, thus laying the foundation for Israel's worship. It also anticipated a coming age of rest (Heb 4:1-11; 12:2; 13:14).

2:4–4:26 This account (see note on 2:4) of the heavens and the earth is not a second creation account; rather, it is a theological and historical expansion on 1:1–2:3. The focus is now on what the cosmos produced rather than on its creation. Special attention is given to the first man and woman. As the story progresses, it is colored by contrasts of good and evil, knowledge and ignorance, life and death, harmony and discord.

2:4 *This is the account* (literally *These are the generations*): This or a similar phrase is repeated throughout Genesis, creating an internal outline for the book. In other occurrences, it introduces the genealogy or story of a key personality (5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2). • Some have argued that the first half of 2:4 belongs with 1:1–2:3, but it is more likely the introduction to the account that follows. • **LORD God** (Hebrew *Yahweh Elohim*) is the second name used for God in the early chapters of Genesis. *Elohim* (1:1–2:3) describes the all-powerful creator God. *Yahweh Elohim* speaks of the eternal God who formed a lasting covenant with Israel (Exod 3:6, 13–15). Accordingly, 2:4–25 focuses on God as provider more than as creator. The three themes of sexuality, dominion, and food in 1:1–31 are now addressed in reverse order (food, 2:8–17; dominion, 2:18–20; sexuality, 2:21–25).

2:5 *cultivate*: Work does not result from sin; it was part of the original structure of creation and is directly tied to human identity and purpose (1:28; 2:15).

2:6 *springs* (Or *mist*, as traditionally rendered): The word refers to subterranean springs that rose to the surface of the ground.

2:7 In 1:1–2:3, creation happens at a distance, by divine command ("Let there be . . . and that is what happened"). In this account, the creative act is much more intimate (see also 2:8–9, 21–22). • **from the dust of the ground**: In Hebrew, *'adamah* ("ground") forms a wordplay with *'adam* ("man"). The earth remains the definitive reference point for humans, who in death return to dust (3:17–19; 4:11; Job 4:19; 10:8–9; Isa 29:16). • **breathed . . . into the man's nostrils**: God's *breath* is not imparted to other animals; only humans are formed in God's image (1:27) and enjoy dialogue with their Creator (2:16–17; 3:8–13). They alone have spiritual awareness and moral conscience (see Job 32:8).

2:8–14 Analogous to the sacred time marked out on the seventh day of creation (2:2–3), the sacred space of the **garden in Eden** was separate from the surrounding world. It functioned as a garden-temple or sanctuary because the Lord manifested his presence there in a special way.

2:8 *Eden* was the general location in which the **garden** was placed, not the garden itself. The term could mean "plain," "delight," or "fertility." The description that follows favors the idea of fertility. • **in the east**: The exact location of Eden is left to speculation, but it was east of Canaan, Israel's later home. • God **placed the man** in the garden for divine fellowship and physical blessing (see also 2:15 and note).

2:9 Beauty and bounty characterized humanity's original environment (compare 13:10). • The **tree of life** represented God's presence and provision. The one who ate of it would have everlasting life (3:22), which made it a rich image for later Israelite and Christian reflection (Prov 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19). • Eating the fruit of the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil** enabled humanity's capacity for wisdom (3:6) and moral discernment (3:5, 22; compare Deut 1:39, "innocent"). Eating from it represented a human grasp for autonomy and wisdom that were God's alone (compare Prov 30:1–4). Humans sidestepped God's revelation as the means of moral discernment, flaunting their independence rather than submitting to God's will (compare Prov 1:7). Choosing human wisdom over God's instruction brings death and destruction (see Ps 19:7–9; Ezek 28:6, 15–17).

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crowds (see Mark 6:31–32). Our times of rest refresh us for times of service.

2:3 *That God blessed the seventh day means that he set it apart for holy use. The Ten Commandments emphasize this distinction by commanding the observance of the Sabbath* (Exod 20:1–17).

2:7 *"From the dust of the ground" implies that there is nothing fancy about the chemical elements making up our bodies. The body is a lifeless shell until God brings it alive with his "breath of life." When God removes his life-giving breath, our bodies once again return to dust. Our life and worth, therefore, come from God's Spirit. Many boast of their achievements and abilities as though they were the originator of their own strengths. Others feel worthless because their abilities do not stand out. In reality, our worth comes not from our achievements but from the God of the universe, who chooses to give us the mysterious and miraculous gift of life. Value life, as he does.*

2:9, 16–17 *Were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil real trees? Two views are often expressed: (1) The trees were real, but symbolic. Eternal life with God was pictured as eating from the tree of life. (2) The trees were real, possessing special properties. By eating the fruit from the tree of life, Adam and Eve could have had eternal life, enjoying a permanent relationship as God's children.*

In either case, Adam and Eve's sin separated them from the tree of life and thus kept them from obtaining eternal life. Interestingly, the tree of life again appears in a description in Rev 22 of people enjoying eternal life with God.

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.

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

The First Command

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

Creation of the Woman

¹⁸Then 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.” ¹⁹So 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. ²⁰He 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.

²¹So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD

2:19 Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter.

2:10
Rev 22:1, 17

2:11
Gen 25:18

2:14
Gen 15:18
Deut 1:7
Dan 10:4

2:15
Gen 2:8

2:16
Gen 3:1-3

2:17
Gen 3:1, 16-17
Deut 30:15,
19-20
Rom 6:23
Jas 1:15

2:18
Gen 3:12
Prov 18:22

2:19
Gen 1:20-25

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2:10 The *river* that was *watering the garden* was a material blessing (bringing agricultural fertility) and a symbol of God's presence (compare Ps 46:4; Ezek 47:1-12; Zech 14:8; Rev 22:1-2). • *dividing into four branches* (literally *heads*): The common understanding is that one river had its source in Eden, flowed down through the garden, and then split into the four rivers named.

2:11 *The Pishon* and the Gihon (2:13) cannot be identified with certainty. If *the land of Havilah* was in southeast Arabia or on the African coast, as some biblical data suggest (see 10:7; 25:18; 1 Sam 15:7), then the Pishon was possibly the Nile River. Josephus thought that Havilah and the Pishon were in India (*Antiquities* 1.1.3). Two other proposals suggest: (1) rivers in the mountains of eastern Turkey where the Tigris and Euphrates (2:14) also flow, and (2) the marshy delta near the Persian Gulf. Current geographical conditions make any theory impossible to prove conclusively.

2:12 The magnificence and fertility of the garden are pictured as spreading to the surrounding regions through the rivers flowing out from it. The four rivers possibly imply that the garden's bounty flowed out to the four corners of the earth.

2:13 *Gihon*: Though unknown, proposals have included the Nile (as in the Greek version of Jer 2:18; Josephus, *Antiquities* 1.1.3), the Jordan, or, according to Jewish tradition, a river that formerly ran through the Kidron Valley (1 Kgs 1:33; 2 Chr 33:14). • Although *Cush* is the name of ancient Ethiopia, Mesopotamian regions associated with Babylon seem to be the immediate setting (see 10:8); Cush is possibly the land of the Kassites, a dynasty ruling in Babylonia.

2:14 *Tigris . . . Euphrates*: These well-known rivers flow from the mountains of eastern Turkey.

2:15 *to tend and watch over*: The garden required maintenance and oversight. Tending the *Garden* was humanity's dignifying work.

2:17 *except* (literally *but you must not eat*): This prohibition is given in the same legal format as Israel's Ten Commandments (see Exod 20:1-17; Deut 5:6-21). The Lord built law and obedience into the fabric of his covenant relationship with humanity. • *the knowledge of good and evil*: See note on 2:9. • *you are sure to die*: The consequences of disobedience would be immediate spiritual death (loss of relationship with God) and eventual physical death (see 3:22-23; Eccl 12:6-7).

2:18-23 As human creation was the climax of ch 1, so human intimacy is the high point of ch 2. God's concern for mutual human support and companionship finds no parallel in ancient Near Eastern literature.

2:18 *It is not good*: This is God's first negative assessment of an otherwise excellent creation (1:31). *The LORD God* is portrayed as a father who obtains a bride for his son (compare 24:1-67). • The answer to the man's need is *a helper who is just right for him*; she is his perfect complement, made in the same image of God (1:26-27), given the same commission (1:28; 2:15), and obligated by the same prohibition (2:17). The man cannot fulfill his created purpose alone.

2:19-20 *to see what he would call them*: Following God's example (1:5, 8, 10), the man *chose a name for each* of the creatures. In so doing, he was exercising his reign over creation (1:26, 28).

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2:15-17 *God gave Adam responsibility for the garden and told him not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Rather than physically preventing him from eating, God gave Adam a choice and, thus, the possibility of choosing wrongly. God still gives us choices, and we, too, often choose wrongly. These wrong choices may cause us pain, but they can help us learn and grow and make better choices in the future. Living with the consequences of our choices teaches us to think and choose more carefully.*

2:16-17 *Why would God place a tree in the garden and then forbid Adam to eat from it? God wanted Adam to obey, but God gave Adam the freedom to choose. Without choice, Adam would have been like a prisoner, and his obedience would have been hollow. The two trees provided an exercise in choice, with rewards for choosing to obey and sad consequences for choosing to disobey. When you are faced with the choice, always choose to obey God.*

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 for us that in marriage man and woman symbolically are united into one. This is a mystical union of the couple's hearts and lives. Throughout the Bible, God treats this special partnership seriously: If you are married or planning to be married, are you willing to keep the commitment that makes the two of you one? The goal in marriage should be more than friendship; it should be oneness.*

2:21-23 *God forms and equips men and women for various tasks, but all these tasks lead to the same goal—honoring God. Man gives life to woman; woman gives life to the world. Each role carries exclusive privileges; there is no room for thinking that one sex is superior to the other.*

2:22
1 Cor 11:8-9
1 Tim 2:13

2:23
Gen 29:14
Eph 5:28-30

2:24
*Matt 19:5
*1 Cor 6:16
Eph 5:31

2:25
Gen 3:7, 10-11

3:1
2 Cor 11:3
Rev 12:9; 20:2

3:2
Gen 2:16

3:3
Gen 2:17
Exod 19:12

God took out one of the man's ribs* and closed up the opening. ²²Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

²³"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.'"

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

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

The Ruin of God's Creation (3:1-24)

Temptation to Sin

3 The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals 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?"

²"Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. ³"It's only the

2:21 Or *took a part of the man's side.*

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2:23 Adam recognized the woman as a "helper just right for him" (2:20). His celebration of her in poetry and song observed his unity with her, not their distinctions (compare 29:14). • Adam declares that "*She will be called 'woman'* (Hebrew *'ishah*) *because she was taken from 'man'* (Hebrew *'ish*)." He understood the nature of their connection (see Eph 5:28-29). Adam had earlier assessed the animals without finding the characteristics he needed in a partner. How different this evaluation is!

2:24 Marriage between a man and a woman is not just a human social construct but is rooted in the created order. • *a man leaves . . . and is joined:* Marriage entails a shift of loyalty from parents to spouse. • *the two are united into one:* Marriage and its commitments make it the most fundamental covenant relationship observed among humans. Marriage is a powerful image of Israel's covenant with God (Hos 2:14-23) and of Christ's relationship to the church (Eph 5:22-32). Marriage is designed as an inseparable, exclusive relationship between a man and a woman. The family unit it creates is the basic building block of human society.

2:25 both naked: Prior to the Fall (ch 3), nakedness reflected innocence and trust. After the Fall, it denoted vulnerability and *shame* (see 9:22-23; Lev 18:1-23; Isa 47:3). Shame is more than embarrassment; it connotes exploitation and humiliation (see Deut 28:48; Isa 58:7; Jas 2:15-16).

3:1 Genesis describes the deceiver as a *serpent*, one of the animals God created (see also 3:14 and note). He is later identified as Satan, the great enemy of God's people (Rev 12:9; 20:2). His manipulative language and his disguise as a serpent, *the shrewdest of all* creatures, show him as a master deceiver. Satan has various methods for opposing God's people (see 1 Chr 21:1; Zech 3:1-2); deception remains among his key strategies (compare 2 Cor 11:3, 14). The Hebrew term for shrewd (*'arum*) can be positive ("prudent," Prov 14:8) or negative ("cunning," as here; Job 5:12). It forms a wordplay with "naked" (*'arumim*) in 2:25. Adam and Eve were naked and vulnerable; the serpent was shrewd and cunning. • Probably the serpent *asked the woman* because the prohibition was given to Adam prior to Eve's creation (see 2:16-17). Adam was probably aware of the serpent's cunning, having assessed and named all the animals before Eve was created (2:19-20, 23). • *Did God really say?* The deceiver began by twisting God's language to cast doubt on God's goodness. God's original prohibition applied to only one tree (2:16-17), not to all (*any*) of them.

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2:25 Have you ever noticed how a little child can run naked through a room full of strangers without embarrassment? He is not aware of his nakedness, just as Adam and Eve were not embarrassed in their innocence. But after Adam and Eve sinned, shame and awkwardness followed, creating barriers between themselves and God. We often experience these same barriers in marriage. Ideally a husband and wife have no barriers, feeling no embarrassment in exposing themselves to each other or to God. But, like Adam and Eve (3:7), we put on fig leaves (barriers) because we have areas we don't want our spouse, or God, to know about. Then we hide, just as Adam and Eve hid from God. In marriage, lack of spiritual, emotional, and intellectual intimacy usually precedes a breakdown of physical intimacy. In the same way, when we fail to expose our secret thoughts to God, we break our lines of communication with him.

3:1-6 The serpent, Satan, tempted Eve by getting her to doubt God's goodness. He implied that God was strict, stingy, and selfish for not wanting Eve to share his knowledge of good and evil. Satan made Eve forget all that God had given her and, instead, focus on what God had forbidden. We fall into trouble, too, when we dwell on what God forbids rather than on the countless blessings and promises God has given us. The next time you are feeling sorry for yourself and what you don't have, consider all you do have and thank God. Then your doubts won't lead you into sin.

3:1 Disguised as a shrewd serpent, Satan came to tempt Eve. At one time, Satan had been a glorious angel. But in pride, he rebelled against God and was cast out of heaven. As a created being, Satan has definite limitations. Although he is trying to tempt everyone away from God, he will not be the final victor. In 3:14-15, God promises that Satan will be crushed by one of the woman's offspring, the Messiah.

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.’”

“‘You won’t die!’ the serpent replied to the woman. “‘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.’”

Man and Woman Rebel against the Creator

⁶The 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. ⁷At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

God Interrogates the Man and Woman

⁸When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man* and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. ⁹Then the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

3:8 Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter.

3:4
John 8:44
2 Cor 11:3

3:5
Gen 2:17; 3:22
Isa 14:14
Ezek 28:2

3:6
2 Cor 11:3
1 Tim 2:14
Jas 1:14-15
1 Jn 2:16

3:8
Lev 26:12
Deut 23:14
Job 31:33

3:9
Gen 4:9; 18:9

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3:4-5 *You won't die!* This is the exact negation of God's clear and emphatic words: “you are sure to die” (2:17). The serpent capitalizes on the woman's uncertainty by baldly denying the penalty and quickly diverting her attention to the supposed prize—to **be like God, knowing both good and evil**. The deceiver falsely implies that this would be an unqualified good for them. The term rendered God is *Elohim*; it can also mean “divine beings” (i.e., God and the angels; e.g., Ps 29:1; 89:7).

3:6 *She saw . . . she wanted:* The woman made two grave errors. (1) She assumed the right to decide what was and was not good, though God alone has this right; and (2) she coveted God's wisdom (see Deut 5:21). • **her husband . . . with her:** Although Scripture is clear about the woman's central role in the Fall (compare 1 Tim 2:14), the man was clearly present and culpable as well. He comes to center stage in the verses that follow and in biblical theology. The consequence of his sin for the entire human race was immense. The Good News is that in Jesus Christ, the “second Adam,” God has made salvation universally available (Rom 5:12-21).

3:7 *Shame* is opposite to the naked innocence Adam and Eve enjoyed prior to their rebellion (2:25). Their relationship with one another and with God was fractured. • **sewed fig leaves together:** These covered their physical bodies, but not their shame. They could not mend their broken relationships (see also 3:21).

3:8 *When the cool evening breezes were blowing:* The Hebrew has traditionally been interpreted as referring to the cool part of the day, most likely the evening. Others think that the language refers to a powerful manifestation of God's presence (a *theophany*; see Exod 19:16-25; 1 Sam 7:10) as a storm. If this view is correct, the man and the woman were hiding from the sound of the Lord appearing in judgment (see 2 Sam 5:24; Ps 29).

3:9-10 *Where are you?* The true intent of this rhetorical question is revealed in the man's answer (3:10). The real question was, why are you hiding? (compare 4:9-10). • **I was afraid because I was naked:** Modesty was not the issue. The shame brought on by rebellion drove Adam and his wife to hide. Possibly they also feared punishment (see note on 3:8).

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3:5 *Adam and Eve got what they wanted: an intimate knowledge of both good and evil. But they got it by doing evil, and the results were disastrous. Sometimes we have the illusion that freedom is doing anything we want. But God says that true freedom comes from obedience and knowing what not to do. The restrictions he gives us are for our good, helping us avoid evil. We have the freedom to walk in front of a speeding car, but we don't need to be hit to realize it would be foolish to do so. Don't listen to Satan's temptations. You don't have to do evil to gain more experience and learn more about life.*

3:5 *Satan used a sincere motive to tempt Eve: “You will be like God.” It wasn't wrong of Eve to want to be like God. To become more like God is humanity's highest goal. It is what we are supposed to do. But Satan misled Eve concerning the right way to accomplish this goal. He told her that she could become more like God by defying God's authority, by taking God's place and deciding for herself what was best for her life. In effect, he told her to become her own god.*

But to become like God is not the same as trying to become God. Rather, it is to reflect his characteristics and to recognize his authority over your life. Like Eve, we often have a worthy goal but try to achieve it in the wrong way. We act like a political candidate who pays off an election judge to be “voted” into office. When he does this, serving the people is no longer his highest goal.

Self-exaltation leads to rebellion against God. As soon as we begin to leave God out of our plans, we are placing ourselves above him. This is exactly what Satan wants us to do.

3:6-7 *Notice what Eve did: She looked, she took, she ate, and she gave. The battle is often lost at the first look. Temptation often begins by simply seeing something you want. Are you struggling with temptation because you have not learned that looking is the first step toward sin? You would win over temptation more often if you followed Paul's advice to run from those things that produce evil thoughts (2 Tim 2:22).*

3:6-7 *One of the realities of sin is that its effects spread. After Eve sinned, she involved Adam in her wrongdoing. When we do something wrong, often we try to relieve our guilt by involving someone else. Like toxic waste spilled in a river, sin swiftly spreads. Recognize and confess your sin to God before you are tempted to pollute those around you.*

3:6 *Satan tried to make Eve think that sin is good, pleasant, and desirable. A knowledge of both good and evil seemed harmless to her. People usually choose wrong things because they have become convinced that those things are good, at least for themselves. Our sins do not always appear ugly to us, and the pleasant sins are the hardest to avoid. So prepare yourself for the attractive temptations that may come your way. We cannot always prevent temptation, but there is always a way of escape (1 Cor 10:13). Use God's Word and God's people to help you stand against it.*

3:7-8 *After sinning, Adam and Eve felt guilt and embarrassment over their nakedness. Their guilty feelings made them try to hide from God. A guilty conscience is a warning signal God placed inside you that goes off when you've done wrong. The worst step you can take is to eliminate the guilty feelings without eliminating the cause. That would be like using a painkiller but not treating the disease. Be glad those guilty feelings are there. They make you aware of your sin so you can ask God's forgiveness and then correct your wrongdoing.*

3:8-9 *These verses show God's desire to have fellowship with us. They also show why we are afraid to have fellowship with him. Adam and Eve hid from God when they heard him approaching. God wanted to be with them, but because of their sin, they were afraid to show themselves. Sin had broken their close relationship with God, just as it has broken*

3:10
Deut 5:5

3:12
Prov 28:13

3:13
2 Cor 11:3
1 Tim 2:14

3:14
Deut 28:15
Isa 65:25

3:15
John 8:44
Rom 16:20
Heb 2:14
^azera' (2233)
▶ Gen 12:7

3:16
1 Cor 11:3
Eph 5:22
1 Tim 2:15

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

¹¹"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?"

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

¹³Then the LORD God asked the woman, "What have you done?"

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

God Indicts and Convicts

¹⁴Then 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.

¹⁵ And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your ^aoffspring and her ^aoffspring.

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

¹⁶Then 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.*"

3:15 Or *bruise*; also in 3:15b. **3:16** Or *And though you will have desire for your husband, / he will rule over you.*

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3:12 *It was the woman you gave me:* Rather than confessing, the man became evasive. He blamed the woman for giving him the fruit and God for giving him the woman.

3:13 *The serpent deceived me:* As the man implicated the woman (3:12), the woman accused the serpent. The serpent did play a role and would be punished (3:14), but that did not release the woman or the man from their guilt.

3:14-19 The parties were judged in the order of their transgression—serpent, woman, man. Each received a punishment unique to his or her situation, and each had a key relationship altered. God is principled in judgment, not fickle; each punishment is proportionate to the offense.

3:14 to the serpent: Though later revelation identifies the deceiver as Satan, it is the created animal who was cursed, like the ground (3:17).

• *Groveling in the dust* is a posture of humiliation and defeat (Ps 72:9; Mic 7:17).

3:15 hostility: The prophet Isaiah envisions the day when the Messiah's kingdom will restore all of creation to a harmonious state like the Garden of Eden before humans sinned (see Isa 11:8). • *her offspring* (literally *her seed*): This collective noun can refer to a single descendant or many. The ancient Near Eastern concept of corporate solidarity (e.g., "you and your descendants," 28:14) is also behind this description of the ongoing hostility that would exist between humans and snakes. The pattern is set using singular terms (*He . . . you*). Christian interpreters have traditionally understood this verse as a prophecy of Christ, the seed of Abraham and the culmination of the woman's seed (Gal 3:16; 4:4). • *strike*: The striking of *his heel* is a reference to the suffering of God's servant (see Isa 53:1-12), while striking the serpent's *head*—a more definitive blow—is ultimately fulfilled in Christ's death, resurrection, and final victory over Satan (1 Cor 15:55-57; Rev 12:7-9; 20:7-10).

3:16 Judgment falls on the woman's unique role of childbearing and on her relationship with her husband. • *And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you:* The marriage relationship now included an element of antagonism rather than just security and fulfillment. New life in Christ allows for the restoration of a man and a woman's marriage relationship (Eph 5:18-32; compare Matt 20:25-28).

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ours. But Jesus Christ, God's Son, opens the way for us to renew our fellowship with him. God longs to be with us. He actively offers us his unconditional love. Our natural response is fear because we feel we can't live up to his standards. But understanding that he loves us, regardless of our faults, can help remove that dread.

3:11-13 *When God asked Adam about his sin, Adam blamed Eve. Then Eve blamed the serpent. How easy it is to excuse our sins by blaming someone else or circumstances. But God knows the truth, and he holds each of us responsible for what we do (see 3:14-19). Admit your wrong attitudes and actions and apologize to God. Don't try to get away with sin by blaming someone else.*

3:14-19 *Adam and Eve learned by painful experience that because God is holy and hates sin, he must punish sinners. The rest of the book of Genesis recounts painful stories of lives ruined as a result of the Fall. Disobedience is sin, and it breaks our fellowship with God. But, fortunately, when we disobey, God is willing to forgive us and to restore our relationship with him.*

3:14 *Adam and Eve chose their course of action (disobedience), and then God chose his. As a holy God, he could respond only in a way consistent with his perfect moral nature. He could not allow sin to go unchecked; he had to punish it. If the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin seem extreme, remember that their sin set in motion the world's tendency toward disobeying God. That is why we sin today: Every human being ever born, with the exception of Jesus, has inherited the sinful nature of Adam and Eve (Rom 5:12-21). Adam and Eve's punishment reflects how seriously God views sin of any kind.*

3:15 *Satan is our enemy. He will do anything he can to get us to follow his evil, deadly path. The phrase "you will strike his heel" refers to Satan's repeated attempts to defeat Christ during his life on earth. "He will strike your head" foreshadows Satan's defeat when Christ rose from the dead. A strike on the heel is not deadly, but a blow to the head is. Already God was revealing his plan to defeat Satan and offer salvation to the world through his Son, Jesus Christ.*

¹⁷And 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.

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

¹⁹ 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.”

3:17
Job 5:7
Eccl 1:3
Rom 8:20-22

3:18
Job 31:40
Heb 6:8

3:19
Gen 2:7
Pss 90:3; 104:29
Eccl 12:7
1 Cor 15:47

3:20
2 Cor 11:3
1 Tim 2:13

3:21
2 Cor 5:2-3

3:22
Gen 1:26
^bolam (5769)
▶ Gen 9:16

3:24
Ezek 10:1
Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14
^ckerub (3742)
▶ Exod 25:18

4:2
Luke 11:50-51

Expulsion and Hope

²⁰Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live.* ²¹And the LORD God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

²²Then 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 ^bforever!” ²³So 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. ²⁴After sending them out, the LORD God stationed mighty ^ccherubim 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.

Results of Rebellion (4:1-24)

Cain and Abel

4 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!” ²Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel.

3:20 *Eve* sounds like a Hebrew term that means “to give life.” **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.”

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3:17-19 God highlighted his original command *not to eat* the fruit by speaking of eating several times in 3:17-19. The judgment affected humanity’s ability to get food, and it was proportionate to their offense of eating what had been prohibited. • **the ground is cursed:** The relationship of the man to the ground (see note on 2:7) was now antagonistic as judgment fell on his primary role (2:5, 15). He must labor and toil to work the ground, but with diminished productivity. Human sin has broad effects on creation (see 4:12; 6:7; Lev 26:1-46; Deut 11:13-17, 28; Rom 8:22).

3:20 *Eve* (Hebrew *khawah*) sounds like a Hebrew term (*khayah*) that means “to give life.” Following God’s pronouncement of Adam’s impending death (3:19), Adam expressed hope by giving Eve a name associated with life. Adam’s naming of Eve in such close proximity to 3:16 may suggest that the narrator views it as Adam’s first act of ruling over the woman after the Fall (see note on 2:19-20).

3:22 *like us:* The plural probably reflects God’s conversation with his angelic court (see note on 1:26). • **the tree of life . . . live forever!** Mercifully, God prevented humankind from eating of the tree of life and having to live forever in a fallen state. Through Jesus Christ, however, eternal life is once again made available (see Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19).

3:23 *So the LORD God banished them from the Garden of Eden:* Before the Fall, the garden was a sanctuary in which humans could move freely in God’s holy presence. Now their sin required expulsion from that environment.

3:24 *Cherubim* are a class of angelic beings that guard access to God’s presence (Exod 26:31; Ezek 28:14). • **east . . . of Eden:** In Genesis, movement eastward often implies leaving the presence or blessing of God, whether in judgment (see also 4:16), self-aggrandizement (11:2; 13:11), or estrangement (25:6).

4:1 *had sexual relations* (literally *knew*): In certain contexts, the Hebrew term meaning “to know” is an idiom for sexual knowledge of another person (4:17; 19:33, 35). It is never used of animals, which mate by instinct. • **With the LORD’s help:** Eve fulfilled her God-given role of procreation despite the negative effects of the Fall (see 3:16, 20).

• **I have produced:** Or *I have acquired*. *Cain* (Hebrew *qayin*) sounds like a Hebrew term (*qanah*) that can mean “produce” or “acquire.”

3:17-19 *Adam and Eve’s disobedience and fall from God’s gracious presence affected all creation, including the environment. Years ago people thought nothing of polluting streams with chemical wastes and garbage. This seemed so insignificant, so small. Now we know that just two or three parts per million of certain chemicals can damage human health. Sin in our lives is similar to pollution in streams. Even small amounts are deadly.*

3:22-24 *Life in the Garden of Eden was like living in heaven. Everything was perfect, and if Adam and Eve had obeyed God, they could have lived there forever. But after disobeying, Adam and Eve no longer deserved paradise, and God told them to leave. If they had continued to live in the garden and eat from the tree of life, they would have lived forever. But eternal life in a state of sin would mean forever trying to hide from God. Like Adam and Eve, all of us have sinned and are separated from fellowship with God. We do not have to stay separated, however. God is preparing a new earth as an eternal paradise for his people (see Rev 21–22).*

3:24 *This is how Adam and Eve broke their relationship with God: (1) They became convinced their way was better than God’s; (2) they became self-conscious and hid; (3) they tried to excuse and defend themselves. To build a relationship with God we must reverse those steps: (1) We must drop our excuses and self-defenses; (2) we must stop trying to hide from God; (3) we must become convinced that God’s way is better than our way.*

4:1 *Sexual union means oneness and total knowledge of the other person. Sexual intercourse is the most intimate*

4:3

Lev 2:1-2
Num 18:12

4:4

Exod 13:12
Heb 11:4

4:6

Jon 4:4

4:7

Rom 6:12, 16
Jas 1:15

4:8

Matt 23:35
1 Jn 3:12

4:9

Gen 3:9

4:10

Num 35:33
Deut 21:1
Heb 12:24

4:11

Deut 27:15-26

4:12

Deut 28:15-24

4:14

Gen 9:6
Job 15:22

When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. ³When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the LORD. ⁴Abel also brought a gift—the best of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his gift, ⁵but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected.

⁶“Why are you so angry?” the LORD asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? ⁷You 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.”

⁸One day Cain suggested to his brother, “Let’s go out into the fields.”* And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him.

⁹Afterward the LORD asked Cain, “Where is your brother? Where is Abel?”

“I don’t know,” Cain responded. “Am I my brother’s guardian?”

¹⁰But the LORD said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground! ¹¹Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother’s blood. ¹²No 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.”

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

4:8 As in Samaritan Pentateuch, Greek and Syriac versions, and Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text lacks “Let’s go out into the fields.”

4:13 Or *My sin*.

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4:2 *his brother* . . . *Abel*: The name (Hebrew *habel*) means “breath,” “vapor,” or “meaningless,” anticipating his tragically brief life (compare Eccl 1:2).

4:3 There was nothing wrong with offering grain to the Lord (Lev 2:14; Deut 26:2-4), but Cain brought only a token gift (*some of his crops*), whereas God requires the first and best (Exod 23:16, 19; 34:22, 26). Cain’s heart attitude made his offering inferior to Abel’s (compare Heb 11:4).

4:4-5 *the best of the firstborn lambs*: Or *the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions*. Abel was giving God the best animals and the richest parts. Abel’s offering, in contrast to Cain’s, was the best he had to offer. True worship is a costly privilege.

4:7 *Sin is crouching at the door* . . . *you must subdue it*: Sin is pictured as a vicious animal lying in wait to pounce on Cain (compare note on 3:16). Either sin will dominate Cain, or Cain will resist the temptation to sin. There is no neutral ground in that conflict.

4:8 The effects of the Fall on human relationships are tragically expressed in the first murder. • The word *brother* is used seven times in 4:2-11, highlighting Cain’s fratricide in the face of familial responsibility.

4:9 *Where is your brother?* The questions God asked Cain (4:6, 9, 10) recall those that God asked Cain’s parents (3:9-13). In both cases, humans put up evasive answers (compare 3:12-13). Cain’s answer is shockingly defiant—another clue that the problem with his token offering was the attitude that lay behind it.

4:10 *What have you done?* is more an expression of horror and rebuke than a fact-finding question (compare 3:13). • Abel’s *blood* is personified as a legal witness that *cries out* against Cain. • *from the ground*: See note on 4:11-12.

4:11-12 As with his father (compare 3:9-12, 17-19), Cain’s interrogation (4:9-10) was followed by God’s verdict. Adam’s sin had already caused *the ground* to be cursed. Now Cain was *cursed* and *banished* from the land he farmed because he had contaminated it with innocent blood. • *homeless wanderer*: Cain was condemned to ceaseless roving in a land that would provide neither sustenance nor security. The effects of sin were escalating.

4:13-14 For Cain, eviction *from the land*—the domain of his vocation as a farmer (see 4:2; compare 3:23)—amounted to exile from God’s *presence*. The Israelites were warned that unfaithfulness to the Sinai covenant would similarly result in eviction from the Promised Land and from God’s presence in the Temple (see, e.g., Lev 26:27-32).

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of acts, sealing a social, physical, and spiritual relationship. That is why God has reserved it for marriage alone.

4:2 *No longer was everything provided for Adam and Eve as it was in the Garden of Eden, where their daily tasks were refreshing and delightful. Now they had to struggle against the elements in order to provide food, clothing, and shelter for themselves and their family. Cain became a farmer, while Abel was a shepherd.*

4:3-5 *The Bible does not say why God did not accept Cain’s gift. Perhaps Cain’s attitude was improper, or perhaps his gift was not up to God’s standards. Proverbs 21:27 says, “The sacrifice of an evil person is detestable, especially when it is offered with wrong motives.” God evaluates both our motives and the quality of what we offer him. When we give to God and others, we should have a joyful heart because of what we are able to give. We should not worry about how much we are giving up, for all things are God’s in the first place. Instead, we should joyfully give to God our best in time, money, possessions, and talents.*

4:7 *For Cain to subdue the sin that was waiting to attack and destroy him, he would have to give up his jealous anger so that sin would not find a foothold in his life. Sin is still waiting to attack and destroy us today. Like Cain, we will be victims of sin if we do not master it. But we cannot master sin in our own strength. Instead, we must turn to God to receive faith for ourselves and turn to other believers to receive encouragement and strength. The Holy Spirit will help us master sin. This will be a lifelong battle that will not be over until we are face to face with Christ.*

4:8-10 *This is the first murder—taking a life by shedding human blood. Blood represents life (Lev 17:10-14). If blood is removed from a living creature, it will die. Because God created life, only God should take life away.*

4:8-10 *Adam and Eve’s disobedience brought sin into the human race. They may have thought their sin—eating a piece of fruit—wasn’t very bad, but notice how quickly their sinful nature developed in their children. Simple disobedience quickly degenerated into outright murder. Adam and Eve acted only against God, but Cain acted against both God and other people. A small sin has a way of growing out of control. Let God help you with your “little” sins before they turn into tragedies.*

4:14 *We have heard about only four people so far—Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel. Two questions arise: Why was Cain worried about being killed by others, and where did he get his wife (see 4:17)?*

Adam and Eve had numerous children; they had been told to “fill the earth” (1:28). Cain’s guilt and fear over killing his brother was heavy, and he probably feared repercussions from his family. If he was capable of killing, so were they. The wife Cain chose may have been one of his sisters or a niece. The human race was still genetically pure, and there was no fear of side effects from marrying relatives.

¹⁵The 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. ¹⁶So Cain left the LORD’s presence and settled in the land of Nod,* east of Eden.

The Descendants of Cain

¹⁷Cain 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. ¹⁸Enoch had a son named Irad. Irad became the father of* Mehujael. Mehujael became the father of Methushael. Methushael became the father of Lamech.

¹⁹Lamech married two women. The first was named Adah, and the second was Zillah. ²⁰Adah gave birth to Jabal, who was the first of those who raise livestock and live in tents. ²¹His brother’s name was Jubal, the first of all who play the harp and flute. ²²Lamech’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. ²³One day Lamech said to his wives,

4:17
Ps 49:11
4:23
Lev 19:18
Deut 32:35
4:25
Gen 4:8; 5:3
1 Chr 1:1
Luke 3:38
4:26
Gen 12:8
1 Kgs 18:24
Joel 2:32
Zeph 3:9
Acts 2:21

“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.

²⁴ If someone who kills Cain is punished seven times,
then the one who kills me will be punished seventy-seven times!”

Epilogue: The Birth of Seth (4:25-26)

²⁵Adam 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.”

²⁶When Seth grew up, he had a son and named him Enosh. At that time people first began to worship the LORD by name.

4:16 *Nod* means “wandering.” **4:18** *Or the ancestor of*, and so throughout the verse. **4:25** *Seth* probably means “granted”; the name may also mean “appointed.”

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4:15 *Sevenfold punishment* was the full weight of justice. Cain complained that his punishment was too great, but the full sentence that would fall on anyone who committed Cain’s crime against him shows how gracious the Lord was to Cain. Cain deserved death (see 9:5-6). • The *mark* graciously provided protection following Cain’s judgment (compare 3:21).

4:16 *Nod*: The name speaks more of Cain’s fate (see 4:12, 14) than of a specific geographical area (the location is unknown). Cain’s sin denied him rest and a sense of belonging. • Cain’s exile *east of Eden* is another point of connection with Adam’s story (compare 3:24). Cain did not learn from his father’s mistake, so he also suffered estrangement from the ground and exile to the east (see note on 3:24).

4:17 Cain’s *wife* was probably one of his sisters (5:4). Cain’s marriage to his sister would not have caused genetic problems so early in the development of the human gene pool. • Cain was condemned to be a wanderer. Perhaps he *founded a city* in rebellion against that verdict, seeking to defend himself by enclosing it in walls. Naming it *after his son* reflects a tendency among those who rebel against God to idolize humanity and its achievements.

4:18 *the father of*: *Or the ancestor of*, and so throughout the verse. Hebrew genealogies do not necessarily list every single generation.

4:19 Marrying *two women* was contrary to God’s ideal pattern for marriage (2:24), and might be another manifestation of the arrogance and rebellion of Cain’s descendants.

4:20-22 Technological advancement masks increasing self-assertion and distance from God.

4:23-24 Lamech’s chilling taunt shows the further escalation of sin’s effects on humanity. Cain’s line had reached a crescendo of violence with Lamech’s contempt for life. In his arrogance, he put his deed into poetic verse. • *punished seventy-seven times!* God warned that anyone who tried to kill Cain would experience the full weight of justice (4:15). Lamech’s declaration that anyone who harmed him would receive an even more severe penalty is a claim to be accountable to no one, including God.

4:25 *another son . . . in place of Abel*: Cain (4:8-16) and Lamech (4:19-24) illustrate sin’s consequences; the birth of Seth brought renewed hope. See also note on 5:1-2.

4:26 *Enosh* means “humankind.” In the OT, the term is often used in poetic texts that emphasize human mortality, frailty, and weakness (e.g., Ps 144:3, “mere mortals”). Enosh was born at the time when people began to *worship the LORD by name* (literally *call on the name of the LORD*). In Genesis, that meant calling on the name of the Lord through sacrifice and prayer (similar Hebrew terminology is found in 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 26:25).

4:19-26 Unfortunately, when left to themselves, people tend to get worse instead of better. This short summary of Lamech’s family shows us the variety of talent and ability God gives humans. It also presents the continuous development of sin as time passes. Another killing occurred, presumably in self-defense. Violence was on the rise. Two distinct groups were emerging: (1) those who showed indifference to sin and evil, and (2) those who worshiped the Lord (the descendants of Seth, 4:26). Seth would take Abel’s place as leader of a line of God’s faithful people.

5:1
Gen 1:26; 6:9
1 Chr 1:1

5:2
Gen 1:27
*Matt 19:4
*Mark 10:6

5:3
Gen 1:26; 4:25
1 Cor 15:49

5:4
1 Chr 1:1

5:5
Gen 2:17
Heb 9:27

5:6
1 Chr 1:1
Luke 3:38

5:9
1 Chr 1:2
Luke 3:37

5:12
1 Chr 1:2
Luke 3:37

5:15
1 Chr 1:2
Luke 3:37

5:18
1 Chr 1:3
Luke 3:37
Jude 1:14

5:21
1 Chr 1:3
Luke 3:37

5:22
Gen 6:9; 48:15

5:24
2 Kgs 2:1, 11
Ps 73:24
Heb 11:5

3. The Account of Adam's Descendants (5:1–6:8)

Human Identity Restated

5 This is the written account of the descendants of Adam. When God created human beings,* he made them to be like himself. ²He created them male and female, and he blessed them and called them “human.”

Genealogy: Adam to Noah

- ³When 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. ⁴After the birth of Seth, Adam lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ⁵Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.
- ⁶When Seth was 105 years old, he became the father of* Enosh. ⁷After the birth of* Enosh, Seth lived another 807 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ⁸Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.
- ⁹When Enosh was 90 years old, he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰After the birth of Kenan, Enosh lived another 815 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ¹¹Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.
- ¹²When Kenan was 70 years old, he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³After the birth of Mahalalel, Kenan lived another 840 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ¹⁴Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.
- ¹⁵When Mahalalel was 65 years old, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶After the birth of Jared, Mahalalel lived another 830 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ¹⁷Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.
- ¹⁸When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹After the birth of Enoch, Jared lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ²⁰Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.
- ²¹When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of Methuselah. ²²After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for another 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ²³Enoch lived 365 years, ²⁴walking in close fellowship with God. Then one day he disappeared, because God took him.

5:1 Or *man*; Hebrew reads *adam*; similarly in 5:2. **5:6** Or *the ancestor of*; also in 5:9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25. **5:7** Or *the birth of this ancestor of*; also in 5:10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 26.

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5:1–32 The genealogies of Genesis go beyond simply recording history. By selective information and by structure, they communicate spiritual truth. The genealogies highlight God's blessing, authenticate the family heritage of important individuals, and hold the Genesis narrative together by showing familial continuity. Adam's genealogy through Seth traces ten generations to Noah (see 1 Chr 1:1–4; Luke 3:36–38), with the flood intervening before another ten generations from Noah to Abram.

5:1–2 This is the prologue to the second *account* in Genesis (5:1–6:8; see note on 2:4); it connects God's purpose in creation with Seth's line rather than Cain's (4:17–24).

5:1 *written account*: Although the previous account (2:4–4:26) focused on Adam, Eve, and their first children, it was technically “the account of the heavens and the earth.” Genesis 5:1–32 is a more typical genealogy. • *like himself*: See 1:26 and note.

5:2 *male and female . . . “human”* (Hebrew *’adam*): See 1:27 and note. • *blessed them*: See 1:28 and note.

5:3 *just like him—in his very image*: The image and likeness of God (see note on 1:26) is preserved in human beings despite sin. Adam's sinful nature was also carried forward (Rom 5:12–14).

5:5 *he died*: Death indeed came to Adam (see 2:17; 3:18–19) and his descendants (see Rom 5:12–14).

5:6 *the father of*: Or *the ancestor of*. Hebrew genealogies do not necessarily list every single generation.

5:7 *After the birth of*: See note on 5:6.

5:22 *Enoch lived in close fellowship with God* (literally *Enoch walked with God*; also in 5:24): Enoch's position as seventh from Adam in the genealogy strikes a contrast with Lamech, the seventh from Adam in the line of Cain.

5:24 Unlike all other sons of Adam, Enoch did not succumb to death; rather, *he disappeared, because God took him* (compare 2 Kgs 2:9–12; see also Heb 11:5).

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5:1 *Why are genealogies included in the Bible? The Hebrew people passed on their beliefs through oral tradition. For many years in many places, writing was primitive or nonexistent. Stories were told to children who passed them on to their children. Genealogies gave a skeletal outline that helped people remember the stories. For centuries these genealogies were added to and passed down from family to family. Even more important than preserving family tradition, genealogies were included to confirm the Bible's promise that the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, would be born into the line of Abraham.*

Genealogies point out that people are important to God as individuals. Therefore, God refers to people by name, mentioning their life span and descendants. The next time you feel overwhelmed in a vast crowd, remember that the focus of God's attention and love is on the individual—and on you!

5:3–5 *All human beings are related, going back to Adam and Eve. All people form a family that shares one flesh and blood. Remember this when prejudice enters your mind or hatred invades your feelings. Each person is a valuable and unique creation of God.*

²⁵When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶After the birth of Lamech, Methuselah lived another 782 years, and he had other sons and daughters.

5:25
1 Chr 1:3
Luke 3:36

5:29
Gen 3:17
1 Chr 1:3
Luke 3:36
Rom 8:20

²⁷Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died.

²⁸When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son. ²⁹Lamech 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." ³⁰After the birth of Noah, Lamech lived another 595 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ³¹Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died.

5:32
Gen 7:6; 9:18

6:1
Gen 1:28

6:2
^aben 'elohim
(1121, 0430)
▶ Job 1:6

6:3
Ps 78:39
1 Pet 3:20

6:4
Num 13:33

6:5
Ps 14:1-3

6:6
Exod 32:14
Num 23:19
1 Sam 15:11, 35
2 Sam 24:16

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

Corruption of the Human Race

6 Then the people began to multiply on the earth, and daughters were born to them. ²The sons of God saw the beautiful women* and took any they wanted as their wives. ³Then 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."

⁴In 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.

⁵The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. ⁶So the LORD was sorry he

5:29 Noah sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean "relief" or "comfort." **6:2** Hebrew *daughters of men*; also in 6:4. **6:3** Greek version reads *will not remain in*.

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5:27 969 years: This statement and the numbers given in 5:25, 28 and 7:6 mean that Methuselah died in the year of the flood.

5:28-29 As with Enoch (5:21-24), the normal genealogical formula is interrupted to highlight important theological information about Noah. Noah sounds like a Hebrew term (*nakhm*) that can mean "relief" or "comfort," and another term (*nuakh*) that means "rest." As the first person born after Adam's death (see note on 5:5), Noah prompted his father Lamech to hope that the curse brought on by Adam's sin (3:17) might be lifted. See 8:21; 2 Cor 1:3-7; 2 Thes 2:16-17.

6:1-8 Human wickedness reached a climax, prompting God to send the flood to destroy all living things. A glimmer of hope appears in God's favor toward Noah (6:8).

6:1-2 The *sons of God* have generally been understood as fallen angels (compare the same Hebrew phrase in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Ps 29:1; 89:7). This interpretation is prominent in ancient Jewish and Christian literature (e.g., 1 Enoch 6:1-7:6; Justin Martyr, *Apology* 2.5) and is apparently supported by the NT (see 1 Pet 3:18-20; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 1:6-7). Some interpreters do not believe that God would permit angels to procreate with humans and doubt that the above NT texts should be read in this way. Another possibility is that *sons of God* refers to the righteous descendants of Seth, while the *beautiful women* (6:2) were female descendants of Cain's wicked line. This interpretation is in harmony with 4:17-5:32, but is weakened by the language of 6:1-2, which seems to refer to the daughters of humanity in general, not the daughters of Cain specifically. Others believe that *sons of God* refers to tyrannical human kings (possibly demon-possessed) who took Lamech's polygamy (4:19) to a new height of wickedness by seizing the daughters of the righteous. Language reminiscent of 3:6 (*saw . . . took*) shows the rebellious nature of this act.

6:3 *will not put up with*: Many think that this is an announcement of God's decision to withdraw the restraining influence of his Spirit from human society and allow human wickedness to run its full course. Others think it means that God would withdraw his life-giving breath from humans at an earlier age (*ruakh*, the Hebrew term for "spirit," can also mean "breath"; see 6:17; 7:22; see also Ps 104:29-30).

• *normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years* (literally *his days will be 120 years*): It is possible that this was a new restriction on the number of years individuals would generally be allowed to live (so the NLT). However, for generations after the flood, humans lived well beyond 120 years (see, e.g., 11:10-26). An alternative interpretation sees this as a 120-year grace period before the arrival of the flood (see Jon 3:4; Matt 24:37-38; 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5).

6:4 *giant Nephilites* (Hebrew *nepilim*): The term may mean "fallen ones." The context implies that they were the offspring of the "sons of God" and would be destroyed in the flood. Numbers 13:31-33 uses the same term to describe other giants who were hostile toward God's people and would also be destroyed (see also Deut 2:11, which connects the Anakite *nepilim* with another group called the *repa'im*).

6:5 *everything they thought or imagined* (literally *every intention of the thoughts of their hearts*): In the OT, the heart is the core of volition, thought, and morality (see Prov 4:23). Wicked actions stem from a corrupt inner life. • *consistently and totally evil*: Strong language captures the pervasiveness, depth, and persistence of human wickedness. Human nature continued to be corrupt even after the flood (see 8:21).

6:6 *the LORD was sorry*: The extent of human wickedness made the Lord regret having created them (see also 6:7; compare 1 Sam 15:11, 35). • *It broke his heart*: The evil in humanity's heart (6:5) pained God greatly. Sending the flood was a heart-wrenching act on God's part.

5:25-27 How did these people live so long? Some believe that the ages listed here were lengths of family dynasties rather than ages of individual men. Those who think these were actual ages offer three explanations: (1) The human race was more genetically pure in this early time period with less disease to shorten life spans; (2) no rain had yet fallen on the earth, and the expanse of "the waters of the heavens" (1:7) kept out harmful cosmic rays and shielded people from environmental factors that hasten aging; (3) God gave people longer lives so they would have time to "fill the earth" (1:28).

6:3 "Their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years" has been interpreted by some commentators to mean that God was allowing the people of Noah's day 120 years to change their sinful ways. God shows his great patience with us as well. He is giving us time to quit living our way and begin living his way, the way he shows us in his Word. While 120 years seems like a long time, eventually the time ran out, and the floodwaters swept across the earth. Your time also may be running out. Turn to God to forgive your sins. You can't see the stopwatch of God's patience, and there is no bargaining for additional time.

6:6-8 The people's sin grieved God. Our sins break God's heart as much as sin did in Noah's day. Noah, however, pleased God, although he was far from perfect. We can follow Noah's example and find "favor with the LORD" in spite of the sin that surrounds us.

6:7
Deut 29:20
^bbara' (1254)
▶ Ps 51:10

6:8
Exod 33:17

6:9
Job 1:1
Ezek 14:14
^ctamim (8549)
▶ Gen 17:1

6:11
Deut 31:29
Judg 2:19
Ezek 8:17

6:12
Ps 14:1-3

6:13
Isa 34:1-4
Ezek 7:2-3

6:14
Exod 2:3
1 Pet 3:20

6:17
Ps 29:10
2 Pet 2:5

6:18
Gen 9:9-16; 17:7;
19:12

6:20
Gen 7:3

6:21
Gen 1:29

6:22
Gen 7:5
Exod 40:16

had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart. ⁷And the LORD said, "I will wipe this human race I have ^bcreated 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." ⁸But Noah found favor with the LORD.

4. The Account of Noah's Family (6:9–9:29)

The Story of Noah

⁹This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only ^cblameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. ¹⁰Noah was the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence. ¹²God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt. ¹³So 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!

¹⁴"Build a large boat* from cypress wood* and waterproof it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout its interior. ¹⁵Make the boat 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.* ¹⁶Leave 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.

¹⁷"Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die. ¹⁸But I will confirm my covenant with you. So enter the boat—you and your wife and your sons and their wives. ¹⁹Bring a pair of every kind of animal—a male and a female—into the boat with you to keep them alive during the flood. ²⁰Pairs 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. ²¹And be sure to take on board enough food for your family and for all the animals."

²²So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.

6:14a Traditionally rendered *an ark*. **6:14b** Or *gopher wood*. **6:15** Hebrew *300 cubits* [138 meters] long, *50 cubits* [23 meters] wide, and *30 cubits* [13.8 meters] high. **6:16** Hebrew *an opening of 1 cubit* [46 centimeters].

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6:7 wipe . . . from the . . . earth: As Adam and Eve were banished from the garden-sanctuary (3:23), all of humankind would be expunged from God's good creation. • **every living thing:** Human sin had so corrupted the earth that judgment fell on the animals and birds over which they had dominion (see 1:28 and note). The special role of humans in the created order (1:28-30) means that nature is affected by human moral choices (see 8:1; Job 38:41; Hos 4:3; Rom 8:19-22).

6:8 Noah and his godly life stand in stark contrast to the sinfulness of the rest of the people.

6:9 the account: See note on 2:4 • **a righteous man, the only blameless person:** The text does not claim that Noah was without sin (see Rom 5:12-14). Noah's righteousness and blamelessness came about because *he walked in close fellowship with God*. See also 7:1; 17:1; Heb 11:7.

6:11-13 See 6:5-7. • **violence** (Hebrew *khamas*): Murder had especially corrupted the line of Cain (4:8, 23-24).

6:14 a large boat: Traditionally rendered *an ark*, this was a long rectangular barge designed for survival, not for navigation.

6:16 Noah was to build a *door* and God would close it (7:16). God was the captain of this peculiar boat with no sail or rudder. God also brought the animals to Noah (6:20).

6:17 cover the earth with a flood: Some propose that the flood might only have covered the ancient Near East as it was known to Noah or Moses. However, the flood's stated purpose—to *destroy every living thing that breathes* (see also 6:7, 11-13; 7:1, 4, 18-23; 8:21)—and its effect of undoing creation (see notes on 1:9-10; 7:11-12) suggest that the flood covered the entire planet (see also 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5; 3:6).

6:18 This first explicit mention of a *covenant* in the Bible refers to the unilateral pact that God made with humankind and the world after the flood (see 9:9, 11, 14-17).

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6:6-7 Does this mean that God regretted creating humanity? Was he admitting he made a mistake? No, God does not change his mind (1 Sam 15:29). Instead, he was expressing sorrow for what the people had done to themselves, as a parent might express sorrow over a rebellious child. God was sorry that the people chose sin and death instead of a relationship with him.

6:9 Saying that Noah was "righteous" and "blameless" does not mean that he never sinned (the Bible records one of his sins in 9:20ff). Rather, it means that Noah wholeheartedly loved and obeyed God. For a lifetime he walked step by step in faith as a living example to his generation. Like Noah, we live in a world filled with evil. Are we influencing others or being influenced by them?

6:15 The boat Noah built was no canoe! Picture yourself building a boat the length of one and a half football fields and as high as a four-story building. The boat was exactly six times longer than it was wide—the same ratio used by modern shipbuilders. This huge boat was probably built miles from any body of water by only a few faithful men who believed God's promises and obeyed his commands.

6:22 Noah got right to work when God told him to build the huge boat. Other people must have been warned about the coming disaster (1 Pet 3:20), but apparently they did not expect it to happen. Today things haven't changed much. Each day thousands of people are warned of God's inevitable judgment, yet most of them don't really believe it will happen. Don't expect people to welcome or accept your message of God's coming judgment on sin. Those who don't believe in God will deny his judgment and try to get you to deny God as well. But remember God's promise to Noah to keep him safe. This can inspire you to trust God for deliverance in the judgment that is sure to come.

The Universal Flood

7 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. ²Take 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. ³Also 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. ⁴Seven 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.”

⁵So Noah did everything as the LORD commanded him.

⁶Noah was 600 years old when the flood covered the earth. ⁷He went on board the boat to escape the flood—he and his wife and his sons and their wives. ⁸With 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. ⁹They entered the boat in pairs, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰After seven days, the waters of the flood came and covered the earth.

¹¹When 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. ¹²The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights.

¹³That very day Noah had gone into the boat with his wife and his sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—and their wives. ¹⁴With them in the boat were pairs of every kind of animal—domestic and wild, large and small—along with birds of every kind. ¹⁵Two by two they came into the boat, representing every living thing that breathes. ¹⁶A male and female of each kind entered, just as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD closed the door behind them.

¹⁷For forty days the floodwaters grew deeper, covering the ground and lifting the boat high above the earth. ¹⁸As the waters rose higher and higher above the ground, the boat floated safely on the surface. ¹⁹Finally, the water covered even the highest mountains on the earth, ²⁰rising more than twenty-two feet* above the highest peaks. ²¹All the living things on earth died—birds, domestic animals, wild animals, small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people. ²²Everything that breathed and lived on dry land died. ²³God 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. ²⁴And the floodwaters covered the earth for 150 days.

7:2 Hebrew of each clean animal; similarly in 7:8. **7:20** Hebrew 15 cubits [6.9 meters].

7:1
Gen 6:18
Matt 24:38
Luke 17:26-27
Heb 11:7
1 Pet 3:20
7:2
Lev 11:1-47
Deut 14:3-20
Ezek 44:23
7:4
Gen 6:7, 13
7:6
Gen 5:32
7:7
Gen 6:18
7:9
Gen 6:22
7:11
Ps 78:23
Ezek 26:19
Mal 3:10
7:13
1 Pet 3:20
2 Pet 2:5
7:15
Gen 6:19; 7:9
7:19
Ps 104:6
7:20
2 Pet 3:6
7:23
Matt 24:38-39
Luke 17:26-27
1 Pet 3:20
2 Pet 2:5
7:24
Gen 8:3

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7:2 of each animal I have approved for eating and for sacrifice: In addition to the animals that were to repopulate the earth, these “clean” animals were for food and for Noah’s sacrifice after the flood (8:20-21). This passage does not use the precise technical language that is found in the regulations concerning “clean” and “unclean” given to Israel at Sinai (see Lev 11:1-47; Deut 14:3-12), but the underlying concept is the same.

7:4 The number *forty* is often associated with affliction, trial, or punishment (see Exod 16:35; Judg 13:1; 1 Kgs 19:8; Ezek 4:6; Jon 3:4; Matt 4:2; Acts 1:3).

7:6 covered the earth: See note on 6:17.

7:8 See note on 7:2.

7:11-12 on the seventeenth day of the second month: Such information gives the flood account a certain solemnity; it reminds readers that this was a true historical event.

• **underground waters:** See 2:6. • **rain fell:** The flood undid the boundaries established on the second and third days of creation (1:6-13). Elsewhere, the Bible describes God’s judgment as an undoing of creation (see Jer 4:23-26; Amos 7:4). • **forty days and forty nights:** See note on 7:4.

7:16 the LORD closed the door: The sovereign Judge took responsibility for the annihilation of all outside the boat and the protection of those within (see also 6:16 and note).

7:17 floodwaters grew deeper (literally *waters multiplied*): The same word used for the proliferation of humans and animals during creation (see 1:22, 28) is now used ironically of the water that would annihilate them. • **covering the ground:** The Hebrew word translated “ground” or “earth” is mentioned eight times in eight verses (7:17-24). The earth is the domain that humankind had polluted and that was now the object of a cleansing deluge.

7:22 Everything that . . . lived: See note on 6:17.

7:1 Pairs of every animal joined Noah in the boat; seven pairs were taken of those animals used for sacrifice. Scholars have estimated that almost 45,000 animals could have fit into the boat.

7:16 Many have wondered how this animal kingdom roundup happened. Did Noah and his sons spend years collecting all the animals? In reality the creation, along with Noah, was doing just as God had commanded. There seemed to be no problem gathering the animals—God took care of the details of that job while Noah was doing his part by building the boat. Often we do just the opposite of Noah. We worry about details over which we have no control, while neglecting specific areas (such as attitudes, relationships, responsibilities) that are under our control. Like Noah, concentrate on what God has given you to do, and leave the rest to God.

7:17-24 Was the Flood a local event, or did it cover the entire earth? A universal flood was certainly possible. Enough water exists in the oceans to cover all dry land (the earth began that way; see 1:9-10). Afterward God promised never again to destroy the earth with a flood. Thus, this Flood must have either covered the entire earth or destroyed all the inhabitants of the earth. Remember, God’s reason for sending the Flood was to destroy all the earth’s wickedness. It would have taken a major flood to accomplish this.

DICTIONARY AND INDEX FOR HEBREW AND GREEK WORD STUDIES

The *NLT Parallel Study Bible* includes over 200 Hebrew and Greek word studies throughout the Bible text. These word studies give readers a glimpse into the inner workings of the New Living Translation and open a small window to the original languages of the Bible.

HOW TO DO WORD STUDIES WITH THE NLT PARALLEL STUDY BIBLE

While reading through the Bible text, you will find at various places a superscript letter attached to the front of an English word. In the cross-reference column, there is a transliteration of the Hebrew or Greek word or phrase that underlies the translation at that point, along with the *Strong's* number(s) in parentheses (see below) and the location of the next reference in that Hebrew or Greek word chain. If you follow the reference chain, eventually you will read through all of the marked instances of that word or group of words in the entire study Bible. Doing so is a good way to begin doing Hebrew and Greek word studies.

Another way to use the tool is to systematically study a particular word from those listed below. Here we have listed and defined all of the words that are included in the Hebrew and Greek word-study chains.

The references in the chains are selective and do not represent all of the places where a Hebrew or Greek word occurs in the Bible; we chose a limited number of instances in order to show the variety of usage for a given term or group of terms. If you want to do a complete study of a biblical word, it would be a good idea to read most or all instances, which you can find with *Strong's Concordance* (see below) or a similar tool.

You can take your study of Hebrew and Greek words further by obtaining a copy of *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. Dr. James Strong first published his exhaustive concordance of the King James Version in 1890, and the system he created for referring to every individual word in Hebrew and Greek by a number has been tremendously helpful for English readers who want to do word studies in the original languages. The *Strong's* numbering system has become the de facto standard for English language word-study tools. There is a wide variety of other publications and software tools available with which you can take your study of any Hebrew or Greek term further.

This dictionary and index is organized using the *Strong's* numbering system, named for the system used in *Strong's Concordance*. For any word you find while reading the text, you will simply have to use the *Strong's* number to find the brief definition and full chain. Please note that there are separate numbers and lists for the Hebrew words in the OT and the Greek words in the NT.

If you follow the entire word chain, note each context in which the word occurs and how it has been translated. You will get a good feel for the range of uses that each word can have, and you will get a unique glimpse into the inner workings of the NLT.

HEBREW AND GREEK WORD STUDIES Because the Bible was originally written in ancient languages that are quite different from our own, the Hebrew and Greek words of the original text are often seen as strange and wonderful. Sometimes, Greek and Hebrew words are portrayed as though they are somehow a special or "divine" language containing more

significant meaning than normal languages like English. In truth, biblical Greek and Hebrew are normal human languages, with words that are similar to the words of any language.

Words are complex animals. Consider, for example, the word *animal* in the previous sentence. In most contexts, that word conjures up images of wildlife. In this particular instance, however, it means something quite different. Words have a dynamic relationship to meaning, neither confined to a dictionary entry nor free to mean anything at all. Few readers whose mother tongue is English would have misunderstood the meaning of the sentence, "Words are complex animals," but it could certainly cause confusion for a reader whose knowledge of English is minimal.

When confronted with a word from any foreign language, especially an ancient one like the Hebrew or Greek of the Bible, people can misunderstand if they aren't careful to study the word in a way that makes sense with how language is used. Some common mistakes that are made in studying words in the biblical languages include the following:

- *Assuming a word means more than it does.* When faced with the range of meanings a given word can have, sometimes interpreters are tempted to think that every instance of that word contains *all* of the possible meanings. While it is true that sometimes a writer will purposefully use a word to mean more than one thing, it is not common. Normally, a word has *one* meaning in a given context. For instance, not every instance of the Greek *sarx* (4561) has to do with the sin nature. An important part of original-language Bible study is to discern which meaning a term probably has in a given context.
- *Understanding words by their roots.* Many words share common roots, but this does not necessarily mean their meanings are related. The meaning of a word is related to how it is used in the language, not where it came from. The Greek *ekklēsia* (1577) comes from two words that mean "to call" (*kaleō*) and "out of" (*ek*). This does not mean that *ekklēsia* means "called out of," any more than the English word *goodbye* means "it's good that you're leaving." It is important to understand the meaning of the word from its usage rather than its roots.
- *Confusing synonyms.* Many words share common meanings, or at least have very similar meanings in specific contexts. An example in English is "choose" and "select." In many cases, the difference is negligible, and a writer could choose between them without changing the meaning at all. But in some contexts the selection is meaningful. In this tool, we sometimes string synonyms together in a single chain, but that does not mean they are completely interchangeable. Each word must be considered on its own terms in each context.
- *Failing to appreciate the difference between words and concepts.* Words are only tools to communicate meaning, so any one word will never be sufficient to get a complete picture of an important concept. If you want to understand the concept of "truth" in the Bible, Hebrew *ēmeth* (0571) is a good place to start, but to limit study to a word alone will miss important components of the biblical picture of truth. Each concept must be studied as whole, going beyond the study of words.

HEBREW WORDS

'abal (0056): *mourn*. This verb expresses an attitude of deep sorrow. Often mourning is accompanied by weeping and other physical manifestations of grief or more formal mourning rites.
SEE Gen 37:34; Exod 33:4; 1 Sam 6:19; 2 Sam 13:37; 1 Chr 7:22; Ezra 10:6; Neh 1:4; Isa 3:26; 66:10; Dan 10:2; Amos 9:5

'adonay Yahweh (0136, 3068): *Sovereign Lord*. A compound name and title of God that combines his covenant name, *Yahweh*, with the title *'adonay* ("my lord, my master"). This title occurs over 280 times in the OT and emphasizes God's power and authority as well as his gracious relationship with his people.
SEE Gen 15:2; Deut 3:24; Josh 7:7; Judg 6:22; 2 Sam 7:18; Ps 73:28; Isa 61:1; Ezek 2:4; Amos 3:7; Hab 3:19; Zeph 1:7

'iwweleth (0200): *foolishness*. This noun is often presented as the opposite of wisdom. It indicates a lack of wisdom and understanding, with overtones of moral deficiency rather than simply intellectual failure.
SEE Ps 69:5; Prov 12:23; 14:17, 24; 15:14, 21; 17:12; 22:15; 26:4, 5

'el (0410), **'elohim** (0430): *God*. These two related words are both used to refer to God. Similar to the English word *god*, these words are also used to refer to deity generally (i.e., a god) or other supernatural beings. They can be used to address God directly ("O God, hear my prayer"), as part of a description of God ("the living God," "my God"), or in describing false gods ("the gods of the Egyptians").
SEE Exod 3:6; Num 23:21; Josh 24:2; Ps 16:1; 17:6; 36:7; 40:17; 85:4, 8; Isa 42:5

'aman (0539): *believe*. This verb denotes trust. It often involves the active decision to believe in the veracity or trustworthiness of an idea or person but can also signify an ongoing state of belief and the action associated with that faith. The word is often used to refer to faith in God and his promises, though not exclusively.
SEE Gen 15:6; 45:26; Exod 14:31; Num 14:11; Ps 106:12; 119:66; Prov 14:15; Isa 28:16; 53:1; Jon 3:5

'amen (0543): *amen, let it be so*. This word is an affirmation of the truth of what has been said. It can express either the firm belief that something is true ("Yes!") or the desire that something will happen ("let it be so"). It is also used as a formulaic response in praising God, sometimes doubled for emphasis.
SEE Num 5:22; Deut 27:15; 1 Kgs 1:36; 1 Chr 16:36; Neh 5:13; 8:6; Ps 41:13; Isa 65:16; Jer 11:5

'emeth (0571): *truth, faithfulness*. This word has many nuances around the central idea of truth. It can represent the concept of truth as opposed to falsehood; it can refer to the faithfulness or reliability of a person or standard. It is also used in phrases such as "the true God."
SEE Exod 34:6; Ps 25:5; 26:3; 86:11; 119:142, 151, 160; Prov 16:6; Isa 38:3; Dan 10:21

'ap (0639): *anger*. This word denotes anger or extreme displeasure toward a person, group, or state of affairs. It is morally neutral, as it is used both for foolish, selfish anger and for righteous anger at injustice. It also means "nose, nostrils";

the flaring of nostrils and reddening of the nose when a person is angry led to the usage of this word to denote anger.

SEE Num 32:13; Deut 7:4; Judg 6:39; 2 Sam 12:5; 2 Kgs 23:26; Ps 6:1; Prov 27:4; 29:8, 22; Isa 12:1; Hab 3:8

'arbeh (0697): *locust*. This word refers to a desert migratory locust in the mature wing stage. These insects can swarm in vast, inordinate numbers, covering scores of square miles and even blotting out broad daylight.
SEE Exod 10:4, 12; Lev 11:22; Deut 28:38; Judg 6:5; 1 Kgs 8:37; Ps 78:46; Prov 30:27; Joel 1:4; 2:25; Nah 3:15

'aron (0727): *ark, chest*. This noun refers to a container for objects. It is generally a rectangular box. Its most common usage is for the Ark of the Covenant, but it can also refer to a coffin or a contribution chest. It is not the same word used for Noah's large boat, even though it is traditionally called an "ark" in English.
SEE Gen 50:26; Exod 25:22; 40:20; Num 10:33; 1 Sam 3:3; 2 Sam 6:6; 1 Kgs 8:1; 2 Kgs 12:9; 1 Chr 28:2; Ps 132:8; Jer 3:16

'arek 'appayim (0750, 0639): *slow to anger*. Rendered literally, this idiom would be "long of nose," but it means the attitude or emotion of patience. It pertains to not being easily or quickly angered in a potentially hostile situation. It is often used to describe a person of high moral quality and is a repeated component of God's character. Compare **'ap** (0639).
SEE Exod 34:6; Num 14:18; Neh 9:17; Ps 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Prov 14:29; 15:18; 16:32; Joel 2:13; Jon 4:2; Nah 1:3

'erets (0776): *earth, land*. This noun refers to any solid geographic area as contrasted to the sky or bodies of water. It is used in several idiomatic ways as well, such as in the phrase "the heavens and earth," meaning "the entire created order." Sometimes the word can refer specifically to a region or territory of the world, as in "the land" promised to Abraham and his descendants.
SEE Gen 1:1; 9:11; 12:1; 13:17; 15:18; 28:13; Num 13:27; Deut 4:39; Josh 1:15; 23:14, 16; Ps 24:1; 47:2; 97:5; Isa 65:17; 66:22

'ashrey (0835): *happy, blessed*. This word points to a heightened state or condition of joy and rejoicing, implying very favorable circumstances and enjoyment. It may be implied that it is a state to be envied or highly desired. This "blessed" is somewhat different from divine favor (a blessing).
SEE Job 5:17; Ps 1:1; 32:1; 34:8; 41:1; 84:5, 12; 94:12; 106:3; Prov 3:13; 14:21; 28:14; Isa 30:18

bakhar (0977): *choose*. This verb denotes making a distinguishing selection, often between items of similar features or qualities. It can refer to human or divine choices. Some contexts have the same general meaning but a different focus; such "choice" is based on a relationship or special loving concern.
SEE Exod 18:25; Deut 7:6; 14:2; 21:5; 1 Sam 2:28; 10:24; 17:40; 1 Chr 28:5; Ps 78:68; 135:4; Isa 40:20; 43:10

beliya'al (1100): *worthlessness, wickedness*. This noun can mean "worthless," referring to an object that is ruined or devastated. Another meaning is a person who is actively evil, "worthless" in relation

to the standard of right living. It is often used in phrases such as "children of wickedness," meaning troublesome people.

SEE Deut 13:13; Judg 19:22; 1 Sam 1:16; 2:12; 25:17, 25; 2 Sam 22:5; Ps 18:4; 101:3; Prov 6:12; 19:28

ben 'adam (1121, 0120), **bar 'anash** (1247, 0606): *son of man*. This phrase simply means "human being." There is no specific gender in view; it is a way of pointing to the essential human quality of a person. Occasionally there is a diminutive sense (e.g., God is not a mere *ben 'adam*). It is also a messianic term in some contexts. In Dan 7:13, the Aramaic *bar 'anash* is equivalent to the Hebrew *ben 'adam*.
SEE Num 23:19; Job 25:6; 35:8; Ps 8:4; 80:17; 90:3; Isa 56:2; Jer 49:18; Ezek 2:1; Dan 7:13; 8:17

ben 'el (1121, 0410), **ben 'elohim** (1121, 0430): *sons of God*. This phrase means a being or entity that has its origin in God's creative power. It can refer to humans in relationship with God or to supernatural beings that are in the presence of God, including angels. In some contexts, it refers to a "heavenly court" (e.g., Job 1:6).
SEE Gen 6:2; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Ps 29:1; 89:6; Hos 1:10

ba'al (1168): *lord, Baal*. This noun means one who is a ruler, owner, or master of another person or people. It can refer to humans in various controlling social and political relationships. It also came to be a title for pagan deities in and around Canaan.
SEE 1 Kgs 16:31; 18:19, 40; 2 Kgs 10:18; 11:18; Hos 2:8, 13, 16

bar 'anash (1247, 0606): *See ben 'adam* (1121, 0120)

bara' (1254): *create*. This verb means to generate something into existence. It implies craftsmanship, yet the focus is often on bringing objects into existence. This same word can also describe making something out of existing materials or re-creating something into something new.
SEE Gen 1:1, 27; 2:3; 6:7; Ps 51:10; 148:5; Eccl 12:1; Isa 40:28; 43:15; 65:17; Mal 2:10

berith (1285): *covenant*. This noun refers to a binding agreement, a contract between at least two parties. A covenant can be between human parties (such as nations, friends, rulers and subjects, etc.) or between God and a human person or group. *Covenant* is an important defining concept in the relationship between God and his people.
SEE Gen 9:9; 15:18; 17:2; Exod 19:5; Num 25:12; Deut 29:1; 33:9; Josh 24:25; 2 Kgs 11:17; 23:3; 2 Chr 29:10; Ezra 10:3; Isa 42:6; 55:3; Jer 31:31; 33:21; Ezek 37:26; Hos 2:18; Mal 2:4

barak (1288), **berakah** (1293): *bles, blessing*. The verb (*barak*) means either divine speech that bestows success or prosperity, or human vocalization of a desire that God would bless a person. In some contexts, it is virtually a synonym for praise (e.g., "bless God"). The related noun (*berakah*) means an oath that results in prosperity, peace, freedom, safety, etc.
SEE Gen 9:3; 12:2; 49:28; Num 6:23; 22:6; Deut 30:19; 33:1; 1 Kgs 8:14; 2 Chr 6:3; Ezek 34:26; Mal 3:10

SUBJECT INDEX FOR THE STUDY MATERIALS

Each entry and subentry in the following index is followed by a list of references to notes and articles in the *NLT Parallel Study Bible*. References to *NLT Study Bible* notes are set in roman type (e.g., Num 33:38-39), while references to *Life Application Study Bible* notes are in italics (e.g., Num 12:1). In some instances, a reference is followed by a number in parentheses to indicate that there is more than one note on that passage. For example, *Matt 1:1(2)* means that the reader should look up the second note with the heading 1:1 in Matthew.

Please note that this index does not list every topic that occurs in the Bible text, but only those that appear in the notes and articles. If you would like to find a word or phrase in the Bible text itself, use the Dictionary/Concordance that begins on p. 2559.

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NLT DICTIONARY / CONCORDANCE

A

ABANDON, ABANDONED, ABANDONS (v) *to desert or forsake*

Josh 1:5 . . . will not fail you or **a** you.
 Josh 24:16 . . . We would never **a** the LORD
 Ezra 9:9 . . . God did not **a** us in our slavery.
 Neh 9:31 . . . completely or **a** them forever.
 Ps 22:1 . . . why have you **a-ed** me?
 Ps 37:25 . . . never seen the godly **a-ed**
 Ps 37:28 . . . he will never **a** the godly.
 Prov 15:10 . . . Whoever **a-s** the right path
 Matt 27:46 . . . why have you **a-ed** me?
 John 16:1 . . . you won't **a** your faith.
 Rom 1:24 . . . So God **a-ed** them to do
 Rom 1:28 . . . **a-ed** them to their foolish
 2 Cor 4:9 . . . down, but never **a-ed** by God.
 Heb 13:5 . . . I will never **a** you.

ABUNDANCE (n) *great quantity, affluence; more than ample*

Job 36:31 . . . giving them food in **a**.
 Ps 66:12 . . . a place of great **a**.
 Jer 31:14 . . . The priests will enjoy **a**,
 Matt 13:12 . . . have an **a** of knowledge.
 Matt 25:29 . . . they will have an **a**.
 John 1:16 . . . From his **a** we have all

ABUSIVE (adj) *using harsh, insulting language; characterized by wrong or improper use or action*

1 Cor 5:11 . . . worships idols, or is **a**,
 1 Cor 6:10 . . . drunkards, or are **a**, or
 Eph 4:29 . . . use foul or **a** language.

ACCEPT, ACCEPTED, ACCEPTS (v) *to receive willingly*

Gen 4:4 . . . The LORD **a-ed** Abel
 Gen 4:7 . . . be **a-ed** if you do what is right.
 Deut 16:19 . . . Never **a** a bribe, for bribes
 Job 42:8 . . . I will **a** his prayer
 Job 42:9 . . . the LORD **a-ed** Job's prayer.
 Ecc 5:18 . . . to **a** their lot in life.
 Luke 4:24 . . . no prophet is **a-ed** in his
 Luke 10:16 . . . who **a-s** your message
 John 1:12 . . . believed him and **a-ed** him,
 John 17:8 . . . They **a-ed** it and know that
 Rom 11:12 . . . when they finally **a** it.
 Gal 2:9 . . . they **a-ed** Barnabas and me
 Col 2:6 . . . just as you **a-ed** Christ Jesus
 1 Tim 1:15 . . . everyone should **a** it:
 1 Tim 4:9 . . . everyone should **a** it.
 Jas 1:21 . . . **a** the word God has planted

ACCUSE, ACCUSED, ACCUSES, ACCUSING (v) *to charge with fault or offense; to blame*

Job 22:4 . . . **a-s** you and brings judgment
 Ps 27:12 . . . For they **a** me of things
 Dan 6:5 . . . grounds for **a-ing** Daniel
 Luke 23:14 . . . **a-ing** him of leading a revolt.
 John 5:45 . . . it isn't I who will **a**
 John 7:7 . . . because I **a** it of doing evil.
 John 8:46 . . . can truthfully **a** me of sin?
 Acts 18:13 . . . **a-d** Paul of "persuading
 Rom 2:15 . . . and thoughts either **a** them
 Rom 8:33 . . . Who dares **a** us whom God
 Rev 12:10 . . . who **a-s** them before our God

ACKNOWLEDGE, ACKNOWLEDGES (v) *to express a gratitude of debt; to recognize as valid; to confess (wrongdoing)*

Jer 3:13 . . . Only **a** your guilt. Admit
 Matt 10:32 . . . Everyone who **a-s** me
 Luke 12:8 . . . Son of Man will also **a**
 Rom 1:28 . . . thought it foolish to **a** God,
 1 Jn 2:23 . . . anyone who **a-s** the Son
 1 Jn 4:3 . . . and does not **a** the truth

ADD, ADDED (v) *to make or serve as an addition*

Deut 4:2 . . . Do not **a** to or subtract from
 Deut 12:32 . . . You must not **a** anything to
 Prov 30:6 . . . Do not **a** to his words,
 Ecc 3:14 . . . Nothing can be **a-ed** to it
 Isa 37:2 . . . sent Eliakim the palace **a**
 Matt 6:27 . . . worries **a** a single moment
 Luke 12:25 . . . worries **a** a single moment
 Acts 2:47 . . . each day the Lord **a-ed** to their
 Rev 22:18 . . . God will **a** to that person

ADOPT, ADOPTED (v) *to take another's child into one's own family*

Rom 8:15 . . . when he **a-ed** you as his own
 Rom 8:23 . . . rights as his **a-ed** children,
 Rom 9:4 . . . to be God's **a-ed** children.
 Gal 4:5 . . . so that he could **a** us as
 Eph 1:5 . . . decided in advance to **a** us

ADULTERY (n) *unlawful sexual relations between a married and an unmarried person; symbolic of idolatry*

Exod 20:14 . . . You must not commit **a**.
 Deut 5:18 . . . You must not commit **a**.
 Prov 6:32 . . . who commits **a** is an utter fool,
 Matt 5:27 . . . You must not commit **a**.
 Matt 19:18 . . . You must not commit **a**.
 Mark 10:11 . . . someone else commits **a**
 Luke 18:20 . . . You must not commit **a**.
 John 8:4 . . . caught in the act of **a**.
 1 Cor 6:9 . . . **a**, or are male prostitutes,

ADVISE (n) *recommendation regarding a decision or course of conduct; counsel*

1 Kgs 12:8 . . . rejected the **a** of
 2 Chr 10:8 . . . rejected the **a** of
 Prov 12:5 . . . **a** of the wicked is
 Job 12:26 . . . godly give good **a** to their
 Prov 15:22 . . . Plans go wrong for lack of **a**;
 Isa 44:25 . . . I cause the wise to give bad **a**,
 Rom 11:34 . . . enough to give him **a**?

ADVOCATE (n) *one who pleads the cause of another; defender*

see also COUNSELOR
 Job 16:19 . . . My **a** is there on high.
 John 14:16 . . . he will give you another **A**,
 John 14:26 . . . the Father sends the **A**
 John 15:26 . . . I will send you the **A**—
 John 16:7 . . . if I don't, the won't come.
 1 Jn 2:1 . . . an **a** who pleads our case

AFRAID (adj) *fearful or apprehensive about an unwanted or uncertain situation*

Gen 3:10 . . . I was **a** because I was naked.
 Gen 26:24 . . . Do not be **a**, for I am
 Exod 3:6 . . . he was **a** to look at God.
 Deut 1:21 . . . Don't be **a**!
 Deut 20:1 . . . your own, do not be **a**.
 Ps 23:4 . . . I will not be **a**, for you are
 Isa 10:24 . . . do not be **a** of the Assyrians
 Isa 41:10 . . . Don't be **a**, for I am
 Isa 43:1 . . . Do not be **a**, for I have
 Matt 8:26 . . . Why are you **a**?
 Matt 10:31 . . . So don't be **a**;
 Mark 5:36 . . . Don't be **a**.
 John 14:27 . . . don't be troubled or **a**.
 2 Tim 4:5 . . . Don't be **a** of suffering
 1 Pet 3:14 . . . don't worry or be **a**

ALCOHOL (n) *drink (as wine or beer) containing ethanol*

Prov 20:1 . . . **a** leads to brawls.

Isa 5:22 . . . boast about all the **a** they

ALCOHOLIC (adj) *containing alcohol*

Num 6:3 . . . give up wine and other **a**

ALIVE (adj) *animate, having life; active; aware*

Gen 45:7 . . . keep you and your families **a**
 Ps 41:2 . . . them and keeps them **a**.
 Luke 24:23 . . . Jesus is **a**!
 Acts 1:3 . . . ways that he was actually **a**.
 Rom 6:11 . . . the power of sin and **a** to
 Rev 2:8 . . . who was dead but is now **a**:

ALMIGHTY (n) *having absolute power over all; God*

Gen 17:1 . . . I am El-Shaddai—"God **A**."
 Exod 6:3 . . . as El-Shaddai—"God **A**"—
 Ruth 1:20 . . . **A** has made life very bitter
 Job 6:14 . . . without any fear of the **A**.
 Job 33:4 . . . breath of the **A** gives me life.
 Ps 91:1 . . . rest in the shadow of the **A**.
 Rev 4:8 . . . the **A**—the one who always was,
 Rev 15:3 . . . O Lord God, the **A**.
 Rev 19:6 . . . our God, the **A**, reigns.

ALTAR, ALTARS (n) *high places of worship on which sacrifices are offered or incense is burned*

Exod 8:20 . . . Noah built an **a** to the LORD,
 Gen 12:7 . . . Abram built an **a** there
 Gen 22:9 . . . Abraham built an **a** and
 Gen 26:25 . . . Isaac built an **a** there
 Exod 30:1 . . . make another **a** of acacia
 Exod 37:25 . . . incense **a** of acacia wood.
 Josh 8:30 . . . Joshua built an **a** to the LORD,
 Josh 22:10 . . . a large and imposing **a**.
 1 Sam 7:17 . . . Samuel built an **a** to the
 2 Chr 4:1 . . . made a bronze **a** 30 feet long,
 2 Chr 4:19 . . . Temple of God: the gold **a**;
 2 Chr 32:12 . . . only at the **a** at the Temple
 2 Chr 33:16 . . . restored the **a** of the LORD
 Ezra 3:2 . . . rebuilding the **a** of the God
 Isa 6:6 . . . coal he had taken from the **a**
 Matt 5:23 . . . presenting a sacrifice at the **a**
 Acts 17:23 . . . your **a-s** had this inscription
 Heb 13:10 . . . an **a** from which the priests
 Rev 6:9 . . . I saw under the **a** the souls

AMBASSADOR, AMBASSADORS (n) *an authorized representative or messenger*

2 Cor 5:20 . . . So we are Christ's **a-s**;
 Eph 6:20 . . . this ssg as God's **a**.

AMBITION (n) *aspiration to achieve a particular goal, good or bad*

Gal 5:20 . . . anger, selfish **a**, dissension,
 Phil 1:17 . . . They preach with selfish **a**,
 Jas 3:14 . . . there is selfish **a** in your heart,

ANCESTOR, ANCESTORS (n) *one from whom a person is descended; forefather*

Exod 3:15 . . . God of your **a-s**—the God of
 Deut 19:14 . . . markers your **a-s** set up
 Isa 9:7 . . . throne of his **a** David for all
 Isa 43:27 . . . your first **a** sinned against me;
 Mark 11:10 . . . Kingdom of our **a** David!
 Luke 1:32 . . . the throne of his **a** David.
 Rom 9:5 . . . Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are their **a-s**,
 Gal 1:14 . . . for the traditions of my **a-s**.
 Heb 1:1 . . . to our **a-s** through the prophets.

ANGEL, ANGELS (n) *human or superhuman agent or messenger of God*

Exod 23:20 . . . I am sending an **a**
 2 Sam 24:16 . . . and said to the death **a**,
 Ps 91:11 . . . will order his **a-s** to protect
 Matt 4:6 . . . will order his **a-s** to protect
 Matt 28:2 . . . an **a** of the Lord came down
 Luke 1:26 . . . God sent the **a** Gabriel
 Luke 2:9 . . . an **a** of the Lord appeared
 Luke 20:36 . . . they will be like **a-s**.

Acts 12:7 . . . The **A** struck him on the side
 1 Cor 6:3 . . . we will judge **a-s**?
 2 Cor 11:14 . . . disguises himself as an **a**
 Gal 1:8 . . . or even an **a** from heaven,
 Heb 1:6 . . . all of God's **a-s** worship him.
 Heb 2:7 . . . a little lower than the **a-s**
 Heb 13:2 . . . entertained **a-s** without
 1 Pet 1:12 . . . the **a-s** are eagerly watching
 2 Pet 2:4 . . . even the **a-s** who sinned.
 Jude 1:6 . . . remind you of the **a-s**

ANGER (n) *a strong feeling of displeasure*
 Exod 34:6 . . . slow to **a** and filled with
 Num 14:18 . . . slow to **a** and filled with
 Deut 9:19 . . . furious **a** of the LORD,
 Deut 29:28 . . . In great **a** and fury
 2 Kgs 22:13 . . . LORD's great **a** is burning
 Ps 30:5 . . . his **a** lasts only a moment,
 Ps 78:38 . . . Many times he held back his **a**
 Rom 1:18 . . . God shows his **a** from heaven
 Rom 2:5 . . . a day of **a** is coming,
 Eph 4:26 . . . by letting **a** control you.
 1 Thes 5:9 . . . pour out his **a** on us.
 Jas 1:20 . . . Human **a** does not produce
 Rev 14:10 . . . the wine of God's **a**.

ANGRY (adj) *feeling or showing anger; wrathful*
 Exod 32:11 . . . so **a** with your own people
 Neh 9:17 . . . merciful, slow to become **a**,
 Ps 103:8 . . . merciful, slow to get **a**
 Prov 22:24 . . . Don't befriend a people
 Jonah 4:2 . . . slow to get **a** and filled
 Matt 5:22 . . . if you are even **a** with
 Mark 10:14 . . . he was **a** with his disciples.
 John 3:36 . . . under God's **a** judgment.
 Acts 4:25 . . . Why were the nations so **a**?
 Jas 1:19 . . . to speak, and slow to get **a**.

ANGUISH (n) *extreme pain, distress, or anxiety*
 Isa 53:11 . . . by his **a**, he will be satisfied.
 Zeph 1:15 . . . of terrible distress and **a**,
 Matt 24:21 . . . greater **a** than at any time
 Luke 16:24 . . . I am in **a** in these flames.
 Rev 16:10 . . . ground their teeth in **a**,

ANOINT, ANOINTED, ANOINTING (v) *to smear or rub with oil; used for healing or consecration to sacred duty; used for grooming or burial; figurative for divine appointment*
 see also ANOINTED ONE
 Exod 30:26 . . . oil to **a** the Tabernacle,
 Exod 30:30 . . . **A** Aaron and his sons
 Lev 8:12 . . . **a-ing** him and making him holy
 1 Sam 15:1 . . . told me to **a** you as king
 2 Sam 2:4 . . . David and **a-ed** him king over
 2 Sam 23:1 . . . man **a-ed** by the God of Jacob,
 Ps 23:5 . . . honor me by **a-ing** my head
 Ps 92:10 . . . You have **a-ed** me with
 Isa 61:1 . . . the LORD has **a-ed** me
 Dan 9:24 . . . and to **a** the Most Holy Place.
 Acts 10:38 . . . you know that God **a-ed** Jesus
 Heb 1:9 . . . your God has **a-ed** you,
 Jas 5:14 . . . over you, **a-ing** you with oil

ANOINTED ONE (n) *one chosen by divine election*
 1 Sam 2:10 . . . the strength of his **a**.
 1 Sam 26:9 . . . attacking the LORD's **a**?
 Ps 132:17 . . . my **a** will be a light for
 Isa 45:1 . . . the LORD says to Cyrus, his **a**
 Dan 9:25 . . . a ruler—the **A**—comes.

ANTICHRIST, ANTICHRISTS (n) *opponent of Christ; the personification of evil*
 1 Jn 2:18 . . . heard that the **A** is coming,
 1 Jn 2:18 . . . many such **a-s** have appeared.
 1 Jn 4:3 . . . has the spirit of the **A**,
 2 Jn 1:7 . . . deceiver and an **a**.

APPEAR, APPEARED, APPEARING, APPEARS (v) *to come out of hiding and show up in public view; to make one's presence known*
 Gen 1:9 . . . so dry ground may **a**.
 Num 14:10 . . . presence of the LORD **a-ed**
 Deut 33:16 . . . **a-ed** in the burning bush.
 Mal 3:2 . . . and face him when he **a-s**?
 Matt 1:20 . . . angel of the Lord **a-ed** to him
 Matt 24:30 . . . will **a** in the heavens,

Luke 2:9 . . . angel of the Lord **a-ed** among
 Luke 16:15 . . . You like to **a** righteous
 Phil 2:7 . . . When he **a-ed** in human form,
 2 Thes 1:7 . . . the Lord Jesus **a-s** from
 2 Tim 1:10 . . . by the **a-ing** of Christ Jesus,
 2 Tim 4:1 . . . **a-s** to set up his Kingdom:
 Heb 9:24 . . . **a** now before God on our
 Heb 9:26 . . . **a-ed** at the end of the age
 1 Pet 5:4 . . . when the Great Shepherd **a-s**,
 1 Jn 3:2 . . . will be like when Christ **a-s**.

APPROVAL (n) *an act or instance of approving*
 Ps 90:17 . . . LORD our God show us his **a**
 John 6:27 . . . the seal of his **a**.
 Rom 14:4 . . . stand and receive his **a**.
 1 Cor 11:19 . . . you who have God's **a**
 2 Tim 2:15 . . . and receive his **a**.
 Heb 11:4 . . . God showed his **a** of his gifts.

ARCHANGEL, ARCHANGELS (n) *a leader and chief angel; biblically designated as Michael*
 Dan 10:13 . . . one of the **a-s**, came to help
 Dan 12:1 . . . At that time Michael, the **a**
 1 Thes 4:16 . . . with the voice of the **a**,

ARGUE, ARGUING (v) *to contend or disagree in words; to dispute*
 Job 13:8 . . . Will you **a** God's case
 Job 40:2 . . . to **a** with the Almighty?
 Prov 25:9 . . . **a-ing** with your neighbor,
 Isa 45:9 . . . those who **a** with their Creator.
 Rom 14:1 . . . and don't **a** with them
 1 Cor 11:16 . . . anyone wants to **a**

ARM, ARMS (n) *upper limb of the body; extension or projection of; lineage; figurative of power or might*
 Num 11:23 . . . Has my **a** lost its power?
 Deut 4:34 . . . a powerful **a**, and terrifying
 Deut 7:19 . . . strong hand and powerful **a**
 Deut 33:27 . . . everlasting **a-s** are under
 Ps 44:3 . . . it was not their own strong **a**
 Ps 98:1 . . . his holy **a** has shown
 Isa 40:11 . . . carry the lambs in his **a-s**,
 Isa 65:2 . . . opened my **a** to a rebellious
 Jer 27:5 . . . powerful **a** I made the earth
 Mark 10:16 . . . took the children in his **a-s**

ARMAGEDDON (n) *the gathering place for the final battle between God's forces and Satan's forces associated with Christ's second coming*
 Rev 16:16 . . . with the Hebrew name **A**.

ARMOR (n) *weapons of war or self-defense; figurative of spiritual resources*
 Ps 91:4 . . . are your **a** and protection.
 Isa 59:17 . . . righteousness as his body **a**
 Jer 46:4 . . . and prepare your **a**.
 Rom 13:12 . . . put on the shining **a**
 Eph 6:11 . . . Put on all of God's **a**
 Eph 6:13 . . . put on every piece of God's **a**
 1 Thes 5:8 . . . protected by the **a** of faith

ARMY, ARMIES (n) *large band of men organized and armed for war; any large multitude devoted to a cause*
 Ps 33:16 . . . best-equipped **a** cannot save
 Ps 84:12 . . . LORD of Heaven's **A-ies**,
 Isa 6:3 . . . LORD of Heaven's **A-ies!**
 Isa 45:13 . . . LORD of Heaven's **A-ies**,
 Isa 51:15 . . . the LORD of Heaven's **A-ies**.
 Joel 2:2 . . . great and mighty **a** appears.
 Joel 2:5 . . . like a mighty **a** moving into
 Joel 2:11 . . . This is his mighty **a**,
 Hag 1:5 . . . LORD of Heaven's **A-ies** says:
 Zech 8:6 . . . LORD of Heaven's **A-ies** says:
 Rev 19:14 . . . The **a-ies** of heaven,
 Rev 19:19 . . . the horse and his **a**.

ASHAMED (adj) *feeling shame, guilt, or disgrace*
 Ps 69:6 . . . be **a** because of me,
 Jer 31:19 . . . I was thoroughly **a** of all I did
 Jer 48:13 . . . were **a** of their gold calf
 Mark 8:38 . . . If anyone is **a** of me
 Luke 9:26 . . . If anyone is **a** of me
 Rom 1:16 . . . I am not **a** of this Good News
 2 Tim 1:8 . . . So never be **a** to tell others
 2 Tim 2:15 . . . who does not need to be **a**

ASLEEP (adj) *state of bodily rest; figurative for physical death or spiritual dullness*
 see also DIE, SLEEP
 Judg 4:21 . . . Sisera fell **a** from exhaustion,
 1 Kgs 18:27 . . . away on a trip, or is **a** and
 Matt 9:24 . . . isn't dead; she's only **a**.
 Matt 26:40 . . . disciples and found them **a**.
 John 11:11 . . . Lazarus has fallen **a**, but
 1 Thes 5:6 . . . be on your guard, not **a** like

ASTRAY (adv) *off the right path or route; in error, away from what is desirable or proper*
 Prov 20:1 . . . Those led **a** by drink
 Isa 47:10 . . . 'knowledge' have led you **a**,
 Jer 50:6 . . . shepherds have led them **a**
 1 Jn 2:26 . . . who want to lead you **a**.

ASTROLOGERS (n) *one who studies the stars and planets to foresee or foretell future events by their positions and aspects*
 Isa 47:13 . . . all your **a**, those stargazers
 Dan 2:2 . . . enchanters, sorcerers, and **a**,

ATHLETE, ATHLETES (n) *a person who is trained or skilled in exercises, sports, or games requiring physical strength, agility, or stamina*
 Ps 19:5 . . . like a great **a** eager to run
 1 Cor 9:25 . . . All **a-s** are disciplined
 1 Cor 9:27 . . . body like an **a**, training it
 2 Tim 2:5 . . . **a-s** cannot win the prize unless

ATONEMENT (n) *reconciliation; reparation for an offense or injury; cleansing*
 see also FORGIVENESS
 Exod 25:17 . . . cover—the place of **a**—
 Lev 23:27 . . . Day of **A** on the tenth day
 2 Chr 29:24 . . . to make **a** for the sins
 Prov 16:6 . . . faithfulness make **a** for sin.

ATTITUDE, ATTITUDES (n) *a mental position with regard to a fact or state; a feeling or emotion toward a fact or state*
 Eph 4:23 . . . your thoughts and **a-s**.
 Phil 2:5 . . . have the same **a** that Christ
 1 Pet 3:8 . . . keep **a** humble **a**.
 1 Pet 4:1 . . . with the same **a** he had,

AUTHORITY, AUTHORITIES (n) *the right to govern; the freedom or ability to act; one entrusted with the right to govern*
 Matt 28:18 . . . been given all **a** in heaven
 Luke 10:19 . . . have given you **a** over
 John 5:22 . . . absolute **a** to judge,
 Acts 1:7 . . . **a** to set those dates and times,
 Rom 13:1 . . . submit to governing **a-ies**.
 Rom 13:1 . . . For all **a** comes from God,
 Rom 13:2 . . . anyone who rebels against **a**
 Rom 13:3 . . . without fear of the **a-ies**?
 1 Cor 4:3 . . . by any human **a**.
 1 Cor 15:24 . . . ruler and **a** and power.
 Eph 1:22 . . . things under the **a** of Christ
 Eph 3:10 . . . all the unseen rulers and **a-ies**
 Eph 6:12 . . . against evil rulers and **a-ies**
 Col 2:10 . . . every ruler and **a**.
 Col 2:15 . . . the spiritual rulers and **a-ies**.
 1 Tim 2:2 . . . all who are in **a** so that
 Titus 2:15 . . . You have the **a** to correct
 1 Pet 2:18 . . . accept the **a** of your masters
 1 Pet 3:1 . . . accept the **a** of your husbands.
 1 Pet 3:22 . . . the angels and **a-ies** and
 1 Pet 5:5 . . . accept the **a** of the elders.
 Jude 1:6 . . . the limits of **a** God gave them

AVOID, AVOIDING (v) *to keep away from; to depart or withdraw from*
 Prov 4:24 . . . **A** all perverse talk;
 Prov 14:16 . . . are cautious and **a** danger;
 Prov 16:6 . . . By fearing the LORD, people **a**
 Prov 20:3 . . . **A-ing** a fight is **a** mark
 Eccl 7:18 . . . fears God will **a** both
 Rom 2:3 . . . think you can **a** God's

AWE (n) *an emotion variously combining dread, respect, and wonder that is inspired by authority or the sacred*
 see also FEAR, REVERENCE
 1 Kgs 3:28 . . . people were in **a** of the king,
 Ps 119:120 . . . I stand in **a** of your
 Luke 5:26 . . . with great wonder and **a**,
 Acts 2:43 . . . sense of **a** came over them
 Heb 12:28 . . . holy fear and **a**.

AWESOME (adj) *characterized by reverential fear; expressive of or inspiring awe*
see also WONDERFUL

Exod 34:10 . . . the **a** power I will display
Deut 7:21 . . . a great and **a** God.
2 Sam 7:23 . . . You performed **a** miracles
Neh 1:5 . . . the great and **a** God
Job 10:16 . . . display your **a** power
Ps 47:2 . . . Most High is **a**.
Ps 65:5 . . . answer our prayers with **a**
Ps 99:3 . . . your great and **a** name.
Ps 106:22 . . . such **a** deeds at the Red Sea.
Ps 131:1 . . . too **a** for me to grasp.
Dan 9:4 . . . a great and **a** God!

B

BABY, BABIES (n) *infant child; youngest of a group; figurative of new or immature Christians*

Exod 2:7 . . . women to nurse the **b** for you?
Luke 1:44 . . . **b** in my womb jumped for
Luke 2:12 . . . find **a** **b** wrapped snugly
Luke 2:16 . . . the **b**, lying in the manger.
Acts 7:19 . . . abandon their newborn **b-ies**
1 Cor 14:20 . . . Be innocent as **b-ies** when
1 Pet 2:2 . . . Like newborn **b-ies**, you must

BABYLON (n) *capital city of the Babylonian Empire; a city devoted to materialism and sensual pleasure; biblical writers used as model of paganism and idolatry*
Ps 137:1 . . . Beside the rivers of **B**, we sat
Jer 29:10 . . . will be in **B** for seventy years.
Jer 51:37 . . . **B** will become a heap of ruins,
Rev 14:8 . . . shouting, "**B** is fallen—

BAPTISM, BAPTISMS (n) *a Christian ordinance; a washing with water to demonstrate cleansing from sin, linked with repentance and admission into the community of faith; figurative of an ordeal or initiation*

Matt 3:16 . . . After his **b**, as Jesus came up
Luke 3:7 . . . crowds came to John for **b**,
Acts 19:3 . . . what **b** did you experience?
Rom 6:3 . . . joined with Christ Jesus in **b**,
Gal 3:27 . . . united with Christ in **b**
Eph 4:5 . . . one Lord, one faith, one **b**,
Heb 6:2 . . . further instruction about **b-s**,
1 Pet 3:21 . . . that water is a picture of **b**,

BEAST, BEASTS (n) *devilish creature(s) ravishing the earth during the Tribulation; animals, as distinguished from plants or humans; a contemptible person*

Dan 7:3 . . . Then four huge **b-s** came up
Dan 7:6 . . . authority was given to this **b**.
1 Cor 15:32 . . . fighting wild **b-s**—those
Rev 13:18 . . . number of the **b**, for it is
Rev 16:2 . . . had the mark of the **b**
Rev 19:20 . . . accepted the mark of the **b**

BEAUTY (n) *a particularly graceful, ornamental, or excellent quality; the quality in a person or thing that gives pleasure to the senses*

2 Sam 11:2 . . . a woman of unusual **b**
Ps 50:2 . . . the perfection of **b**, God shines
Prov 31:30 . . . and **b** does not last;
Isa 28:1 . . . but its glorious **b** will fade
Jas 1:11 . . . and its **b** fades away.
1 Pet 1:24 . . . their **b** is like a flower
1 Pet 3:4 . . . of a gentle and quiet spirit,

BEGINNING (n) *the point at which something starts; the first part; the origin, source*

Gen 1:1 . . . In the **b** God created
John 1:1 . . . In the **b** the Word already
Rom 16:25 . . . secret from the **b** of time.
1 Jn 1:1 . . . one who existed from the **b**,
Rev 21:6 . . . the **B** and the End.
Rev 22:13 . . . the **B** and the End.

BELIEVE, BELIEVED, BELIEVES, BELIEVING (v) *to trust in; to hold a firm conviction about; to accept as true, genuine, or real*
see also FAITH, TRUST

Gen 15:6 . . . Abram **b-d** the LORD,
Isa 53:1 . . . Who has **b-d** our message?
Mark 9:23 . . . is possible if a person **b-s**.
Mark 9:24 . . . I do **b**, but help me
Luke 24:25 . . . You find it so hard to **b**

John 1:7 . . . so that everyone might **b**
John 1:12 . . . all who **b-d** him and accepted
John 3:16 . . . everyone who **b-s** in him
John 4:41 . . . hear his message and **b**.
John 5:38 . . . because you do not **b** me—
John 7:39 . . . to everyone **b-ing** in him.
John 9:35 . . . asked, "Do you **b** in the Son
John 11:27 . . . **b-d** you are the Messiah,
John 11:40 . . . see God's glory if you **b**?
John 12:38 . . . who has **b-d** our message?
John 13:19 . . . you will **b** that I AM
John 14:11 . . . Or at least **b** because of the
John 17:21 . . . world will **b** you sent me.
John 19:35 . . . so that you also can **b**.
John 20:29 . . . **b** because you have seen
Acts 10:43 . . . that everyone who **b-s** in him
Acts 16:31 . . . **B** in the Lord Jesus and
Acts 19:4 . . . **b** in the one who would come
Acts 26:27 . . . do you **b** the prophets?
Acts 27:25 . . . For I **b** God. I will be just
Rom 1:16 . . . saving everyone who **b-s**—
Rom 3:22 . . . for everyone who **b-s**, no
Rom 3:25 . . . **b** that Jesus sacrificed his life,
Rom 10:9 . . . **b** in your heart that God
Rom 10:10 . . . For it is by **b-ing** in your heart
Rom 14:23 . . . anything you **b** is not right,
Rom 16:26 . . . they too might **b** and obey
1 Cor 1:21 . . . to save those who **b**.
2 Cor 5:7 . . . by **b-ing** and not by seeing.
Gal 3:2 . . . because you **b-d** the message
Eph 2:8 . . . his grace when you **b-d**.
Col 1:23 . . . continue to **b** this truth
1 Thes 4:14 . . . For since we **b** that Jesus
2 Thes 2:11 . . . and they will **b** these lies.
1 Tim 3:16 . . . He was **b-d** in throughout the
Heb 3:14 . . . firmly as when we first **b-d**,
Heb 11:6 . . . must **b** that God exists
Jas 2:19 . . . you **b** that there is one God.
1 Jn 3:23 . . . We must **b** in the name
1 Jn 4:1 . . . friends, do not **b** everyone
1 Jn 5:1 . . . Everyone who **b-s** that Jesus is
1 Jn 5:10 . . . All who **b** in the Son

BELONG, BELONGED, BELONGS (v) *to be the property of a person or thing*

Lev 25:55 . . . people of Israel **b** to me.
Lev 27:30 . . . **b-s** to the LORD and
Ps 22:28 . . . royal power **b-s** to the LORD.
John 8:47 . . . Anyone who **b-s** to God
John 15:19 . . . if you **b-ed** to it, but you
Rom 1:6 . . . called to **b** to Jesus
Rom 12:5 . . . we all **b** to each other.
2 Cor 10:7 . . . who say they **b** to Christ
Gal 5:24 . . . Those who **b** to Christ
1 Thes 5:5 . . . we don't **b** to darkness
2 Tim 2:19 . . . All who **b** to the LORD
1 Pet 3:16 . . . because you **b** to Christ.
1 Jn 4:6 . . . If they do not **b** to God,

BETHLEHEM (n) *a city about five miles south of Jerusalem in the hill country of Judah; the ancestral home of King David and the birthplace of Jesus Christ*

Ruth 1:19 . . . When they came to **B**,
1 Sam 16:1 . . . go to **B**. Find a man named
2 Sam 23:15 . . . the well by the gate in **B**.
Mic 5:2 . . . **B** Ephrathah, are only a small
Matt 2:1 . . . Jesus was born in **B** in Judea,
Matt 2:6 . . . you, **O B** in the land of Judah,

BETRAY, BETRAYED (v) *to turn your back on a friend; to deliver to an enemy by treachery; to lead astray, seduce*

Num 5:6 . . . men or women—**b** the LORD
Deut 32:51 . . . both of you **b-ed** me
Jer 38:22 . . . They have **b-ed** and mistled
Mal 2:10 . . . Then why do we **b** each other,
Matt 10:21 . . . A brother will **b** his brother
Matt 24:10 . . . and **b** and hate each other.
Matt 26:21 . . . one of you will **b** me.
Matt 27:4 . . . I have **b-ed** an innocent man.
Luke 6:16 . . . (who later **b-ed** him).
John 18:5 . . . Judas, who **b-ed** him,

BIRTH (n) *the emergence of a new individual from the body of its parent; beginning, start*
Gen 25:24 . . . the time came to give **b**,
Ps 58:3 . . . even from **b** they have lied

Matt 24:8 . . . only the first of the **b** pains,
John 3:6 . . . Spirit gives **b** to spiritual life.
Titus 3:5 . . . giving us a new **b** and new life
Jas 1:15 . . . it gives **b** to death.

BITTERNESS (n) *an intense or severe expression or feeling of pain, grief, or regret; exhibiting intense animosity*
Prov 14:10 . . . Each heart knows its own **b**,
Prov 17:25 . . . **b** to the one who gave them
Rom 3:14 . . . full of cursing and **b**.
Eph 4:31 . . . Get rid of all **b**, rage,

BLAMELESS (adj) *characterized by being free from sin and fault*
see also INTEGRITY, RIGHTEOUS

Gen 6:9 . . . only **b** person living on earth
Job 1:8 . . . **b**—a man of complete integrity.
Ps 18:23 . . . I am **b** before God;
Prov 13:6 . . . guards the path of the **b**,
Prov 29:10 . . . The bloodthirsty hate **b**
Phil 1:10 . . . live pure and **b** lives
Col 1:22 . . . and you are holy and **b**
1 Thes 5:23 . . . kept **b** until our Lord
Titus 1:6 . . . must live a **b** life.
2 Pet 3:14 . . . pure and **b** in his sight.

BLASPHEME, BLASPHEMED, BLASPHEMES, BLASPHEMING (v) *to dishonor or revile God; to speak of or address with irreverence*

Lev 24:11 . . . son of an Israelite woman **b-ed**
Lev 24:16 . . . Anyone who **b-s** the Name
Num 15:30 . . . have **b-ed** the LORD,
Isa 52:5 . . . My name is **b-ed** all day long.
Dan 11:36 . . . even **b-ing** the God of gods.
Mark 3:29 . . . who **b-s** the Holy Spirit
Luke 12:10 . . . who **b-s** the Holy Spirit
Acts 6:11 . . . We heard him **b** Moses,
Rom 2:24 . . . Gentiles **b** the name of God
1 Tim 1:13 . . . to **b** the name of Christ.
1 Tim 1:20 . . . learn not to **b** God.
Rev 13:1 . . . were names that **b-ed** God.

BLASPHEMY, BLASPHEMIES (n) *the words or actions that dishonor God; the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God*

Neh 9:18 . . . They committed terrible **b-ies**.
Mark 3:28 . . . all sin and **b** can be forgiven,
Mark 14:64 . . . You have all heard his **b**.
John 10:33 . . . for any good work, but for **b**!
2 Pet 2:11 . . . a charge of **b** against those
Rev 13:5 . . . speak great **b-ies** against God.
Rev 13:6 . . . words of **b** against God,
Rev 17:3 . . . and **b-ies** against God were

BLESS, BLESSED, BLESSES (v) *to confer prosperity or happiness upon; to honor in worship; to offer approval or encouragement; to bring pleasure or divine favor*

Gen 1:22 . . . Then God **b-ed** them,
Gen 12:3 . . . I will **b** those who **b** you
Gen 22:18 . . . of the earth will be **b-ed**—
Ps 16:7 . . . I will **b** the LORD who guides
Prov 31:28 . . . Her children stand and **b**
Matt 5:3 . . . God **b-es** those who are poor
Matt 5:7 . . . **b-es** those who are merciful,
Matt 5:9 . . . God **b-es** those who work for
Matt 5:11 . . . God **b-es** you when people
Jas 1:12 . . . God **b-es** those who patiently
Rev 22:7 . . . **B-ed** are those who obey
Rev 22:14 . . . **B-ed** are those who wash

BLESSING, BLESSINGS (n) *happiness; praise; divine favor or heavenly reward; the antidote to cursings*

Josh 8:34 . . . **b-s** and cursing Moses
Prov 13:21 . . . **b-s** reward the righteous.
John 12:13 . . . **B-s** on the one who comes in
Acts 4:33 . . . God's great **b** was upon them
Acts 11:23 . . . evidence of God's **b**,
Rom 15:27 . . . spiritual **b-s** of the Good
Eph 3:6 . . . both enjoy the promise of **b-s**
Rev 7:12 . . . **B** and glory and wisdom

BLOOD (n) *fluid in the circulatory system; signifies human life; kinfolk; of animals, used in priestly sacrifices; of Christ, effective for the forgiveness of sins; on hands or head, symbolic of guilt*

Exod 12:13 . . . When I see your **b**, I will pass
Deut 12:23 . . . But never consume the **b**,
Isa 1:11 . . . no pleasure from the **b** of bulls