

GENESIS

Ever turned on a TV show a few minutes after it began? Chances are, you turned it off before the show ended or flipped to a different channel because you couldn't figure out what was going on.

To fully understand the plot, you needed to see the beginning of the show.

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

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

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

KEY POINTS

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

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

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

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

STATS

PURPOSE

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

AUTHOR

Moses

ORIGINAL AUDIENCE

The people of Israel

DATE WRITTEN

1450–1410 B.C.

SETTING

The region presently known as the Middle East

KEY PEOPLE

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

TIMELINE

Creation

(undated)
Noah

2166 B.C.
Abram born

2091
Abram enters Canaan

2066
Isaac born

2006
Jacob & Esau born

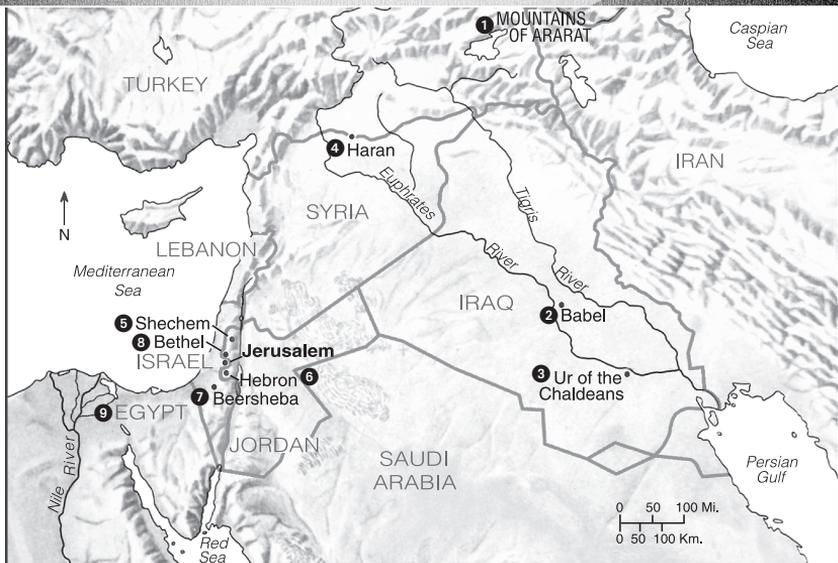
1929
Jacob flees to Haran

1915
Joseph born

1898
Joseph sold into slavery

1885
Joseph rules Egypt

1805
Joseph dies



Modern names and boundaries are shown in gray.

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

1 MOUNTAINS OF ARARAT

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

2 BABEL

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

3 UR OF THE CHALDEANS

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

4 HARAN

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

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

5 SHECHEM

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

6 HEBRON

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

7 BEERSHEBA

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

8 BETHEL

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

9 EGYPT

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

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

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.

⁶Then God said, “Let there be a space between the waters, to separate 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.

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.

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.

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

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

²⁰Then God said, “Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. 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.

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.

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 created human beings* in his own image.

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

TRUE WORTH

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

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

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.

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

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

THE MAN AND WOMAN IN EDEN When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 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

2:12 Or ceased; also in 2:3. **2:6** Or mist.

ULTIMATE ISSUES THE ORIGIN OF HUMANITY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 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.

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."

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 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.

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

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

DAYS OF CREATION

DAY 1:—LIGHT is created and separated from darkness

DAY 2:—SKY AND WATER separated

DAY 3:—SEA AND LAND distinguished

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

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

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

DAY 7:—GOD rested and was pleased

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

²⁴"Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. ²⁵"It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'"

²⁶"You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. ²⁷"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."

²⁸The 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. ²⁹At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

³⁰When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man* and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from

MARRIAGE

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

the LORD God among the trees.⁹ Then the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

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.”

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 offspring and her offspring.

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.”*

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.”

PARADISE LOST: GOD’S JUDGMENT 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.

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

WONDER...

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

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

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

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

For some reason he chose to leave out dinosaurs,

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

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

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

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

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

PERSONALITY PROFILE ADAM & EVE

UPS:

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

DOWNES:

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

STATS:

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

KEY VERSE: *Genesis 1:27*

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

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

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

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

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

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

The basic tendency to sin goes back to the beginning of the human race. God wants people who are free to sin to choose instead to trust and love him. God's design for marriage was part of Creation.

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

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 forever!" 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 cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

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

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.

"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.

BIG MISTAKE

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

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

SATAN'S PLAN

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

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

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

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

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

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!"

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,

"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,

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

ABEL PERSONALITY PROFILE

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

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

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

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

BOTTOM LINE: God hears those who come to him.

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

Abel's story is told in Genesis 4:1-10. He also is mentioned in Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:5; Hebrews 11:4; 12:24.

UPS:

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

STATS:

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

KEY VERSE: Hebrews 11:4

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

THE BIRTH OF SETH 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.

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

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

4:25 Seth probably means "granted"; the name may also mean "appointed." **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. **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*.

MY STORY: Tynisha

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

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

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

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. 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.

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

6 A WORLD GONE WRONG Then the people began to multiply on the earth, and daughters were born to them. 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 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 created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.” ⁸But Noah found favor with the LORD.

THE STORY OF NOAH ⁹This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. 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.

7 THE FLOOD COVERS THE EARTH When everything was ready, the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth, I can see that you alone are righteous. 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

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

6:15 Hebrew 300 cubits [133.8 meters] long, 50 cubits [23 meters] wide, and 30 cubits [13.8 meters] high. **6:16** Hebrew an opening of 1 cubit [46 centimeters]. **7:2** Hebrew of each clean animal; similarly in 7:8.

WHY WORRY?

(7:15-16) Many have wondered how this animal kingdom roundup happened. Did Noah and his sons spend years collecting them? Actually, God took care of that job while Noah and his sons were building the boat. They didn't have to worry about how the animals would arrive. Often we do just the opposite of Noah. We worry about details in our lives over which we have no control, while neglecting specific areas (such as attitudes, relationships, responsibilities) that are under our control. What task has God given you? What aspects of your life seem out of your control? Concentrate on what God has given you to do, and leave the rest to him.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

UPS:

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

STATS:

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

KEY VERSE: *Genesis 6:22*

PERSONALITY PROFILE NOAH

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

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

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

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

BOTTOM LINE: God is faithful.

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

Obedience is a long-term commitment.

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

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