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THE LIFE RECOVERY[®] BIBLE

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Recovery
Bible**
THE BIBLE
FOR PEOPLE
IN 12 STEP
RECOVERY

KJV

THE LIFE RECOVERY[®] BIBLE

KING JAMES
VERSION

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
Carol Stream, Illinois

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THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

The Old Testament

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211	Deuteronomy	999	Daniel	1403	Galatians
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289	Judges	1035	Joel	1423	Philippians
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331	1 Samuel	1051	Obadiah	1441	1 Thessalonians
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413	1 Kings	1061	Micah	1451	1 Timothy
451	2 Kings	1069	Nahum	1461	2 Timothy
489	1 Chronicles	1073	Habakkuk	1469	Titus
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567	Ezra	1085	Haggai	1479	Hebrews
581	Nehemiah	1089	Zechariah	1499	James
601	Esther	1103	Malachi	1509	1 Peter
613	Job			1519	2 Peter
651	Psalms			1525	1 John
743	Proverbs			1535	2 John
777	Ecclesiastes			1537	3 John
791	Song of Songs			1541	Jude
				1545	Revelation

The New Testament

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF BIBLE BOOKS

1291	Acts	1499	James	581	Nehemiah
1041	Amos	865	Jeremiah	163	Numbers
489	1 Chronicles	613	Job	1051	Obadiah
523	2 Chronicles	1035	Joel	1509	1 Peter
1433	Colossians	1251	John	1519	2 Peter
1365	1 Corinthians	1525	1 John	1475	Philemon
1387	2 Corinthians	1535	2 John	1423	Philippians
999	Daniel	1537	3 John	743	Proverbs
211	Deuteronomy	1055	Jonah	651	Psalms
777	Ecclesiastes	255	Joshua	1545	Revelation
1413	Ephesians	1541	Jude	1341	Romans
601	Esther	289	Judges	323	Ruth
75	Exodus	413	1 Kings	331	1 Samuel
941	Ezekiel	451	2 Kings	377	2 Samuel
567	Ezra	933	Lamentations	791	Song of Songs
1403	Galatians	127	Leviticus	1441	1 Thessalonians
3	Genesis	1197	Luke	1447	2 Thessalonians
1073	Habakkuk	1103	Malachi	1451	1 Timothy
1085	Haggai	1163	Mark	1461	2 Timothy
1479	Hebrews	1111	Matthew	1469	Titus
1021	Hosea	1061	Micah	1089	Zechariah
799	Isaiah	1069	Nahum	1079	Zephaniah

PREFACE

THE BIBLE is the greatest book on recovery ever written. In its pages we see God set out a plan for the recovery of his broken people and creation. We meet numerous individuals whose hurting lives are restored through the wisdom and power of God. We meet the God who is waiting with arms outstretched for all of us to turn back to him, seek his will, and recover the wonderful life he has for each of us.

Many of us are just waking up to the fact that recovery is an essential part of life for everyone. It is the simple but challenging process of daily seeking God's will for our life instead of demanding to go our own way. Recovery is letting God do for us what we cannot do for ourselves while also taking the steps necessary to draw closer to our Creator and Redeemer. It is allowing God to heal our wounded soul so we can help others in the process of healing. All of us need to take part in this process; it is an inherent part of being human.

Let us set out together on the journey toward healing and newfound strength—not strength found within ourselves, but strength found through trusting God and allowing him to direct our decisions and plans. This journey will take us through the Twelve Steps and other materials designed to help us focus on the provisions our powerful God offers for recovery. *The Life Recovery Bible* will enrich our experience and expand our understanding of the God who loves us and sent his Son to die that we might be made whole.

Without God there is no recovery, only disappointing substitutions and repeated failure. We pray that the resources within these pages will help us all better understand who God is and how he wants to heal our brokenness and set us on the path toward wholeness.

It's Not All Your Fault.

When we struggle with any problem, it's easy to think it's our fault. But it's never solely our fault. Things in our families often happen to us because of patterns of behavior in other family members that are beyond our control. Life in a family can get chaotic, even overwhelming. Or sometimes the other people in our families may be so absent from any relationships that we feel we are either unwelcome or invisible to them. We may think there is something wrong with us, or that we have no willpower,

or that we don't even want to stop our behaviors. It may be that what started as a way for us to cope with pain has now become the problem.

Sometimes the hurt and pain inside of us become so deep that we feel we need to do something to ease those feelings. Sometimes we try to ease the pain through self-medication. We begin to drink beer, wine, or some hard liquor. At first, we get this mellow feeling that helps us forget what is causing our pain. But eventually it wears off, and we feel the pain again. Or we may try to numb our pain by turning to other behaviors that eventually become destructive.

Here's What You Need to Know:

There are two types of addictions one can develop. One type is called a "chemical addiction." A person takes into his or her body either alcohol or some other drug in order to simply feel different. Not everyone can develop a chemical addiction to alcohol, but other drugs, which can be highly addictive, have the potential to capture everyone who uses them.

If you begin to use alcohol to ease your pain, here are some danger signs—signs that indicate you may be susceptible to becoming addicted to alcohol. People who develop serious alcohol issues are often able to drink a lot without it having much of an effect on them. They seem to be able to handle their drinking. Another danger sign is what is called "binge" drinking. A lot of alcohol is consumed in, say, a weekend or an evening, but then that person doesn't drink again for several weeks. They point to this to prove to themselves they don't have a dependency problem with alcohol, but they do. Another danger sign is that other people in our family are alcoholics. This means there is a much higher probability of us becoming addicted to alcohol. Watch for these signs—they spell trouble.

Becoming addicted to a drug can start innocently. You may use drugs in order to fit in with friends, not knowing how powerfully addictive they are. Sometimes, people get a legitimate prescription for pain medication from a doctor. It helps for a while, but then its effect wears off and soon more and more is needed. Some people may end up actually getting prescription medications on the street, as well as through a doctor. Others try to self-medicate by using illegal drugs. It begins as a way to escape the pain, but the need for more can easily become a compulsion and then an addiction. The user feels trapped and gradually gets loaded down with shame and guilt.

The other type of addiction is called "process addiction." Here one uses less obvious methods to try to handle their emotional pain. These are compulsive behaviors that are related to a process, not to particular substances like drugs or alcohol. These behaviors start out in small ways and are seemingly innocent. Some people may think they are in control of these behaviors, but when they try to stop them, they realize the repetitive behavior controls them.

Gambling or spending money may be a way we try to deal with our problems. We may find that we are always short of money, and are drawn to the excitement of gambling with its random rewards. Even video games may become our escape from a painful reality. Check it out—decide to not play any video games, do any online gambling, or spend any money for thirty days and see how uncomfortable it is. Each of these activities can become a process addiction.

Process addictions involving eating can be a big issue. Eating is one of the few things we think we can always control. But there are three

ways eating can be a problem. One is to overeat. People who struggle with overeating look at food as a source of comfort. When they are in emotional pain, they turn to food in order to “feel good” again. Another eating problem is binge eating, and then having to purge what is overeaten. And then there is the very serious eating disorder of those who over-control their eating habits and chronically lose weight, yet still think they are fat. This can lead to serious, life-threatening physical problems.

Using the Internet can become a problem that leads to devastating addictions. It may be that we are always searching the web, which keeps us living in an unreal world. Or our search may involve pornography. Most think that viewing pornography is something limited to men, but it can be just as big of a problem for women. Research says that the age group most commonly looking at pornography on the Internet is young people—as young as eleven years old. When you start to view pornography early, it changes your brain, which in turn has devastating effects on all of your relationships.

You may know of someone who tries to get rid of their emotional pain by inflicting physical pain on themselves. They usually do this by cutting themselves. The reasons for this are complex, but basically it is a way to feel something different—physical instead of emotional pain—and it is a way for them to feel alive. If they bleed a little, they know they are still here—that they are not invisible. This can become a very serious addiction.

These are some of the ways we may attempt to handle life’s problems. We can get caught up in one of these chemical or process addictions and then get angry with ourselves because we can’t stop. It’s not all our fault, but the answer is always to take responsibility for the choices we make. What you do in response to these problems determines the course of your life, whether you know it or not. You are in control of your choices right now. If you don’t know your way around this book, start with Step One, on page A8. It’s time now to make the bold move to reclaim your life!

THE TWELVE STEPS

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our problems—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our wills and our lives over to the care of God.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Steps used in the Twelve Steps devotional reading plan in this Bible have been adapted from the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Steps are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that AA has reviewed or approved the contents of this publication, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism—use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.

THE TWELVE STEPS AND SCRIPTURE

The Twelve Steps have long been of great help to people in recovery. Much of their power comes from the fact that they capture principles clearly revealed in the Bible. On this page is a list of the Twelve Steps and the corresponding Scriptures that support them. This will help readers familiar with the Twelve Steps to discover the true source of their wisdom—the very word of God.

STEP 1: We admitted that we were powerless over our problems—that our lives had become unmanageable.

“For I know that in me . . . dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Romans 7:18; see also John 8:31-36; Romans 7:14-25).

STEP 2: We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13; see also Romans 4:6-8; Ephesians 1:6-8; Colossians 1:21-22; Hebrews 11:1-10).

STEP 3: We made a decision to turn our wills and our lives over to the care of God.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1; see also Matthew 11:28-30; Mark 10:14-16; James 4:7-10).

STEP 4: We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

“Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD” (Lamentations 3:40; see also Matthew 7:1-5; 2 Corinthians 7:8-10).

STEP 5: We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed” (James 5:16; see also Psalms 32:1-5; 51:1-3; 1 John 1:2-6).

STEP 6: We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:10; see also Romans 6:5-11; Philippians 3:12-14).

STEP 7: We humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9; see also Luke 18:9-14; 1 John 5:13-15).

STEP 8: We made a list of all the persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

“And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise” (Luke 6:31; see also Colossians 3:12-15; 1 John 3:10-20).

STEP 9: We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Matthew 5:23-24; see also Luke 19:1-10; 1 Peter 2:21-25).

STEP 10: We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12; see also Romans 5:3-6; 2 Timothy 2:1-7; 1 John 1:8-10).

STEP 11: We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2; see also Isaiah 40:28-31; 1 Timothy 4:7-8).

STEP 12: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1; see also Isaiah 61:1-3; Titus 3:3-7; 1 Peter 4:1-5).

THE TWELVE LAWS OF LIFE RECOVERY

These laws highlight irrefutable truths that you will discover in yourself as you experience recovery while following the Twelve Steps. They provide evidence of the progress you have made and highlight places where growth is still needed. As you experience these laws, you will find—perhaps to your surprise—that the laws of life recovery often give back what they initially seemed to take away.

1. Powerlessness will result in STRENGTH.

We struggle with the feeling of powerlessness because it feels so much like we are helpless. But God often works healing in our lives through what to us is weakness. It is paradoxical that as we experience recovery in our lives, we will find there is great strength in recognizing our powerlessness.

“Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” (1 Corinthians 1:25, page 1367)

2. Humility will result in HONOR.

In our journey of life recovery, it is easy to take pride in the positive changes we are making in our lives. But in God’s plan, honor is not something we should seek. It is something we receive as we learn to live in humility. Humility is the path to being honored by God and by others.

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” (James 4:10, page 1505)

3. Connection will result in LOVE.

We all long to be loved, but we overlook the fact that being loved always takes place in an emotionally connected relationship. Prior to our recovery, we lived in emotional isolation from others. But God designed us for connection—for relationship. That’s the only context in which we can experience true love.

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. . . . Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.” (1 John 4:7-8, 11-12, page 1530)

4. Willingness will result in GROWTH.

There is the childlike part within all of us that wants to say, “I can do it on my own,” and “I can do it my way.” But true recovery in our lives begins when we are willing to do it God’s way. That’s not easy, but without a willingness to be open to God’s plan, we will limit our growth. It all begins with a willing and open heart.

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.” (Colossians 3:23, page 1438)

5. Sacrifice will result in FULFILLMENT.

Before we started on our recovery journey, it was easy to think and act as if fulfillment came from getting, or from what we owned. But again, God’s ways are mysterious and not our ways. We learn in our recovery that sacrifice—doing good and sharing with others, not getting—is the true path to fulfillment.

“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” (Hebrews 13:16, page 1495)

6. Faith will result in HOPE.

In God’s plan for our recovery, problems and trials are a part of the path that leads to a hope that will not disappoint us. It is all in how we handle our problems and trials. When we endure the hard stuff, we build strength of character, which then builds our faith. It is that faith which leads to a hope built on knowing we are loved by God.

“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” (Romans 5:3-5, page 1348)

7. Surrender will result in VICTORY.

James describes surrendering as being “easy to be intreated.” Here willingness is coupled with surrendering. When we truly surrender ourselves, we are saying to God, “Your will, not mine.” And a truly surrendered life is a life lived out as a celebration of our victory.

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” (James 3:17, page 1505)

8. Service will result in REWARD.

Our acts of service are not to be done in order to gain a reward. They are done out of obedience to what we are learning as we are equipped to do the work of ministry. We are God’s hands, feet, and mouth. As we are faithful in our service, the reward is the peace and satisfaction that comes as the result of our obedience.

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:12, page 1418)

9. Forgiveness results in FREEDOM.

We are called to be forgiving people. When we hold a grudge, we are in bondage to the person we refuse to forgive. We forget that forgiveness involves only us, and that the person we need to forgive really isn’t part of the process. So there is no real excuse for not being obedient and forgiving others as we have been forgiven by God.

“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.” (Colossians 2:13-14, page 1437)

10. Confession will result in HEALING.

You may have wondered why it is so important to confess your inventory to another person as part of your recovery. Healing comes as a result of confessing. We experience something powerful when we confess our shortcomings and failures not only to God but also to another person.

“Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:16, page 1506)

11. Restitution will result in CLOSURE.

Not all acts of restitution are financial repayments, although that can be a very effective way in some circumstances to make restitution. But we need also to make restitution for emotional hurts, or for other non-financial issues. Until we explore ways to make all kinds of restitution, we will struggle with moving on and experiencing closure.

“Then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth *part* thereof, and give *it* unto *him* against whom he hath trespassed.” (Numbers 5:7, page 170)

12. Responsibility will result in SECURITY.

This is one of the most obvious results of our experiencing life recovery. We have not only made restitution; we have also begun to act responsibly in all areas of our lives. Responsibility is living up to our part of life, not blaming or expecting someone else to make up for our lack. We experience a genuine sense of security when we are doing our part—living responsibly in our everyday lives.

“And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This *is* my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.” (Genesis 17:9-10, page 24)

THE TWELVE MISSTEPS OF LIFE RECOVERY

These false thoughts and assumptions have derailed many in their recovery, and some reflect the mistaken thinking of people sincerely trying to do things God's way. Awareness is the first step in avoiding these common pitfalls.

1. "I can quit tomorrow."

Tomorrow has no power or strength to initiate change into your life. Today—right now—is where the power is! Waiting even one more day is a decision to stay on a path that has proven to be destructive.

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. . . . Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4:14, 17, page 1506)

2. "I can handle it by just trying harder or having more willpower."

Under your own strength you have lived a life that has led to disappointment for you and for those who care about you. Under your own strength you have found only momentary victory or short-term progress. Under God's strength you will experience transforming power that will last forever.

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31, page 836)

3. "Turning my life over to Christ is the only step I need."

Turning your life over to Christ and repenting of your sins is a huge first step. Surrendering to him is the most important step. But it is still just the beginning. It does not instantly build your character or make you mature in your faith. Working through the steps based on God's Word will lead you to a better place of maturity, wisdom, and transformed character.

"But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God." (Hebrews 5:14–6:1, page 1484)

4. "Twelve Step groups that don't talk about Jesus aren't worth my time."

A recovery group that focuses on Christ is helpful for anyone's recovery, but a group like that may not exist anywhere near you. And if we segregate ourselves from others who don't know Christ, they will not hear the message of hope and restoration that we have. You can be a light to another who is walking in darkness.

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." (John 12:46, page 1274)

5. "While recovery might be good for some, it just isn't right for me."

If you have made a decision to surrender your life and your problem to God, you have made a very bold move. But your enemy will be the tendency to drift—to move away from surrender and to compromise, jeopardizing the progress you've made. Recovery prevents you from drifting, providing a path to growth and maturity and the support you need to succeed.

"If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard." (Colossians 1:23, page 1436)

6. "If I follow the Bible, I don't really need to work the Twelve Steps."

Working the Twelve Steps is following the Bible. It is a path through the Bible designed specifically for those who used to have a problem but whose problem now has them. It is a path of hope, healing, and restoration based on God's truth that will totally change the way you think.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2, page 1357)

7. "Since I'm accountable to God, I don't need a sponsor."

You certainly are accountable to God, but God has also instructed us to be in healthy and supportive relationships with others. You will grow much stronger and more quickly if you have someone to guide you, encourage you, and hold you accountable.

"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." (Proverbs 27:17, page 770)

8. "Since God has forgiven me, I don't need to go back to rehash what I've done."

Yes, God has forgiven you if you have confessed and changed your ways. But he clearly instructs us to not stop with him. When we open up to someone else, it connects us, keeps us humble and grounded in reality, and leads to healing.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16, page 1506)

9. "Since Jesus would want me to help my old friends, I don't need to change where I go or whom I hang out with."

The Bible is clear that we need to run from people and places that would tempt us to fall back into our old ways. Some call it changing playmates and playgrounds. But not only do we need time away from temptations so we can grow, we also need to seek out those who are on the same path. There will be plenty of time to reach out to those who need your help once you have established your own long-term recovery.

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22, page 1464)

10. "Though I can forgive most things, some things are just beyond forgiveness."

There are some things that are so damaging that they may seem to be beyond forgiveness. But forgiveness does not excuse what someone has done or minimize its impact. Forgiveness frees you from having to live in the pain any longer. Some say the most dangerous thing we can possess is justifiable resentment. It does nothing to the other person, but it robs you of the life of freedom God wants for you.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:31-32, page 1419)

11. "Since I'm involved in recovery, I don't need additional counseling or medication."

When we fully surrender to God, we become willing to do whatever it takes to recover. You may not think you need additional help, but someone you love may need you to need it. Working through your pride and reaching out for additional help, like starting recovery, is never a sign of weakness, but a sign of the strength found in humility.

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom." (Proverbs 11:2, page 754)

12. "After making good progress in my recovery, I can start using again in moderation."

If you are on a solid recovery path, the last thing you want to do is try to control what has come to control you. The desire to fall back into it and try it again indicates that you need additional step work, meetings, and other support. Don't go back and relive the hurt and pain you experienced earlier in life.

"As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly." (Proverbs 26:11, page 769)

THE TWELVE GIFTS OF LIFE RECOVERY

These twelve attributes are not just results or outcomes for people in recovery, but truly gifts from God. They show that recovery doesn't merely provide escape from a destructive problem. It also points toward the possibility of a new and exceptional life.

1. Hope—"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:3-5, page 1348).

2. Power—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13, page 1430). "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7, page 1463).

3. Character—"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23, page 1410).

4. Clarity—"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Corinthians 13:12, page 1380).

5. Security—"The fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life: and *he that hath it* shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil" (Proverbs 19:23, page 763). "What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:31-32, page 1353).

6. Abundance—"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19, page 1430).

7. Wisdom—"The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding" (Proverbs 9:10, page 753). "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5, page 1500).

8. Self-Control—"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" (Romans 8:9, page 1352). "But the fruit of the Spirit is . . . temperance" (Galatians 5:22-23, page 1410).

9. Freedom—"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1, page 1409).

10. Happiness—"Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight" (Psalm 119:35, page 724). "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death." (Proverbs 10:2, page 753).

11. Serenity—"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come" (Romans 8:38, page 1353).

12. Peace—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27, page 1277).

USER'S GUIDE

THE *HOLY BIBLE* is a book about recovery. It records how the world began and how God created it to be good. Then it tells us about the beginning of sin—about the first time people decided to reject God's plan. It spells out the fatal consequences that result from rejecting God's program. But the Bible doesn't leave us in despair. It reveals a plan for recovery and the source of the power to accomplish it. It provides us with the only pathway to wholeness—God's program for reconciliation and healing.

Each feature in *The Life Recovery Bible* leads readers to the powerful resources for recovery found in the Holy Scriptures:

DEVOTIONAL READING PLANS



tyndal.es/lrbusersguide

Each devotional is set near the Scripture it comments on and directs the reader to the next devotional in the reading chain. To get a bird's-eye view of each of these reading plans, turn to the indexes at the back of this Bible.

- The **Twelve Step Devotional Reading Plan** includes eighty-four Bible-based devotionals built around the Twelve Steps. Videos introducing the 12 steps are linked to the MS Tags embedded in the first devotion for each step. A tag reader is available at <http://tag.microsoft.com/consumer/index.aspx>.
To begin this reading plan, turn to page 25, Genesis 16:1-15.
- The **Recovery Principle Devotional Reading Plan** is composed of fifty-six Bible-based devotionals shaped around principles important in the recovery process.
To begin this reading plan, turn to page 5, Genesis 1:26-31.
- The **Serenity Prayer Devotional Reading Plan** is made up of thirty Bible-based devotionals related to the Serenity Prayer.
To begin this reading plan, turn to page 27, Genesis 18:20-33.

RECOVERY PROFILES

In this feature sixty individuals and relationships are profiled, and important recovery lessons are drawn from their lives. For a quick view of the profiles included, see the Index to Recovery Profiles on page 1614.

INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL FOR BIBLE BOOKS

Each book of the Bible is preceded by a number of helpful features.

- **Book Introduction** presents the content and themes from the standpoint of recovery.
- **The Big Picture** gives a panoramic view of the book in outline form.
- **The Bottom Line** provides vital historical information for the book.
- **Recovery Themes** present and discuss important themes for people in recovery.

RECOVERY COMMENTARY NOTES

The Bible text is supported by numerous **Recovery Notes** that pinpoint passages and thoughts important to recovery. The notes appear at the foot of each page and are indexed in the Life Recovery Topical Index beginning on page 1571.

- Additional commentary material is provided in the **Recovery Reflections** that follow many of the Bible books. The notes are arranged topically. The topics discussed in this feature are indexed in the Index to Recovery Reflections on page 1619.

INDEXES

The **Life Recovery Topical Index** guides the reader to the important notes, profiles, devotionals, and recovery themes related to more than a hundred terms important to issues in the recovery process.

- The **Index to Recovery Profiles** alphabetically lists and locates the sixty Recovery Profiles that appear in this Bible.
- The **Index to Twelve Step Devotionals** lists and locates the eighty-four Twelve Step devotionals.
- The **Index to Recovery Principle Devotionals** lists and locates the fifty-six Recovery Principle devotionals.
- The **Index to Serenity Prayer Devotionals** lists and locates the thirty Serenity Prayer devotionals.
- The **Index to Recovery Reflections** lists and locates the various topics discussed in the Reflections feature of this Bible.

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE TO THE AUTHORIZED KING JAMES VERSION TYNDALE PARAGRAPHED EDITION

Traditionally, the King James Version has been typeset by treating each verse as an individual paragraph. This practice, though of long tradition, did not originate with the original biblical texts. In fact, the original texts were not divided by verse numbers at all. The numbers were inserted in late medieval times to facilitate study and discussion. So for an English translation, the paragraph divisions in many cases should not be located at the verse breaks, but at locations that set apart the larger (or sometimes, smaller) meaning units that constitute a modern English paragraph. Such paragraphs group together appropriate sections of the text to help readers better grasp the meaning of a passage.

More recent English translations have followed the rules of paragraphing defined by standard writing in English, grouping appropriate content into meaningful units. It is these same general principles that have guided the paragraphing of this edition of the King James Version. It should be noted that the practice of publishing paragraphed editions of the KJV is not new. The Cambridge Paragraph Bible, the most notable such edition, was published in 1873. This paragraphed text has appeared in various editions during the last century and is still in print today. However, the paragraphs set in the 1873 edition are often so long that they make the KJV text more difficult to follow rather than easier.

The Cambridge Paragraph Bible also does not always follow our contemporary rules for paragraphing. For example, in narrative sections it often lumps multiple speakers together within a single paragraph. Contemporary style normally sets a paragraph break when the speaker in a narrative changes. The Tyndale paragraphed edition of the KJV, along with most contemporary translations, follows the more contemporary rules, resulting in paragraphs that are shorter and easier to understand.

Below, we will state the essential paragraphing principles used for this King James edition and the punctuation adjustments that go with them. But before listing these principles, it should be emphasized that this edition preserves the standard wording of the King James Version throughout.

- The paragraph breaks for this edition of the KJV were determined by means of several principles. We looked to the tradition of the Cambridge Paragraph Bible (1873) as a starting point. Where it reflected contemporary paragraphing principles, we assumed their breaks. But when the paragraphs became unwieldy in length or grouped numerous speakers together, we broke the paragraphs down into smaller, more contemporary units. In narrative sections, each change in speaker is set off by a new paragraph. This can result in dividing single verses into more than one paragraph, but more often results in grouping verses together. The consequent paragraphs are similar in length and character to those found in most contemporary English translations.
- In lengthy poetic passages, the Cambridge Paragraph Bible (1873) breaks each verse into multiple poetic lines. We chose, however, to maintain the traditional verse-by-verse paragraphing throughout these sections. So throughout the poetic sections, including Job, Psalms, and many sections of the prophets, each verse appears as an individual paragraph, with its standard initial capital letter and traditional closing punctuation. In Psalms, the text will appear as it does in all traditional editions of the King James Version.
- In the traditional King James text, each verse opens with a capital letter, without regard to the final punctuation of the previous verse. This makes sense when each verse is being set as an individual paragraph. But when verses are run into paragraph groupings, each verse's initial capital letter is maintained only if the previous verse ends with a period. This follows the punctuation standards set by the KJV text in general: all colons, semicolons, and commas are followed by a lower case letter.
- The traditional punctuation of the King James text has been maintained, except for a few rare occasions when it was appropriate to end a paragraph after a verse that did not end with a period. In such cases, the closing colon or semicolon was replaced by a period. In extended poetic sections where the traditional verse breaks have been maintained, the initial capital letter and traditional punctuation have also been maintained.

OUR PRAYER is that this paragraphed edition of the King James Version will provide contemporary readers with a Bible text that is easy to follow and that accurately preserves the historic text of the Authorized King James Version.

EPISTLE DEDICATORY FOR THE AUTHORIZED KING JAMES VERSION

TO THE MOST HIGH AND MIGHTY PRINCE
JAMES
BY THE GRACE OF GOD
KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND IRELAND
DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, &c.

The Translators of the Bible wish Grace, Mercy, and Peace
through JESUS CHRIST our Lord

GREAT and manifold were the blessings, most dread Sovereign, which Almighty God, the Father of all mercies, bestowed upon us the people of England, when first he sent Your Majesty's Royal Person to rule and reign over us. For whereas it was the expectation of many, who wished not well unto our Sion, that upon the setting of that bright Occidental Star, Queen Elizabeth of most happy memory, some thick and palpable clouds of darkness would so have overshadowed this Land, that men should have been in doubt which way they were to walk; and that it should hardly be known, who was to direct the unsettled State; the appearance of Your Majesty, as of the Sun in his strength, instantly dispelled those supposed and surmised mists, and gave unto all that were well affected exceeding cause of comfort; especially when we beheld the Government established in Your Highness, and Your hopeful Seed, by an undoubted Title, and this also accompanied with peace and tranquility at home and abroad.

But among all our joys, there was no one that more filled our hearts, than the blessed continuance of the preaching of God's sacred Word among us; which is that inestimable treasure, which excellet all the riches of the earth; because the fruit thereof extendeth itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that eternal happiness which is above in heaven.

Then not to suffer this to fall to the ground, but rather to take it up, and to continue it in that state, wherein the famous Predecessor of Your Highness did leave it: nay, to go forward with the confidence and resolution of a Man in maintaining the truth of Christ, and propagating it far and near, is that which hath so bound and firmly knit the hearts of all Your Majesty's loyal and religious people unto You, that Your very name is precious among them: their eye doth behold You with comfort, and they bless You in their hearts, as that sanctified Person who, under God, is the immediate Author of their true happiness. And this their contentment doth not diminish or decay, but every day increaseth and taketh strength, when they observe, that the zeal of Your Majesty toward the house of God doth not slack or go backward, but is more and more kindled, manifesting itself abroad in the farthest parts of Christendom, by writing in defence of the Truth, (which hath given such a blow unto that man of sin, as will not be healed,) and every day at home, by religious and learned discourse, by frequenting the house of God, by hearing the Word preached, by cherishing the Teachers thereof, by caring for the Church, as a most tender and loving nursing Father.

There are infinite arguments of this right Christian and religious affection in Your Majesty; but none is more forcible to declare it to others than the vehement and perpetuated desire of accomplishing and publishing of this work, which now with all humility we present unto Your Majesty. For when Your Highness had once out of deep judgment apprehended how convenient it was, that out of the Original Sacred Tongues, together with comparing of the labours, both in our own, and other foreign Languages, of many worthy men who went before us, there should be one more exact Translation of the holy Scriptures into the English Tongue; Your Majesty did never desist to urge and to excite those to whom it was commended, that the work might be hastened, and that the business might be expedited in so decent a manner, as a matter of such importance might justly require.

And now at last, by the mercy of God, and the continuance of our labours, it being brought unto such a conclusion, as that we have great hopes that the Church of England shall reap good fruit thereby; we hold it our duty to offer it to Your Majesty, not only as to our King and Sovereign, but as to the principal Mover and Author of the work: humbly craving of Your most Sacred Majesty, that since things of this quality have ever been subject to the censures of ill-meaning and discontented persons, it may receive approbation and patronage from so learned and judicious a Prince as Your Highness is, whose allowance and acceptance of our labours shall more honour and encourage us, than all the calumniations and hard interpretations of other men shall dismay us. So that if, on the one side, we shall be traduced by Popish Persons at home or abroad, who therefore will malign us, because we are poor instruments to make God's holy Truth to be yet more and more known unto the people, whom they desire still to keep in ignorance and darkness; or if, on the other side, we shall be maligned by self conceited Brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing, but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil; we may rest secure, supported within by the truth and innocence of a good conscience, having walked the ways of simplicity and integrity, as before the Lord; and sustained without by the powerful protection of Your Majesty's grace and favour, which will ever give countenance to honest and Christian endeavours against bitter censures and uncharitable imputations.

The Lord of heaven and earth bless Your Majesty with many and happy days, that, as his heavenly hand hath enriched Your Highness with many singular and extraordinary graces, so You may be the wonder of the world in this latter age for happiness and true felicity, to the honour of that great GOD, and the good of his Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour.

OLD TESTAMENT

GENESIS

THE BIG PICTURE

A. GOD SETS THE STAGE

(1:1–11:32)

1. Formation of the Universe (1:1–2:25)

- a. God creates matter, energy, and the natural order (1:1–2:3)
- b. God prepares pristine surroundings for the first family (2:4–25)

2. Fall of the Human Race (3:1–24)

- a. Commission of sin (3:1–8)
- b. Curse on sin (3:9–24)

3. Failure of Society (4:1–9:29)

- a. Failure of humankind (4:1–6:22)
- b. Flood of judgment (7:1–9:29)

4. Folly of Rebellion (10:1–11:32)

- a. Dispersal of the people (10:1–32)
- b. Disobedience of the people (11:1–32)

B. GOD CHOOSES THE PLAYERS (12:1–50:26)

1. Abraham (12:1–25:18)
2. Isaac (25:19–27:46)
3. Jacob (28:1–36:43)
4. Joseph (37:1–50:26)

The book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. It records how the world began and how God created it to be good. It tells us about the first people and how God made them to be excellent. But then it tells us about the beginning of sin—about the first time people decided to reject the program God had laid out for them. It records the first days of shame and of covering up. It records the beginning of our separation from God, each other, and the world God gave us.

We will see how people with perfect health, living in a perfect environment, rebelled against God. And we will see the consequences of their rebellion. We are given intimate glimpses of individuals dominated by hatred, drunkenness, lust, unhealthy family relationships, greed, cheating, irresponsibility, dishonesty, jealousy, violence, and other problems.

But the book of Genesis doesn't leave us in despair. It tells us of yet another beginning. It records how God chose a man named Abraham to father a special nation. And through this nation would come the solution for our separation from God, each other, and the world God gave us. Genesis begins the story of how God began his work of healing broken humanity—a healing to be expressed in the laws he would give his people and culminating in the coming of Jesus, the promised Messiah.

The book of Genesis reminds us of where all our problems began. It spells out the fatal consequences of rejecting God's program. But it also begins the age-long story of God's amazing love for the human race. Through this book we will discover that the only pathway to spiritual wholeness is in following God's program.

THE BOTTOM LINE

PURPOSE: To tell us about the beginning of things, including human opportunities and difficulties, and to demonstrate that God's solutions are the only ones that work. **AUTHOR:** Moses. **AUDIENCE:** The people of Israel. **DATE WRITTEN:** Chapters 1–11 deal with the undatable past; the events of chapters 12–50 are to be dated between about 2000 and 1800 B.C. The book was probably written shortly after 1445 B.C. **SETTING:** Mesopotamia, then Canaan, finally Egypt. **KEY VERSE:** "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (15:6). **KEY EVENTS:** Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Tower of Babel. **KEY PEOPLE:** Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph.

RECOVERY THEMES

A Good Creation: Everything about God's creation was described as being good except the fact that Adam was alone. In fact, Adam's isolation is the only thing in the first two chapters of Genesis that God considered to be a problem. When God created a partner for man, then God was pleased with everything in his creation. Because God was pleased with what he created, he stayed involved, even after Adam and Eve disobeyed him. In fact, ever since the Fall God has been seeking to make things right again. Our sinfulness always leads us away from God and distorts the way God created us to be. But recovery always involves growth toward God's original ideal for the human race. As we progress in recovery, we take part in God's re-creation of our fallen world.

A Ruined World: Adam's and Eve's disobedience affected all of God's creation. The idyllic world of the garden was gone forever, and life became a struggle. Our futile attempts to avoid the realities of a ruined world have led us into all kinds of destructive behaviors. Recovery begins when we squarely face the broken realities of our world—its daily struggles and hardships. Once we have done this, we have started down the road of recovery. We have entered the spiritual arena where battles are fought to regain what has been lost.

Promises of Healing: The book of Genesis presents us with a series of "new beginnings" that come out of the ruin of our sinfulness. In the original Fall, God promised hope and healing for us when he told the serpent that the offspring of the woman would crush his head. When people generally continued to disobey, God sent the Flood as judgment for their sinfulness. After the Flood, God again promised victory and confirmed that promise with a rainbow. Then the people rejected God again, building a great tower as a memorial of their pride. In response, God confused their languages, further fragmenting society. Then God chose a man named Abram and promised to bless all nations of the world through his offspring. Each time that human sin brought ruin, God promised victory and recovery in the face of it.

Hope for Reconciliation: As people began to experience the terrible consequences of their disobedience, God didn't leave them to figure out a plan for recovery all alone; nor did he leave a long list of principles or rules to follow that would repair their damaged relationships. Instead, God always worked with people on a very personal level in the recovery process. As we enter into the recovery process, we find it to be relational in nature. It requires us to seek reconciliation with people close to us, and this includes God. In Genesis, God modeled this pattern for us time and again. He chose certain individuals and worked patiently in their lives, reconciling them with himself and the people around them.

CHAPTER 1

The Account of Creation

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. ²And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. ⁴And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵And God called the light Day, and

1:6 *firmament*: space.

the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

⁶And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. ⁷And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so. ⁸And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

⁹And God said, Let the waters under the

1:4 God was pleased with his creation. He declared that it was good. God stopped now and then to approve of what he had designed and created (1:4-5, 9-10, 11-12, 18, 21-22, 25, 31). Many of our problems and dependencies result from the misuse of God's good creation. Recovery sometimes involves discovering the good things that we have misused and learning how to enjoy them in the way God intended.

1:24 The phrase "and it was so" (also in 1:9-12, 14-15) shows us that God's creative activity was done in complete conformity to the specifications he had originally intended. God accomplishes his will with certainty and precision. It should reassure us to know that God's good desires for us can be accomplished with the same certainty.

heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so. ¹⁰And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was good*. ¹¹And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. ¹²And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*. ¹³And the evening and the morning were the third day.

¹⁴And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: ¹⁵and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. ¹⁶And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also. ¹⁷And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was good*. ¹⁹And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. ²¹And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*. ²²And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. ²³And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. ²⁵And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*.

²⁶And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. ²⁸And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and

SELF-PERCEPTION

READ GENESIS 1:26-31

If we have lived in bondage to our compulsive behaviors for a while, we probably see more bad than good inside us. Many of us tend to see life in terms of all or nothing. As a result, we probably think we are all bad. But in recovery, we need a balanced understanding of ourself. We need to see that along with our bad points we have also been gifted with strengths. It's not an either/or proposition. A balanced view of ourself will help us better understand our shortcomings while also giving us greater hope in our potential.

At the end of the fifth day of creation God had made everything except the first people. The Bible tells us that when he looked at what he had made so far, "God saw that *it was good*." Then God created the first man and woman. "So God created man in his *own* image, . . . male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. . . . And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was very good*." (Genesis 1:25, 27-31).

God distinguished between the human race and the rest of creation. He made us in his very image, with capacities far beyond those of mere animals. God was (and is) excited about us! He gave us abilities and responsibilities to reflect his own nature in all of creation. When he created us, he was proud of what he had made!

Although we have a sinful nature that came as a result of the Fall, we also must remember that we were created in the likeness of God. There are excellence and dignity inherent in being human that should cause us to ponder our potential for good as well as for bad. **Turn to page 31, Genesis 22.**

replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

²⁹And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so. ³¹And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

CHAPTER 2

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ²And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. ³And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

The Man and Woman in Eden

⁴These *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground. ⁶But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. ⁷And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

1:29 *meat*: food. 2:18 *help meet*: suitable helper.

⁸And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. ¹¹The name of the first *is* Pison: that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold; ¹²and the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* bdellium and the onyx stone. ¹³And the name of the second river *is* Gihon: the same *is* it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. ¹⁴And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel: that *is* it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river *is* Euphrates.

¹⁵And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

¹⁸And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. ¹⁹And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. ²⁰And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

²¹And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead

2:2-3 This is the first mention of sabbath rest—one day of rest in seven. By his example God encourages us to designate a portion of our life to rest and spiritual rejuvenation. Without proper rest, it is very difficult to deal with the other matters in our life, especially our progress in recovery.

2:8-14 God provided a perfect environment for the first people. We often blame our outward circumstances for our difficulties. It is important to note here that in spite of their ideal surroundings, our first parents fell—they failed. Although the environments we live in can certainly add to our problems, they are never entirely at fault. We need to take responsibility for our own mistakes and failures.

3:1-5 The account here pictures for us the process of temptation. The serpent offered something that had been forbidden by God as a very attractive option. The serpent also caused Eve to doubt God and the truth of his word. During the debate, Eve offered some halfhearted opposition, but her growing doubt in God weakened her resolve. In the end she gave in. Satan strengthened his temptation by weakening Eve's faith in God. Staying close to God and maintaining our faith in him will weaken the power of temptation in our life.

ADAM & EVE

It was an ideal situation: a man and his wife living harmoniously together in a lush, beautiful garden that God had created for their pleasure. They each enjoyed a perfect relationship with God and with each other. But when Adam and Eve gave in to temptation, they overstepped their God-given boundaries and plunged the human race into sin. Harmony was broken. Shame and guilt penetrated their lives and created an invisible barrier between them and God. The consequences of their disobedience and lack of self-control are with us to this day.

Adam and Eve knew that they had gone against God's plan—a plan that was created with their best interests in mind. And the consequences of their sin followed immediately. Right away they became afraid of the God who loved them so much, and they hid from his presence. They also became ashamed of their nakedness and set out to cover themselves. The relationship between Adam and Eve began to show cracks and strains. Accusations were made. Blame was shifted. Neither of them wanted to be held accountable. Both of them refused to admit that they were wrong. Needless to say, their relationship was damaged. Their sin had separated them from each other and from God.

But the story doesn't end there. Adam and Eve stayed together in spite of the shame and guilt they felt. Their lives were marred by sin and scarred by wounds inflicted on one another. However, they faced the reality that life had to go on and began to build a new life together. And by love, commitment, and the grace of God, they persevered through life's trials.

The story of Adam and Eve is found in the opening chapters of Genesis. Adam and/or Eve are also mentioned in 1 Chronicles 1:1; Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45-49; 2 Corinthians 11:3; and 1 Timothy 2:13-15.

STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- They were the parents of the entire human race.
- They were committed to each other through the trials they faced.
- Their story provides us with the first illustration of God's grace.

WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES:

- They were disobedient to the plan that God had revealed to them.
- They were not willing to take responsibility for their sin.
- They made excuses rather than admit the truth.
- Their actions brought sin into the world.

LESSONS FROM THEIR LIVES:

- A good marriage requires love and commitment even through tough times.
- Relationships that accept God's grace and forgiveness persevere through life's difficulties.
- Complacency is a breeding ground for temptation—be on guard against Satan's schemes.
- The mistakes of parents are often passed on to their descendants.

KEY VERSES:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:26-27).

thereof; ²²and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. ²³And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. ²⁴Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. ²⁵And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

CHAPTER 3 Adam and Eve Sin

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had **2:24** *cleave*: be joined. **3:1** *subtil*: cunning.

made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

²And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: ³but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

⁴And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: ⁵for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. ⁶And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was*

pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. ⁷And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

⁸And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. ⁹And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou?

¹⁰And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *was* naked; and I hid myself.

¹¹And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

¹²And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

¹³And the LORD God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done?

And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

¹⁴And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: ¹⁵and I will put enmity between thee and the woman,

3:13 *beguiled*: deceived. **3:15** *enmity*: hatred.

and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

¹⁶Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

¹⁷And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; ¹⁸thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ¹⁹in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Paradise Lost: God's Judgment

²⁰And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. ²¹Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

²²And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: ²³therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. ²⁴So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east

3:12-13 When Adam was questioned, notice that he blamed the woman for his problem. He even backhandedly blamed God by reminding God that he was the one who had given him the woman in the first place. Then Eve blamed the serpent for the problem. Passing the buck is a standard human response to guilt. But true recovery requires that we take a thorough inventory of our life, accepting responsibility for everything we have done or failed to do.

3:21 The very first death occurred on the same day as Adam's and Eve's sin; it was the death of an animal to provide a covering for their nakedness. God's immediate provision for sin was the slaying of an innocent substitute to provide skins to clothe the guilty couple. The clothing they wore must have served as a reminder—engraving the sight of the dying animal in their minds—a picture of the terrible consequences of their sin. As we recognize the suffering we may have caused others, we also are reminded of the consequences of rejecting God's program for our life.

4:6-7 When God rejected Cain's offering, Cain reacted with dejection and anger. God did not reject Cain for his strong feelings; he offered him an opportunity for a new start. How sad that Cain refused this second chance and instead went out to kill his brother. We need to be careful when we face obstacles to the recovery process. We need to carefully weigh the strong feelings we encounter within ourself before acting on them. If we don't, we may be passing up an excellent opportunity for a fresh start. God is not put off by our strong feelings. Recovery is based on God's grace, which always offers us an opportunity to begin again.

4:15 The "mark upon Cain" was not, as some have taught, a badge of guilt. It was a sign that God gave to Cain for his protection. Even after Cain's great failure, God desired to protect him from harm. Many of us look back and marvel at how God protected us before we began the recovery process. He wants us to be restored and often protects us in the midst of evil so that we are not destroyed. Our gracious God desires only our healing and recovery, even after our greatest failures.

of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

CHAPTER 4

Cain and Abel

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. ²And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. ⁴And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering; ⁵but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

⁶And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? ⁷If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

⁸And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

⁹And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother?

And he said, I know not: *Am I* my brother's keeper?

¹⁰And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. ¹¹And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. ¹²When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

¹³And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment *is* greater than I can bear. ¹⁴Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me.

¹⁵And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. ¹⁶And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

3:24 *Cherubims*: mighty angels. *keep*: guard. 4:1 *knew*: had sexual relations with. 4:5 *wroth*: angry.



Coming Out of Hiding

BIBLE READING: Genesis 3:6-13

We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Many of us have spent our life in a state of hiding, ashamed of who we are inside. We may hide by living a double life, by using drugs or other additions to make us feel like someone else, or by self-righteously setting ourselves above others. Step Four involves uncovering the things we have been hiding, even from ourselves.

After Adam and Eve disobeyed God, “the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. . . . And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *was* naked; and I hid myself” (Genesis 3:7-10). Human beings have been covering up and hiding ever since!

Jesus consistently confronted the religious leaders about their hypocrisy. The word *hypocrite* describes a person who pretends to have virtues or qualities that he really doesn't have. One time Jesus said to these leaders, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also” (Matthew 23:25-26).

When the real person inside us comes out of hiding, we will have to deal with some dirt! Making this inventory is a good way to “cleanse first that *which is* within”; some of that washing may involve bathing our life with tears. It is only by uncovering the hidden parts of ourself that we will be able to change the outer person, including our addictive/compulsive behaviors. **Turn to page 591, Nehemiah 8.**



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The Descendants of Cain

¹⁷And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. ¹⁸And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

¹⁹And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. ²⁰And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and *of such as have* cattle. ²¹And his brother's name *was* Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. ²²And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain *was* Naamah.

²³And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. ²⁴If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

The Birth of Seth

²⁵And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, *said she*, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. ²⁶And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.

CHAPTER 5

The Descendants of Adam

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; ²male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. ³And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: ⁴and the days

4:21 *organ*: flute. 4:22 *artificer*: craftsman. *brass*: bronze.

of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: ⁵and all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

⁶And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos: ⁷and Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: ⁸and all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

⁹And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: ¹⁰and Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: ¹¹and all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.

¹²And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel: ¹³and Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters: ¹⁴and all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died.

¹⁵And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared: ¹⁶and Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: ¹⁷and all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died.

¹⁸And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: ¹⁹and Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: ²⁰and all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

²¹And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: ²²and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: ²³and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: ²⁴and Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him.

²⁵And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech: ²⁶and Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven

5:1-32 This chapter has often been called the obituary column. Its recurring refrain is "He died . . . he died . . . he died." Although physical death did not come to Adam and Eve on the day they sinned, it did eventually come. They had reestablished their relationship with God, but the physical consequences of their sin could not be avoided forever. We may hope that after reestablishing our relationship with God, our troubles will be over. But a relationship with God rarely frees us from the consequences of past sins. The consequences usually catch up with us sooner or later. But if we suffer for past mistakes, we can know that God will be with us each step of the way.

5:21-24 Little is said about the spiritual state of these patriarchs of the human race. But the account of Enoch's life provides us with a bright spot in this otherwise dismal chapter. "Enoch walked with God." His example should give us hope. Enoch wasn't trapped by the mistakes or apathy of his peers and ancestors. Instead, he made a new start. And he did it by constantly walking with God.

CAIN & ABEL

How often parents of two children have been heard to exclaim, “There have *never* been two children who were more different!” Adam and Eve could well have been the originators of that comment. Cain apparently felt himself to be in direct competition with Abel. This led to a rivalry that was never resolved, resulting in a major tragedy.

Cain became a farmer and Abel a shepherd. It was their offerings, however, not their occupations, that revealed the true nature of their character. Abel did things God’s way, following his requirements. He is called “righteous” in Matthew 23:35, and Hebrews 11:4 says his offering was made by faith. Cain, on the other hand, did things his own way. Jude suggests that his “way” was that of rebellion (Jude 1:11). Cain brought an offering of produce from his gardens, while Abel brought the fatty cuts of meat from his best lambs.

Abel’s altar must have been ugly, assaulting every sense with the bloody carcasses lying across it. But the blood was a part of God’s plan according to Hebrews 12:24. Cain’s offering had the potential of being beautiful. Picture fresh produce, just out of the garden—fruits, vegetables, flowers, and grain—probably lovingly and artistically arranged. Perhaps Cain wanted to be accepted by God on the basis of his own merits. He may not have been willing to have a relationship with God based on a bloody sacrifice. When God accepted Abel’s offering and rejected Cain’s, Cain became angry. But God did not reject him for his anger. Even at that point, God reasoned with him. He offered Cain another opportunity to change his mind and accept divine grace, but still Cain refused. Jealous of Abel, whose offering had been accepted, and raging because God had rejected his own, Cain murdered his brother.

Cain tried to hide his terrible deed, but God was not fooled. God confronted Cain with the murder and assigned the consequence of lifelong exile. Cain spent the rest of his life as an alien, wandering in lands far from his family. But God protected Cain, even when he was in exile; God placed his mark upon Cain to keep him from being killed.

STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Abel was obedient to God.
- Abel is the first hero mentioned in the “Gallery of Faith” in Hebrews 11.
- Both sons developed skills and worked hard in the occupations they chose.

WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES:

- Cain insisted on doing things his own way.
- When rejected, Cain reacted with rage.
- Cain allowed his rage to lead him to commit the first murder.

LESSONS FROM THEIR LIVES:

- Our righteousness is based on our willingness to follow God’s program by faith.
- Feeling angry does not separate us from God unless we express it in destructive ways.
- Though we may try to hide our sins for a time, God’s justice will prevail.

KEY VERSE:

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh” (Hebrews 11:4).

The account of Cain and Abel is given in Genesis 4. Both are also mentioned in Hebrews 11:4 and 1 John 3:12. Cain alone is referred to in Jude 1:11; Abel is spoken of in Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51; and Hebrews 12:24.

hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters: ²⁷and all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.

²⁸And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: ²⁹and he called his name Noah, saying, This *same* shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands,

because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed. ³⁰And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters: ³¹and all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died.

³²And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

CHAPTER 6

A World Gone Wrong

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, ²that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

³And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. ⁴There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown.

⁵And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. ⁶And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. ⁷And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. ⁸But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

The Story of Noah

⁹These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with God. ¹⁰And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹²And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

¹³And God said unto Noah, The end of all
6:2 *fair*: beautiful.

flesh *is* come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. ¹⁴Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. ¹⁵And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it *of*: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. ¹⁶A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it. ¹⁷And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life, from under heaven; *and* every thing that *is* in the earth shall die. ¹⁸But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. ¹⁹And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every *sort* shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep *them* alive with thee; they shall be male and female. ²⁰Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every *sort* shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive. ²¹And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

²²Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

CHAPTER 7

The Flood Covers the Earth

And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. ²Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by

6:1-12 Some people insist that the human race is developing and becoming better and better. But when we compare the condition of the world in these verses to the way things were back in the Garden of Eden, it is obvious that the trend has gone in the opposite direction. Without God's help, we only get worse. It is only by following God's program and receiving his grace that we can hope to escape the natural slide toward pain and destruction.

6:8-10 God did not destroy the righteous with the wicked. These verses are another statement of God's grace. God extended grace to Noah and his family. Noah, like Enoch, lived his life in constant fellowship with God. He broke the mold set by his ancestors and neighbors by drawing close to God. As a result, Noah lived through the Flood and became the second father of the human race.

6:22 One has to wonder whether God's instructions made any sense to Noah. God told him to build a gigantic boat far from the nearest body of navigable water. But here we see that Noah was obedient even though God's instructions were hard to understand. This is one of the secrets of success in any recovery program. We may not understand how everything works, but we must do what God tells us is necessary for a successful recovery. When we step out in faith, as Noah did, God will give us the success we seek.

sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that *are* not clean by two, the male and his female. ³Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. ⁴For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. ⁵And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.

⁶And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. ⁷And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. ⁸Of clean beasts, and of beasts that *are* not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, ⁹there went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. ¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. ¹²And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

¹³In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; ¹⁴they, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. ¹⁵And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life. ¹⁶And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.

¹⁷And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. ¹⁸And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. ¹⁹And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered. ²⁰Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

7:13 *selfsame*: very same. 8:1 *asswaged*: subsided. 8:11 *abated*: lowered.

²¹And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: ²²all in whose nostrils *was* the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry *land*, died. ²³And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark. ²⁴And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

CHAPTER 8 The Flood Recedes

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged; ²the fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; ³and the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated. ⁴And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. ⁵And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

⁶And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: ⁷and he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. ⁸Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; ⁹but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. ¹⁰And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; ¹¹and the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth *was* an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. ¹²And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

8:1 Noah had listened to God and obeyed all his requests. But now the boat was floating over the earth on the floodwaters—not an ideal situation to be in. But God didn't forget about Noah. It is comforting to know that when we obey God, he will not forget us. He will stand by us until his plans for us are complete.

¹³And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. ¹⁴And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

¹⁵And God spake unto Noah, saying, ¹⁶Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. ¹⁷Bring forth with thee every living thing that *is* with thee, of all flesh, *both* of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. ¹⁸And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: ¹⁹every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, *and* whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

²⁰And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. ²²While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

CHAPTER 9

God Confirms His Covenant

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. ²And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all

9:3 *meat*: food.

that moveth *upon* the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. ³Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. ⁴But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. ⁵And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. ⁶Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. ⁷And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

⁸And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, ⁹And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; ¹⁰and with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. ¹¹And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

¹²And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: ¹³I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: ¹⁵and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth. ¹⁷And God said

9:1-17 Noah and his family were the only people left after the Flood. The comforts of civilization had been washed away. They had to start all over again. God gave Noah his special blessing and instituted a program that, if followed, would result in a healthy society. God has given us his Word, which contains the ultimate blueprint for healthy living. And just as God gave the human race a new start with Noah, he can give each of us a new start, too.

9:20-21 Since the Bible talks so much about Noah's righteousness and his fellowship with God, it is surprising to read that he gave in to the excesses of alcohol. The account of Noah's drunkenness and shame comes as a shock to us, but it is a reminder that even in ideal conditions it is easy for us to slip and fall. We can never completely let down our guard or feel as if we have it made, for that is when we become most vulnerable to failure.

10:1-32 This chapter is often called the Table of Nations. It is refreshing to realize that the God we worship is not a local deity. He is sovereign over all ethnic and language groups, nations, and political entities. The God who holds kings and empires in his hands surely has the power to hold us, too.

NOAH & SONS

Parents often wonder if they can have a positive effect on their children in our corrupt world. Noah leaves us with a good model of what a godly parent should be like. Noah was the only righteous man left in a generation of corrupt individuals. He led his family by example in a world that looked upon Noah as being “out of touch.” Society mocked him for his belief in and obedience to God.

The principles of obedience to God, consistency, and patience were taught to Noah’s sons and their wives. When judgment came upon the world, Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives were spared. The Bible tells us that later in his life, after the Flood, Noah became drunk on the wine of his vineyard. Two of his sons (Shem and Japheth) responded to the situation in a godly manner while one (Ham) did not. Noah’s drunkenness and Ham’s subsequent indiscretion resulted in the suffering of some of Ham’s descendants.

As we look at Noah’s life, we are reminded that our children learn from our examples. They often receive great blessings from the good things we do, but they also suffer from our mistakes. Like Noah, all of us have made mistakes. But those mistakes can become insignificant through our repentance and obedience to God’s Word. We must remember that children become like the adults who surround them.

STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Noah was the only follower of God left in his generation.
- Noah was the second father of the human race.
- Noah taught his sons patience, consistency, and obedience to God.

WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES:

- Noah embarrassed himself by getting drunk in front of his sons.
- Ham acted in an ungodly manner, which resulted in a curse upon some of his descendants.

LESSONS FROM THEIR LIVES:

- God is faithful to those who trust and obey him.
- Obedience to God is a lifelong commitment.
- Good parents teach their children by example.

KEY VERSE:

“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he” (Genesis 6:22).

The story of Noah and his sons is told in Genesis 5:29–10:32. Noah is referred to 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; and 2 Peter 2:5.

unto Noah, This *is* the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

Noah’s Sons

¹⁸And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham *is* the father of Canaan. ¹⁹These *are* the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.

²⁰And Noah began *to be* an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: ²¹and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. ²²And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. ²³And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid *it* upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces *were* backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness.

9:20 *husbandman*: farmer. 9:22 *without*: outside.

²⁴And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

²⁵And he said, Cursed *be* Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. ²⁶And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. ²⁷God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

²⁸And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. ²⁹And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

CHAPTER 10

Now these *are* the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

Descendants of Japheth

²The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. ³And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz,

and Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. ⁵By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

Descendants of Ham

⁶And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan. ⁷And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

⁸And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. ⁹He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. ¹⁰And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. ¹¹Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, ¹²and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city.

¹³And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, ¹⁴and Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim.

¹⁵And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, ¹⁶and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, ¹⁷and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, ¹⁸and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. ¹⁹And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha. ²⁰These *are* the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations.

Descendants of Shem

²¹Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder,

even to him were *children* born. ²²The children of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram. ²³And the children of Aram; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash. ²⁴And Arphaxad begat Salah; and Salah begat Eber. ²⁵And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one *was* Peleg; for in his days *was* the earth divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan. ²⁶And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, ²⁷and Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah, ²⁸and Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba, ²⁹and Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these *were* the sons of Joktan. ³⁰And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar a mount of the east. ³¹These *are* the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

Conclusion

³²These *are* the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

CHAPTER 11

The Tower of Babel

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. ²And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. ³And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. ⁴And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

⁵And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. ⁶And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language;

11:3-4 Whatever else the Tower of Babel might have represented, it was a mighty monument to human pride. It was a symbol of man's rebellion against the revealed will of God. This type of pride is always destructive to human community and to the process of recovery.

11:5-9 The Tower of Babel incident records the progression of broken communication that began back in the Garden of Eden. After sin entered the world, Adam and Eve began to hide the truth. They tried to blame each other and God for their mistakes, which resulted in separation from God and barriers between that first couple. The sinful pride of the people of Babel caused another great rift in human communication. Numerous languages now divided them into various groups, making their cooperation difficult if not impossible. But the story doesn't end there. God is in the business of restoring broken communication. He chose the people of Israel and spoke to them, giving them his laws. His Son was born through this nation, so he could speak to us and walk among us. And when the Holy Spirit came, the diversity of language was no longer a barrier to communication (Acts 2:5-12). God's program is designed to enhance our communication with him and with the people around us.

ABRAHAM & SARAH

Many give lip service to walking by faith; Abraham and Sarah modeled it. They were imperfect but willing instruments used by God to implement his perfect plan.

Abram, with Sarai, departed by faith from a pagan world for a new life of God's choosing. God promised a land and a nation of descendants, including One through whom all the peoples of the world would be blessed. The covenant defied human logic: Abram was seventy-five; Sarai was ten years younger and infertile. Their hopes of having children had long vanished. Yet Abram believed God's promises.

During their pilgrimage, the pair often strayed from God's will. They succumbed to fear and dishonesty in dealings with Pharaoh and Abimelech. Difficulty in persevering led them to second-guess God. Abram's subsequent union with Hagar resulted in domestic strife. Jealousy naturally erupted, and family relationships became strained. Abram behaved irresponsibly, and Sarai acted with deliberate cruelty. Years later a wiser Abraham would listen to God's instructions for handling the handmaid Hagar and her son.

Abram's and Sarai's failures neither diminished God's love for them nor altered his commitment to his promises. Through turmoil and temptation, the couple's mutual affection and respect for each other survived. Eventually God changed their names. Sarah's faith grew, and a quarter-century after God's promises were first given, she bore a son. They named him Isaac. The delayed gratification must have been sweet! Sarah enjoyed Isaac for many years. After her death she was tenderly mourned by both husband and son.

Worship and obedience were such a part of Abraham's life that when God tested Abraham's faith, he willingly surrendered his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Then God provided a ram as a burnt offering to take Isaac's place on the altar. God's provision in Abraham's life can bring hope to us even today.

STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- They voluntarily left comfortable, familiar surroundings in obedience to God's will.
- Scripture heralds both as examples of faithful obedience.
- Abraham's physical descendants include the Jewish nation, from which came Jesus the Messiah.
- Abraham's spiritual descendants include all who have trusted Jesus for salvation.

WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES:

- They at times presumed to know God's plans before he revealed them and foolishly attempted to assist him.
- When victimized by fear, Abraham was not above protecting himself at the expense of his wife's safety and integrity.
- Both acted intolerably toward Hagar and her son.

LESSONS FROM THEIR LIVES:

- A fresh start is possible at any stage of life.
- The fulfillment of God's promises does not depend upon our performance but upon his grace.
- It is dangerous to move ahead without first seeking God's direction.

KEY VERSES:

"And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age" (Genesis 21:1-2).

The story of Abraham and Sarah is found in Genesis 11-25. Among the many other references to Abraham are Romans 4:1-24; 9:7-9; Galatians 3:6-9, 14, 18; Hebrews 6:13-15; 7:1-2, 4-6; 11:8-12, 17-19; James 2:21-23. Sarah is mentioned in Romans 4:19; 9:9; Hebrews 11:11; and 1 Peter 3:6.

and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. ⁷Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. ⁸So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. ⁹Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and **11:8** *left off*: ceased.

from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

The Line of Descent from Shem to Abram

¹⁰These *are* the generations of Shem: Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood: ¹¹and Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

¹²And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years,

and begat Salah: ¹³and Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

¹⁴And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber: ¹⁵and Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

¹⁶And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg: ¹⁷and Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

¹⁸And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu: ¹⁹and Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

²⁰And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug: ²¹and Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

²²And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor: ²³and Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

²⁴And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah: ²⁵and Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters.

²⁶And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

The Family of Terah

²⁷Now these *are* the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. ²⁸And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. ²⁹And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife *was* Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. ³⁰But Sarai was barren; she *had* no child.

³¹And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and

they came unto Haran, and dwelt there. ³²And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

CHAPTER 12

The Call of Abram

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ²and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

⁴So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. ⁵And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. ⁶And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land.

⁷And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. ⁸And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, *having* Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD. ⁹And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

Abram and Sarai in Egypt

¹⁰And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine *was* grievous in the land. ¹¹And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his

12:1 A relationship with God is a two-way street. He is there to help us, but he expects us to follow his plan. When God called Abram to leave his country and his people and go to a land that God would show him, God promised to guide him. But Abram had to step out in faith. God has promised to be with us as we seek his help in recovery, but he may also ask something of us. As with Abram, God may call us away from the familiar world that drags us down. And if we want to progress, we will need to follow his plan.

12:11-20 As Abram and Sarai approached Egypt, Abram began to fear that the Egyptians would kill him so they could take his beautiful wife. So Abram and Sarai spun a lie to "protect" their relationship; they said that they were brother and sister. This was a half-truth—they actually were half siblings. But it should be recognized that a half-truth is a whole lie. And like most lies, this one backfired, almost destroying Abram and Sarai's marriage. Total honesty is an essential part of recovery. We need to be careful to avoid doing what Abram and Sarai did, even though they did it with the best of intentions. Dishonesty never pays—we should never try to rationalize it.

LOT & FAMILY

Many people in this world live for wealth, comfort, and the easy life. And they want to get it as quickly as possible! To make this happen, they often sacrifice the really important things in life. This was true in the life of Abraham's nephew Lot. Looking for the easy road to wealth and comfort, he made decisions that ended up destroying everything he had lived for.

Lot always thought of himself first. He demonstrated this when he chose the rich pastureland of the valleys, leaving Abraham with the rugged hill country. Embracing the easy comforts of the valley's cities and the physical prosperity they offered, he grew blind to the legacy he was leaving his descendants. When the men of Sodom demanded that Lot send his angelic guests out to take part in their sexual practices, Lot offered his daughters as an alternative. His desire to be accepted by the sinful people of his adopted homeland led him to fail to treat his daughters with the respect and protection they deserved.

The result of Lot's selfishness and greed was the loss of his fortune and the ruin of his family. He sacrificed his family and all he had worked for to the gods of comfort and wealth. He witnessed his wife's death as a result of her disobedience to God—something he had modeled for her. His daughters followed Lot's example, too. They used the quickest and easiest means available to overcome their lonely and childless state—drunkenness, seduction, and incest.

Our society places great value on wealth, comfort, and success, calling us all to join the mad rush to get them. This focus is so pervasive that it may be hard for us to see it as bad. Even though living for wealth may not seem such a terrible sin, its destructive effects upon people in our world are widespread. We must learn to put God first. If we put wealth first, we are setting ourselves up to lose all the really important things in life—our family and our relationship with God.

STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Lot was successful at generating wealth.
- The apostle Peter referred to him as a just and righteous man.

WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES:

- Lot often chose the easiest course of action, usually at the expense of doing what was right.
- When faced with making a decision, Lot thought of himself first.
- Lot's daughters used sinful means to meet their needs, instead of seeking God's provision.

LESSONS FROM THEIR LIVES:

- If we live for comfort and wealth, they can come between us and our families.
- We need to take care of our responsibilities to God and people first if we want our lives to be successful.
- Mistakes made by parents usually lead to mistakes made by their children.
- When we put wealth and comfort before obedience to God, the result will be destructive.

KEY VERSE:

"Come, let us make our father [Lot] drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father" (Genesis 19:32).

The story of Lot and his family is told in Genesis 13 and 19. Lot is also mentioned in Deuteronomy 2:9; Luke 17:28-32; and 2 Peter 2:7-8.

wife, Behold now, I know that thou *art* a fair woman to look upon: ¹²therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This *is* his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. ¹³Say, I pray thee, thou *art* my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

¹⁴And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. ¹⁵The princes

also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. ¹⁶And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

¹⁷And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. ¹⁸And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What *is* this *that* thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she *was*

12:16 *entreated*: treated.

thy wife? ¹⁹Why saidst thou, *She is my sister?* so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take *her*, and go thy way. ²⁰And Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

CHAPTER 13

Abram and Lot Separate

And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. ²And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. ³And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; ⁴unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

⁵And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. ⁶And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. ⁷And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

⁸And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we *be* brethren. ⁹*Is* not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

¹⁰And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, *even* as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. ¹¹Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. ¹²Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan,

13:6 *substance*: possessions. **14:5** *smote*: attacked.

and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched *his* tent toward Sodom. ¹³But the men of Sodom *were* wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

¹⁴And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: ¹⁵for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. ¹⁶And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then* shall thy seed also be numbered. ¹⁷Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

¹⁸Then Abram removed *his* tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

CHAPTER 14

Abram Rescues Lot

And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; ²*that these* made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. ³All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the Salt Sea. ⁴Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

⁵And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that *were* with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, ⁶and the Horites in their mount Seir, unto El-paran, which *is* by the wilderness. ⁷And they returned, and came to En-mishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezon-tamar.

⁸And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela

13:5-11 A conflict developed between the families of Abram and Lot over pastureland for their flocks. To ease the strained family relationship, Abram offered Lot first choice of the land. Abram realized that people were more important than possessions, so he sacrificed his own right to the best land to maintain harmony between their families. In recovery, we need to learn this important lesson: Our relationships are more important than the things we own.

13:11-13 One bad choice often leads to another. The choices Lot made here and in the following chapters led him toward his eventual fall. Here, he selfishly chose the best land and the easy life-style that would come with it. In 13:12-13, he chose to move closer to the wicked city of Sodom. In 19:1-18, he chose to become an important man in a wicked place. In 19:30-38, Lot's descent reached its final depths as he had incestuous relations with his daughters. We need to think ahead, reflecting upon the probable consequences of our present decisions.

(the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; ⁹with Chedor-laomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five. ¹⁰And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. ¹¹And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. ¹²And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

¹³And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram. ¹⁴And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. ¹⁵And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. ¹⁶And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

Melchizedek Blesses Abram

¹⁷And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedor-laomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale.

¹⁸And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. ¹⁹And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: ²⁰and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered

thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

²¹And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

²²And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, ²³that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: ²⁴save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

CHAPTER 15

The LORD's Covenant Promise to Abram

After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

²And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? ³And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

⁴And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. ⁵And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

⁶And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

⁷And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

⁸And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

14:8 vale: valley. **14:10** slimepits: asphalt pits. **14:11** victuals: food. **14:13** confederate: allies. **14:15** himself: his forces. **smote**: attacked. **14:17** dale: valley. **14:23** shoelatchet: shoelace. **15:2** steward: heir. **15:4** bowels: body.

14:14-16 A number of important character traits emerge as we examine Abram's prompt military action. He proved himself to be a man of courage, always ready to act when the situation demanded it. He was willing to give up certain luxuries in order to follow the program God had laid out for him. These are important characteristics for us to emulate as we continue in the recovery process.

15:4-5 Because of the disappointment and frustration of seventy-five childless years, God's promise of numerous children must have stretched Abram's faith to the very limit. God's plan for Abram seemed an impossibility—thousands of descendants from an old man and a barren woman! But God's promise did actually come about. God's plans for us may seem beyond belief—even impossible. We may think we are beyond hope. But with God, nothing is impossible!

15:6 This is one of the most important verses in the Old Testament. Abram believed God, and God declared him righteous. In other words, it was Abram's faith, not his works, that made him righteous before God. For us to continue in recovery, we need to trust God more and trust our works less. We are powerless over the pressures of sin, but God will help us through the toughest temptations if we trust him. He will count us righteous because of our trust in him, not because we are perfect.

⁹And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. ¹⁰And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. ¹¹And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹²And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. ¹³And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; ¹⁴and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. ¹⁵And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. ¹⁶But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

¹⁷And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. ¹⁸In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: ¹⁹the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, ²⁰and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, ²¹and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

CHAPTER 16

The Birth of Ishmael

Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose

15:13 *of a surety*: surely. **15:14** *substance*: possessions. **15:16** *hither*: here. **16:2** *hearkened*: listened.

name *was* Hagar. ²And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. ³And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. ⁴And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

⁵And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong *be* upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.

⁶But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

⁷And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. ⁸And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go?

And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

⁹And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. ¹⁰And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. ¹¹And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. ¹²And he will be a wild man; his hand *will be* against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

16:1-4 Since God's promise of a child had been given, about two years had passed without anything happening. Sometimes the hardest part of recovery is the waiting. Here Abram and Sarai show us what *not* to do when things don't progress as quickly as we might hope. Rather than accept God's timing, they took matters into their own hands. They assigned a servant girl, Hagar, to be a surrogate mother for Abram's son. This "solution" has been a source of conflict to this day. Abram's descendants through Hagar are the Arab nations whose conflicts with the Jews keep the Middle East in constant turmoil.

16:7-13 When Hagar could not help herself and recognized her powerlessness over her situation, the angel of the Lord came and ministered to her. Until we recognize that our situation is hopeless without outside help, God waits and does not help us. But when we are ready to admit our need and cry out to him, he is ready to step in.

17:5-6 Since Abram was childless, his name (meaning "exalted father") must have been a source of embarrassment to him. Here it is changed to "Abraham," which means "father of many." Abraham's name, in a real sense, became his promise from God. It would have been a continual reminder and source of hope that God would come through for him in the end.

HAGAR & ISHMAEL

Hagar is often overshadowed by the two prominent people in her life—Abraham and Sarah. Her story is woven into the fabric of great events that make up Abraham's life. Yet God chose this "insignificant" woman to bear the son who was destined to be the father of the Arab nations.

When Hagar became pregnant, she gave in to pride and looked down on her mistress, Sarai, who had been unable to bear children. This prompted a great deal of strife in Abraham's family and much suffering for Hagar. The pain and alienation she suffered because of the baby and her wrong attitude could have put considerable strain on the mother-child relationship from the beginning. But Hagar showed no regrets about having her son. She joyfully received him and accepted him despite the complicated and emotionally charged circumstances surrounding his birth.

Hagar and her son, Ishmael, had much in common. They were both rejected by Abraham's household. Together they experienced the torture of the hot, barren desert after Sarai demanded that Abraham send them away. They became nameless outcasts, discarded by those who had once valued them. Under such circumstances, it must have been difficult to maintain a positive self-assessment.

Yet this mother and son persevered through these trials because they had faith in God, who had appeared to them in the wilderness. They knew that they were of great worth in his sight, and they rebuilt their identity upon his promises. To this day their story is used to illustrate God's deep concern for all who have been discarded and rejected. It also shows us that God's assessment of our life is far more important than what other people think.

STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Hagar was willing to humbly return to Sarai even though she had been badly mistreated.
- Hagar stood by her son even though he was the source of many of her trials.

WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES:

- When Hagar became pregnant, she looked down on Sarai with contempt, prompting much of the strife that followed.
- Hagar momentarily abandoned her son in the shade of a bush at the time of his greatest need.

LESSONS FROM THEIR LIVES:

- A loving mother/child relationship is a precious gift from God.
- God is deeply concerned about those who have been abused and rejected.
- God is able to restore a sense of self-worth even in the most trying times.

KEY VERSES:

"And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction." (Genesis 16:9-11).

The story of Hagar and Ishmael is told in Genesis 16–21. The apostle Paul briefly discusses them in Galatians 4:21-31.

¹³And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

¹⁴Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. ¹⁶And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

CHAPTER 17

Abram Is Named Abraham

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said **16:13** *looked after*: seen.

unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. ²And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. ³And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, ⁴As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. ⁵Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. ⁶And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. ⁷And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in

their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. ⁸And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

The Mark of the Covenant

⁹And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. ¹⁰This *is* my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. ¹²And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed. ¹³He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

Sarai Is Named Sarah

¹⁵And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall* her name *be*. ¹⁶And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother* of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

¹⁷Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old?

17:11 *betwixt*: between. 17:22 *left off*: ceased. 17:23 *selfsame*: very same.

and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? ¹⁸And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

¹⁹And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his seed after him. ²⁰And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. ²¹But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. ²²And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

²³And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. ²⁴And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. ²⁷And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

CHAPTER 18

A Son Is Promised to Sarah

And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; ²and he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the

17:9-10, 24-27 Most of our significant relationships are symbolized by an outward sign. For example, married people wear rings as a sign of their marriage commitment. Circumcision was a sign of the agreement or covenant between God and Abraham. It was a mark by which Abraham's descendants were set apart as God's special people. Inner changes need to be accompanied by outer signs; beliefs need to be proven by actions. In recovery, as changes begin to take place inside, we need to express these changes outwardly in our actions and lifestyle.

18:1-6 Hebrews 13:2 urges the practice of hospitality since "some have entertained angels unawares." Abraham's treatment of the three strangers here may have been the background for this verse in Hebrews. Surely this is an example to be followed. As we progress in recovery, one of our goals is to help others discover the new way of life that we have found. What better way than to be hospitable toward others.

18:17-19 Many people wonder why God chose one man and his family out of all the others. Was this fair? These verses show us that God had an important purpose for choosing this one family. God picked Abraham so Abraham could teach his descendants God's ways, for through his ancestral line would come Jesus the Messiah, a source of blessing for all the nations of the earth. God never planned to bless only one family. God chose one family to bring blessings and a means of recovery to all of us.

ground, ³and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: ⁴let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: ⁵and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant.

And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

⁶And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead *it*, and make cakes upon the hearth. ⁷And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave *it* unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. ⁸And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

⁹And they said unto him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife?

And he said, Behold, in the tent.

¹⁰And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard *it* in the tent door, which *was* behind him. ¹¹Now Abraham and Sarah *were* old *and* well stricken in age; *and* it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. ¹²Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

¹³And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? ¹⁴Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

¹⁵Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid.

And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

Abraham Intercedes for Sodom

¹⁶And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. ¹⁷And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; ¹⁸seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

¹⁹For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

²⁰And the LORD said, Because the cry of

18:3 *pass not away*: do not pass by. **18:12** *waxed*: grown. *lord*: husband. **18:13** *of a surety*: surely. **18:19** *justice and judgment*: righteousness and justice.



► The Twelve Step devotional reading plan begins here.

No-Win Situations

BIBLE READING: Genesis 16:1-15

We admitted that we were powerless over our problems—that our lives had become unmanageable.

Sometimes we are powerless because of our stations in life. We may be in a situation where other people have power over us. We may feel that we are trapped by the demands of others and that there's no way to please them all. It's a double bind: To please one is to disappoint another. Sometimes when we feel stuck and frustrated with our relationships, we look for a measure of control by escaping through our addictive behaviors.

Hagar is a picture of powerlessness. She had no rights. As a girl, she was a servant to Sarai and Abram. When they were upset because Sarai could not bear children, Hagar was given to Abram as a surrogate. When she did become pregnant, as they had wanted, Sarai was so jealous that she beat Hagar, and Hagar ran away. All alone out in the wilderness, she was met by an angel who gave her an amazing message: "Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction" (Genesis 16:9-11).

When we are caught in no-win situations, it's tempting to run away through our addictive/compulsive escape hatches. At times like these God is there, and he is listening to our woes. We need to learn to express our pain to God instead of just trying to escape it. He hears our cries and is willing to give us hope for the future. **Turn to page 313, Judges 16.**



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Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; ²¹I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

²²And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD. ²³And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein? ²⁵That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

²⁶And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

²⁷And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am but* dust and ashes: ²⁸peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack of five*?

And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy *it*.

²⁹And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there.

And he said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake.

³⁰And he said *unto him*, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there.

And he said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there.

³¹And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there.

And he said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.

³²And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there.

And he said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.

³³And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

CHAPTER 19

Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; ²and he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways.

And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

³And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

⁴But before they lay down, the men of the city, *even* the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: ⁵and they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where *are* the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

⁶And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, ⁷and said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. ⁸Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as *is* good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

⁹And they said, Stand back. And they said *again*, This one *fellow* came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, *even* Lot, and came near to break the door. ¹⁰But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. ¹¹And they smote the men that *were* at the door of the house with

18:24 *peradventure*: suppose. 18:33 *left communing*: finished speaking. 19:2 *tarry*: stay. 19:4 *compassed*: surrounded. 19:5 *know*: have sex with. 19:9 *sojourn*: live among us. *sore*: hard. 19:11 *smote*: struck.

18:22-32 Often we are urged to pray for others who have problems and difficulties. In these verses, we see Abraham entreating God on behalf of Lot and his family. He is deeply concerned for their welfare and intercedes for them as he speaks with God. This is similar to what we are asked to do in the twelfth step of the recovery process. We are to reach out and help others who are in need. Prayer is a powerful means of doing this.

19:16 Even after Lot became aware of Sodom's impending doom, he and his family continued to linger there. The angels had to force them to leave. Sometimes, even when we know what course of action is required, we need a push to get us moving. Let us thank God for the "angels" he has provided to help us through times of crisis. Sometimes, as the twelfth step suggests, we may be needed to push others out of situations that are dangerous for them.

► **The Serenity Prayer**
devotional reading plan
begins here.

GOD grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change
the courage to change the things I can
and the wisdom to know the difference
AMEN

We all face difficult situations that involve the people we love. In some of these situations the wise course of action may not be clear. We may feel a heavy burden to act but have no idea what to do.

Abraham found himself in such a situation. The Lord had told Abraham that he intended to destroy the people of Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness. Since Abraham's nephew Lot lived among the people of these cities, Abraham was concerned for their welfare. So Abraham approached God and said, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked . . . that be far from thee. . . . And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes" (Genesis 18:23-26). The bargaining went on: Suppose there are only forty-five . . . forty . . . thirty . . . twenty . . . ten? Finally God said, "I will not destroy it for ten's sake" (18:32).

Abraham wasn't sure what he could do in the situation he faced; he wasn't even sure what was right in this situation. He talked it over with God, reasoning it out, trying to do whatever he could. When we don't know how much of a change we can or even should make, we can start by talking it over with God. Then we can try to do as much as we feel confident doing.
Turn to page 53, Genesis 37.

blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

¹²And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring *them* out of this place: ¹³for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.

¹⁴And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

¹⁵And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. ¹⁶And while he lingered, the men laid

19:13 *waxen: grown.*

hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. ¹⁷And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

¹⁸And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord: ¹⁹behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die: ²⁰behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (*is it not a little one?*) and my soul shall live.

²¹And he said unto him, See, I have accepted

thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. ²²Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

²³The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. ²⁴Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; ²⁵and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. ²⁶But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

²⁷And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: ²⁸and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. ²⁹And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

Lot and His Daughters

³⁰And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. ³¹And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and *there is* not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: ³²come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. ³³And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went **20:1** *sojourned: lived.*

in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

³⁴And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. ³⁵And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

³⁶Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. ³⁷And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. ³⁸And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

CHAPTER 20

Abraham Deceives Abimelech

And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. ²And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.

³But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou *art but* a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife.

⁴But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? ⁵Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.

19:17-26 As we seek recovery from our problems and dependencies, there can be no looking back, no lingering. Doing so will only result in our destruction. Lot's wife failed to follow the program that the angels had set out for her family. They were to run from Sodom and never look back. Lot's wife did look back, and it spelled her destruction. As we leave the destructive situations in our life, it will be tempting to look back. But this final episode in the life of Lot's wife demonstrates the fatal consequences. We need to run, without looking back.

19:30-38 The incest in Lot's family was a direct consequence of Lot's irresponsible decisions in the past. He had spent his years in a wicked city and had failed to find suitable husbands for his daughters. Their desire for children led to deceit and incest. But there is hope beyond the shocking details of this story. Even though Lot failed in so many ways, many centuries later the apostle Peter used him as a clear example of one whose righteousness came by grace through faith (2 Peter 2:7-8). Lot was an extremely flawed person, but God is a gracious God. There is hope available for each of us, no matter how sordid our past activities may have been.

20:1-18 Why is it so difficult to learn life's most important lessons? To protect himself, Abraham lied, telling Abimelech that his wife, Sarah, was his sister. The sad truth is, Abraham had made this mistake before (12:10-20). He had fallen into a pattern of using lies and deceit to protect himself. But this practice only caused pain to everyone involved. It also displayed how weak Abraham's faith in God was when he was confronted with a difficult situation. Truth is crucial to building healthy relationships. If we stand by the truth, we can trust God to stand by us when things get tough.

⁶And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. ⁷Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine.

⁸Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid. ⁹Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. ¹⁰And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

¹¹And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God *is* not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. ¹²And yet indeed *she is* my sister; *she is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. ¹³And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He *is* my brother.

¹⁴And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave *them* unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. ¹⁵And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. ¹⁶And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand *pieces* of silver: behold, he *is* to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that *are* with thee, and with all *other*: thus she was reposed.

¹⁷So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-servants; and they bare *children*. ¹⁸For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

CHAPTER 21 The Birth of Isaac

And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. ²For

20:6 *suffered*: allowed. 20:8 *sore*: very. 21:10 *bondwoman*: slave. 21:15 *bottle*: skin. *cast*: put. 21:16 *over against*: across.

Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. ³And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. ⁴And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. ⁵And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

⁶And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, *so that* all that hear will laugh with me. ⁷And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born *him* a son in his old age.

Hagar and Ishmael Are Sent Away

⁸And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the *same* day that Isaac was weaned.

⁹And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. ¹⁰Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac. ¹¹And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

¹²And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. ¹³And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he *is* thy seed.

¹⁴And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave *it* unto Hagar, putting *it* on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. ¹⁵And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. ¹⁶And she went, and sat her down over against *him* a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against *him*, and lift up her voice, and wept.

¹⁷And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he *is*. ¹⁸Arise, lift up the lad, and hold

21:1-2 God keeps his word. When we claim his promises, we know that our sovereign God is able to fulfill them. Under normal circumstances there was no way that Sarah could have become a mother. But God gave her a child anyway. Sometimes we may feel that complete recovery is just as impossible, but with God, it can be a reality. With him, anything is possible.

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2 Samuel 6:1-8	384
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1 Chronicles 21:9-13	512
1 Chronicles 21:17	512
2 Chronicles 12:5	536
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Job 8:1-7	620
Psalms 38:1-8	673
Psalms 60:1-4	686
Psalms 88:6-12	703
Proverbs 4:23-27	748
Proverbs 5:1-23	750
Proverbs 13:6	756
Isaiah 8:6-8	808
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Lamentations 1:1-11	934
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