

**FREE  
APP**

**WITH PURCHASE**

See back for  
details



TRUSTED WISDOM  
PRACTICAL APPLICATION  
REFRESHING INSIGHT

# THE SWINDOLL STUDY BIBLE

L A R G E P R I N T



CHARLES R. SWINDOLL

*Charles Swindoll*

They will  
and have a  
God their savior.  
rich people may seek you  
and worship in your presence.  
O God of Jacob.  
ancient gates!  
ancient d



TRUSTED WISDOM  
PRACTICAL APPLICATION  
REFRESHING INSIGHT

THE  
SWINDOLL  
STUDY BIBLE  
L A R G E P R I N T

CHARLES R. SWINDOLL

*Charles Swindoll*



New Living  
Translation®

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.  
CAROL STREAM, ILLINOIS



Visit Tyndale online at [www.swindollstudybible.com](http://www.swindollstudybible.com), [www.newlivingtranslation.com](http://www.newlivingtranslation.com), and [www.tyndale.com](http://www.tyndale.com).  
Features and Bible helps copyright © 2017 by CRS, Inc. All rights reserved.  
NLT Dictionary/Concordance copyright © 2007 by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.  
Book introduction charts adapted from charts copyright © 1978, 1996, 2009 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.  
“Searching the Scriptures” feature adapted from *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* copyright © 2016 by Charles R. Swindoll. All rights reserved.  
Photograph of Charles Swindoll by David Edmonson © 2010. All rights reserved.  
Interior maps copyright © 2017 by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Color maps copyright © 2016 by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.  
All cover photographs and illustrations are the property of their respective copyright holders and all rights are reserved: geometric frame © olgash\_i/Adobe Stock; water © CobraCZ/iStockphoto; silhouette © RelaxFoto.de/iStockphoto; father/son © digitalskillet/iStockphoto; reading © 4masik/Depositphotos.com; birds © Rowan Heuvel/Unsplash.com; leaves © bananahuman/iStockphoto.

*The Swindoll Study Bible* is an edition of the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation.

*Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. All rights reserved.

The text of the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, may be quoted in any form (written, visual, electronic, or audio) up to and inclusive of five hundred (500) verses without express written permission of the publisher, provided that the verses quoted do not account for more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the work in which they are quoted, and provided that a complete book of the Bible is not quoted.

When the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, is quoted, one of the following credit lines must appear on the copyright page or title page of the work:

Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

When quotations from the NLT text are used in nonsalable media, such as church bulletins, orders of service, newsletters, transparencies, or similar media, a complete copyright notice is not required, but the initials *NLT* must appear at the end of each quotation.

Quotations in excess of five hundred (500) verses or twenty-five percent (25%) of the work, or other permission requests, must be approved in writing by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Send requests by e-mail to: [permission@tyndale.com](mailto:permission@tyndale.com) or call 630-668-8300, ext. 5023.

Publication of any commentary or other Bible reference work produced for commercial sale that uses the New Living Translation requires written permission for use of the NLT text.

*TYNDALE*, *New Living Translation*, *NLT*, the New Living Translation logo, and *LeatherLike* are registered trademarks of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. *TuTone* is a trademark of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

ISBN 978-1-4964-3368-8	Hardcover
ISBN 978-1-4964-3371-8	LeatherLike Brown/Tan
ISBN 978-1-4964-3372-5	LeatherLike Brown/Tan Indexed
ISBN 978-1-4964-3369-5	LeatherLike Black
ISBN 978-1-4964-3370-1	LeatherLike Black Indexed

Printed in South Korea

24	23	22	21	20	19	18
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Tyndale House Publishers and Wycliffe Bible Translators share the vision for an understandable, accurate translation of the Bible for every person in the world. Each sale of the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, benefits Wycliffe Bible Translators. Wycliffe is working with partners around the world to accomplish Vision 2025—an initiative to start a Bible translation program in every language group that needs it by the year 2025.

# Table of Contents

Letter from Chuck Swindoll . . . . .	A7
<i>The Swindoll Study Bible</i> User's Guide . . . . .	A9
A Note to Readers . . . . .	A11
Introduction to the New Living Translation . . . . .	A13
NLT Bible Translation Team . . . . .	A19
Contributors . . . . .	A21

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

<b><i>The Pentateuch</i></b> . . . . .	<b>3</b>
Genesis . . . . .	5
Exodus . . . . .	81
Leviticus . . . . .	137
Numbers . . . . .	169
Deuteronomy . . . . .	215
<b><i>The Historical Books</i></b> . . . . .	<b>253</b>
Joshua . . . . .	255
Judges . . . . .	289
Ruth . . . . .	321
1 Samuel . . . . .	329
2 Samuel . . . . .	375
1 Kings . . . . .	413
2 Kings . . . . .	451
1 Chronicles . . . . .	485
2 Chronicles . . . . .	521
Ezra . . . . .	561
Nehemiah . . . . .	575
Esther . . . . .	597
<b><i>The Wisdom Books</i></b> . . . . .	<b>611</b>
Job . . . . .	613
Psalms . . . . .	651
Proverbs . . . . .	743
Ecclesiastes . . . . .	777
Song of Songs . . . . .	791
<b><i>The Major Prophets</i></b> . . . . .	<b>801</b>
Isaiah . . . . .	803
Jeremiah . . . . .	871
Lamentations . . . . .	933
Ezekiel . . . . .	943
Daniel . . . . .	997
<b><i>The Minor Prophets</i></b> . . . . .	<b>1021</b>
Hosea . . . . .	1023
Joel . . . . .	1039
Amos . . . . .	1047
Obadiah . . . . .	1059
Jonah . . . . .	1065
Micah . . . . .	1073
Nahum . . . . .	1085

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Habakkuk .....1091

Zephaniah.....1097

Haggai.....1103

Zechariah .....1109

Malachi .....1123

THE NEW TESTAMENT

***The Gospels . . . . .1133***

Matthew .....1135

Mark .....1187

Luke.....1223

John .....1273

***The History of the Early Church . . . . .1317***

Acts .....1319

***The Letters of Paul. . . . .1373***

Romans .....1375

1 Corinthians .....1405

2 Corinthians .....1435

Galatians .....1457

Ephesians.....1471

Philippians .....1485

Colossians .....1497

1 Thessalonians .....1505

2 Thessalonians .....1515

1 Timothy .....1523

2 Timothy .....1535

Titus .....1545

Philemon .....1553

***The General Letters. . . . .1559***

Hebrews .....1561

James .....1583

1 Peter.....1593

2 Peter.....1605

1 John.....1613

2 John.....1623

3 John.....1627

Jude .....1633

***The Apocalypse of John . . . . .1639***

Revelation.....1641

Searching the Scriptures.....1671

Bible Reading Plans.....1679

Index to Application Articles.....1693

Index to People Profiles.....1697

Index to Holy Land Tour Stops .....1699

Topical Index to Features .....1701

NLT Dictionary/Concordance .....1777

Image Credits.....1953

Holy Land Tour Itineraries .....1955

App download code can be found on the pages  
following the color maps at the back of the Bible.

*Dear Reader,*

There is nothing quite like the Bible. This Book is unique because it is *God's very Word*.

When God wanted to communicate with us, He didn't simply speak His message. Nor did He merely reveal it in the clouds or communicate it through dreams and visions. No, He did much more. The Lord saw to it that His Word was actually written down by His prophets and apostles and then preserved and translated through the ages by His faithful followers. The Spirit of God has communicated the Word of God in clear, understandable terms so that people of all generations can read it, understand it, and be transformed by it.

Because God felt it was so important to give us the Bible, we should take the time to read it, study it, and even commit portions of it to memory. Ultimately, we should allow its transforming truths to change us. Make no mistake: The Bible—God's Word—is our final authority for faith and practice. It is living, infallible truth from our living, infallible God. Knowing and loving Him requires knowing and loving His Word.

The Bible you hold in your hands will help you do just that.

The notes you'll find throughout this Bible come from literally thousands of hours of my personal study over more than fifty years of ministry. This study Bible was designed with you in mind. As you read the Scriptures, imagine my sitting beside you and sharing personal stories, important insights, and hard-earned lessons that will encourage you to walk more closely with Jesus Christ. You'll discover the *who, what, where, when, why, and how* of the Bible. *Who* wrote it and *when*? *What* does it mean, and *where* did its events occur? *Why* should I trust it? And most importantly, *how* can I apply it today?

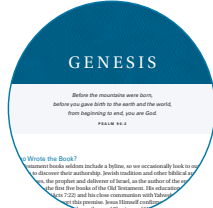
It's that last question more than any other that has fed my passion to publish this Bible. My primary focus in ministry has been teaching biblical *insight for living* . . . for genuine life change. After all, that's why God has communicated His Word to us—so that we may become like His Son, Jesus Christ, the central figure of this Book.



CHARLES R. SWINDOLL  
SENIOR PASTOR  
STONEBRIAR COMMUNITY CHURCH  
FRISCO, TEXAS

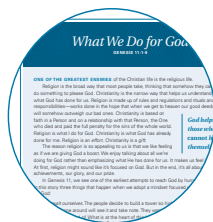
# The Swindoll Study Bible User's Guide

Every page of *The Swindoll Study Bible* is filled with content that is designed to help you grow closer to Jesus as you engage with God's Word. It all starts with the clear and accurate New Living Translation, which communicates the message of Scripture powerfully in contemporary English. The text of Scripture itself should always be the primary feature of any edition of the Bible. In *The Swindoll Study Bible*, you will also find several different ways that Chuck Swindoll will come alongside you to help you understand and apply the message of the Bible.

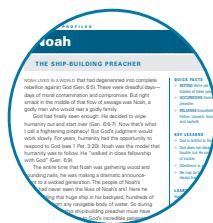


**BOOK INTRODUCTIONS** will help you understand what each individual book of the Bible is all about. These introductions follow the format of answering five key questions: *Who Wrote the Book?* gives you insight into the person or people God used to record this book of Scripture. *Where Are We?* addresses the key details about the book's setting, such as the date of writing and the political or social situation the author and audience were facing. *Why Is This Book So Important?* covers the unique contribution each book makes to the Bible. *What's the Big Idea?* highlights one or more big themes that the book covers, giving you an idea of what to look for as you read. *How Do I Apply This?* brings the message of the book right home to you, reminding you that the Bible is always about life change.

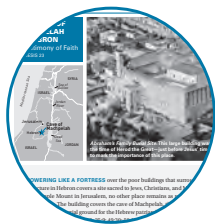
Each book introduction also includes a chart showing the book's structure and highlighting important verses, themes, and events that will help you see how the book holds together. Most books also include a map to help orient you to the real-world places where the events of the book took place.



**APPLICATION ARTICLES** are full-page articles where Chuck explains important passages in his winsome and engaging style. These articles have all the wit, charm, personal stories, and clear biblical wisdom that you have come to expect from listening to Chuck's sermons on the radio, each complete with a few main points from the passage for you to take away and apply directly to your life.



**PEOPLE PROFILES** highlight key figures in the biblical story with an eye to the lessons from their lives that will hit home for Christians today. Each of these full-page features also contains a section highlighting key facts about the person's family and setting, the key lessons you can take away from their life, and guidance on where in the Bible you can learn more about them.

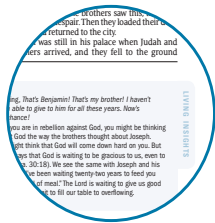


**HOLY LAND TOUR** will take you on a journey through the lands of the Bible. This tour visits many major archeological and geographical sites that relate to the Bible in some way, and each tour stop explains why a site is important in the Scriptures and includes a photo of the site or an artifact related to that place. It is almost like being on a bus tour of the Holy Land with Chuck and his team! You will find six unique guided tours that will walk you through several tour stops arranged around a theme. Check out the Holy Land Tour Itineraries beginning on page 1955.

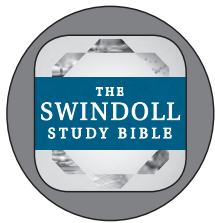
*Note on the maps in the Holy Land Tour:* The borders of Israel have expanded and contracted over the centuries and continue to be a point of contention even today. The tour maps in this Bible represent the modern State of Israel, and the dotted lines denote the cease-fire line—which once enclosed what was called the West Bank—that came as a result of the armistice following the 1948 War of Independence. There is an expectation that final borders still need to be negotiated. Amazingly, in the future Kingdom of God, the borders of Israel will reach “all the way from the border of Egypt to the great Euphrates River” (Gen. 15:18).



**PRAYER MOMENTS** are brief prayers adapted from the ones Chuck delivers at the end of each of his sermons. These prayers apply the message of the Scriptures, asking God for help in living out the truth He is teaching His people.



**LIVING INSIGHTS** are found on almost every page of this Bible. Drawn from Chuck's sermons during his ministry of fifty-plus years, these brief notes highlight important teachings from the Scriptures. It is like having Chuck sit right alongside you as you read Scripture, pointing out the things he'd like to pass along to you.



## APP

Your purchase of this Bible entitles you to download a complete digital edition of *The Swindoll Study Bible* that includes all text, notes, and features. Additional app-only features include searching, note taking, bookmarking, social media sharing, and much more. *The Swindoll Study Bible* app is available for both Android and iOS. Your individual code is located on the pages immediately following the color maps at the back of the Bible. Secure your copy today by visiting [SwindollStudyBible.com/App](http://SwindollStudyBible.com/App) and entering your unique code.



# OLD TESTAMENT

## THE PENTATEUCH

*Pentateuch* is from a Greek word that means “five books.” It is a common name for the first five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. These books were each written by Moses and chronicle God’s creation of the world, God’s choice to draw humanity to Himself through the family of Abraham, the growth of that family into a large nation, Moses’ delivery of God’s law to the people, and God’s leadership of the Israelites out of slavery, through the wilderness, and to the edge of their Promised Land.

# GENESIS

*Before the mountains were born,  
before you gave birth to the earth and the world,  
from beginning to end, you are God.*

PSALM 90:2

## Who Wrote the Book?

Old Testament books seldom include a byline, so we occasionally look to outside sources to discover their authorship. Jewish tradition and other biblical authors name Moses, the prophet and deliverer of Israel, as the author of the entire Pentateuch—the first five books of the Old Testament. His education in the courts of Egypt (Acts 7:22) and his close communion with Yahweh—the Hebrew name for God—support this premise. Jesus Himself confirmed Moses' authorship (see John 5:45-47), as did the scribes and Pharisees of His time (Matt. 19:7; 22:24).

The first book of the Bible gets its name from the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures. *Genesis* is a Greek word that means “beginning” or “origin” and serves as a translation of the first word in the original Hebrew version of Genesis: *bereshith*.

Moses wrote Genesis for the people of Israel, whom he led out of slavery in Egypt back to the land of their forefathers. Genesis provides a history of those forefathers—their origins, their journeys, and their covenants with God. Because the events contained in the rest of the Pentateuch are responses to the promises of God found in Genesis, such a history of God's interaction with their ancestors would have provided encouragement and inspiration to the former slaves seeking freedom and prosperity in the Promised Land.

## Where Are We?

The first eleven chapters of Genesis paint the early history of the human race in broad strokes. After the great flood, the focus narrows to God's dealings with one family living in Mesopotamia, a family headed by Abram (later called Abraham). From the Euphrates River (in modern-day Iraq) over to what is now Syria, events move south into Canaan (modern-day Jordan and Israel) and Egypt. See the map on the following page for a helpful visual reference to important places in Genesis.



Genesis covers a longer period of time than all the other books in the Bible combined. While the ancient history recounted in the first eleven chapters gives no indication of time span, Abram's story begins (Gen. 12:1) around 2091 BC, and the book ends with Joseph's death in Egypt (Gen. 50:26) around 1805 BC.



## Why Is Genesis So Important?

To the original readers of Genesis, the book was valued as a history of their people. It told them the story of how God created the world and dealt with all humanity until He initiated a personal relationship with their forefather Abraham. Genesis

*Genesis offers  
a thorough  
background  
to the rest of  
the Bible.*

revealed to them the eternal promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—promises that extended to their descendants. It provided comfort and hope for the downtrodden Israelites as they waited to return to their Promised Land.

For later readers, Genesis offers a thorough background to the rest of the Bible. Here we learn ancient history and geography and are introduced to significant people and events found later in the Bible. In Genesis God reveals many facets of His nature through His dealings with people. We also learn of the origin of sin, of its destructive effect on humanity, and of God's plan to atone for that sin through a future Son from the people of Israel (Gen. 3:15; 22:18; 49:10).

## What's the Big Idea?

The Bible is divided into two major parts, the Old and New Testaments. *Testament* is another word for *covenant*. Covenants figure prominently in the story of Genesis, for they help define God's relationship with His people at various times. Sin broke the perfect peace between God and humanity (see Gen. 3). But God established His plan for redemption through covenants. He made a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), then reaffirmed it with Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5) and with Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15). God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob applied to the Israelites in Egypt and to later generations. Genesis sets the stage for the rest of God's plan to redeem the world through His Son, Jesus Christ.

## How Do I Apply This?

It's easy to get lost in the genealogies and stories in Genesis without seeing the big picture. Keep God, not the people, in mind as you read through the book. Consider His character qualities. If you were an Israelite just released from slavery and reading this for the first time, would you marvel at God's power over creation? Or His anger over sin? Or the way He fulfilled His promises to everyone? Awareness of each of these characteristics should evoke worship—and hope. Remember that the Lord is strong, faithful, and just. And His desire to bless His creation will one day be fully realized.

	Creation	Fall	Flood	Nations	Abraham	Isaac	Jacob	Joseph
	Genesis 1–2	Genesis 3–5	Genesis 6–9	Genesis 10–11	Genesis 12–25	Genesis 26–27	Genesis 28–36	Genesis 37–50
Beginnings	Beginning of the human race				Beginning of the chosen race			
Result	Confusion and scattering				Bondage in Egypt			
History	Primeval history				Patriarchal history			
Emphasis	Four major events				Four important people			
Time	Over 2,000 years				Approximately 300 years			
Key Words and Phrases	“In the beginning” (Gen. 1:1); “account” (Gen. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2)							
Theme	God promises to redeem and bless His people.							
Key Verses	Genesis 3:15; 12:3							
Christ in Genesis	Pictured in the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15); Melchizedek, the high priest (Gen. 14:18); the humiliation and exaltation of Joseph (Gen. 37–41)							

### The Account of Creation

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

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

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

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

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

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

And that is what happened. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

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

<sup>14</sup>Then God said, “Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, days, and years. <sup>15</sup>Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth.”

1:1 Or In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, . . . Or When God began to create the heavens and the earth, . . .

**A BOOK OF BEGINNINGS** *Gen. 1:1* The book of Genesis is the book of beginnings. Whatever begins, begins here. It is the beginning of time, the beginning of matter, and the beginning of humanity. Even sin had its beginning here, and thus, so did God’s judgment. In Genesis we see, for the first time, the plan of God begin to unfold and the promise of the Messiah’s coming. Genesis is the beginning of the family as God created it—the husband-and-wife relationship—and the product of their union, the birth of children. This first book in the Book of books is the beginning of life as we know it. It all starts in Genesis.



And that is what happened. <sup>16</sup>God made two great lights—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup>God set these lights in the sky to light the earth, <sup>18</sup>to govern the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>29</sup>Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. <sup>30</sup>And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened.

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

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

**2** So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. <sup>2</sup>On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested\* from all his work. <sup>3</sup>And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

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

### *The Man and Woman in Eden*

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup>neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. <sup>6</sup>Instead, springs\* came up from the ground and watered all the land. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.

<sup>8</sup>Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from

1:26a Or *man*; Hebrew reads *adam*. 1:26b As in Syriac version; Hebrew reads *all the earth*. 1:27 Or *the man*; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*. 2:2 Or *ceased*; also in 2:3. 2:6 Or *mist*.

**REMEMBER YOUR GENESIS** *Gen. 1:26-27* We each have our own genesis. We have all had our beginnings. I have never seen any two people with the same beginning. God has created us all unique—every individual is different. Think back to your genesis, the beginning of your walk with the Lord. Remember how old you were. Recall who first shared the gospel with you. Think back to that time when you released your right to live your own way and surrendered yourself, in faith, to Christ. That was your genesis. True life began for you in that moment.

**VERY GOOD** *Gen. 1:31* God looked at His creation and said, in effect, “Everything is in its place. Everything is excellent. Nothing needs to be added. Nothing is lacking that I wanted. Life, light, matter, land, sea, vegetation, man, woman—it is all there, and it is very good!”

**THE BEGINNING OF LEISURE** *Gen. 2:2* God wasn’t tired. He didn’t rest because there was nothing else to do. Rather, He deliberately *stopped* His work so that there could be a deliberate *beginning* of leisure. This was a time to look at what He had made and to contemplate the value of it. It was a time for enjoyment.

We sometimes make an idol out of productivity. If we do take some time out for relaxation and enjoyment, we immediately start to feel guilty. But if we’re serious about imitating God, then we must take time for leisure. We have to take time to rest, to think, and to appreciate. Whenever we do these things, we are doing exactly what God did.

# The Image of God

GENESIS 1:26-27

**THE CLIMAX OF THE CREATIVE WEEK** is God's creation of humanity. The stars and planets are in place. The sun is ready to rule the day and the moon the night. The seas and the land have been formed. The plants and trees are bursting with life and in full bloom. Then God brings humanity onto the scene. It almost appears anticlimactic until we see that there is something altogether distinct about God's creation of the man and the woman in Genesis 1:26-27. The plants and animals were not made in His image. The stars too, as magnificent as they are, do not bear God's likeness. But the man and the woman do.

When God said, "Let us make human beings in our image," He was saying, in effect, "Humanity will be unlike anything I have created. No other being has a heart to love Me. No other created being has a mind to know Me or a will to obey Me. Nothing else in all of My creation has a destiny of eternity like these creatures will have. I will make humans distinct. They will have *imago Dei*, 'the image of God,' stamped on them. Only they will have a capacity within them to love and know and obey Me."

When we use the word *image* in our culture, our minds imagine something external and short-lived. We talk about celebrities, corporations, or brands that protect "their image." An "image" in these cases has more to do with perception than reality. But when we speak of the *image of God*, we're not talking about God's appearance as projected and presented through humanity. We're talking about portraying who God is. In a unique and amazing way, human beings relate to God and reflect something of His character and nature.

What does it mean to be made in God's image? Theologians have spilled oceans of ink on this topic, but I will offer a few simple proposals. Humans have a capacity not found in animals. God communicates with us in a way He does not communicate with animals. There are inner, secret chambers within our being where the Lord connects with us. He prods us with inner promptings. He urges, He moves, He convicts, He directs, He stops, He guards, He guides. When God made us, He gave us more than a body: He gave us an immaterial soul—a spirit. Animals do not have a spirit. They have no connection with God except by way of instinct and the natural order of things.

When God created the first humans, He made them to have a sense of community, connection, and communication with the One who fashioned them. But once sin entered the world, that connection broke down. It wasn't erased, but it was defaced. It wasn't destroyed; it was damaged. We live with a defaced and damaged image today. Nevertheless, unlike animals, we are able to connect with our God in the inner person.

Bearing the image of God means that humans have dignity. It also means that God has entrusted us with the responsibility and the capacity to love and obey Him.

The image of God is who we are as human beings. It is our most basic, original calling. God calls us to live in His image—in the light of who He is and who He has made us to be.

**God created humans to have community, connection, and communication with the One who fashioned them.**

the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

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

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

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” <sup>19</sup>So the LORD God formed from the ground

all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man\* to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. <sup>20</sup>He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him.

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

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

“This one is bone from my bone,  
and flesh from my flesh!  
She will be called ‘woman,’  
because she was taken from ‘man.’”

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

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

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

**THE PRIVILEGE OF WORK** *Gen. 2:15* The first thing God did with the first man on the earth was give him a job. Work is important to God. The job Adam had was a significant responsibility, an involved occupation: The man was to cultivate the garden.

Many people feel that work is a curse. But it isn’t. When we look at Genesis 2–3, we see that sweat upon the brow is part of the curse, but work itself is not a curse. In fact, work began in the context of innocence. Work remains one of the greatest privileges God has given us.

**GOD TAKES CARE OF HIS CHILDREN** *Gen. 2:18* Adam did not come to God one day and say, “God, I’ve had it with being in the garden alone. I am really just sick of all these lonely days and nights.” No, it was God who saw that it was “not good for the man to be alone.” Adam simply did his work faithfully, and God stepped in.

How did God know to do that? He took time to observe. He related. He anticipated the need before Adam even said it. He knew what Adam needed even though Adam didn’t know it himself and didn’t have the ability to say it.

Parents, take time to study how your children are made. Observe how each one is unlike other children, and then move in to help when you see a need. That’s relating. That’s building a friendship. It takes time and effort if you want it to be a real friendship. God takes time and effort with us. He notices who we are and what we need. He sees a lack, and He responds. This is what the love of God is all about.

**THE HELPER SINGS HARMONY** *Gen. 2:18* God holds the patent on marriage. It was His idea! It wasn’t ours. He came up with it. God’s truth, as revealed in Scripture, remains unchanged. God looks at the man as he is alone, and God says, “Not good. That’s not best.” The aloneness is not good. And then He says, “I will make a helper who is just right for him.”

Here’s the way I like to describe it. The Lord gave the man the melody line in the music, and He gave the woman the harmony part. It’s a beautiful duet put together by God.

The very first term used to describe the purpose of the wife is “helper.” She’s the one who assists in the fulfillment of this relationship. She’s the one who adds color and harmony and beauty to the relationship. Otherwise, it’s rather meat-and-potatoes, a plain and primitive melody. God says to Adam, in essence, “All alone, your voice can’t carry it, Adam. You working alone is not something that pleases Me, nor will it really satisfy you. I will provide someone you need who is just right for you.”

**DELIGHTFUL INTIMACY** *Gen. 2:24–25* God’s design shows His intent. In God’s plan, marriage is monogamy—a heterosexual relationship between a man and a woman joined by God. This plan is so lovely and fulfilling that the last verse of Genesis 2 describes the man and his wife as both being naked without shame. There is no self-consciousness. There is no uneasiness with one another. There is no reluctance. The heavenly Father who made them said, in effect, “Man alone is not as good as man joined.” And in the beauty and intimacy of this innocent setting, there is even freedom in their nakedness. That plan hasn’t changed. In the bonds of marriage as God designed it there is a delightful intimacy found nowhere else.

# Guidelines for Marriage

GENESIS 2:24-25

**I FIND IN GENESIS 2:24-25** four helpful guidelines for marriage we can summarize in one word each. When trouble comes in a marriage, it's because one or more of these four guidelines have been overlooked, ignored, or directly disobeyed.

The first is the principle of *severance*: "A man leaves his father and mother." Severance does not mean we no longer listen to our parents. Nor does it mean we never need them or talk to them. Of course not! Severance simply means we are not dependent on them. We either need to sever that dependence or not get married. This applies to both men and women, regardless of age.

The second principle is *permanence*: "A man . . . is joined to his wife." Think of glue bonding two substances together. If you've ever applied a professional-grade glue, you understand what it means when the directions say, "Don't put it on until you're ready for it to stick." Why? The things you glue together will be bonded. This is the principle of *permanence*. Following this principle means working through and dealing with anything that may cause the glue to break loose—anything disturbing the permanence. That means you don't do things that threaten the bond. You refuse to spend time with people who can weaken the permanence. You don't allow flexibility where there should be faithfulness. To be joined is to be permanently bonded—for life.

The third principle is *unity*: "The two are united into one." Paul would later refer to this union as a "great mystery" (Eph. 5:32). Can you imagine two people who are very different becoming one? It doesn't happen automatically or easily. The process only *begins* at the altar. It takes a long time and a lot of hard work for two people to become united in body, mind, and purpose. It requires a lifetime of adaptation and adjustment for two to become one.

The fourth and final principle is *intimacy*: "The man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame." Here stood Adam and Eve, arm in arm before the living God, not ashamed to stand naked before Him or each other. Their nakedness was more than physical; it was also emotional. They had no secrets. They had nothing to hide, from God or each other. It was not until sin entered the world that they experienced shame in nakedness (Gen. 3:7). If you are married, you and your spouse are either becoming more unified or you're hiding. God wants the two of you to develop intimacy by being open with each other. When you experience heartaches, discouragements, and even joys, a spouse can understand these things like no one else. It's remarkable what happens when intimacy grows.

Perhaps you realize you have not been following God's principles for marriage. Change works against our fallen nature, and it is tough work. But the good news? With God, you can do it. The way to make a change is to start today, follow God's Word, and determine to do the right thing each day. Believe me, it's worth it.

*Adam and Eve  
had nothing to  
hide, from God  
or each other.  
It was not until  
sin entered the  
world that they  
experienced  
shame.*

## THE GARDEN OF EDEN

GENESIS 2



*Unspoiled Creation.* The Garden of Eden was an unsullied paradise, the perfect place for Adam and Eve.

**TRYING TO DETERMINE** the location of the Garden of Eden has given Bible students and scholars an unending quest. Genesis describes Eden as “in the east” and as having a river that watered the garden and divided, becoming four rivers. We can locate two of the four rivers—the Tigris and the Euphrates, which flowed through ancient Mesopotamia, or modern Iraq (Gen. 2:8, 10-14). With these scant geographical facts, scholars must put a question mark in the atlas beside any proposed location of the Garden of Eden.

The Hebrew term *eden* means “delight” and describes the ideal circumstances Adam and Eve enjoyed in the garden. Yet even a perfect environment had its challenges:

- ▶ There was a tree in the garden with fruit that God had commanded Adam and Eve not to eat (Gen. 2:16-17).
- ▶ Even in paradise, perfect humanity still faced temptation from the devil to disobey God’s command (Gen. 3:1-5; Rev. 12:9).
- ▶ Adam and Eve had within them the possibility of disobedience.

In other words, the delightful surroundings of the Garden of Eden didn’t remove the need to obey God.

It’s essential that we remember this as we pursue our goals in life. If paradise required obedience to God, how much more do our lives! To help us in our journey, we have what Adam and Eve also had—God’s direction. In spite of what the tempter would have us believe, God’s rules have good reasons. God gives us His prohibitions because He loves us—not because He is trying to keep us from our potential. In fact, it’s just the opposite. God’s purposes for our lives are best realized when we trust and obey His Word.

Searching for the Garden of Eden hasn’t ended with its physical location. Many people live their lives on a quest for the ideal life. But instead we should determine to remain obedient in whatever situation we find ourselves. Obedience is always God’s desire for us.



### The Man and Woman Sin

**3** The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“The serpent deceived me,” she replied. “That’s why I ate it.”

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

“Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live.

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

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

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

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

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

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

3:8 Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter. 3:15 Or *bruise*; also in 3:15b. 3:16 Or *And though you will have desire for your husband, / he will rule over you.*

**FORBIDDEN FRUIT** *Gen. 3:1-7* God had clearly said, “Don’t eat from that tree.” But Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit anyway! Why in the world would they do that? Human nature? Curiosity?

We might ask ourselves the same question. We are warned about the danger of sin so often in Scripture—Sunday after Sunday, week after week, Bible study after Bible study, time with the Lord after time after time. Why is it that, when presented with the very thing God says we have no business doing, we take a big bite?

You and I will face choices just like Adam and Eve did. We will struggle with this thing inside each of us. Paul calls it the “old sinful self” (see Rom. 6:6). You will never be rid of it, nor will I, throughout this life. You will curse it, you will hate it, and you will find yourself attacking it. Yet you will later turn around and exalt it, try to please it, and protect it. The Christian life often feels like a yo-yo or a roller coaster: It goes up and down. The gravitational pull of the old sinful self is always there, saying, “Satisfy me.” We are burdened with the disease of selfishness. It is a malady only God can cure.

**AFTER THE CURSE** *Gen. 3:14-19* In Genesis 2, we see the beauty of the fellowship between Adam and Eve and their Creator. We see innocence. But in Genesis 3, sin steps onto the scene. As a result of sin’s entrance, a curse falls

upon the man, the woman, the serpent, and even upon the earth.

We cannot imagine a world free of this curse. Try to picture childbirth without pain, or a field without weeds, or even a heart that is absolutely innocent. We can’t imagine it. That’s because there are no such things. We live our entire lives on a sin-cursed earth. But Adam and Eve lived during the transition between paradise and life after the curse. How could they stand the incredible contrast between what they had in the garden and what they had as a result of their fall? It must have seemed overwhelming.

**SATAN WAS CONQUERED AT THE CROSS** *Gen. 3:15*

Genesis 3 gives us a glimpse into the spiritual warfare that surrounds us. If we look at this chapter alone, it seems as if Satan has won the fight. Yet after mankind fell, God promised that the offspring of the woman would ultimately triumph over Satan. The devil succeeded in the first battle, but a second round would come that would deal the death blow to him. That promise was fulfilled at Calvary, when Jesus Christ, born of a woman, crushed the serpent’s head (see Gal. 4:4-5). At the cross of Jesus Christ, God judged Satan. He stripped the ancient serpent of his power. He took from Satan, as far as the believer is concerned, any right to rule over us.

<sup>18</sup> It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains.  
<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return.”

### *Paradise Lost: God's Judgment*

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

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

### *Cain and Abel*

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

When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. <sup>3</sup>When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his gift, <sup>5</sup>but he did not

accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected.

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

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

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

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

<sup>10</sup>But the LORD said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground!

<sup>11</sup>Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother’s blood. <sup>12</sup>No longer will the ground yield good crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless wanderer on the earth.”

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

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

### *The Descendants of Cain*

<sup>17</sup>Cain had sexual relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Then Cain founded a city, which he named Enoch, after his son.

<sup>18</sup>Enoch had a son named Irad. Irad became the father

3:20 *Eve* sounds like a Hebrew term that means “to give life.” 3:22 *Or the man*; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*. 4:1a *Or the man*; also in 4:25. 4:1b *Or I have acquired*. *Cain* sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “produce” or “acquire.” 4:8 *As in Samaritan Pentateuch, Greek and Syriac versions, and Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text lacks “Let’s go out into the fields.”* 4:13 *Or My sin*. 4:16 *Nod* means “wandering.”

**ANGER IS A CANCER** *Gen. 4:1-16* Some things don’t fix themselves. Take a flat tire, for instance. You will not go to bed with a flat tire and wake up in the morning and say, “Well, what do you know? It fixed itself!”

Anger is one of those things that won’t repair itself. Anger never vanishes—it only multiplies. That’s why you have to face it and deal with it. You have to confess it. Anger is like a cancer. You have to get rid of it.

A friend of mine who was camping in Colorado caught sight of an eagle as it was following its prey. The eagle came down to treetop level and suddenly swept down and grabbed a sizable animal in its talons. After the eagle took off again, my friend watched it ascend. All of a sudden, the eagle’s wings went limp, it fell into a tailspin, and the bird and its prey crashed to the ground! My friend ran over to see what had happened. The eagle had caught a weasel,

which had grabbed the eagle in retaliation and bit its main artery. Neither animal survived the fall.

That’s a perfect illustration of what anger does to us when we fail to deal with it. It takes us down. When we ignore our anger, it never fixes itself.

**FEELINGS WILL FOLLOW** *Gen. 4:6-7* In our day, we are sometimes told not to do something until we feel like it. With that mind-set, it seems that we will only be able to obey when we feel like it. But God says nothing about feelings when talking with Cain. God says, in effect, “Cain, do what is right and you’ll have a better attitude in life. Do what is right and you won’t be so dejected. Do what is right and you’ll be happier. Your attitude will be transformed.” We don’t need to wait until we feel like it to do what is right. We need to do what is right first, and the feelings will follow.

## PEOPLE PROFILES

# Cain

## GOD'S MARK OF GRACE

CAIN AND ABEL WERE BROTHERS, sons of Adam and Eve. They gravitated to different occupations: Abel was a shepherd, caring for animals, while Cain chose to cultivate crops as a farmer. As adults, these two young men brought their offerings to the Lord.

Here is where the conflict began. Cain brought as his offering “some of his crops.” Abel brought “the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock” (Gen. 4:3-4). Cain did it his own way, a way that proved to be unacceptable to God, and his offering was rejected. Abel did it God’s way and found full acceptance because of his faith (Heb. 11:4).

Observe Cain’s response carefully: He became very angry (Gen. 4:5). Interesting, isn’t it? He knew what God expected, but he failed to do it. When God responded justly, Cain got angry. He was also jealous of Abel because God accepted Abel’s offering. God saw that anger and jealousy were consuming Cain, and He graciously gave him a warning: “Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you” (Gen. 4:7). God said, in effect, “Don’t let anger get the best of you. If you continue to compound the problem of this disobedient sacrifice, you will fall deeper into sin.”

What happened next? The first murder. Through this monstrous act, Cain basically said, “You want a sacrifice? Here’s Your sacrifice, God!” Blood spilled onto the ground as Abel’s lifeless body collapsed into Cain’s arms.

But then God came along, asking a question He already knew the answer to, a question designed to make Cain think deeply: “Where is your brother?” Cain’s impudent answer has lived on through the centuries: “Am I my brother’s guardian?” (Gen. 4:9). The man had done an unconscionable deed, yet he defiantly refused to acknowledge any wrongdoing.

Only when God announces His judgment do we see a little emotion from Cain. Listen to him: “My punishment is too great for me to bear! . . . Anyone who finds me will kill me!” (Gen. 4:13-14). He’s afraid that others will treat him as he had treated his brother.

Now watch God’s incredible expression of grace. Had you or I been in charge of the case, we likely would have pounded the gavel and said, “Justice is served.” But God is gracious; He gave Cain a mark that warned people not to take revenge against him. What was that mark? We don’t know. Whatever it was, I see it as an act of grace. I believe that by sparing Cain’s life, God left an opportunity for Cain to repent. That mark was God’s way of saying, “I’m ready to listen. I’m ready to accept you. Not even this murder can keep you from Me permanently.” That’s a picture of God’s amazing grace in the life of every one of us—descendants of Cain that we are.

### QUICK FACTS

- > **SETTING** Near Eden
- > **OCCUPATIONS** Farmer, wanderer
- > **RELATIVES** Parents: Adam and Eve; Siblings: Abel, Seth, and others not mentioned by name

### KEY LESSONS

- > Anger is not necessarily a sin, but actions motivated by anger can be sinful. Anger should be the energy behind good action, not evil action.
- > What we offer to God must be from the heart—the best of who we are and what we have.
- > The consequences of sin may last a lifetime.

### LEARN MORE

Cain’s story is told in Genesis 4:1-17. He is also mentioned in Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:12; and Jude 1:11.

of\* Methusael. Methusael became the father of Methushael. Methushael became the father of Lamech.

<sup>19</sup>Lamech married two women. The first was named Adah, and the second was Zillah. <sup>20</sup>Adah gave birth to Jabal, who was the first of those who raise livestock and live in tents. <sup>21</sup>His brother's name was Jubal, the first of all who play the harp and flute. <sup>22</sup>Lamech's other wife, Zillah, gave birth to a son named Tubal-cain. He became an expert in forging tools of bronze and iron. Tubal-cain had a sister named Naamah. <sup>23</sup>One day Lamech said to his wives,

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

<sup>24</sup> If someone who kills Cain is punished seven times,  
then the one who kills me will be punished  
seventy-seven times!"

### The Birth of Seth

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

### The Descendants of Adam

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

<sup>3</sup>When Adam was 130 years old, he became the father of a son who was just like him—in his very image. He named his son Seth. <sup>4</sup>After the birth of Seth, Adam lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup>Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

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

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

<sup>12</sup>When Kenan was 70 years old, he became the father of Mahalalel. <sup>13</sup>After the birth of Mahalalel, Kenan lived another 840 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>14</sup>Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

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

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

<sup>21</sup>When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of Methuselah. <sup>22</sup>After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for another 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup>Enoch lived 365 years, <sup>24</sup>walking in close fellowship with God. Then one day he disappeared, because God took him.

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

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

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

### A World Gone Wrong

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

<sup>4</sup>In those days, and for some time after, giant Nephilites lived on the earth, for whenever the sons of God had intercourse with women, they gave birth to children who became the heroes and famous warriors of ancient times.

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

### The Story of Noah

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

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



## PEOPLE PROFILES

# Noah

## THE SHIP-BUILDING PREACHER

NOAH LIVED IN A WORLD that had degenerated into complete rebellion against God (Gen. 6:5). These were dreadful days—days of moral contamination and compromise. But right smack in the middle of that flow of sewage was Noah, a godly man who would rear a godly family.

God had finally seen enough: He decided to wipe humanity out and start over (Gen. 6:6-7). Now that's what I call a frightening prophecy! But God's judgment would work slowly. For years, humanity had the opportunity to respond to God (see 1 Pet. 3:20). Noah was the model that humanity was to follow. He "walked in close fellowship with God" (Gen. 6:9).

The entire time that Noah was gathering wood and pounding nails, he was making a dramatic announcement to a wicked generation. The people of Noah's world had never seen the likes of Noah's ark! Here he was, building this huge ship in his backyard, hundreds of miles away from any navigable body of water. So during those long years, this ship-building preacher must have been a powerful witness to God's incredible patience and power.

After this mammoth construction project was completed, God closed the door of the ark. Inside were His only followers, along with the most amazing collection of animals you can imagine. Then God's terrible judgment fell on the rest of the outside world.

As we read on just a bit we notice the first thing Noah did when he left the ark: He "built an altar to the LORD" (Gen. 8:20). Why? I think it was because he was afraid. The world was completely different from the way it had been before. He saw strange new mountains and valleys; the climate was alien to him. Over all the world hung an eerie silence. So Noah knelt down before God and prayed, and God responded to him with an enduring and beautiful promise: "Never again will floodwaters kill all living creatures. . . . I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my covenant with you and with all the earth" (Gen. 9:11, 13). Fear gone.

At times you may think you're at your end, that you're going to be wiped off the face of the earth. Let me offer you this gentle advice: When those times come, calm down and pray. God's plan is full of rainbows, and people who trust in His promises are especially honored and protected.

### QUICK FACTS

- > **SETTING** We're not told how far from the Garden of Eden people had settled.
- > **OCCUPATIONS** Farmer, shipbuilder, preacher
- > **RELATIVES** Grandfather: Methuselah; Father: Lamech; Sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth

### KEY LESSONS

- > God is faithful to those who obey Him.
- > God does not always protect us from trouble, but He cares for us in spite of trouble.
- > Obedience is a long-term commitment.
- > We may be faithful, but our sinful nature always travels with us.

### LEARN MORE

Noah's story is told in Genesis 5:28–10:32. He is also mentioned in 1 Chronicles 1:4; Isaiah 54:9; Ezekiel 14:14, 20; Matthew 24:37-38; Luke 3:36; 17:26-27; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; and 2 Peter 2:5.



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

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

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

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

### The Flood Covers the Earth

**7** When everything was ready, the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth, I can see that you

alone are righteous. <sup>2</sup>Take with you seven pairs—male and female—of each animal I have approved for eating and for sacrifice,\* and take one pair of each of the others. <sup>3</sup>Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird. There must be a male and a female in each pair to ensure that all life will survive on the earth after the flood. <sup>4</sup>Seven days from now I will make the rains pour down on the earth. And it will rain for forty days and forty nights, until I have wiped from the earth all the living things I have created.”

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

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

<sup>11</sup>When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the underground waters erupted from the earth, and the rain fell in mighty torrents from the sky. <sup>12</sup>The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights.

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

6:14a Traditionally rendered an ark. 6:14b Or gopher wood. 6:15 Hebrew 300 cubits [138 meters] long, 50 cubits [23 meters] wide, and 30 cubits [13.8 meters] high. 6:16 Hebrew an opening of 1 cubit [46 centimeters]. 7:2 Hebrew of each clean animal; similarly in 7:8.

### BELIEVE THAT GOD CAN DO THE IMPOSSIBLE

*Gen. 6:9-22* God tells Noah to build an ark. He says to make it a certain size and a particular shape and to use specific materials. Noah responds without hesitation. He does it! That may not seem incredible until we remember that no one has ever built an ark before. Noah hasn't read Genesis 6. All he knows is that God has spoken, and Noah chooses to have faith and obey.

Is that happening in your life? Do God's commands seem strange? What in the world are you waiting for? Why is it so hard to believe that God can do the impossible? His Book is full of stories like Noah's. They are here to encourage you.

**THE ARK OF SALVATION** *Gen. 7:1-24* Noah did everything God told him to do. Then he entered the ark—and *slam!* God shut the door. For the first time in their lives the people on the outside felt rain on their shoulders. Sadly, it was too late. The door was closed. Scripture preserves us from the horror Noah's family went through as they listened to the cries of their neighbors clawing to get in the ark as the waters rose.

This is a story of incredible judgment and, at the same time, of magnificent rescue. God is helping the hopeless and shutting the mouths of the wicked. The good news? He would do it again.

In the centuries to come, there would be another ark—in the shape of a cross. Only One was qualified to be on it. That Savior paid the penalty for sin so that all who believed in Him would be rescued from eternal judgment.

Most who were near Him mocked and denied Him, just like the people of Noah's day did to Noah. Even today, the majority of people still mock and still deny God. But when it comes to spiritual things, it's doubtful that the majority has ever been right. But the cross is big enough for everyone who listens to God's instruction and gets inside before God shuts the door and it's too late.

**RIISING WATERS** *Gen. 7:13* Do you know what you need when the floodwaters are rising? You need sound theology. You need a solid dose of biblical truth where you can put down your anchor. Your situation may seem as hopeless as an overwhelming flood. You may be saying to yourself, *There's no way we're going to survive this.* But haven't you told yourself that same thing countless times before? Relax. God's plan is full of rainbows—promises that He will never break (see Gen. 9). He is fully capable of honoring and protecting those who trust Him.

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

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

### *The Flood Recedes*

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

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

<sup>13</sup>Noah was now 601 years old. On the first day of the new year, ten and a half months after the flood began,\* the floodwaters had almost dried up from the earth. Noah lifted back the covering of the boat and saw that the surface of the ground was drying. <sup>14</sup>Two more months went by,\* and at last the earth was dry!

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

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

<sup>20</sup>Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and there

he sacrificed as burnt offerings the animals and birds that had been approved for that purpose.\* <sup>21</sup>And the LORD was pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice and said to himself, “I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood. I will never again destroy all living things. <sup>22</sup>As long as the earth remains, there will be planting and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night.”

### *God Confirms His Covenant*

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

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

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

<sup>12</sup>Then God said, “I am giving you a sign of my covenant with you and with all living creatures, for all generations to come. <sup>13</sup>I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my covenant with you and with all the earth. <sup>14</sup>When I send clouds over the earth, the rainbow will appear in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>and I will remember my covenant with you and with all living creatures. Never again will the floodwaters destroy all life. <sup>16</sup>When I see the rainbow in the clouds, I will remember the eternal covenant between God

7:20 Hebrew 15 cubits [6.9 meters]. 8:4 Hebrew on the seventeenth day of the seventh month; see 7:11. 8:5 Hebrew On the first day of the tenth month; see 7:11 and note on 8:4. 8:13 Hebrew On the first day of the first month; see 7:11. 8:14 Hebrew The twenty-seventh day of the second month arrived; see note on 8:13. 8:20 Hebrew every clean animal and every clean bird. 9:6 Or man; Hebrew reads ha-adam.

**THE RAINBOW IS A SIGN** *Gen. 9:1-17* Whenever I catch sight of a rainbow, I like to point it out and say to any people nearby, “God put that there.” That usually catches them off guard. Sometimes they even jump a little! They look around as though God is going to appear. Then I say, “That rainbow is the sign of a promise. According to Genesis 9, God will never again flood the earth.” I have found that to be a great way to start a conversation about Christ.

# JOHN

*The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book. But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.*

JOHN 20:30-31

## Who Wrote the Book?

The Gospel of John never provides the name of its author. This is not surprising, since such identifications are not made in any of the other three Gospels either. However, two significant factors point to John as the author. First, the book identifies its author as “the disciple Jesus loved” (John 21:20, 24; see also John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7). This description likely points to John for three reasons. First, this person had to be one of the twelve disciples, because he was an eyewitness to the events he records in this Gospel (John 21:24). Second, he was probably a member of Jesus’ inner circle of three disciples (Peter, James, or John), because he was among the first Mary told of the Resurrection (John 20:1-10). Third, this disciple is distinguished from Peter in the book, and James died too soon after the Resurrection to be the author (Acts 12:2). The second significant piece of evidence for John’s authorship is the unanimous testimony of early Christians, among them the second-century Christian Irenaeus, who declared that John was the disciple who had leaned over to talk to Jesus at the Last Supper—“the disciple Jesus loved” (John 13:23)—and the author of this Gospel (*Against Heresies* 3.1.1).

## Where Are We?

In Christian tradition, John’s Gospel has always been referred to as the “fourth Gospel,” implying that it was composed after the other three. Polycarp, a second-century Christian martyr who was a personal disciple of John, told Irenaeus of Lyons that John had written the book during the apostle’s time in Ephesus. These factors suggest that John wrote the book between AD 85 and AD 95.

## Why Is John So Important?

It is notable that John does not include the Nativity story in his Gospel. Instead, he introduces the book by going back even further in history—to eternity past.



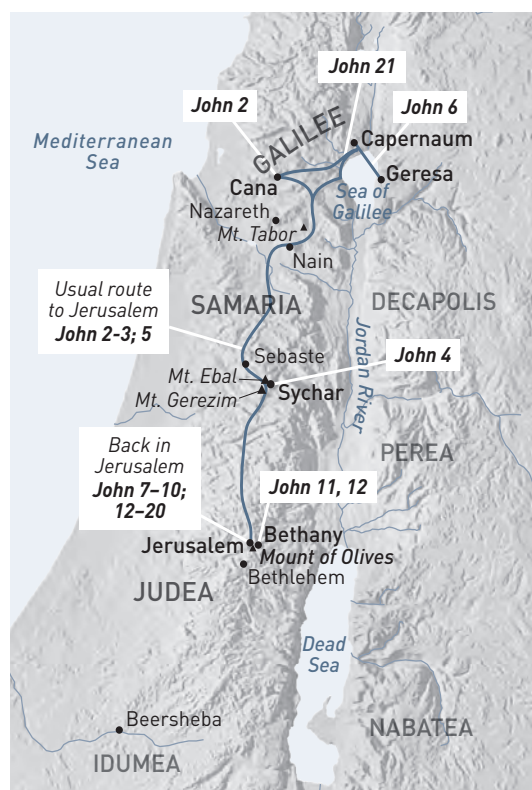
By invoking the language of Genesis 1:1, “in the beginning,” John starts this book by making a direct link between the nature of God and the nature of the Word, Jesus Christ (John 1:1). The emphasis on the deity of Christ is a striking quality of John’s Gospel. It comes through clearly throughout the book, particularly when Jesus claims the divine name, “I AM,” for Himself, leading an angry mob of Jews to try to stone Him for blasphemy (John 8:58).

### What’s the Big Idea?

John states his theme more clearly than any of the other Gospel writers. He turns to his readers near the end of the book and addresses them directly, explaining that he has written it “so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of His name” (John 20:31). To accomplish this goal, John presents a riveting and distinctive picture of Jesus Christ, one that is in complete unity with the portraits in the other three Gospels, but one that also adds significantly to the Bible’s revelation of Jesus as the God-man.

John uses a variety of techniques to communicate to his readers the nature of Jesus. These include his citation of Jesus’ seven “I am” statements, in which Jesus speaks of Himself in terms such as “the light of the world” (John 8:12), “the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25), and “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). In addition, a large section of John’s Gospel has sometimes been called the Book of Signs because it recounts seven different miracles Jesus performed, like turning water into wine at Cana and raising Lazarus from the dead at Bethany (John 2–12). These miracles support His identity as the Son of God.

*John presents a riveting and distinctive picture of Jesus Christ that adds significantly to the Bible’s revelation of Jesus as the God-man.*



*In John, Jesus journeys from Galilee through Samaria to Judea and back a number of times going to and from Jewish festival celebrations in Jerusalem.*

### How Do I Apply This?

Jesus’ identity as the divine Son of God sets Him apart from any other man who ever lived. He carries with Him the transcendence that comes only with God Himself. Therefore, His work on our behalf makes our salvation sure. Because He is God, His sacrifice on the cross has eternal implications, unlike the limited effect of





*Prologue: Christ, the Eternal Word*

- 1** <sup>1</sup> In the beginning the Word already existed.  
 The Word was with God,  
 and the Word was God.  
<sup>2</sup> He existed in the beginning with God.  
<sup>3</sup> God created everything through him,  
 and nothing was created except through him.  
<sup>4</sup> The Word gave life to everything that was  
 created,\*  
 and his life brought light to everyone.  
<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness,  
 and the darkness can never extinguish it.\*

<sup>6</sup> God sent a man, John the Baptist,\* <sup>7</sup> to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. <sup>8</sup> John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light. <sup>9</sup> The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. <sup>13</sup> They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

<sup>14</sup> So the Word became human\* and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.\* And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

<sup>15</sup> John testified about him when he shouted to the crowds, "This is the one I was talking about when I

said, 'Someone is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.'"

<sup>16</sup> From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another.\* <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God,\* is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

*The Testimony of John the Baptist*

<sup>19</sup> This was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders sent priests and Temple assistants\* from Jerusalem to ask John, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup> He came right out and said, "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup> "Well then, who are you?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"

"No," he replied.

"Are you the Prophet we are expecting?"\*

"No."

<sup>22</sup> "Then who are you? We need an answer for those who sent us. What do you have to say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> John replied in the words of the prophet Isaiah:

"I am a voice shouting in the wilderness,  
 'Clear the way for the LORD's coming!'"\*

<sup>24</sup> Then the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup> asked him, "If you aren't the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet, what right do you have to baptize?"

<sup>26</sup> John told them, "I baptize with\* water, but right here in the crowd is someone you do not recognize. <sup>27</sup> Though his ministry follows mine, I'm not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandal."

1:3-4 Or and nothing that was created was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything. 1:5 Or and the darkness has not understood it. 1:6 Greek a man named John. 1:14a Greek became flesh. 1:14b Or grace and truth; also in 1:17. 1:16 Or received the grace of Christ rather than the grace of the law; Greek reads received grace upon grace. 1:18 Some manuscripts read But the one and only Son. 1:19 Greek and Levites. 1:21 Greek Are you the Prophet? See Deut 18:15, 18; Mal 4:5-6. 1:23 Isa 40:3. 1:26 Or in; also in 1:31, 33.

**HIS OWN** *John 1:11* The Master came to His own things—the mountains that had emerged as a result of His power, the lakes that filled the landscape as a result of His work, the universe that He had created and filled with stars—and they followed Him and believed in Him and obeyed Him. He said to the seas, "Be still!" and they were still. He said to the wind, "Stop!" and it stopped (see Matt. 8:26-27; Mark 4:39-41). Nature obeys the Master.

But His own people did not believe, obey, and follow Him. They said, "Now, wait a minute. Who do You think You are? You haven't been to one of our rabbinical schools. You don't wash as we have taught everybody to wash. You don't go through our rituals. You heal people on the Sabbath, and our rules say that You can't do that." They called Him a heretic, and they decided to kill Him.

**BECOMING MAN** *John 1:14* Radio commentator Paul Harvey once told a story about a farmer who was a religious skeptic. One cold winter night, the farmer heard a thumping sound at his window. He went to the window and watched a small group of sparrows beat themselves against the glass, attracted to the warmth inside.

Touched, the farmer bundled up and opened the barn

for the struggling birds. He turned on the lights, tossed some hay in a corner, and sprinkled a few crackers nearby to lure them inside. But the sparrows hid in the darkness, afraid of him. He tried circling behind the birds to drive them toward the barn. Finally, he retreated to his house to see if they'd flutter into the barn on their own. Nothing worked. He, a huge, alien creature, had terrified them. The birds couldn't understand that he actually desired to help them.

As he continued to watch the doomed sparrows, a thought hit him: *If only I could become a bird—one of them—just for a moment. Then I wouldn't frighten them. I could lead them to warmth and safety.* At the same moment, another thought dawned on the farmer: He had grasped the concept of the Incarnation.

**NOT THE MESSIAH** *John 1:19-28* John the Baptist answered his questioners up front: "First off, before you come to any other conclusions, understand that I'm not the Messiah." John didn't string them along in order to get fame or attention. He simply did what he was called to do and didn't do what he wasn't called to do. His job was to be the Messiah's forerunner. That was all. And he did it tremendously.

# The Word Became Human

JOHN 1:1-18

**THE SON OF GOD**, as “very God” (to quote the Nicene Creed), arrived on this earth as a man. He came to the mountains He created. He faced the rivers with their rushing currents. He crossed the valleys. He gazed upon the sea. He walked beneath the skies and the stars and the moon and the sun. But the tragedy of all tragedies is this: “He came into the very world he created, but the world didn’t recognize him” (John 1:10). The world didn’t recognize the One who had created it. In other words, “He came to his own people, and even they rejected him” (John 1:11).

*The world  
didn’t recognize  
the One who  
created it.*

In our world, people look at the beauty of creation but refuse to acknowledge the Creator. Imagine Walt Disney coming to Disneyland on its opening day in 1955—but nobody even acknowledging him or acknowledging the fact that everything in the park had come from his imagination and creativity. Imagine them all saying, “Oh, it just *happened*.” Such an illustration can’t really do justice to this magnificent passage of Scripture, but you get the picture.

We all know the Christmas story: The Creator came to our planet as a baby, but there was no room at the inn for the One who had created the rocks from which that inn was made. There was no welcome mat for Christ. Isn’t it remarkable that the One who is coequal, coeternal, and coexistent with the Father and the Spirit—the One who divinely decreed the events that would run their course on this earth in perfect timing with His profound plan—could come to the earth and be beaten and spit upon, have spikes driven through His hands and feet, be hung on a cross, and be cursed until He died? Even after being raised from the dead, He is still denied, rejected, and refused some twenty centuries later. There is still no room for the Savior.

What about you? Do you know what it means that God, who made everything, reduced Himself to take on skin, subject Himself to the very gravity that He put into effect, and limit Himself to a tiny space of property—for you?

From the vanishing point of the past to the vanishing point of the future, Jesus Christ remains in His nature and His attributes *very God*. But Christ, in order that human beings might be able to see what God is like in tangible form, became a human for all eternity future. This introduction to the Gospel of John concludes, “No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father’s heart. He has revealed God to us” (John 1:18).

Do you wonder what the Father is like? Make a study of Christ. Do you wonder how God could be a God of grace, at the same time both gentle and full of justice and purity? Look at Christ. He shares the Father’s divine nature, and He explains it and models it in perfect terms so that we can grasp the person of the Father.

The world didn’t recognize the One who created it. Do we?

<sup>28</sup>This encounter took place in Bethany, an area east of the Jordan River, where John was baptizing.

### *Jesus, the Lamb of God*

<sup>29</sup>The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup>He is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘A man is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.’ <sup>31</sup>I did not recognize him as the Messiah, but I have been baptizing with water so that he might be revealed to Israel.”

<sup>32</sup>Then John testified, “I saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and resting upon him. <sup>33</sup>I didn’t know he was the one, but when God sent me to baptize with water, he told me, ‘The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and rest is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup>I saw this happen to Jesus, so I testify that he is the Chosen One of God.\*”

### *The First Disciples*

<sup>35</sup>The following day John was again standing with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup>As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and declared, “Look! There is the Lamb of God!” <sup>37</sup>When John’s two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus.

<sup>38</sup>Jesus looked around and saw them following. “What do you want?” he asked them.

They replied, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”

<sup>39</sup>“Come and see,” he said. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon when they went with him to the place where he was staying, and they remained with him the rest of the day.

<sup>40</sup>Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of these men who heard what John said and then followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup>Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means “Christ”\*).

<sup>42</sup>Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, “Your name is Simon, son of John—but you will be called Cephas” (which means “Peter”\*).

<sup>43</sup>The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Come, follow me.”

<sup>44</sup>Philip was from Bethsaida, Andrew and Peter’s hometown.

<sup>45</sup>Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, “We have found the very person Moses\* and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.”

<sup>46</sup>“Nazareth!” exclaimed Nathanael. “Can anything good come from Nazareth?”

“Come and see for yourself,” Philip replied.

<sup>47</sup>As they approached, Jesus said, “Now here is a genuine son of Israel—a man of complete integrity.”

<sup>48</sup>“How do you know about me?” Nathanael asked.

Jesus replied, “I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you.”

<sup>49</sup>Then Nathanael exclaimed, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!”

<sup>50</sup>Jesus asked him, “Do you believe this just because I told you I had seen you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this.” <sup>51</sup>Then he said, “I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the one who is the stairway between heaven and earth.\*”

### *The Wedding at Cana*

**2** The next day\* there was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, <sup>2</sup>and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. <sup>3</sup>The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus’ mother told him, “They have no more wine.”

<sup>4</sup>“Dear woman, that’s not our problem,” Jesus replied. “My time has not yet come.”

<sup>5</sup>But his mother told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

<sup>6</sup>Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons.\* <sup>7</sup>Jesus told the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” When the jars had been filled, <sup>8</sup>he said, “Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies.” So the servants followed his instructions.

1:34 Some manuscripts read *the Son of God*. 1:41 *Messiah* (a Hebrew term) and *Christ* (a Greek term) both mean “anointed one.” 1:42 The names *Cephas* (from Aramaic) and *Peter* (from Greek) both mean “rock.” 1:45 Greek *Moses in the law*. 1:51 Greek *going up and down on the Son of Man*; see Gen 28:10-17. “Son of Man” is a title Jesus used for himself. 2:1 Greek *On the third day*; see 1:35, 43. 2:6 Greek 2 or 3 *measures* [75 to 113 liters].

**FOUND** *John 1:40-41* Andrew says to Simon Peter, “We have found the Messiah.” What does that imply? It implies that they had been looking for Him. If you’ve lost something and have told your family that it’s lost, you also then tell them when you find it. Andrew and Simon Peter had been looking for the promised Messiah—and they had found Him.

I wonder if more people today would find Jesus if they simply began to look for Him.

**GROWING UP** *John 2:4* Sometimes people look at the way Jesus responds to His mother in this story and wonder what is going on. Certainly several things are in play here,

but one thing I see is that Mary doesn’t understand that her relationship with Jesus has changed. Sometimes parents need to grow up as well as their children. As children grow, their parents’ relationship with them needs to change. Parents need to let their kids become their own people while at the same time cultivating friendships with them. If you are a parent, you’ve been raising your children to one day be on their own. So *let them go*. As hard as it is, let them go. This does not mean your children will no longer relate to you. It means that they will now relate to you in a different way. That’s God’s design.

## CANA

### Water into Wine in God's Time

JOHN 2



Archaeologists have found ruins from the ancient village of Cana on this hill.

**THE MOST LIKELY SITE** for what the Bible calls Cana in Galilee is Khirbet Qana in the Bet Netofa Valley, which fits the location given by Josephus (*The Life of Flavius Josephus* 16.86). In antiquity, this beautiful east–west valley served as a major passageway from Tiberias to Ptolemais (Acco), and the valley used to have swamps with reeds. In fact, the name Cana means “reed.”

Archaeologists have found caves, cisterns, stone vessels, a Roman public building, houses, and a dovecote at Cana. Located eight miles northeast of Nazareth, Cana was the hometown of Nathaniel (John 21:2). Here Jesus performed His first miracle, turning water into wine (John 2:1–11). When He returned to Cana, a government official from Capernaum implored Jesus to heal his son, and Jesus granted his request (John 4:46–54).

John calls Jesus’ first miracle a “miraculous sign,” showing that Jesus’ miracles had a purpose. They pointed to something beyond the wonders themselves. This particular sign may have related to the prophecy of the tribe of Judah and its Messianic promise signaled by an abundance of wine (Gen. 49:11–12), and it occasioned the first gentle shove Jesus would receive from His followers to get God’s Kingdom rolling. Mary mentioning the need for wine may have had Messianic implications, especially in light of Jesus’ response—“My time has not yet come” (John 2:4). Turning water into wine for a wedding was one thing. Starting the Kingdom of God before its time was another. This miracle revealed Jesus’ glory. What was the result? “His disciples believed in him” (John 2:11).

Jesus’ response reveals that the blessings He promises for all believers will come only in God’s time. In the meantime, He has revealed His glory to us to give us faith and hope in Him.



<sup>9</sup>When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over. <sup>10</sup>"A host always serves the best wine first," he said. "Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!"

<sup>11</sup>This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

<sup>12</sup>After the wedding he went to Capernaum for a few days with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples.

### *Jesus Clears the Temple*

<sup>13</sup>It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money. <sup>15</sup>Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. <sup>16</sup>Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, "Get these things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!"

<sup>17</sup>Then his disciples remembered this prophecy from the Scriptures: "Passion for God's house will consume me."<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>18</sup>But the Jewish leaders demanded, "What are you doing? If God gave you authority to do this, show us a miraculous sign to prove it."

<sup>19</sup>"All right," Jesus replied. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

<sup>20</sup>"What!" they exclaimed. "It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you can rebuild it in three days?" <sup>21</sup>But when Jesus said "this temple," he meant his own body. <sup>22</sup>After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this, and they believed both the Scriptures and what Jesus had said.

### *Jesus and Nicodemus*

<sup>23</sup>Because of the miraculous signs Jesus did in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration, many began to

trust in him. <sup>24</sup>But Jesus didn't trust them, because he knew all about people. <sup>25</sup>No one needed to tell him about human nature, for he knew what was in each person's heart.

**3** There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. <sup>2</sup>After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you."

<sup>3</sup>Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again,<sup>\*</sup> you cannot see the Kingdom of God."

<sup>4</sup>"What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?"

<sup>5</sup>Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.<sup>\*</sup> <sup>6</sup>Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life.<sup>\*</sup> <sup>7</sup>So don't be surprised when I say, 'You<sup>\*</sup> must be born again.' <sup>8</sup>The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."

<sup>9</sup>"How are these things possible?" Nicodemus asked.

<sup>10</sup>Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things? <sup>11</sup>I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won't believe our testimony. <sup>12</sup>But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man<sup>\*</sup> has come down from heaven. <sup>14</sup>And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>16</sup>"For this is how God loved the world: He gave<sup>\*</sup> his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

2:17 Or "Concern for God's house will be my undoing." Ps 69:9. 3:3 Or born from above; also in 3:7. 3:5 Or and spirit. The Greek word for Spirit can also be translated wind; see 3:8. 3:6 Greek what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 3:7 The Greek word for you is plural; also in 3:12. 3:13 Some manuscripts add who lives in heaven. "Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself. 3:15 Or everyone who believes will have eternal life in him. 3:16 Or For God loved the world so much that he gave.

**SIMPLE FAITH** *John 3:4* Nicodemus wasn't trying to be clever or make a joke. He was totally confused. "Jesus, I am a rabbi. My world is the Torah. I know it by heart. I teach it regularly. You're telling me about something completely foreign. How can I curl up in my mother's womb and be born again? What do You mean by that?" Fortunately, Nicodemus didn't let all of his learning get in the way of eventually finding simple faith (see John 7:50-51; 19:38-42).

**THIS IS HOW GOD LOVED** *John 3:16* I think I love people deeply—until I read about the way God loves people.

Chances are good I wouldn't sacrifice my son or daughter for anyone. But God did—and He did it for all of us. He so loved you and me that He gave His Son to die for us.

Why did He do it? "So that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." You don't have to clean up your life. You couldn't if you tried. You just have to believe in Jesus Christ. That's the Good News. He died for you on a cross. And if you believe in Him, you will have eternal life with God and a whole new beginning that starts from the inside out. Goodness knows we need help from the inside out.

# The Simple Story

JOHN 3:1-16

**THIS DIALOGUE** between Jesus and a Pharisee named Nicodemus is very revealing. This Pharisee was concerned about the message from this radical teacher, Jesus. The Lord put away all the unnecessary preliminaries and went right to the heart of the issue. He said to Nicodemus, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.” Nicodemus exclaimed with concern and confusion, “What do you mean?” (John 3:3-4). He wondered how in the world he could literally be born again. Jesus responded that His statement was spiritual, not physical. Furthermore, it was not something one could analyze to understand. Being born again is a mystery, the result of God’s inner work in a life.

To explain His meaning, Jesus drew upon Nicodemus’s knowledge of the Law and the history of Israel. No one would have been a student of Moses and the Law like a Pharisee. Nicodemus knew the Law intimately, so he immediately connected with what Jesus said. Jesus referred to the story in Numbers 21:4-9, where the Israelites in the wilderness had brought God to the end of His tether with their constant complaining. The Lord decided it was time to discipline them, so He sent poisonous snakes among them. The snakes bit, and the venom killed, and the people finally got it. “We have sinned!” they cried out. So Moses prayed, and God said, “Make a replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to a pole. All who are bitten will live if they simply look at it!” Moses made a bronze snake, and He put it on a pole. Anyone bitten by a snake could look at it, and they would be healed. It was a look of faith to God’s provision.

Then Jesus explained the analogy for Nicodemus: “As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life” (John 3:14-15). Do you see the analogy? It’s the Cross, of course! The bronze snake was a picture of the Cross, where Jesus was going to be lifted up and where He would pay the complete penalty for the sin of the world for all time. Jesus was saying that when He was lifted up, everyone who believed in Him would have eternal life. This, too, was a look of faith to God’s provision.

I believe by now Nicodemus was standing, staring, and churning. I don’t think he was born again yet. But by John 7:50-51, he will have started to come out of hiding, and he will make a statement in defense of Jesus in front of his colleagues in the Sanhedrin. Then by the time of the Crucifixion, Nicodemus will be standing alongside Joseph of Arimathea as they wrap the body of Jesus and prepare it for burial (John 19:38-42). Somewhere between here and there, Nicodemus will come to believe in Christ.

Are you still trying to figure out what it means to be born again? Don’t make it complicated. No need to add to the story. It only takes a look of faith. Why not look to Jesus and find out if He is who He says? If you do, you won’t be sorry.

*Jesus was saying that when He was lifted up, everyone who believed in Him would have eternal life.*

## PEOPLE PROFILES

# Nicodemus

## RELIGION MEETS REGENERATION

THERE'S A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE between religion and regeneration. Correction: there's an eternity's difference. Religion says, "By an *external* system of deeds, you can gain God's favor." Regeneration says, "No—by an *internal* gift of grace, God gives you His life through Jesus Christ." Religion says, "I can achieve God's favor by what I do. When the Judgment Day comes, God will see that my good outweighs my evil." Regeneration says, "All my righteous actions are like filthy rags. I have no good in myself. I can only rely on Christ's death on my behalf." It's in this context that we need to look at Nicodemus.

Nicodemus was part of the religious ruling class in Jesus' day. He was a Pharisee, a member of a small but influential brotherhood known for meticulously following the Old Testament law and, honestly, splitting religious hairs. He was a prominent member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high council. This was a man who carried a lot of influence.

It's no wonder, then, that he would approach Jesus after dark (John 3:2). Nicodemus knew that people around the city would see him if he came during the day. Furthermore, the night hours afforded him a chance for conversation about a crucial issue with which he was wrestling. I believe he came to Jesus in all sincerity, not knowing the conversation would take a dramatic turn from the subject of religion to the concept of regeneration.

Note that Nicodemus acknowledged right up front that Jesus was a teacher sent from God and was uniquely gifted (see John 3:2). He laid a bit of flattery on Jesus to break the ice. What did Jesus think of that approach? He went straight to the issue: "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3). What did Jesus' response have to do with what Nicodemus had just said? Zero! But Jesus knew exactly what Nicodemus needed.

Nicodemus was surprised by Jesus' reference to being born again. The Lord clarified that regeneration is something God prompts, not humans. Religion, on the other hand, is something humans push, not God. With his spiritually blind eyes wedged in the natural, Nicodemus couldn't get his mind around the concept of spiritual rebirth. Jesus knew that only a work of grace through the power of the Holy Spirit could open Nicodemus's spiritual eyes. In essence, Jesus said to him, "This new birth is not that complicated. There must be an inward cleansing that God will make possible through His Spirit" (see John 3:5-8).

To bring His point home, Jesus used a story that was near to Nicodemus's heart. The ancient account of the bronze snake in the desert (Num. 21:4-9) perfectly illustrates the diametric opposition of religion and regeneration. These ancient Israelites who had been bitten by venomous snakes found themselves completely helpless, dependent on God's mercy. They thought the best strategy would be to implore God to take away the snakes, to come up with some extermination process that would eliminate the problem. Yet God prompted Moses to do something a human never would have thought of: make a bronze snake, attach it to a pole, and ask everyone to simply look at it to be healed. Having reminded Nicodemus of that awesome scene, Jesus outlined for him the same basic plan for eternal salvation from the venom of sin and death: "The Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life" (John 3:14-15).

How can simple belief from the heart create new birth and such incredible transformation? It's the same basic plan today as it was when Jesus spoke these words to Nicodemus. We are urged to believe it—and *live*.

### QUICK FACTS

- > **SETTING** Jerusalem
- > **OCCUPATION** Religious leader
- > **CONTEMPORARIES** Jesus, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, Joseph of Arimathea

### KEY LESSONS

- > God is able to change those we might consider unreachable.
- > God is patient and persistent.

### LEARN MORE

Nicodemus's story is told in John 3:1-21; 7:50-51; and 19:38-42.

<sup>18</sup>“There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God’s one and only Son. <sup>19</sup>And the judgment is based on this fact: God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. <sup>20</sup>All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.”\*

### John the Baptist Exalts Jesus

<sup>22</sup>Then Jesus and his disciples left Jerusalem and went into the Judean countryside. Jesus spent some time with them there, baptizing people.

<sup>23</sup>At this time John the Baptist was baptizing at Aenon, near Salim, because there was plenty of water there; and people kept coming to him for baptism.

<sup>24</sup>(This was before John was thrown into prison.)

<sup>25</sup>A debate broke out between John’s disciples and a certain Jew\* over ceremonial cleansing. <sup>26</sup>So John’s disciples came to him and said, “Rabbi, the man you met on the other side of the Jordan River, the one you identified as the Messiah, is also baptizing people. And everybody is going to him instead of coming to us.”

<sup>27</sup>John replied, “No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven. <sup>28</sup>You yourselves know how plainly I told you, ‘I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him.’ <sup>29</sup>It is the bridegroom who marries the bride, and the bridegroom’s friend is simply glad to stand with him and hear his vows. Therefore, I am filled with joy at his success. <sup>30</sup>He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

<sup>31</sup>“He has come from above and is greater than anyone else. We are of the earth, and we speak of earthly things, but he has come from heaven and is greater than anyone else.\* <sup>32</sup>He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but how few believe what he tells them! <sup>33</sup>Anyone who accepts his testimony can affirm that God is true. <sup>34</sup>For he is sent by God. He speaks God’s words, for God gives him the Spirit

without limit. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves his Son and has put everything into his hands. <sup>36</sup>And anyone who believes in God’s Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn’t obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God’s angry judgment.”

### Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

**4** Jesus\* knew the Pharisees had heard that he was baptizing and making more disciples than John <sup>2</sup>(though Jesus himself didn’t baptize them—his disciples did). <sup>3</sup>So he left Judea and returned to Galilee.

<sup>4</sup>He had to go through Samaria on the way. <sup>5</sup>Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup>Jacob’s well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. <sup>7</sup>Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Please give me a drink.” <sup>8</sup>He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

<sup>9</sup>The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans.\* She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?”

<sup>10</sup>Jesus replied, “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”

<sup>11</sup>“But sir, you don’t have a rope or a bucket,” she said, “and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? <sup>12</sup>And besides, do you think you’re greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?”

<sup>13</sup>Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. <sup>14</sup>But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

<sup>15</sup>“Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water! Then I’ll never be thirsty again, and I won’t have to come here to get water.”

<sup>16</sup>“Go and get your husband,” Jesus told her.

<sup>17</sup>“I don’t have a husband,” the woman replied.

3:21 Or can see God at work in what he is doing. 3:25 Some manuscripts read *some Jews*. 3:31 Some manuscripts do not include *and is greater than anyone else*. 4:1 Some manuscripts read *The Lord*. 4:9 Some manuscripts do not include this sentence.

#### HE MUST BECOME GREATER John 3:26-30

“He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less” (John 3:30). John the Baptist’s words ring with humility and joy. John’s disciples were worried about his followers now going after Jesus, but John knew that this was good and right. John wasn’t the Messiah; he came to point to the Messiah. When Jesus arrived on the scene, John was thrilled: “I am filled with joy at his success” (John 3:29).

**A FAVOR** John 4:7 If you know anything about human nature, you know that one of the ways to break down that strange, distant feeling that can come when you meet a

stranger is to ask for a favor. That was Jesus’ approach, and He knows human nature better than anyone. He broke down social and cultural barriers by appealing to this woman’s kindness.

**HE ALREADY KNOWS** John 4:16-18 I think Jesus was acting something like an attorney who has a portfolio of facts and drops a question on a witness—a question the witness is not expecting and doesn’t even know the attorney has information about. Jesus knew the truth about this woman, and He knows the truth about you and me. He always does. There’s no point in trying to pull one over on Him. He already knows it all.



# Searching the Scriptures

In my years of teaching and preaching the Word of God, I've encountered many followers of Jesus who express frustration and confusion about how to study the Bible: "It's long." "It's confusing." "I can't get through Leviticus." These frustrations are real, and they aren't easy to overcome without some guidance from wise mentors. Therefore, here I will share with you my time-tested method for studying the Bible. I learned this method from Dr. Howard G. Hendricks, one of my favorite professors during my time at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Once I learned Professor Hendricks's Bible study method, I began to realize how incomplete and inadequate my approach to the Scriptures had been for most of my life. Though I had slowly grown in my knowledge of God's Word prior to taking his class, I didn't have a consistent method of studying the Bible's truths and interpreting them—one that would lead to insightful and accurate applications of the Scriptures. While I had been sincere and committed during those earlier years, my method had lacked a systematic, trustworthy approach.

Thanks to what I learned in this magnificent course of study from "Prof" Hendricks, I finally discovered how to engage in a meaningful and reliable process of searching the Scriptures. I want to share it with you now.

## Before Getting Started

Fruitful Bible study requires a good plan, but there are some things you need to get started—you need a few simple tools, and you need a particular condition of the heart. First and foremost, in order for you to do your own work in the Scriptures, it's essential to consider the crucial matters of the heart. In order to understand the Scriptures, you must know the Lord and be walking the path of daily purity and humility. Integrity and purity go hand in hand. You also need willingness—a personal desire to follow the Lord.

I can tell you from my experience over these many years that when I open the Scriptures I can't wait to get into them, because I have cultivated a willingness to allow the Word of God to get into me! Another essential for studying the Scriptures is passion. When you become motivated to study God's Word, such excitement becomes contagious and begins to rub off on others. You and I are to go after truth the way someone in love pursues his or her beloved. Another thing you need to do is set aside time specifically for studying the things of God. It takes time to pray, meditate, and turn thoughts over in your mind. These aren't things that happen overnight. You'll need to invest time in order to make them happen.

Having addressed those conditions of the heart—integrity, willingness, passion, and time—you'll also need some tools. First of all, you'll need a Bible—specifically, a Bible that is in a translation you can understand. You'll also need a concordance, an alphabetical listing of the primary words in the Bible, so that you can more easily

find what the Bible says about whatever topic or subject you're studying. Some people like to use websites or Bible software programs that allow you to search the Bible in almost any translation. While those are extremely useful tools in their own right, I have found that they are not good substitutes for a paper concordance tied to the translation you are using. Seeing everything arranged on the page can even help you notice other related words you might not have thought to search for in a software program. Additionally, a necessary resource for studying the Bible is a Bible dictionary. A good Bible dictionary will give you basic knowledge of the literary and cultural backgrounds of the Bible through numerous articles written by fine scholars. Finally, you will need a good set of maps in order to have a handle on what the world looked like during the various periods of history the Bible covers. With these things, your basic tool set will be complete.

## The Basics of Studying the Bible

My method of studying the Bible has four main steps:

1. Observation
2. Interpretation
3. Correlation
4. Application

I suggest that you memorize these steps. The more you practice them as you read and study, the more they will become second nature for you. You want learning and engaging with the Bible to become as natural as breathing in and out so that God's Word becomes part of you and changes you. The Bible wasn't given simply to satisfy idle curiosity. The Bible wasn't written so ministers would have something to say on Sundays. The Bible has been preserved to transform the lives of people like you and me. So let's dive in and start studying.

### Observation

***To observe means to look at Scripture carefully and with attention to detail.***

Carefully observing the text is always the first step of studying the Scriptures. Initially, pay attention to the terms. Slow down, read carefully, and note significant words or phrases. Don't think about how much time this takes—focus on one word at a time and read the passage as if for the first time. Give your full attention to each word.

As important as word study is, you must always keep in mind that you understand a verse of Scripture better when you grasp its context—when you acquaint yourself with the surrounding verses. Every verse sits within a larger context. Let me remind you of an important rule of Bible interpretation: Never isolate a verse from its context. Seizing isolated verses without having a bigger view of how they fit in with the rest of the passage or book leads to error. As you take notice of how a book is conveying its author's ideas, take in the flow of the sentences and the logic of the passage.

After spending time observing, write down in your own words a summary of all you have observed from the passage. As I observe more and more details, I pause

# Bible Reading Plans

Most Christians understand that it is important to be reading the Bible regularly in order to continually grow more and more like Christ, but many often find it difficult to read it consistently. A proven method to help keep you on track is a well-made Bible reading plan.

Insight for Living Ministries has produced two great reading plans that will help you consistently read Scripture. Each of these plans is designed to last for an entire year, providing fifty-two weeks of readings with five readings per week. One plan will help you complete the entire Old Testament, and the other will get you through the New Testament along with Psalms and Proverbs. If you follow them both, you will read the entire Bible—including all of the Psalms and Proverbs twice!

## Old Testament Reading Plan

WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO	WEEK THREE	WEEK FOUR
<div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Monday</b> <i>Genesis 1–3</i> <i>Psalms 1</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Tuesday</b> <i>Genesis 4–8</i> <i>Psalms 2</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Wednesday</b> <i>Genesis 9–11</i> <i>Psalms 3</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Thursday</b> <i>Genesis 12–14</i> <i>Psalms 4</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Friday</b> <i>Genesis 15–17</i> <i>Psalms 5</i></div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Monday</b> <i>Genesis 18–20</i> <i>Psalms 6</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Tuesday</b> <i>Genesis 21–23</i> <i>Psalms 7</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Wednesday</b> <i>Genesis 24–26</i> <i>Psalms 8</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Thursday</b> <i>Genesis 27–29</i> <i>Psalms 9</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Friday</b> <i>Genesis 30–33</i> <i>Psalms 10</i></div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Monday</b> <i>Genesis 34–36</i> <i>Psalms 11</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Tuesday</b> <i>Genesis 37–39</i> <i>Psalms 12</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Wednesday</b> <i>Genesis 40–42</i> <i>Psalms 13</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Thursday</b> <i>Genesis 43–45</i> <i>Psalms 14</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Friday</b> <i>Genesis 46–47</i> <i>Psalms 15</i></div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Monday</b> <i>Genesis 48–50</i> <i>Psalms 16</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Tuesday</b> <i>Exodus 1–3</i> <i>Psalms 17</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Wednesday</b> <i>Exodus 4–6</i> <i>Psalms 18:1–19</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Thursday</b> <i>Exodus 7–9</i> <i>Psalms 18:20–36</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Friday</b> <i>Exodus 10–12</i> <i>Psalms 18:37–50</i></div>

# Index to Application Articles

## Genesis

The Image of God . . . . .	9
Guidelines for Marriage . . . . .	11
What We Do for God . . . . .	21
Get Going . . . . .	23
Building Your Altar in Unfamiliar Territory . . . . .	25
Making Choices . . . . .	26
What Gives Someone Greatness . . . . .	29
Walking With God . . . . .	33
Guarding the Well . . . . .	39
Let It Go . . . . .	41
Grieving Death . . . . .	43
What to Do When You Worry . . . . .	57
How to Say No when Lust Says Yes . . . . .	63
Overcoming Negativity . . . . .	69
Kindness Keeps No Record . . . . .	79

## Exodus

God's Will, My Way . . . . .	85
How God Speaks . . . . .	89
Exceptional Work, Extended Waiting . . . . .	95
Worth the Wait . . . . .	101
Between an Army and a Sea . . . . .	104
The Cycle of the Wilderness . . . . .	107
Organized Leadership . . . . .	112
The Purpose of the Law . . . . .	115
A Place of Worship . . . . .	121
The Grace of God . . . . .	129

## Leviticus

Christ, the Ultimate Offering . . . . .	140
Priests and Prophets . . . . .	147

## Numbers

The Peril Principle . . . . .	181
The Trap of Complaining . . . . .	183
Relics of Superstition . . . . .	198

## Deuteronomy

Stop, Look, and Listen . . . . .	223
Completely His . . . . .	226
Biblical Biographies . . . . .	250

## Joshua

Absorbing God's Word . . . . .	259
How Walls Fall Down . . . . .	265
Defeat on the Heels of Victory . . . . .	267
Attitude about Aging . . . . .	277

## Judges

Stand Alone . . . . .	295
Overcoming Discouragement . . . . .	301
Temptation . . . . .	311
Depravity . . . . .	318

## 1 Samuel

Danger Signals of Family Disintegration . . . . .	335
The Rebellious Mind-Set . . . . .	348
Facing Giants . . . . .	353
When Crutches Are Removed . . . . .	359
Three People, Three Lessons . . . . .	365
Suicide . . . . .	373

## 2 Samuel

When God Says No . . . . .	384
Guarding against Sin . . . . .	388
Confronting Those in Sin . . . . .	391
Passive Parenting . . . . .	393
The Possibility of Reconciliation . . . . .	401
The Unknown People . . . . .	408
Characteristics of Maturity . . . . .	410

## 1 Kings

Avoiding Spiritual Decline . . . . .	428
You Are Not Alone . . . . .	443

## 2 Kings

The Perils of Servanthood . . . . .	458
Greed and Rationalization . . . . .	460
Blueprints for Rebellion and for Its Prevention . . . . .	479

## 1 Chronicles

Self-Imposed Limitations . . . . .	491
Understanding the Times . . . . .	503
A Prayer of Praise . . . . .	518



**2 Chronicles**

Giving and Receiving Counsel . . . . . 536  
Signs of Ministry Slippage . . . . . 548

**Ezra**

The Mirror of Scripture . . . . . 569

**Nehemiah**

A Rallying Point . . . . . 583  
How to Study the Bible . . . . . 588

**Esther**

Trusting God with the Unexpected . . . . . 604  
The Importance of Memorials . . . . . 608

**Job**

Growing through Loss . . . . . 622  
Pure as Gold . . . . . 635  
God's Truth through Imperfect Messengers . . 642  
Trusting God's Sovereignty . . . . . 647

**Psalms**

The Right Paths of the Shepherd . . . . . 664  
Why Should I Be Afraid? . . . . . 668  
A Place of Refuge . . . . . 671  
Being Still . . . . . 681  
Carrying the Message . . . . . 691  
The Path to Leadership . . . . . 699  
The Devil Traps, God Protects . . . . . 707  
Growing through Failure . . . . . 712  
Absorbing God's Word . . . . . 723  
God Is Near throughout Life . . . . . 735  
Soaring on the Wings of Praise . . . . . 740

**Proverbs**

The Immoral Woman . . . . . 747  
Well-Chosen Words of Encouragement . . . . 754  
Giving Counsel . . . . . 763

**Ecclesiastes**

Wisdom for the Young . . . . . 781  
Live! . . . . . 787

**Song of Songs**

Unquenchable Love . . . . . 799

**Isaiah**

Worship . . . . . 811  
The Predicted Messiah . . . . . 816  
A Right Heart . . . . . 832

Missions Perspective . . . . . 846  
God's Sovereignty . . . . . 851  
No Longer Remembering . . . . . 859  
Cold Pride . . . . . 868

**Jeremiah**

God's Will . . . . . 874  
Sin in the Church . . . . . 882  
How Firm a Foundation . . . . . 893  
Bad Marital Habits . . . . . 901  
Impossibilities . . . . . 911  
Lessons from the Life of Jeremiah . . . . . 931

**Lamentations**

Restoration . . . . . 941

**Ezekiel**

Four Messages from Ezekiel . . . . . 963  
The Deceiver's Doom, the Believer's Victory . . 972  
The Church Needs Godly Leaders . . . . . 979

**Daniel**

The Nature of Integrity . . . . . 1000  
Pride and Humility . . . . . 1007  
Learning from Daniel's Prayer . . . . . 1015  
Resurrections . . . . . 1019

**Hosea**

Growing in Knowledge . . . . . 1029

**Joel**

Turn Back to the Compassionate One . . . . . 1043

**Amos**

Being God's Messenger . . . . . 1056

**Jonah**

God Works in Spite of the Messenger . . . . . 1071

**Micah**

Walking Humbly with God . . . . . 1081

**Zechariah**

Not by Strength . . . . . 1114

**Malachi**

The Forerunner of the Messiah . . . . . 1128

**Matthew**

Room for the Unusual . . . . . 1140  
Salt and Light . . . . . 1144

Do Not Judge? . . . . .	1147
The Golden Rule . . . . .	1149
Difficulties in Discipling . . . . .	1153
Warning Signs of False Teaching . . . . .	1162
"I Will Build My Church" . . . . .	1164
The God of the Impossible . . . . .	1170
Jesus Understands . . . . .	1179

## Mark

Desperation Can Build Faith . . . . .	1197
Weakness of Character . . . . .	1201
The Voice of the Devil . . . . .	1205
The Modern-Day Religious . . . . .	1212
Stay Awake . . . . .	1217
Grief and Loss . . . . .	1221

## Luke

The Gift We Need . . . . .	1229
Tempting Temptations . . . . .	1233
Out into Deep Water . . . . .	1237
Follow Me . . . . .	1246
Money, Money, Money . . . . .	1253
Power in the Word . . . . .	1259
Staying Strong and Faithful . . . . .	1263
Christ Is the Center . . . . .	1271

## John

The Word Became Human. . . . .	1277
The Simple Story . . . . .	1281
God Seeks Our Worship . . . . .	1284
"Where Are Your Accusers?" . . . . .	1292
Bona Fide Sheep . . . . .	1296
The Human and Divine Perspectives. . . . .	1298
Washing Dirty Feet . . . . .	1302
The Way, the Truth, the Life . . . . .	1304
Unite Them, Protect Them, Sanctify Them. . . . .	1308

## Acts

Reading Acts . . . . .	1322
The Spirit Poured Out . . . . .	1325
The Spirit's Power . . . . .	1328
Enduring Companions . . . . .	1344
God's Calling to Go . . . . .	1346
Disagreements . . . . .	1350
Marks of a Mentor. . . . .	1354
Following Your Convictions . . . . .	1359
Dealing with Criticism . . . . .	1364
Four Anchors in the Storms of Life . . . . .	1368

## Romans

Low Achievers . . . . .	1381
Justified . . . . .	1384
A Second Husband . . . . .	1387
Soaring in the Spirit . . . . .	1390
Wise Witness . . . . .	1394
Remnant and Promises . . . . .	1396
The Gift of Giving. . . . .	1399

## 1 Corinthians

Wisdom from the Spirit . . . . .	1410
Sin in Church . . . . .	1414
Marriage and Grace . . . . .	1416
Mature Personal Mission. . . . .	1420
Lessons from the Body . . . . .	1425
By Grace . . . . .	1429
Accountability . . . . .	1432

## 2 Corinthians

Worldly Success . . . . .	1440
Standing in Weakness . . . . .	1442
Giving with Grace . . . . .	1449
A War on the Mind. . . . .	1451
Turning Away from the Downward Trend. . . . .	1454

## Galatians

The Curse of the Law . . . . .	1464
Standing Fast for Spiritual Freedom. . . . .	1467
Love and Freedom. . . . .	1469

## Ephesians

Spiritual Gifts . . . . .	1477
Marriage Turbulence . . . . .	1479
A Nurturing Home . . . . .	1482

## Philippians

Christlike Humility . . . . .	1489
Fix Your Thoughts. . . . .	1494

## Colossians

Restoring Relationships. . . . .	1502
----------------------------------	------

## 1 Thessalonians

Control Your Body . . . . .	1510
End-Times Prophecy . . . . .	1512

## 2 Thessalonians

The Antichrist. . . . .	1519
Affirming Others . . . . .	1521

INDEX TO APPLICATION ARTICLES

1 Timothy

The One Mediator . . . . . 1527

An Early Hymn . . . . . 1529

The Purpose of the Church . . . . . 1532

2 Timothy

Disciple Making . . . . . 1539

A Charge for Every Pastor . . . . . 1541

Titus

A Watching World . . . . . 1550

Philemon

Life on the Run . . . . . 1556

Hebrews

Sword and Scalpel . . . . . 1567

Do Christians Fall Away? . . . . . 1569

Encouragement . . . . . 1576

Walking with God . . . . . 1580

James

Salvation by Works? . . . . . 1588

Woes and Wealth . . . . . 1590

1 Peter

Marriage Building . . . . . 1600

Living as Strangers . . . . . 1602

2 Peter

The Inspired Word . . . . . 1609

The Day of the Lord . . . . . 1611

1 John

Christ, Our Advocate . . . . . 1617

Love in Action . . . . . 1619

3 John

Following the Truth . . . . . 1630

Jude

Apostates . . . . . 1636

Revelation

Traits Jesus Commends . . . . . 1645

Big Problems in Small Churches . . . . . 1647

Life in the Balance . . . . . 1652

Interludes . . . . . 1654

Revere Him . . . . . 1665

Lessons from the Millennium . . . . . 1667

Standing Alone . . . . . 1669

# Index to People Profiles

Abigail . . . . .	367	Joshua . . . . .	281
Abraham . . . . .	1578	Judas Iscariot. . . . .	1310
Absalom. . . . .	397	King Saul . . . . .	343
Ahab and Jezebel . . . . .	447	Martha . . . . .	1249
Cain . . . . .	15	Mary . . . . .	1227
Caleb . . . . .	189	Moses . . . . .	91
Daniel. . . . .	1009	Naaman . . . . .	463
David . . . . .	501	Nehemiah . . . . .	579
Deborah. . . . .	299	Nicodemus . . . . .	1282
Elijah . . . . .	437	Noah . . . . .	17
Esther . . . . .	603	Paul . . . . .	1461
Hannah . . . . .	333	Peter . . . . .	1166
Isaiah . . . . .	813	Philip . . . . .	1337
Jabez . . . . .	493	Samson . . . . .	309
Jeremiah . . . . .	899	Solomon . . . . .	525
Job . . . . .	619	Stephen . . . . .	1332
John the Baptist. . . . .	1191	Timothy . . . . .	1491
Jonah. . . . .	1070	Uzziah . . . . .	547
Joseph. . . . .	65		



# Index to Holy Land Tour Stops

Abel-beth-maacah . . . . .	404	Lachish. . . . .	914
Antioch of Syria . . . . .	1342	Land of Uz, The . . . . .	617
Arad . . . . .	200	Lo-debar. . . . .	1054
Asia Minor . . . . .	1596	Mareshah in the Guvrin Valley . . . . .	1076
Babylon . . . . .	1004	Micmash . . . . .	347
Beersheba . . . . .	74	Mount Carmel . . . . .	439
Beth-shan . . . . .	371	Mount Hermon . . . . .	732
Beth-shemesh . . . . .	339	Mount of Olives, The . . . . .	1121
Bethlehem . . . . .	324	Mount Sinai . . . . .	165
Caesarea . . . . .	1338	Mount Tabor. . . . .	297
Caesarea Philippi . . . . .	1206	Nazareth . . . . .	1235
Cana. . . . .	1279	Petra . . . . .	1062
Capernaum . . . . .	1142	Philippi . . . . .	1493
Cave of Machpelah in Hebron, The . . . . .	44	Plains of Moab, The . . . . .	218
Church of the Holy Sepulchre . . . . .	1312	Pool of Bethesda, The . . . . .	1287
City of David, The. . . . .	380	Qumran . . . . .	842
Corinth. . . . .	1444	Rephidim . . . . .	109
Cove of the Sower. . . . .	1158	Rome. . . . .	1543
Dead Sea, The . . . . .	993	Rose of Sharon, The. . . . .	795
En-gedi. . . . .	541	Salem. . . . .	1571
Ephesus. . . . .	1648	Samaria . . . . .	435
Ezion-geber . . . . .	448	Sea of Galilee, The. . . . .	1199
Garden of Eden, The . . . . .	12	Shechem . . . . .	287
Garden of Gethsemane, The . . . . .	1215	Southern Steps of the Temple Mount, The . . . . .	728
Gates of the Temple, The . . . . .	666	Tabernacle, The . . . . .	155
Gilead. . . . .	885	Tabgha . . . . .	1315
Goshen . . . . .	97	Tel Dan. . . . .	430
Hezekiah's Tunnel and Wall. . . . .	554	Tel Megiddo. . . . .	274
Hill of Moreh, The . . . . .	456	Temple Mount, The . . . . .	527
Israel's Central Location. . . . .	948	Timeline of the Walls of Jerusalem through the Centuries, A . . . . .	580
Jericho . . . . .	260	Tower of David, The . . . . .	1182
Joppa. . . . .	1068	Valley of Elah, The . . . . .	354
Jordan River, The . . . . .	263	Valley of Trouble, The . . . . .	1027
Kadesh-barnea. . . . .	186	Water Gate, The. . . . .	570
Kidron Valley, The . . . . .	1045	Wilderness of Judah, The . . . . .	689
King's Garden, The. . . . .	782	Wilderness of Zin, The . . . . .	195
Kiriath-jearim . . . . .	505		

# Topical Index to Features

## Abel (Cain and Abel)

### Insights

Feelings Will Follow | *Gen. 4:6-7* . . . . . 14

### Profiles

Cain | *Genesis* . . . . . 15

## Abigail

### Applications

Three People, Three Lessons | *1 Sam. 25:1-44* . . . . . 365

### Insights

When Your Fuse Blows | *1 Sam. 25:12-13* . . . . . 366

Discernment in Action | *1 Sam. 25:18* . . . . . 366

### Profiles

Abigail | *1 Samuel* . . . . . 367

## Abraham (Abram)

### Applications

Get Going | *Gen. 12:1-4* . . . . . 23

Building Your Altar in Unfamiliar Territory | *Gen. 12:4-9* . . . . . 25

What Gives Someone Greatness | *Gen. 14:1-24* . . . . . 29

Guarding the Well | *Gen. 21:22-34* . . . . . 39

### Insights

Abram's Faith | *Gen. 11:27-25:11* . . . . . 22

God's Promises to Abram | *Gen. 12:1-3* . . . . . 22

Only Human | *Gen. 12:10-20* . . . . . 24

Lying Won't Help | *Gen. 12:11-13* . . . . . 24

Offending an Unbeliever | *Gen. 12:18-20* . . . . . 24

Abram's Wealth | *Gen. 13:1-2* . . . . . 27

Abram's Walk | *Gen. 13:2-4* . . . . . 27

Abram's Magnificent Response | *Gen. 13:8-13* . . . . . 27

Abram Rescues Lot | *Gen. 14:13-16* . . . . . 28

A Humble Hero | *Gen. 14:17-24* . . . . . 28

Counted as Righteous | *Gen. 15:6* . . . . . 30

God Is God—and We Are Not | *Gen. 15:12-21* . . . . . 31

A Human Solution | *Gen. 16:1-3* . . . . . 31

The Years Between | *Gen. 17:1* . . . . . 32

Listening to God | *Gen. 17:3-8* . . . . . 32

Wrestling with God | *Gen. 17:15-22* . . . . . 32

Talk to God | *Gen. 18:22-32* . . . . . 35

Wait on God | *Gen. 18:33* . . . . . 35

Disobedience Déjà Vu | *Gen. 20:1-2* . . . . . 37

Leaning on Self | *Gen. 20:1-2* . . . . . 37

Prying Our Fingers Loose | *Gen. 22:1-14* . . . . . 40

Faith Is Obedience | *Gen. 22:3* . . . . . 42

Abraham Didn't Procrastinate | *Gen. 22:3* . . . . . 42

God Provides Surprises | *Gen. 22:13-14* . . . . . 42

Abraham, God's Friend | *2 Chr. 20:7* . . . . . 540

Righteousness and Circumcision | *Rom. 4:10* . . . . . 1382

Faith and the Gospel | *Rom. 4:1-25* . . . . . 1382

Election | *Rom. 9:6-12* . . . . . 1392

Promise and Law | *Gal. 3:15-19* . . . . . 1463

Two Sons, One Heir | *Gal. 4:21-23* . . . . . 1466

### Profiles

Abraham | *Hebrews* . . . . . 1578

### Tours

The Cave of Machpelah in Hebron | *Gen. 23:1-20* . . . . . 44

## Absalom

### Profiles

Absalom | *2 Samuel* . . . . . 397

## abundant life

### Applications

A Second Husband | *Rom. 7:1-6* . . . . . 1387

### Insights

The Bounty of the Kingdom Age | *Isa. 35:1-3* . . . . . 837

Thriving in God | *Ezek. 15:6* . . . . . 956

A Rich and Satisfying Life | *John 10:10* . . . . . 1295

Health and Wellness | *Rev. 21:4* . . . . . 1668

## abuse

### Applications

No Longer Remembering | *Isa. 54:4-6* . . . . . 859

### Insights

Incest in the Home | *Gen. 19:30-38* . . . . . 37

Rape and Incest | *2 Sam. 13:8-14* . . . . . 392

Something for Nothing | *2 Sam. 24:24* . . . . . 411

Parental Discipline | *Prov. 13:24* . . . . . 758

## acceptance

### Applications

Growing through Failure | *Ps. 103:1-22* . . . . . 712

By Grace | *1 Cor. 15:9-11* . . . . . 1429

### Insights

God Accepts Us | *Ps. 103:13-14* . . . . . 713

Tell It All to God | *Ps. 120:1* . . . . . 727

Security and Authenticity | *Prov. 31:25* . . . . . 775

Because of Jesus | *Matt. 27:51* . . . . . 1184

Accept Each Other | *Rom. 15:7* . . . . . 1402

Acceptance of Singleness | *1 Cor. 7:40* . . . . . 1418

Examining Yourself | *1 Cor. 11:28* . . . . . 1423

## accountability

### Applications

The Rebellious Mind-Set | *1 Sam. 15:1-35* . . . . . 348

Guarding against Sin | *2 Sam. 11:1-5* . . . . . 388

Avoiding Spiritual Decline | *1 Kgs. 11:1-13* . . . . . 428

Understanding the Times | *1 Chr. 12:32* . . . . . 503

Accountability | *1 Cor. 16:18* . . . . . 1432

Insights

Joseph Submitted | *Gen. 47:1-12* . . . . .75  
Obeying God's Word | *Lev. 19:1-4* . . . . .158  
Dormant Sensuality | *Judg. 15:20-16:1* . . . . .312  
Unaccountable Leadership | *2 Sam. 24:2-4* . . . . .409  
The Life of the Fool | *Ps. 14:1* . . . . .658

Tours

The City of David | *2 Sam. 5:1-25* . . . . .380  
Samaria | *1 Kgs. 16:1-34* . . . . .435

Achan

Applications

Defeat on the Heels of Victory | *Josh. 7:1-26* . . . . .267

Insights

Sin in the Camp | *Josh. 7:1-6* . . . . .266  
Nothing Is Hidden | *Josh. 7:13* . . . . .268

Tours

The Valley of Trouble | *Hos. 2:1-23* . . . . .1027

achievement

Applications

Avoiding Spiritual Decline | *1 Kgs. 11:1-13* . . . . .428  
Low Achievers | *Rom. 3:10* . . . . .1381  
Worldly Success | *2 Cor. 3:1* . . . . .1440

Insights

Only Human | *Gen. 12:10-20* . . . . .24  
Refusing to Retire | *Josh. 14:6-14* . . . . .276  
God Gets the Glory | *1 Chr. 29:10-11* . . . . .517  
Humanity's Strange Honor | *Ps. 8:3-8* . . . . .656  
God Accepts Us | *Ps. 103:13-14* . . . . .713  
Giving God Credit | *Isa. 40:7* . . . . .841  
Knowing God | *Jer. 9:3, 23-24* . . . . .886  
Pride | *1 Cor. 4:18* . . . . .1412  
Boasting | *Gal. 6:14* . . . . .1470  
All about God | *Rev. 4:1-11* . . . . .1650  
Self-Worship | *Rev. 17:5* . . . . .1662

actions

Applications

Absorbing God's Word | *Josh. 1:7-8* . . . . .259  
Giving and Receiving Counsel | *2 Chr. 15:1-19* . . . . .536  
The Golden Rule | *Matt. 7:12* . . . . .1149  
Love in Action | *1 Jn. 3:12-18* . . . . .1619

Insights

Endure Misunderstanding | *1 Sam. 18:10-16* . . . . .358  
Don't Wait to Do What's Right | *1 Kgs. 3:1-2* . . . . .418  
Zeal for the Lord | *2 Kgs. 10:12-17* . . . . .467  
Doing What Pleases God | *2 Chr. 26:4* . . . . .546  
Independence and Dependence | *2 Chr. 26:17-18* . . . . .549  
Getting Involved | *Esth. 4:13-14* . . . . .602  
God Notices | *Esth. 6:1-12* . . . . .605  
God Restores | *Ezek. 36:1-38* . . . . .981  
True Wisdom | *Hos. 14:9* . . . . .1037  
The Sun of Righteousness | *Mal. 4:2* . . . . .1129  
Do What God Says | *Luke 6:46* . . . . .1240  
More than Words | *1 Thes. 1:5* . . . . .1507  
Pleasing God | *1 Thes. 4:1* . . . . .1509

Caring for Family | *1 Tim. 5:8* . . . . .1531  
Checking Your Belief | *Titus 3:8* . . . . .1549  
Fooling Ourselves | *Jas. 1:23-24* . . . . .1586  
Faith and Works | *Jas. 2:17* . . . . .1587  
Dead or Alive? | *Rev. 3:1-6* . . . . .1646

Tours

Corinth | *2 Cor. 5:1-21* . . . . .1444

Adam

Insights

God Takes Care of His Children | *Gen. 2:18* . . . . .10  
The Helper Sings Harmony | *Gen. 2:18* . . . . .10  
Forbidden Fruit | *Gen. 3:1-7* . . . . .13  
After the Curse | *Gen. 3:14-19* . . . . .13  
Adam and Christ | *Rom. 5:17-19* . . . . .1385

adultery

Applications

"Where Are Your Accusers?" | *John 8:1-11* . . . . .1292

Insights

Avoid Mediums and Spiritists | *Lev. 19:31; 20:6* . . . . .159  
David's Sin | *2 Sam. 11:27* . . . . .390  
Deep Infidelity | *Ezek. 16:14-16* . . . . .957  
Spiritual Adultery | *Hos. 1:2-9* . . . . .1025  
Love! | *Rom. 13:8-9* . . . . .1400

adversity

Insights

Live in the Light | *Prov. 4:18-19* . . . . .749  
Adversity | *Prov. 24:10* . . . . .769

Ahab

Insights

Stand Alone | *1 Kgs. 18:1-19* . . . . .438  
God's Patience | *1 Kgs. 22:10-40* . . . . .446  
Zeal for the Lord | *2 Kgs. 10:12-17* . . . . .467

Profiles

Elijah | *1 Kings* . . . . .437  
Ahab and Jezebel | *1 Kings* . . . . .447

alcoholism

Insights

Alcohol | *Prov. 23:29-35* . . . . .768

Amnon

Applications

Passive Parenting | *2 Sam. 13:1-39* . . . . .393

Insights

The Plague of Passivity | *2 Sam. 13:21* . . . . .394

Profiles

Absalom | *2 Samuel* . . . . .397

Andrew

Insights

Recognize Potential | *Mark 1:16-17* . . . . .1190  
A Faithful Brother | *John 12:20-22* . . . . .1300

# NLT Dictionary/Concordance

## A

### AARON

First high priest of Israel; elder brother and spokesman of Moses (Exod 4:14-31; 7:1-2); confronted Pharaoh with Moses (Exod 5-12); held up Moses' hands during battle (Exod 17:8-15); led Israel while Moses was absent (Exod 24:14); priestly clothing and accessories (Exod 28); his ordination (Exod 29; Lev 8); his failure with the gold calf (Exod 32; Acts 7:40); spoke against Moses, then interceded on behalf of sister, Miriam (Num 12:1-16); helped stop the plague (Num 16:45-48); priesthood confirmed (Num 17; Heb 5:1-4); failed at Meribah and was denied entry to Promised Land (Num 20:1-13); died (Num 20:22-29; 33:38-39).

### ABANDON, ABANDONED, ABANDONS (v)

to desert or forsake

Josh 1:5 . . . will not fail you or **a** you.

Josh 24:16 . . . We would never **a** the LORD

Ezra 9:9 . . . God did not **a** us in our slavery.

Neh 9:31 . . . completely or **a** them forever.

Ps 22:1 . . . why have you **a-ed** me?

Ps 37:25 . . . never seen the godly **a-ed**

Ps 37:28 . . . he will never **a** the godly.

Prov 15:10 . . . Whoever **a-s** the right path

Matt 27:46 . . . why have you **a-ed** me?

John 16:1 . . . you won't **a** your faith.

Rom 1:24 . . . So God **a-ed** them to do

Rom 1:28 . . . **a-ed** them to their foolish

2 Cor 4:9 . . . down, but never **a-ed** by God.

Heb 13:5 . . . I will never **a** you.

### ABASED (KJV)

Ezek 21:26 . . . mighty will be *brought down*.

Matt 23:12 . . . themselves will be *humbled*

Phil 4:12 . . . how to *live on almost nothing*

### ABEL

Son of Adam and Eve, brother of Cain (Gen 4:1-2); his offering accepted (Gen 4:4; Heb 11:4); murdered by Cain (Gen 4:8; Matt 23:35; Luke 11:51; Heb 12:24; 1 Jn 3:11-12; Jude 1:11); replaced by Seth (Gen 4:25).

### ABIDE(TH), ABIDING (KJV)

Luke 2:8 . . . shepherds *staying* in the fields

John 12:46 . . . no longer *remain* in the dark

John 15:4 . . . be fruitful unless you *remain*

### ABILITY, ABILITIES (n)

talent, aptitude, or skill

Exod 35:34 . . . the **a** to teach their skills

Dan 6:3 . . . because of Daniel's great **a**,

Acts 2:4 . . . Spirit gave them this **a**.

1 Cor 12:1 . . . special **a-ies** the Spirit gives

1 Cor 14:1 . . . special **a-ies** the Spirit gives—

1 Cor 14:12 . . . special **a-ies** the Spirit gives,

2 Cor 1:8 . . . beyond our **a** to endure,

### ABLE (adj)

marked by power, intelligence, competence, skill, giftedness

Deut 16:17 . . . must give as they are **a**,

Dan 3:17 . . . whom we serve is **a** to save

Rom 8:39 . . . ever be **a** to separate us from

Rom 16:25 . . . to God, who is **a** to

Eph 3:20 . . . all glory to God, who is **a**,

Eph 6:13 . . . you will be **a** to resist

2 Tim 1:12 . . . that he is **a** to guard

2 Tim 2:24 . . . be **a** to teach, and

Jude 1:24 . . . to God, who is **a** to keep

### ABOUND(ED) (KJV)

Prov 28:20 . . . person will *get a rich reward*

Matt 24:12 . . . Sin will be *rampant everywhere*

Rom 5:15 . . . *even greater* is God's wonderful grace

Rom 5:20 . . . grace *became more abundant*

2 Cor 8:7 . . . *excel* also in this gracious act

### ABRAHAM (ABRAM)

Father of the nation of Israel (Isa 51:2; John 8:37-59);

friend of God (Isa 41:8); father of all people of faith

(Gen 12-25; Rom 4; Heb 11); made covenant with the

LORD (Gen 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:12-21; 22:15-18; 50:24;

Exod 2:24; 32:13; Lev 26:42; 2 Kgs 13:23; 1 Chr 16:16;

Neh 9:8; Ps 105:9; Luke 1:73; Acts 3:25; Gal 3:17-20;

Heb 6:13); descendant of Terah from Ur (Gen 11:27-31);

husband of Sarah (Sarai) (Gen 11:29); called to leave

home (Gen 12:1-9; Acts 7:2-4; Heb 11:8-10); went to

Egypt and deceived the Pharaoh (Gen 12:10-20); chose

Canaan over the Jordan Plain (Gen 13); rescued Lot

from enemies (Gen 14:11-16); blessed by Melchizedek

(Gen 14:18-24; Heb 7:1); covenant restated by God

(Gen 15); faith counted as righteousness (Gen 15:6;

Rom 4:3; Gal 3:6-9; Jas 2:21-23); given son (Ishmael)

by Hagar (Gen 16); circumcision commanded (Gen 17;

Rom 4:9-12); name changed to "Abraham" (Gen 17:5;

Neh 9:7); son promised to Sarah (Gen 17:16; 18:10);

welcomed heavenly visitor (Gen 18:1-15); bargained to

save Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18:16-33); deceived

Abimelech (Gen 20); named as a prophet (Gen 20:7);

given son (Isaac) by Sarah (Gen 21:1-7; Heb 11:11-12);

sent Hagar and Ishmael away (Gen 21:9-14; Gal 4:21-31);

offered Isaac as test (Gen 22:1-19; Heb 11:17-19;

Jas 2:21); secured burial ground for Sarah (Gen 23);

found a wife for Isaac (Gen 24); descendants through

wife Keturah (Gen 25:1-6); died (Gen 25:7-11).

### ABUNDANCE (n)

great quantity, affluence; more than ample

Job 36:31 . . . giving them food in **a**.

Ps 66:12 . . . a place of great **a**.

Jer 31:14 . . . The priests will enjoy **a**,

Matt 13:12 . . . have an **a** of knowledge.

Matt 25:29 . . . they will have an **a**.

John 1:16 . . . From his **a** we have all

### ABUNDANT (adj)

marked by great plenty, abounding

Deut 28:11 . . . livestock, and **a** crops.



Ps 68:9 . . . You sent **a** rain, O God  
 Jer 31:12 . . . good gifts—the **a** crops  
 John 16:24 . . . you will have **a** joy.  
 2 Cor 8:2 . . . are also filled with **a** joy,

**ABUSIVE (adj)**

using harsh, insulting language; characterized by wrong or improper use or action

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

**ABYSS (KJV)**

Luke 8:31 . . . send them into the *bottomless pit*  
 Rev 9:1 . . . the shaft of the *bottomless pit*  
 Rev 9:11 . . . the angel from the *bottomless pit*

**ACCEPT, ACCEPTED, ACCEPTS (v)**

to receive willingly

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

**ACCEPTABLE (adj)**

capable or worthy of being accepted; welcome, pleasing, favorable

Mark 7:19 . . . every kind of food is **a**  
 Rom 4:2 . . . had made him **a** to God,  
 Rom 12:1 . . . the kind he will find **a**.  
 Rom 14:20 . . . all foods are **a**, but it is  
 2 Cor 8:12 . . . is **a** if you give it eagerly.  
 1 Tim 4:5 . . . made **a** by the word of God

**ACCURSED (KJV)**

Deut 21:23 . . . anyone who is hung is *curse*d  
 Josh 6:18 . . . things *set apart for destruction*  
 1 Cor 12:3 . . . will *curse* Jesus, and no one  
 Gal 1:9 . . . let that person be *curse*d

**ACCUSE, ACCUSED, ACCUSES, ACCUSING (v)**

to charge with fault or offense; to blame

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

**ACKNOWLEDGE, ACKNOWLEDGES (v)**

to express a gratitude of debt; to recognize as valid; to confess (wrongdoing)

Jer 3:13 . . . Only **a** your guilt. Admit

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

**ACQUAINTED (v)**

to make familiar; to know firsthand

Isa 53:3 . . . sorrows, **a** with deepest grief.  
 Acts 18:2 . . . **a** with a Jew named Aquila,

**ACT (v)**

to behave; to take action or do something

Ps 119:126 . . . it is time for you to **a**,  
 Eccl 6:8 . . . how to **a** in front of others?

**ACTION, ACTIONS (n)**

a thing done, deed; an exercise of will

Jer 4:18 . . . Your own **a-s** have brought  
 Phlm 1:6 . . . put into **a** the generosity  
 1 Pet 1:13 . . . So prepare your minds for **a**  
 Rev 3:2 . . . **a-s** do not meet the requirements

**ADAM**

First man (Gen 1:26–2:25; Rom 5:14; 1 Tim 2:13-14); son of God (Luke 3:38); sinned (Gen 3:1-19; Hos 6:7; Rom 5:12-21); descendants of (Gen 5); died (Gen 5:5; 1 Cor 15:22-49).

**ADD, ADDED (v)**

to make or serve as an addition

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

**ADMIT (v)**

to acknowledge, confess

Hos 5:15 . . . until they **a** their guilt  
 John 12:42 . . . But they wouldn't **a** it

**ADMONISH(ED) (KJV)**

Eccl 12:12 . . . give you *some further advice*  
 Jer 42:19 . . . Don't forget this *warning* I  
 2 Thes 3:15 . . . *warn* them as you would  
 Heb 8:5 . . . God gave him this *warning*

**ADMONITION (KJV)**

1 Cor 10:11 . . . written down *to warn us*  
 Eph 6:4 . . . *instruction* that comes from the Lord  
 Titus 3:10 . . . a first and second *warning*

**ADOPT, ADOPTED (v)**

to take another's child into one's own family

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

**ADULTERER, ADULTERERS (n)**

one who commits adultery

Job 24:15 . . . The **a** waits for the twilight,  
 Jas 4:4 . . . You **a-s**! Don't you realize

**ADULTERY (n)**

unlawful sexual relations between a married person and someone other than their spouse; symbolic of idolatry

Exod 20:14 . . . You must not commit **a**.

Deut 5:18 . . . You must not commit **a**.

Prov 6:32 . . . who commits **a** is an utter fool,

Matt 5:27 . . . You must not commit **a**.

Matt 19:18 . . . You must not commit **a**.

Mark 10:11 . . . someone else commits **a**

Luke 18:20 . . . You must not commit **a**.

John 8:4 . . . caught in the act of **a**.

1 Cor 6:9 . . . **a**, or are male prostitutes,

**ADVICE (n)**

recommendation regarding a decision or course of conduct; counsel

1 Kgs 12:8 . . . rejected the **a** of

2 Chr 10:8 . . . rejected the **a** of

Prov 12:5 . . . **a** of the wicked is

Prov 12:26 . . . godly give good **a** to their

Prov 15:22 . . . Plans go wrong for lack of **a**;

Isa 44:25 . . . I cause the wise to give bad **a**,

Rom 11:34 . . . enough to give him **a**?

**ADVISE (v)**

to give advice; to counsel

Ps 32:8 . . . I will **a** you and watch over

1 Tim 5:14 . . . I **a** these younger widows

Rev 3:18 . . . I **a** you to buy gold from me—

**ADVISERS (n)**

one who gives advice; counselor

1 Sam 28:23 . . . his **a** joined the woman in

1 Kgs 12:14 . . . counsel of his younger **a**.

Esth 1:13 . . . consulted with his wise **a**,

Prov 11:14 . . . safety in having many **a**.

Prov 29:12 . . . all his **a** will be wicked.

**ADVOCATE (n)**

one who pleads the cause of another; defender

see also HOLY SPIRIT, COUNSELOR

Job 16:19 . . . My **a** is there on high.

John 14:16 . . . he will give you another **A**,

John 14:26 . . . the Father sends the **A**

John 15:26 . . . I will send you the **A**—

John 16:7 . . . if I don't, the **A** won't come.

1 Jn 2:1 . . . an **a** who pleads our case

**AFFIRM (v)**

to validate; to confirm

John 3:33 . . . can **a** that God is true.

Rom 8:16 . . . **a** that we are God's children.

Heb 10:23 . . . hope we **a**, for God can

**AFRAID (adj)**

fearful or apprehensive about an unwanted or uncertain situation

Gen 3:10 . . . I was **a** because I was naked.

Gen 26:24 . . . Do not be **a**, for I am

Exod 3:6 . . . he was **a** to look at God.

Deut 1:21 . . . Don't be **a**!

Deut 20:1 . . . your own, do not be **a**.

Ps 23:4 . . . I will not be **a**, for you are

Isa 10:24 . . . do not be **a** of the Assyrians

Isa 41:10 . . . Don't be **a**, for I am

Isa 43:1 . . . Do not be **a**, for I have

Matt 8:26 . . . Why are you **a**?

Matt 10:31 . . . So don't be **a**;

Mark 5:36 . . . Don't be **a**.

John 14:27 . . . don't be troubled or **a**.

2 Tim 4:5 . . . Don't be **a** of suffering

1 Pet 3:14 . . . don't worry or be **a**

**AFRESH (adv)**

from a fresh beginning; anew, again

Lam 3:23 . . . his mercies begin **a** each

**AGED (adj)**

showing the effects or characteristics of increasing age

Job 12:12 . . . Wisdom belongs to the **a**,

Prov 17:6 . . . crowning glory of the **a**;

**AGES (n)**

long period of time; a generation; a measure of history, geology, or culture

Prov 8:23 . . . I was appointed in **a** past,

Jer 23:40 . . . infamous throughout the **a**.

Eph 2:7 . . . in all future **a** as examples

**AGREE, AGREED, AGREEING (v)**

to admit, concede

Matt 18:19 . . . If two of you **a** here on

Luke 7:29 . . . **a-d** that God's way was right,

Rom 7:16 . . . that I **a** that the law is good.

Phil 2:2 . . . make me truly happy by **a-ing**

**AIR (n)**

empty space, nothingness; atmosphere

1 Thes 4:17 . . . meet the Lord in the **a**.

**ALABASTER (adj)**

a compact, fine-textured, usually white and translucent plaster often carved into vases and ornaments

Matt 26:7 . . . with a beautiful **a** jar

Mark 14:3 . . . with a beautiful **a** jar

Luke 7:37 . . . she brought a beautiful **a** jar

**ALCOHOL (n)**

drink (as wine or beer) containing ethanol

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

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

**ALCOHOLIC (adj)**

containing alcohol

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

**ALERT (adj)**

quick to perceive and act

Isa 21:7 . . . the watchman be fully **a**.

Mark 13:33 . . . be on guard! Stay **a**!

1 Pet 5:8 . . . Stay **a**! Watch out for

**ALIEN (KJV)**

Exod 18:3 . . . a *foreigner* in a foreign

Job 19:15 . . . I am like a *foreigner* to them

Eph 2:12 . . . were *excluded from citizenship*

**ALIENATED (KJV)**

Ezek 48:14 . . . traded or *used by others*

Eph 4:18 . . . *wander far from* the life God

Col 1:21 . . . were once *far away from* God

**ALIVE (adj)**

animate, having life; active; aware

Gen 45:7 . . . keep you and your families **a**

Ps 41:2 . . . them and keeps them **a**.

Luke 24:23 . . . Jesus is **a**!

Acts 1:3 . . . ways that he was actually **a**.

Rom 6:11 . . . the power of sin and **a** to God

Rev 2:8 . . . who was dead but is now **a**:

## ALLELUIA (KJV)

Rev 19:1 . . . shouting, *"Praise the Lord!*  
 Rev 19:3 . . . rang out: *"Praise the Lord!*  
 Rev 19:4 . . . *"Amen! Praise the Lord!"*  
 Rev 19:6 . . . *"Praise the Lord! For the Lord*

## ALMIGHTY (n)

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

## ALPHA (n)

first letter of Greek alphabet; figurative of beginning or first one  
 Rev 1:8 . . . I am the **A** and the Omega—  
 Rev 21:6 . . . I am the **A** and the Omega—  
 Rev 22:13 . . . I am the **A** and the Omega,

## ALTAR, ALTARS (n)

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

## ALWAYS (adv)

at all times; forever, perpetually  
 1 Kgs 2:4 . . . will **a** sit on the throne  
 Ps 16:8 . . . the LORD is **a** with me.  
 Ps 52:8 . . . will **a** trust in God's unfailing  
 Ps 102:27 . . . But you are **a** the same;  
 Ps 106:3 . . . and **a** do what is right.  
 Prov 23:7 . . . They are **a** thinking about  
 Isa 16:5 . . . He will **a** do what is just  
 Matt 28:20 . . . I am with you **a**, even to  
 Mark 14:7 . . . You will **a** have the poor  
 John 12:8 . . . you will not **a** have me.  
 1 Pet 3:15 . . . **a** be ready to explain it.

## AMAZED (v)

to fill with wonder, astound  
 Matt 7:28 . . . were **a** at his teaching  
 Mark 7:37 . . . They were completely **a** and  
 Mark 10:24 . . . This **a** them. But Jesus  
 Luke 2:33 . . . Jesus' parents were **a** at  
 Acts 2:7 . . . They were completely **a**.

## AMAZING (adj)

causing amazement, great wonder, or surprise  
 1 Chr 16:24 . . . about the **a** things he does.  
 Ps 96:3 . . . about the **a** things he does.  
 Ps 126:2 . . . What **a** things the LORD has

## AMBASSADOR, AMBASSADORS (n)

an authorized representative or messenger  
 2 Cor 5:20 . . . So we are Christ's **a-s**;  
 Eph 6:20 . . . this message as God's **a**.

## AMBITION (n)

aspiration to achieve a particular goal, good or bad  
 Gal 5:20 . . . anger, selfish **a**, dissension,  
 Phil 1:17 . . . They preach with selfish **a**,  
 Jas 3:14 . . . there is selfish **a** in your heart,

## ANCESTOR, ANCESTORS (n)

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

## ANCHOR (n)

a reliable or principal support; mainstay  
 Heb 6:19 . . . trustworthy **a** for our souls.

## ANDREW

One of the 12 disciples; listed second (Matt 10:2; Luke 6:14) and fourth (Mark 3:18; 13:3; Acts 1:13); came from Bethsaida (John 1:44); brother of Simon Peter (Matt 4:18); former fisherman (Mark 1:16); follower of John the Baptist who introduced Peter to Jesus (John 1:40-44).

## ANGEL, ANGELS (n)

human or superhuman agent or messenger of God  
 Exod 23:20 . . . I am sending an **a**  
 2 Sam 24:16 . . . and said to the death **a**,  
 Ps 91:11 . . . will order his **a-s** to protect  
 Matt 4:6 . . . will order his **a-s** to protect  
 Matt 28:2 . . . an **a** of the Lord came down  
 Luke 1:26 . . . God sent the **a** Gabriel  
 Luke 2:9 . . . an **a** of the Lord appeared  
 Luke 20:36 . . . they will be like **a-s**.  
 Acts 12:7 . . . The **a** struck him on the side  
 1 Cor 6:3 . . . we will judge **a-s**?  
 2 Cor 11:14 . . . disguises himself as an **a**  
 Gal 1:8 . . . or even an **a** from heaven,  
 Heb 1:6 . . . all of God's **a-s** worship him.  
 Heb 2:7 . . . a little lower than the **a-s**  
 Heb 13:2 . . . entertained **a-s** without  
 1 Pet 1:12 . . . the **a-s** are eagerly watching  
 2 Pet 2:4 . . . even the **a-s** who sinned.  
 Jude 1:6 . . . I remind you of the **a-s**

## ANGELIC (adj)

having or displaying characteristics of an angel  
 2 Sam 22:11 . . . on a mighty **a** being, he flew,  
 Ps 18:10 . . . on a mighty **a** being, he flew,

## ANGER (n)

a strong feeling of displeasure  
 Exod 34:6 . . . slow to **a** and filled with

## Holy Land Tour Itineraries

The tour stops throughout this Bible are meant to help you see and experience the Holy Land just like you would if you were visiting with Chuck and his team. We think you'll find each stop to be a rewarding experience on its own, but in the following pages we also provide some special guided tours, each based on a theme, like "Strategic Cities in Israel's History" and "Jesus' Ministry Travels." Here you will find six different tour experiences, each including a map of the route along with the Scripture references and page numbers for the tour stops on that route. Simply choose a route and turn to each tour stop for a memorable trip through some of the significant geographical and archeological sites of the Bible.



TRIP 1

Mountains and Valleys of Israel

Experience the geography of Israel by taking this guided tour through the valleys where battles were fought and God led His people to victory as well as the mountains where prophets proclaimed God’s Word and denounced false gods. You will also get to know the place where one day we will all experience Christ’s final return.



ITINERARY

- A

**Mareshah in the Guvrin Valley** *pg 1076*  
Stomping Ground of Micah the Prophet—MICAH 1
- B

**The Valley of Elah** *pg 354*  
How Your Ordinary Becomes Extraordinary—1 SAMUEL 17
- C

**The Kidron Valley** *pg 1045*  
The Valley of Decision—JOEL 3
- D

**The Valley of Trouble** *pg 1027*  
A Gateway of Hope—HOSEA 2
- E

**The Hill of Moreh** *pg 456*  
Where Anxiety Finds Its Peace—2 KINGS 4
- F

**Mount Tabor** *pg 297*  
A Panorama of Beauty and Praise—JUDGES 4
- G

**Mount Carmel** *pg 439*  
Elijah’s Place of Triumph—1 KINGS 18
- H

**Mount Hermon** *pg 732*  
A Reminder of the Blessing of Unity—PSALM 133

## TRIP 2 Strategic Cities in Israel's History

*Come and see the places where the Israelites lived! Choose this guided tour to see some of the most strategic cities in Israel's history. Learn more about God's people by getting to know the cities they discovered, protected, and in one case, knocked down.*

### ITINERARY

- A Ezion-geber pg 448**  
A Warning When Your Ship Comes In—1 KINGS 22
- B Kadesh-barnea pg 186**  
Getting Ahead of God's Will—NUMBERS 13-14
- C Israel's Central Location pg 948** A Picture of Your Influence—EZEKIEL 5
- D Lachish pg 914** Blending Biblical History and Archaeology—JEREMIAH 34
- E Bethlehem pg 324**  
An Ignoble Beginning Redeemed—RUTH 1
- F The City of David pg 380**  
When Our Strengths Become Our Weaknesses—2 SAMUEL 5
- G Jericho pg 260** Joshua's Battle Continues Today—JOSHUA 2
- H Beth-shan pg 371** Where Security Also Requires Trust—1 SAMUEL 31
- I Lo-debar pg 1054** Why God Invades Our Comfortable Lives—AMOS 6
- J Abel-beth-maacah pg 404**  
How to Deal with a Problem Person—2 SAMUEL 20
- K Tel Megiddo pg 274**  
And What Megiddo Tells—JOSHUA 12:7-24
- L Samaria pg 435** A Capital Lesson from Crumbling Ruins—1 KINGS 16
- M Shechem pg 287** A Place of Rededication—JOSHUA 24
- N Joppa pg 1068** Greatest Export: God's Compassion to Gentiles—JONAH 1

