



*life*

APPLICATION<sup>®</sup>  
Study Bible

— THIRD EDITION —

NIV<sup>®</sup>

LIFE  
APPLICATION  
STUDY  
BIBLE



# LIFE APPLICATION<sup>®</sup> STUDY BIBLE

— T H I R D   E D I T I O N —

**NIV**  <sup>TM</sup>

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## **Welcome to the *Life Application Study Bible, Third Edition!***

Since it was first published in 1988, the *Life Application Study Bible* has undergone several significant updates. This new, third edition includes a thorough update of the historic features, along with new and expanded content, to make the LASB even more relevant for your daily life. With a fresh, two-color design throughout and an improved layout to support the content enhancements, this Bible will not only help you to understand God's Word—it will also give you everything you need to apply it to your life and begin to experience the life transformation that God wants for us all.



# List of the Books of the Bible

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

2	Genesis	664	2 Chronicles	1408	Daniel
93	Exodus	719	Ezra	1437	Hosea
153	Leviticus	741	Nehemiah	1462	Joel
192	Numbers	766	Esther	1472	Amos
253	Deuteronomy	782	Job	1489	Obadiah
303	Joshua	841	Psalms	1494	Jonah
342	Judges	1010	Proverbs	1501	Micah
388	Ruth	1071	Ecclesiastes	1515	Nahum
397	1 Samuel	1089	Song of Songs	1522	Habakkuk
453	2 Samuel	1102	Isaiah	1530	Zephaniah
502	1 Kings	1220	Jeremiah	1540	Haggai
560	2 Kings	1321	Lamentations	1545	Zechariah
613	1 Chronicles	1335	Ezekiel	1562	Malachi

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

1576	Matthew	2045	Ephesians	2132	Hebrews
1656	Mark	2060	Philippians	2159	James
1712	Luke	2072	Colossians	2170	1 Peter
1792	John	2085	1 Thessalonians	2182	2 Peter
1861	Acts	2094	2 Thessalonians	2188	1 John
1942	Romans	2100	1 Timothy	2199	2 John
1976	1 Corinthians	2112	2 Timothy	2202	3 John
2009	2 Corinthians	2121	Titus	2205	Jude
2029	Galatians	2128	Philemon	2209	Revelation

# Alphabetical List of the Books of the Bible

1861	Acts	342	Judges
1472	Amos	502	1 Kings
613	1 Chronicles	560	2 Kings
664	2 Chronicles	1321	Lamentations
2072	Colossians	153	Leviticus
1976	1 Corinthians	1712	Luke
2009	2 Corinthians	1562	Malachi
1408	Daniel	1656	Mark
253	Deuteronomy	1576	Matthew
1071	Ecclesiastes	1501	Micah
2045	Ephesians	1515	Nahum
766	Esther	741	Nehemiah
93	Exodus	192	Numbers
1335	Ezekiel	1489	Obadiah
719	Ezra	2170	1 Peter
2029	Galatians	2182	2 Peter
2	Genesis	2128	Philemon
1522	Habakkuk	2060	Philippians
1540	Haggai	1010	Proverbs
2132	Hebrews	841	Psalms
1437	Hosea	2209	Revelation
1102	Isaiah	1942	Romans
2159	James	388	Ruth
1220	Jeremiah	397	1 Samuel
782	Job	453	2 Samuel
1462	Joel	1089	Song of Songs
1792	John	2085	1 Thessalonians
2188	1 John	2094	2 Thessalonians
2199	2 John	2100	1 Timothy
2202	3 John	2112	2 Timothy
1494	Jonah	2121	Titus
303	Joshua	1545	Zechariah
2205	Jude	1530	Zephaniah



# The NIV Cross-Reference System

The New International Version has one of the most accurate and best-organized cross-reference systems available. The system used in this Bible contains more than 23,500 references.

The cross-references link words or phrases in the NIV text with counterpart biblical references listed in a side column on every page. The raised letters containing these cross-references are set in a light italic typeface to distinguish them from the NIV text note letters, which use a bold typeface.

The lists of references are in biblical order with one exception: If reference is made to a verse within the same chapter, that verse (indicated by “ver”) is listed first.

In the Old Testament, some references are marked with an asterisk (\*), which means that the Old Testament verse or phrase is quoted in the New Testament (see, for example, Genesis 1:3). The corresponding information is provided in the New Testament by the NIV text note (see 2 Corinthians 4:6).

Following is a list of abbreviations used in the cross-references:

## ABBREVIATIONS FOR THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Genesis.....Ge	Isaiah.....Isa	Romans.....Ro
Exodus.....Ex	Jeremiah.....Jer	1 Corinthians .....1Co
Leviticus .....Lev	Lamentations.....La	2 Corinthians .....2Co
Numbers .....Nu	Ezekiel.....Eze	Galatians.....Gal
Deuteronomy.....Dt	Daniel .....Da	Ephesians.....Eph
Joshua .....Jos	Hosea .....Hos	Philippians .....Php
Judges .....Jdg	Joel.....Joel	Colossians .....Col
Ruth.....Ru	Amos.....Am	1 Thessalonians .....1Th
1 Samuel.....1Sa	Obadiah .....Ob	2 Thessalonians .....2Th
2 Samuel .....2Sa	Jonah .....Jnh	1 Timothy.....1Ti
1 Kings.....1Ki	Micah .....Mic	2 Timothy .....2Ti
2 Kings.....2Ki	Nahum .....Na	Titus .....Titus
1 Chronicles.....1Ch	Habakkuk.....Hab	Philemon.....Phm
2 Chronicles.....2Ch	Zephaniah .....Zep	Hebrews.....Heb
Ezra .....Ezr	Haggai.....Hag	James .....Jas
Nehemiah.....Ne	Zechariah .....Zec	1 Peter .....1Pe
Esther.....Est	Malachi.....Mal	2 Peter .....2Pe
Job.....Job	Matthew.....Mt	1 John .....1Jn
Psalms.....Ps	Mark .....Mk	2 John .....2Jn
Proverbs.....Pr	Luke.....Lk	3 John.....3Jn
Ecclesiastes.....Ecc	John.....Jn	Jude .....Jude
Song of Songs .....SS	Acts .....Ac	Revelation.....Rev

# Preface

THE GOAL OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV) is to enable English-speaking people from around the world to read and hear God's eternal Word in their own language. Our work as translators is motivated by our conviction that the Bible is God's Word in written form. We believe that the Bible contains the divine answer to the deepest needs of humanity, sheds unique light on our path in a dark world and sets forth the way to our eternal well-being. Out of these deep convictions, we have sought to recreate as far as possible the experience of the original audience—blending transparency to the original text with accessibility for the millions of English speakers around the world. We have prioritized accuracy, clarity and literary quality with the goal of creating a translation suitable for public and private reading, evangelism, teaching, preaching, memorizing and liturgical use. We have also sought to preserve a measure of continuity with the long tradition of translating the Scriptures into English.

The complete NIV Bible was first published in 1978. It was a completely new translation made by over a hundred scholars working directly from the best available Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. The translators came from the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, giving the translation an international scope. They were from many denominations and churches—including Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Brethren, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Evangelical Covenant, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Wesleyan and others. This breadth of denominational and theological perspective helped to safeguard the translation from sectarian bias. For these reasons, and by the grace of God, the NIV has gained a wide readership in all parts of the English-speaking world.

The work of translating the Bible is never finished. As good as they are, English translations must be regularly updated so that they will continue to communicate accurately the meaning of God's Word. Updates are needed in order to reflect the latest developments in our understanding of the biblical world and its languages and to keep pace with changes in English usage. Recognizing, then, that the NIV would retain its ability to communicate God's Word accurately only if it were regularly updated, the original translators established the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT). The Committee is a self-perpetuating group of biblical scholars charged with keeping abreast of advances in biblical scholarship and changes in English and issuing periodic updates to the NIV. The CBT is an independent, self-governing body and has sole responsibility for the NIV text. The Committee mirrors the original group of translators in its diverse international and denominational makeup and in its unifying commitment to the Bible as God's inspired Word.

In obedience to its mandate, the Committee has issued periodic updates to the NIV. An initial revision was released in 1984. A more thorough revision process was completed in 2005, resulting in the separately published TNIV. The updated NIV you now have in your hands builds on both the original NIV and the TNIV and represents the latest effort of the Committee to articulate God's unchanging Word in the way the original authors might have said it had they been speaking in English to the global English-speaking audience today.

## TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

The Committee's translating work has been governed by three widely accepted principles about the way people use words and about the way we understand them.

First, the meaning of words is determined by the way that users of the language actually use them at any given time. For the biblical languages, therefore, the Committee utilizes the best and most recent scholarship on the way Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words were being used in biblical times. At the same time, the Committee carefully studies the state of modern English. Good translation is like good communication: one must know the target audience so that the appropriate choices can be made about which English words to use to represent the original words of Scripture. From its inception, the NIV has had as its target the general English-speaking population all over the world, the "International" in its title reflecting this concern. The aim of the Committee is to put the Scriptures into natural English that will communicate effectively with the broadest possible audience of English speakers.

Modern technology has enhanced the Committee's ability to choose the right English words to convey the meaning of the original text. The field of computational linguistics harnesses the power of computers to provide broadly applicable and current data about the state of the language. Translators can now access huge databases of modern English to better understand the current meaning and usage of key words. The Committee utilized this resource in preparing the 2011 edition of the NIV. An area of especially rapid and significant change in English is the way certain nouns and pronouns are used

to refer to human beings. The Committee therefore requested experts in computational linguistics at Collins Dictionaries to pose some key questions about this usage to its database of English—the largest in the world, with over 4.4 billion words, gathered from several English-speaking countries and including both spoken and written English. (The Collins Study, called “The Development and Use of Gender Language in Contemporary English,” can be accessed at <http://www.thenivbible.com/about-the-niv/about-the-2011-edition/>.) The study revealed that the most popular words to describe the human race in modern U.S. English were “humanity,” “man” and “mankind.” The Committee then used this data in the updated NIV, choosing from among these three words (and occasionally others also) depending on the context.

A related issue creates a larger problem for modern translations: the move away from using the third-person masculine singular pronouns—“he/him/his”—to refer to men and women equally. This usage does persist in some forms of English, and this revision therefore occasionally uses these pronouns in a generic sense. But the tendency, recognized in day-to-day usage and confirmed by the Collins study, is away from the generic use of “he,” “him” and “his.” In recognition of this shift in language and in an effort to translate into the natural English that people are actually using, this revision of the NIV generally uses other constructions when the biblical text is plainly addressed to men and women equally. The reader will encounter especially frequently a “they,” “their” or “them” to express a generic singular idea. Thus, for instance, Mark 8:36 reads: “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?” This generic use of the “distributive” or “singular” “they/them/their” has been used for many centuries by respected writers of English and has now become established as standard English, spoken and written, all over the world.

A second linguistic principle that feeds into the Committee’s translation work is that meaning is found not in individual words, as vital as they are, but in larger clusters: phrases, clauses, sentences, discourses. Translation is not, as many people think, a matter of word substitution: English word *x* in place of Hebrew word *y*. Translators must first determine the meaning of the words of the biblical languages in the context of the passage and then select English words that accurately communicate that meaning to modern listeners and readers. This means that accurate translation will not always reflect the exact structure of the original language. To be sure, there is debate over the degree to which translators should try to preserve the “form” of the original text in English. From the beginning, the NIV has taken a mediating position on this issue. The manual produced when the translation that became the NIV was first being planned states: “If the Greek or Hebrew syntax has a good parallel in modern English, it should be used. But if there is no good parallel, the English syntax appropriate to the meaning of the original is to be chosen.” It is fine, in other words, to carry over the form of the biblical languages into English—but not at the expense of natural expression. The principle that meaning resides in larger clusters of words means that the Committee has not insisted on a “word-for-word” approach to translation. We certainly believe that every word of Scripture is inspired by God and therefore to be carefully studied to determine what God is saying to us. It is for this reason that the Committee labors over every single word of the original texts, working hard to determine how each of those words contributes to what the text is saying. Ultimately, however, it is how these individual words function in combination with other words that determines meaning.

A third linguistic principle guiding the Committee in its translation work is the recognition that words have a spectrum of meaning. It is popular to define a word by using another word, or “gloss,” to substitute for it. This substitute word is then sometimes called the “literal” meaning of a word. In fact, however, words have a range of possible meanings. Those meanings will vary depending on the context, and words in one language will usually not occupy the same semantic range as words in another language. The Committee therefore studies each original word of Scripture in its context to identify its meaning in a particular verse and then chooses an appropriate English word (or phrase) to represent it. It is impossible, then, to translate any given Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek word with the same English word all the time. The Committee does try to translate related occurrences of a word in the original languages with the same English word in order to preserve the connection for the English reader. But the Committee generally privileges clear natural meaning over a concern with consistency in rendering particular words.

## TEXTUAL BASIS

For the Old Testament the standard Hebrew text, the Masoretic Text as published in the latest edition of *Biblia Hebraica*, has been used throughout. The Masoretic Text tradition contains marginal notations that offer variant readings. These have sometimes been followed instead of the text itself. Because such instances involve variants within the Masoretic tradition, they have not been indicated in the textual notes. In a few cases, words in the basic consonantal text have been divided differently than

in the Masoretic Text. Such cases are usually indicated in the textual footnotes. The Dead Sea Scrolls contain biblical texts that represent an earlier stage of the transmission of the Hebrew text. They have been consulted, as have been the Samaritan Pentateuch and the ancient scribal traditions concerning deliberate textual changes. The translators also consulted the more important early versions. Readings from these versions, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the scribal traditions were occasionally followed where the Masoretic Text seemed doubtful and where accepted principles of textual criticism showed that one or more of these textual witnesses appeared to provide the correct reading. In rare cases, the translators have emended the Hebrew text where it appears to have become corrupted at an even earlier stage of its transmission. These departures from the Masoretic Text are also indicated in the textual footnotes. Sometimes the vowel indicators (which are later additions to the basic consonantal text) found in the Masoretic Text did not, in the judgment of the translators, represent the correct vowels for the original text. Accordingly, some words have been read with a different set of vowels. These instances are usually not indicated in the footnotes.

The Greek text used in translating the New Testament has been an eclectic one, based on the latest editions of the Nestle-Aland/United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament. The translators have made their choices among the variant readings in accordance with widely accepted principles of New Testament textual criticism. Footnotes call attention to places where uncertainty remains.

The New Testament authors, writing in Greek, often quote the Old Testament from its ancient Greek version, the Septuagint. This is one reason why some of the Old Testament quotations in the NIV New Testament are not identical to the corresponding passages in the NIV Old Testament. Such quotations in the New Testament are indicated with the footnote "(see Septuagint)."

## FOOTNOTES AND FORMATTING

Footnotes in this version are of several kinds, most of which need no explanation. Those giving alternative translations begin with "Or" and generally introduce the alternative with the last word preceding it in the text, except when it is a single-word alternative. When poetry is quoted in a footnote a slash mark indicates a line division.

It should be noted that references to diseases, minerals, flora and fauna, architectural details, clothing, jewelry, musical instruments and other articles cannot always be identified with precision. Also, linear measurements and measures of capacity can only be approximated (see the Table of Weights and Measures). Although *Selah*, used mainly in the Psalms, is probably a musical term, its meaning is uncertain. Since it may interrupt reading and distract the reader, this word has not been kept in the English text, but every occurrence has been signaled by a footnote.

As an aid to the reader, sectional headings have been inserted. They are not to be regarded as part of the biblical text and are not intended for oral reading. It is the Committee's hope that these headings may prove more helpful to the reader than the traditional chapter divisions, which were introduced long after the Bible was written.

Sometimes the chapter and/or verse numbering in English translations of the Old Testament differs from that found in published Hebrew texts. This is particularly the case in the Psalms, where the traditional titles are included in the Hebrew verse numbering. Such differences are indicated in the footnotes at the bottom of the page. In the New Testament, verse numbers that marked off portions of the traditional English text not supported by the best Greek manuscripts now appear in brackets, with a footnote indicating the text that has been omitted (see, for example, Matthew 17:[21]).

Mark 16:9–20 and John 7:53–8:11, although long accorded virtually equal status with the rest of the Gospels in which they stand, have a questionable standing in the textual history of the New Testament, as noted in the bracketed annotations with which they are set off. A different typeface has been chosen for these passages to indicate their uncertain status.

Basic formatting of the text, such as lining the poetry, paragraphing (both prose and poetry), setting up of (administrative-like) lists, indenting letters and lengthy prayers within narratives and the insertion of sectional headings, has been the work of the Committee. However, the choice between single-column and double-column formats has been left to the publishers. Also the issuing of "red-letter" editions is a publisher's choice—one that the Committee does not endorse.

The Committee has again been reminded that every human effort is flawed—including this revision of the NIV. We trust, however, that many will find in it an improved representation of the Word of God, through which they hear his call to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and to service in his kingdom. We offer this version of the Bible to him in whose name and for whose glory it has been made.

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# Why the Life Application Study Bible Is Unique

Have you ever opened your Bible and asked the following?

- What does this passage really mean?
- How does it apply to my life?
- Why does some of the Bible seem irrelevant?
- What do these ancient cultures have to do with today?
- I love God; why can't I understand what he is saying to me through his Word?
- What was going on in the lives of these people in the Bible?

Many Christians do not read the Bible regularly. Why? Because with the pressures of daily living they cannot find a connection between the timeless principles of Scripture and the ever-present problems of day-to-day living.

God urges us to apply his Word (see Isaiah 42:23; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:4), but too often we stop at accumulating Bible knowledge. This is why the *Life Application Study Bible* was developed—to show how to put into practice what we have learned.

Applying God's Word is a vital part of one's relationship with God; it is the evidence that we are obeying him. The difficulty in applying the Bible is not with the Bible itself, but with the reader's inability to bridge the gap between the past and present, the conceptual and practical. When we don't or can't do this, spiritual dryness, shallowness, and indifference are the results.

## A Chronology of Bible Events and World Events

**THE TIMELINE** on the following pages gives a visual overview of events in biblical times as compared to other famous world events. (The timelines in the individual books of the Bible are different, focusing on the events occurring in the books themselves.) This timeline gives the scope of biblical history from Creation to the resurrection of Christ and the beginnings of the church along with key events that were occurring in other parts of the world.

Creation  
undated

Noah builds  
the ark  
undated

Abraham  
born  
2166

Abraham  
enters Canaan  
2091



**2500 BC**  
Egyptians  
discover  
papyrus  
and ink for  
writing and  
build the first  
libraries;  
iron objects  
manufactured  
in the ancient  
Middle East

**2400**  
Egyptians  
import gold  
from other  
parts of  
Africa

**2331**  
Semitic  
chieftain,  
Sargon,  
conquers  
Sumer to  
become first  
"world  
conqueror"

**2300**  
Horses  
domesticated in  
Egypt; chickens  
domesticated in  
Babylon; bows &  
arrows used in  
wars

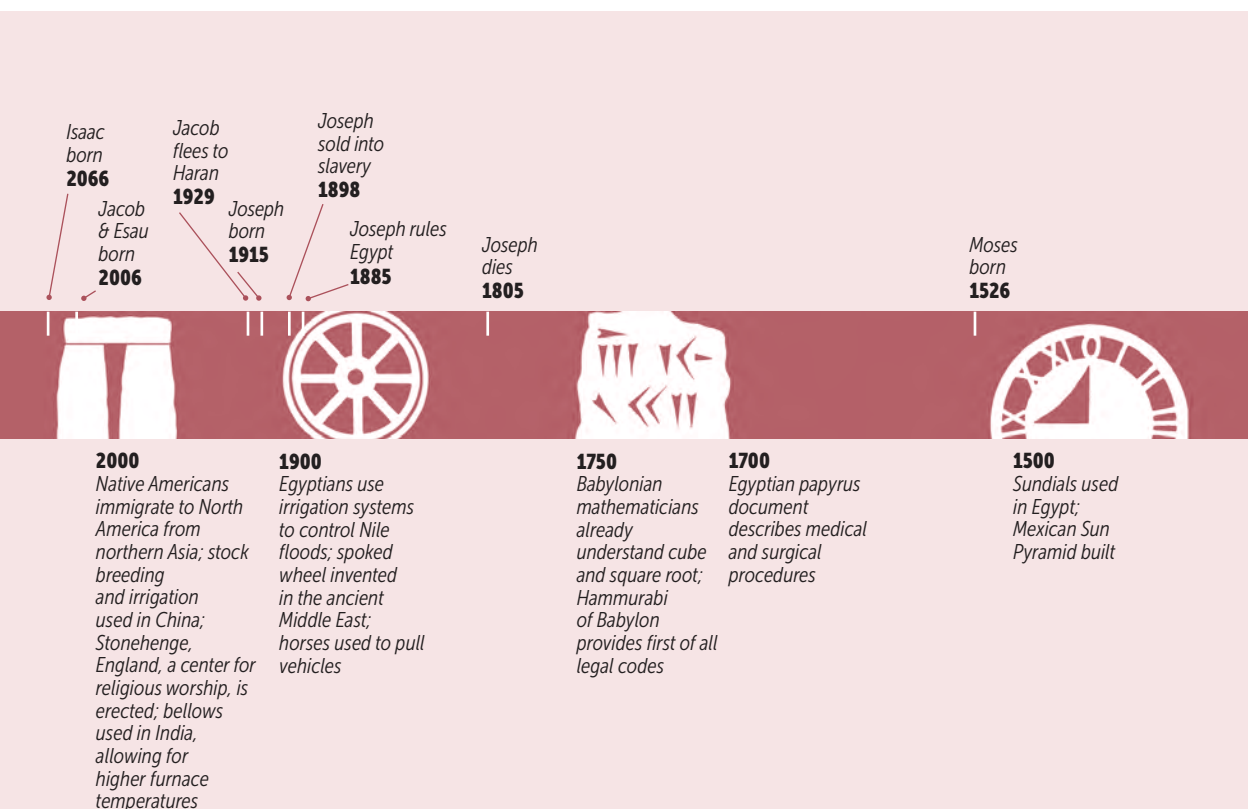
**2100**  
Glass made  
by the  
Mesopotamians;  
ziggurats (like  
the tower of  
Babel) built in  
Mesopotamia;  
earliest discovered  
drug, ethyl alcohol,  
used to alleviate  
pain



The words of Scripture itself cry out to us, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (James 1:22). The *Life Application Study Bible* shows you how to do just that. Developed by an interdenominational team of pastors, scholars, family counselors, and members of a national organization dedicated to promoting God’s Word and spreading the gospel, the *Life Application Study Bible* took many years to complete, and all the work was reviewed by several renowned theologians under the directorship of Dr. Kenneth Kantzer.

The *Life Application Study Bible* does what a good resource Bible should—it helps you understand the context of a passage, gives important background and historical information, explains difficult words and phrases, and helps you see the interrelationships within Scripture. But it also does much more. The *Life Application Study Bible* goes deeper into God’s Word, helping you discover the timeless truth being communicated, see its relevance for your life, and make personal applications. While some study Bibles attempt application, over 75 percent of this Bible’s features are application oriented. The notes answer the questions “So what?” and “What does this passage mean for me, my family, my friends, my job, my neighborhood, my church, my country?”

Imagine reading a familiar passage of Scripture and gaining fresh insight, as if it were the first time you had ever read it. How much richer your life would be if you left each Bible reading with a new perspective and a small change for the better! A small change every day adds up to a changed life—and that is one of the very purposes of Scripture.





# What Is Application?

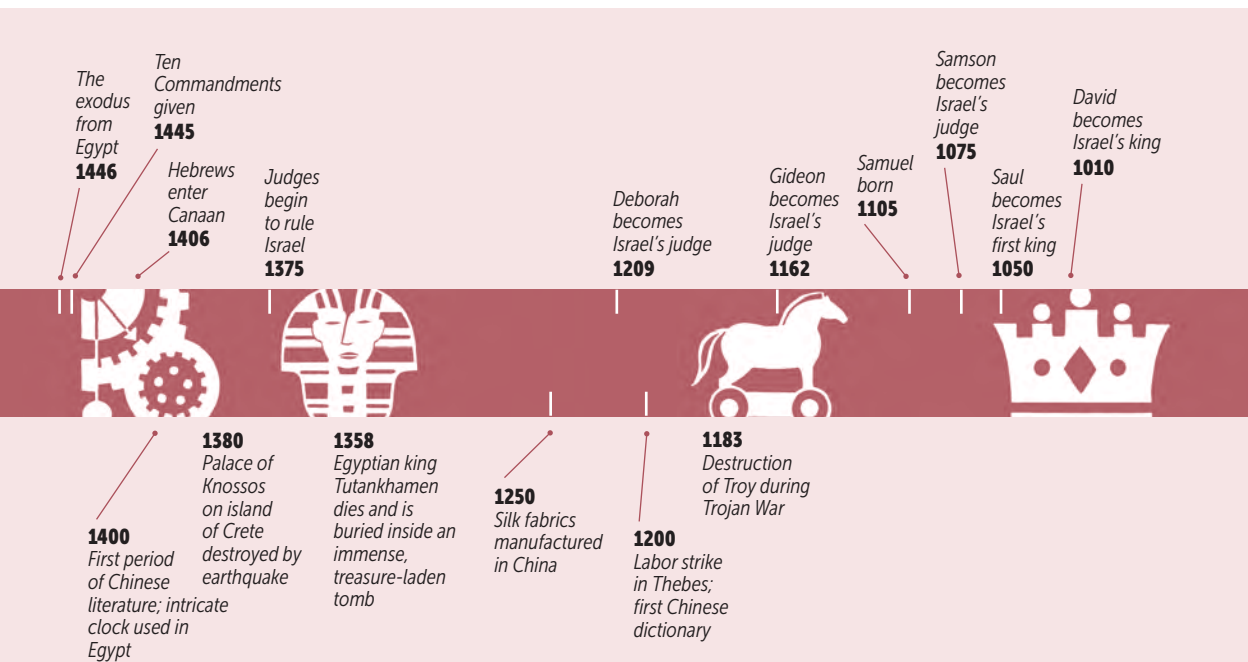
The best way to define *application* is to first determine what it is not. Application is not just accumulating knowledge. This helps us discover and understand facts and concepts, but it stops there. History is filled with philosophers who knew what the Bible said but failed to apply it to their lives, keeping them from believing it and being changed. Many think that understanding is the end goal of Bible study, but that is really only the beginning.

Application is not just illustration. Illustration only tells us how someone else has handled a situation similar to one we are facing. While we may empathize with that person, we still have little direction for our personal situations.

Application is not just demonstrating that a passage is relevant. Showing the Bible's relevance only helps us to see that the same things that were true in biblical times are true today; it does not show us how to apply the truth to the problems and pressures of our individual lives.

What, then, is application? Application begins by knowing and understanding God's Word and its timeless truths. *But you cannot stop there.* If you do, God's Word may not change your life, and it may seem dull, difficult, tedious, and tiring. A good application brings the truth of God's Word into focus, shows the reader what to do about what God is teaching, and motivates him or her to respond with action and appropriate change. All three are essential to application.

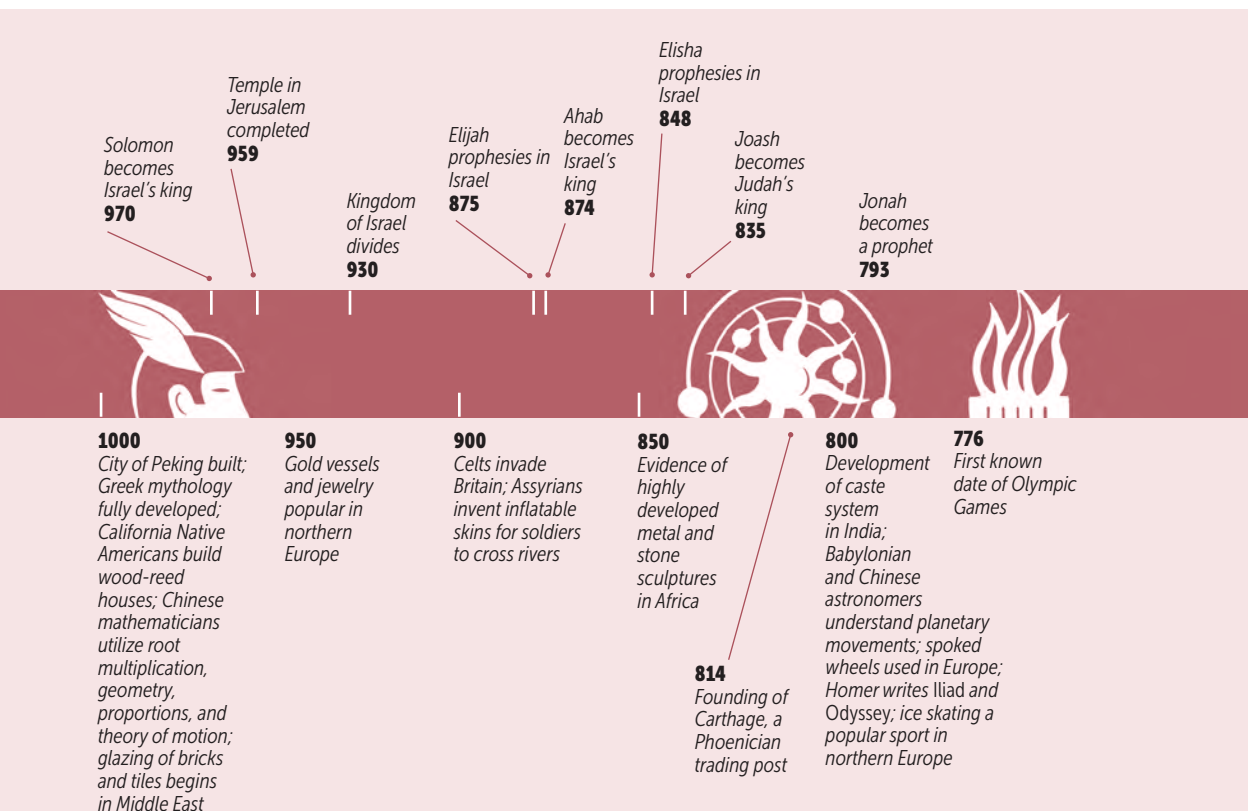
Application is putting into practice what we already know (see Mark 4:24 and Hebrews 5:11-14) and



answering the question “So what?” by being confronted with the right questions and motivated to take action (see James 2:17 and 1 John 2:5-6). Application is deeply personal—unique for each individual. It is making a relevant truth a personal truth, and it involves developing a strategy and action plan to live your life in harmony with the Bible. It is the biblical “how to” of life.

You may ask, *How can these application notes be relevant to my life?* Each application note has three parts: (1) an *explanation* that ties the note directly to the Scripture passage and sets up the truth that is being taught, (2) the *bridge* that explains the timeless truth and makes it relevant for today, and (3) the *application* that shows you how to take the timeless truth and apply it to your personal situation. No note, by itself, can apply Scripture directly to your life. It can only teach, direct, lead, guide, inspire, recommend, and urge. It can give you the resources and direction you need to apply the Bible; but only you can take these resources and put them into practice.

A good note, therefore, should not only give you knowledge and understanding but also point you to application. Before you buy any kind of resource Bible, you should evaluate the notes and ask the following questions: (1) Do the notes contain enough information to help me understand the point of a given Scripture passage? (2) Do the notes assume I know too much? (3) Do the notes avoid denominational bias? (4) Do the notes touch most of life’s experiences? (5) Do the notes help me *apply* God’s Word?



# Features of the Life Application Study Bible



## NOTES

In addition to providing many application notes, the *Life Application Study Bible* offers several kinds of explanatory notes, which help you understand culture, history, context, difficult-to-understand passages, background, places, theological concepts, and the relationships of various passages of Scripture to other passages. Maps, charts, and diagrams are also found on the same pages as the passages to which they relate. For an example of an application note, see the note on Mark 15:47. For an example of an explanatory note, see the note on Mark 11:1-2.



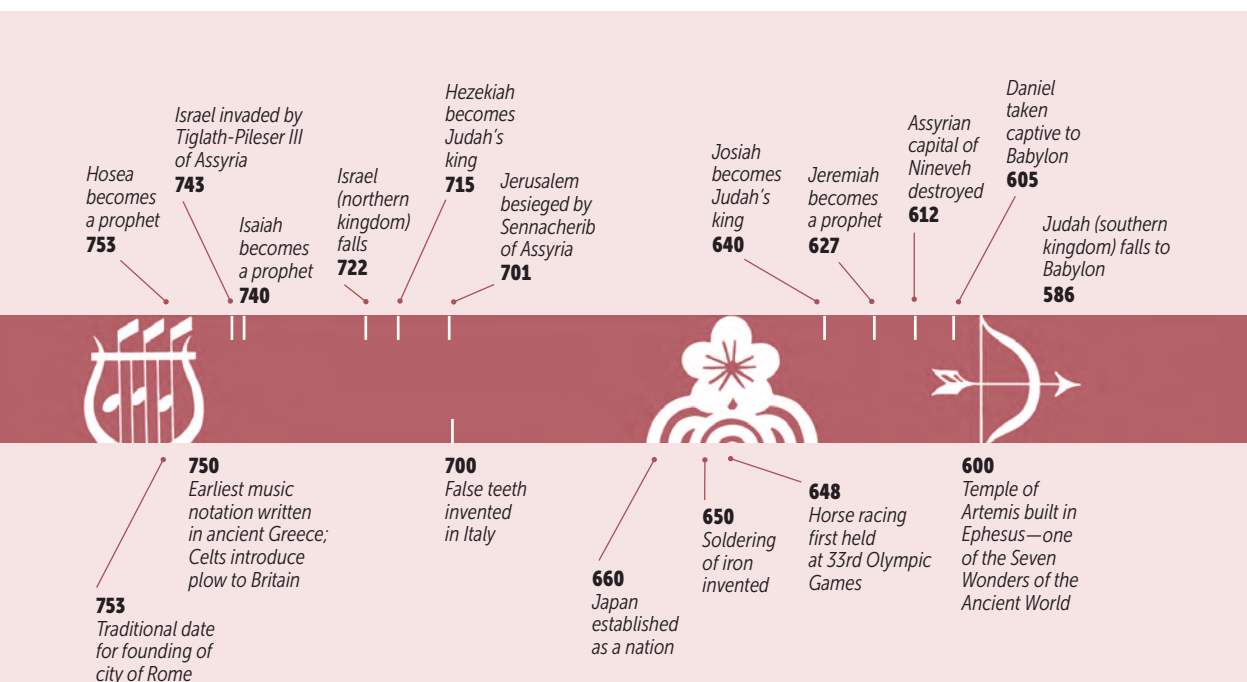
## BOOK INTRODUCTIONS

The book introductions are divided into several easy-to-find parts:

**Timeline.** This places the specific book of the Bible in its historical setting. It lists the key events of the book and the dates when they occurred. Alternative dates in parentheses are based on a later dating of the Exodus.

**Vital Statistics.** This is a list of straight facts about the book—pieces of information you need to know at a glance.

**Overview.** This is a summary of the book with general lessons and applications that can be drawn from the book as a whole.



**Blueprint.** This is the outline of the book. It is written in easy-to-understand language and is designed for easy memorization. To the right of each main heading is a key lesson that is taught in that particular section.

**Megathemes.** This section gives the main themes of the book, explaining their significance and telling why they are still important for us today.

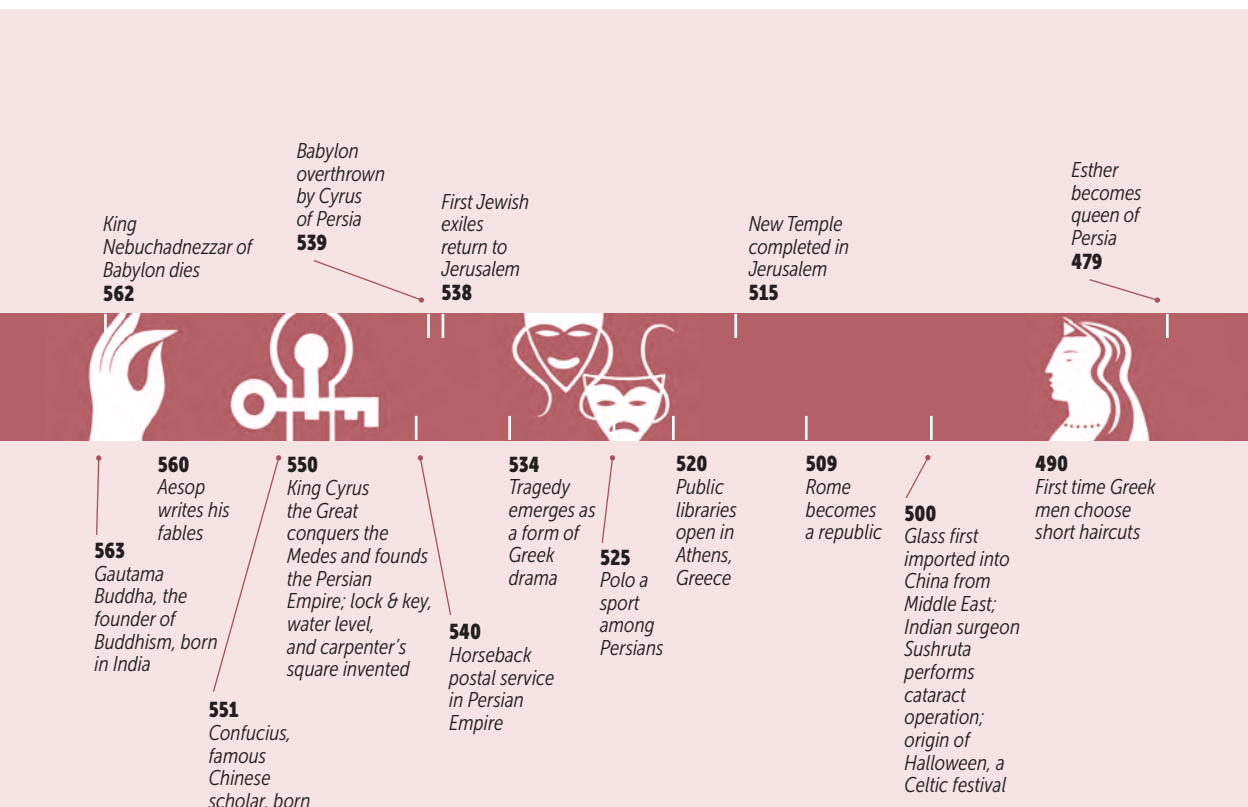
**Map.** This shows the key places found in the book and retells the story of the book from a geographical point of view.



## OUTLINE

The *Life Application Study Bible* has a custom-made outline that was designed specifically with application in mind. Several unique features should be noted:

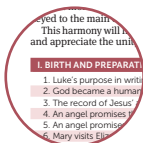
1. To avoid confusion and aid memory work, each book outline has only three levels of headings. Main outline heads are marked by a capital letter. Subheads are marked by a number. Further explanatory heads have no letter or number.
2. Each main outline head marked by a letter also has a brief paragraph below it summarizing the Bible text and offering a general application.
3. Parallel passages are listed where they apply in the Gospels.





## A HARMONY OF THE BOOKS OF KINGS & CHRONICLES *see page 556*

A harmony of the books of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles has been developed to help you understand the interplay between these books. The chart is set up like a timeline, providing you with the names of the kings listed chronologically, a brief overview of each king's reign, and where you can read about him. It also includes the names of the prophets—as well as when and to whom they prophesied—so you can understand their prophecies in context. This harmony is located between the books of 1 and 2 Kings.



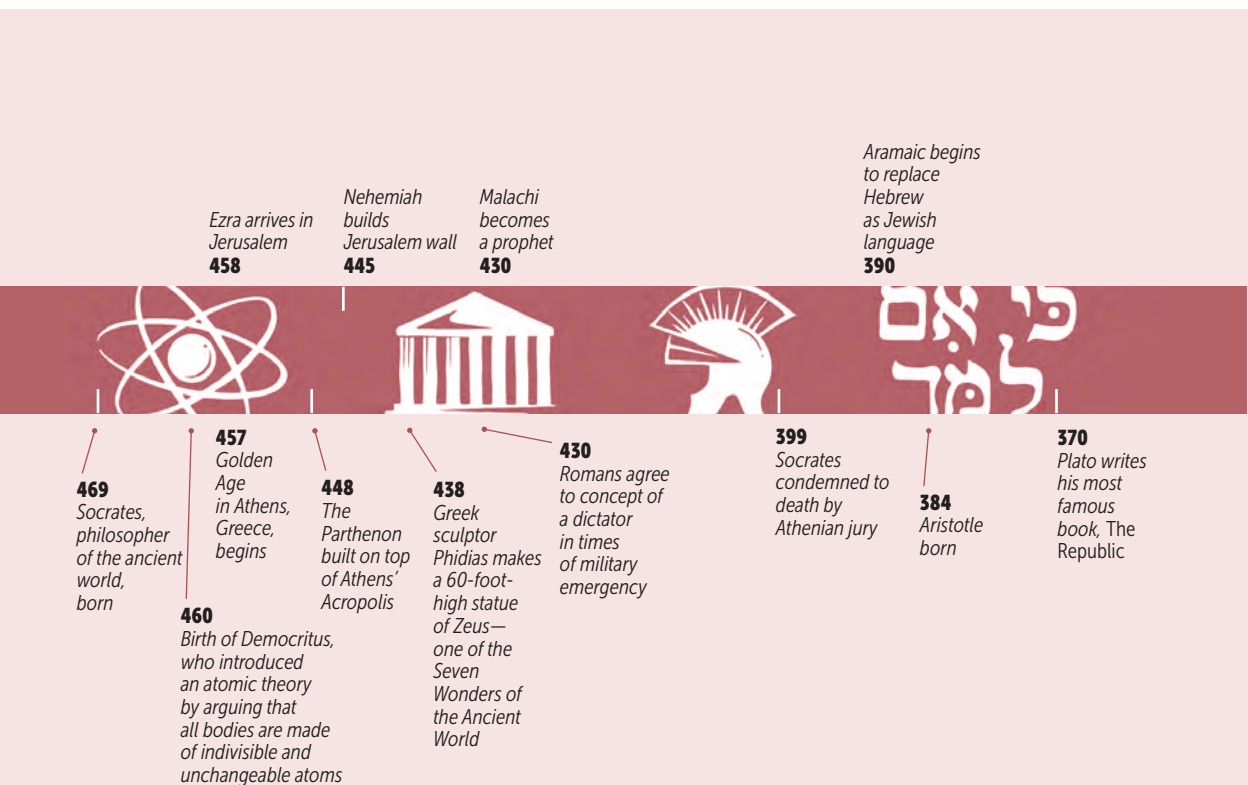
## A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS *see page 1853*

A harmony of the Gospels was developed specifically for this Bible. It is the first harmony ever incorporated throughout the Bible text. Through a unique and simple numbering system (found both in the harmony and in parentheses in the subheads throughout the Gospels), you can read any Gospel account and see just where you are in relation to other events in the life of Christ. The harmony is located after the Gospel of John and explained in detail there.



## PERSONALITY PROFILES

Another unique feature of this Bible is the profiles of many biblical people, which include their strengths and weaknesses, greatest accomplishments and mistakes, and key lessons from their lives. The profiles of these people are found in the books of the Bible where their stories occur.





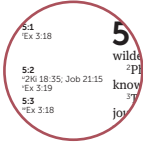
## MAPS

The *Life Application Study Bible* has numerous maps, building a thorough and comprehensive Bible atlas right into the pages of this Bible. There are two kinds of maps: (1) Book introduction maps, each one telling the story of a particular Bible book. (2) Thumbnail maps in the notes, plotting geographic movements in the Bible. In addition to these numerous black-and-white maps, there is a comprehensive set of color maps at the back of this Bible.



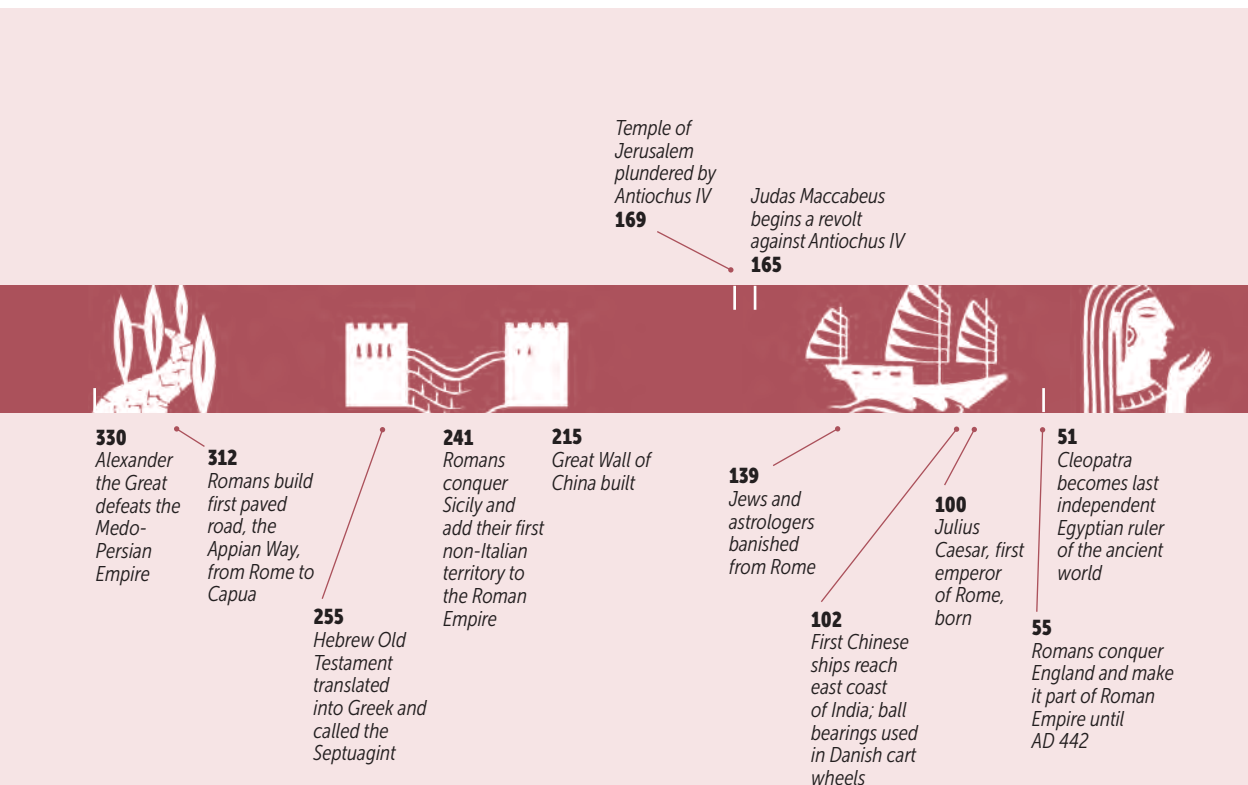
## CHARTS AND DIAGRAMS

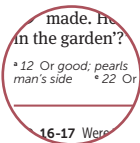
Hundreds of charts and diagrams are included to help you better visualize difficult concepts and relationships. Most charts not only present the needed information but also show its significance.



## CROSS-REFERENCES

A carefully organized cross-reference system in the margins of the Bible text helps you find related passages quickly. See page A11 for more information on the NIV cross-reference system.





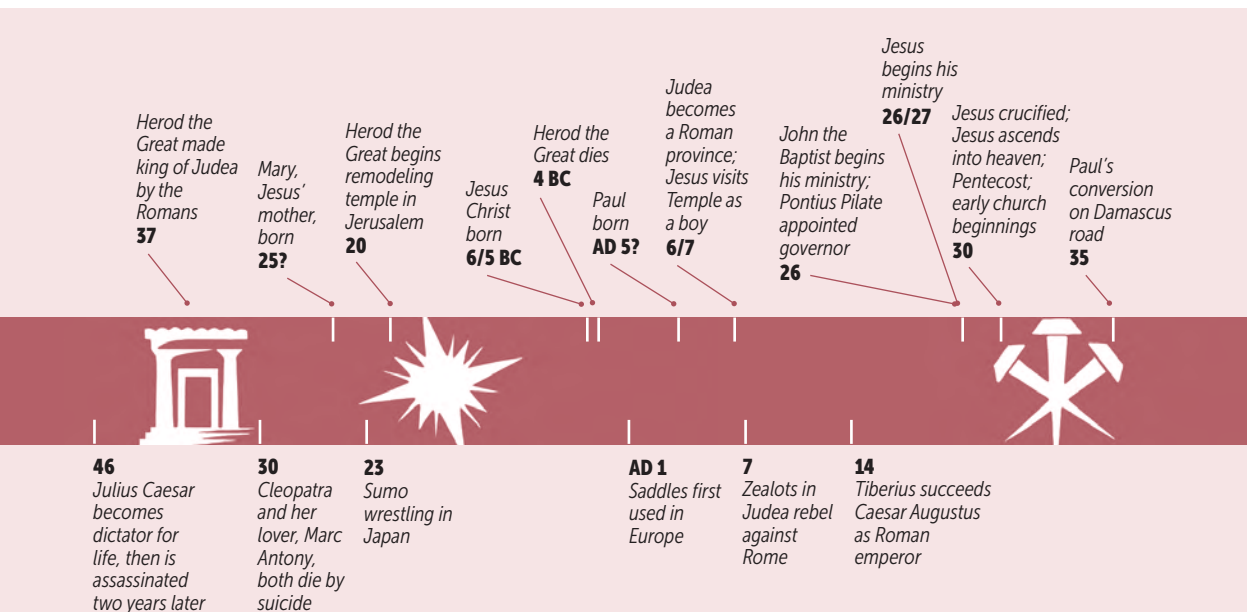
## TEXTUAL NOTES AND SECTION HEADINGS

Directly related to the New International Version text, the textual notes examine such things as alternate translations, meanings of Hebrew and Greek terms, Old Testament quotations, and variant readings in ancient biblical manuscripts. The NIV text also contains section headings in order to help you more easily understand the subject and content of each section. *Note:* The standard New International Version section headings have been altered for this edition of the Bible, particularly in the Gospels, where they have been eliminated in favor of the Harmony of the Gospels. The headings throughout the Gospels also include a number in parentheses, relating each passage to the Harmony of the Gospels.



## A CHRISTIAN WORKER'S RESOURCE *see page 2251*

The Christian Worker's Resource is a special supplement written with you in mind. It includes five articles that you will find useful in your ministry: (1) "How to Become a Christian" includes the basic steps of becoming a believer, along with Bible verses you can use to guide someone to faith. (2) "How to Follow Up with a New Believer" gives you 14 discussion points to walk through with a new believer over the course of several weeks. These will help him or her understand the basics of the Christian faith. (3) "Mining the Treasures of the *Life Application Study Bible*" gives you a taste of the scope of the study notes by offering often-asked questions in 25 categories (that you probably have been or will be asked from time to time) and sends you to Life Application notes that help to answer those questions. (4) "So You've Been Asked to Speak . . ." walks you through the process of preparing a talk or Bible study using the many features of the *Life Application Study Bible*. (5) Finally, "Taking the Step to Application" teaches you how to make application a natural part of your personal study as well as a part of Bible studies you lead or talks you give.







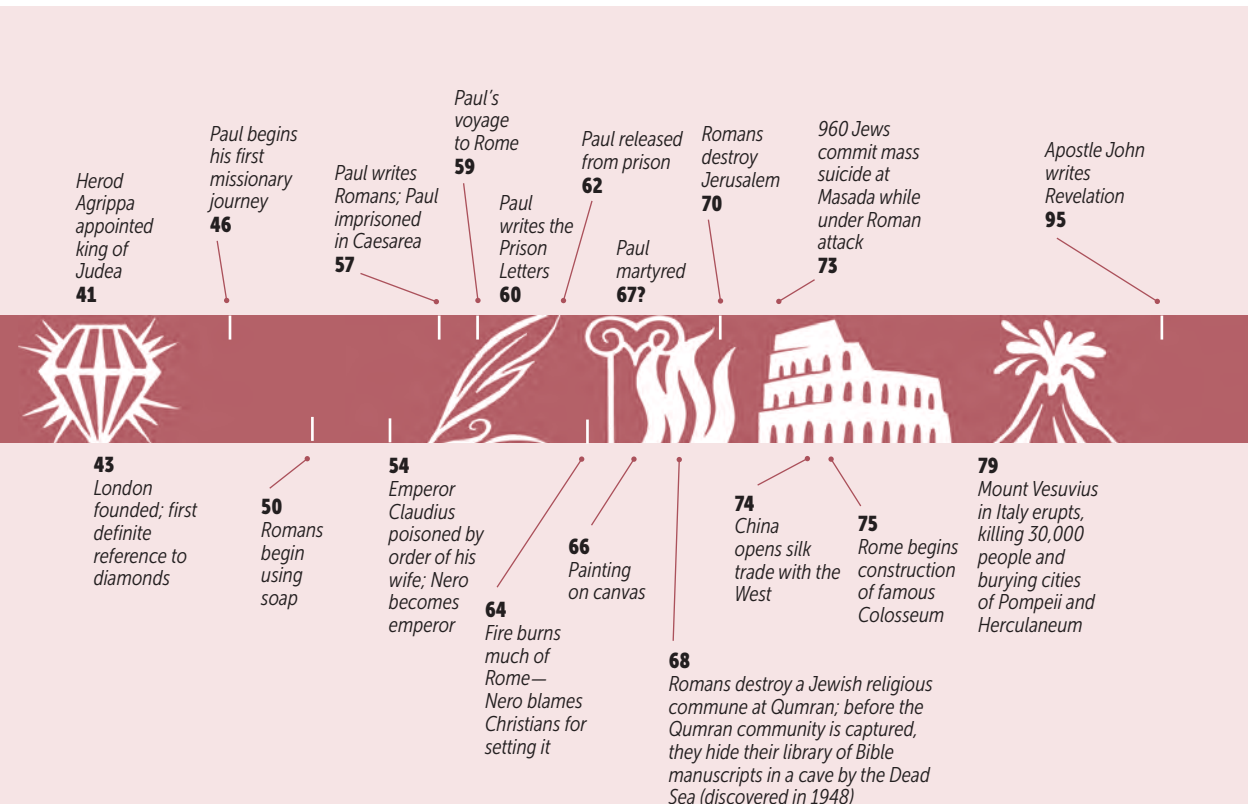
## MASTER INDEX *see page 2273*

This Bible contains a complete index to all the notes, charts, maps, and personality profiles. With its emphasis on application, it is helpful for group Bible study, sermon preparation, teaching, and personal study. There are also indexes for charts (listed canonically), maps (listed canonically), and personality profiles (listed alphabetically).



## DICTIONARY/CONCORDANCE *see page 2385*

A concise dictionary/concordance identifies terms of special interest and lists some of the most relevant occurrences in context.





THE  
OLD TESTAMENT

# Genesis

## Vital Statistics

**PURPOSE:**

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

**AUTHOR:**

Moses

**ORIGINAL AUDIENCE:**

The people of Israel

**DATE WRITTEN:**

1450–1410 BC

**WHERE WRITTEN:**

In the wilderness during Israel's wanderings

**SETTING:**

The region presently known as the Middle East

**KEY VERSES:**

"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (1:27)

"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (12:2-3)

**KEY PEOPLE:**

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



**BEGIN . . . start . . . commence . . . open . . .** There's something refreshing and optimistic about these words, whether they refer to the dawn of a new day, the birth of a child, the start of a symphony, or the first miles of a family vacation. Full of promise, beginnings stir hope and encourage imaginative visions of the future. *Genesis* means "beginnings" or "origin," and it unfolds the record of the beginning of the world, of

human history, of family, of civilization, of salvation. It is the story of God's purpose and plan for his creation. As the book of beginnings, *Genesis* sets the stage for the entire Bible. It reveals the person and nature of God (Creator, Sustainer, Judge, Redeemer); the value and dignity of human beings (made in God's image, saved by grace, used by God in the world); the tragedy and consequences of sin (the Fall, separation from God, judgment); and the promise and assurance of salvation (covenant, forgiveness, the promised Messiah).

God. That's where *Genesis* begins. All at once we see him creating the universe in a majestic display of power and purpose, culminating with a man and woman made to be like him (1:26-27). But before long, sin entered the world, and Satan was unmasked. Bathed in innocence, creation was shattered by the Fall (the willful disobedience of Adam and Eve). Fellowship with God was broken, and evil began weaving its destructive web. In rapid succession, we read how Adam and Eve were expelled from the beautiful Garden, their first son turned murderer, and evil bred evil until God finally destroyed everyone on earth except the small family of Noah, the only godly person left.

As we come to Abraham on the plains of Canaan, we discover the beginning of God's covenant people and the broad strokes of his salvation plan: Salvation comes by faith, Abraham's descendants will be God's people, and the Savior of the world will come through this chosen nation. The stories of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph that follow are more than interesting biographies. They emphasize the promises of God and the proof that he is faithful. The men and women we meet in *Genesis* are simple, ordinary people, yet through them, God launched his eternal plan. These are vivid pictures of how God can and does use all kinds of people to accomplish his good purposes—even people like you.

Read *Genesis* and be encouraged. No matter how dark the world situation seems, God has a plan. No matter how insignificant or useless you feel, God loves you and wants to use you in his plan. No matter how sinful and separated from God you are, his salvation is available. Read *Genesis* . . . and find hope!

## Timeline

Creation

Noah  
undated

Abram  
born  
2166 BC  
(2000 BC)

Abram  
enters  
Canaan  
2091  
(1925)

Isaac  
born  
2066  
(1900)

## The Blueprint

<b>A. THE STORY OF CREATION</b> (1:1–2:3)	God created the sky, seas, and land. He created the plants, animals, fish, and birds. But he created human beings in his own image. Because of this, we can all be certain of our dignity and worth, regardless of how we are treated, and we should do our best to treat everyone respectfully.
<b>B. THE STORY OF ADAM</b> (2:4–5:32) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adam and Eve</li> <li>2. Cain and Abel</li> <li>3. Adam's descendants</li> </ol>	When Adam and Eve were created by God, they were without sin. But they became sinful when they disobeyed God and ate some fruit from the tree. Through Adam and Eve we learn about the destructive power of sin and its bitter consequences.
<b>C. THE STORY OF NOAH</b> (6:1–11:32) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Flood</li> <li>2. Repopulating the earth</li> <li>3. The tower of Babel</li> </ol>	Noah was spared from the destruction of the Flood because he obeyed God and built a large boat. Just as God protected Noah and his family, he still protects those who are faithful to him today.
<b>D. THE STORY OF ABRAHAM</b> (12:1–25:18) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. God promises a nation to Abram</li> <li>2. Abram and Lot</li> <li>3. God promises a son to Abram</li> <li>4. Sodom and Gomorrah</li> <li>5. Birth and near sacrifice of Isaac</li> <li>6. Isaac and Rebekah</li> <li>7. Abraham dies</li> </ol>	Abraham was asked to leave his country, wander in Canaan, wait years for a son, and then sacrifice his son as a burnt offering. Through these periods of sharp testing, Abraham remained faithful to God. His example teaches us what it means to live a life of faith.
<b>E. THE STORY OF ISAAC</b> (25:19–28:9) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jacob and Esau</li> <li>2. Isaac and Abimelek</li> <li>3. Jacob gets Isaac's blessing</li> </ol>	Isaac did not demand his own way. He did not resist when he was about to be sacrificed, and he gladly accepted a wife chosen for him by others. Like Isaac, we must learn to put God's will ahead of our own.
<b>F. THE STORY OF JACOB</b> (28:10–36:43) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jacob starts a family</li> <li>2. Jacob returns home</li> </ol>	Jacob did not give up easily. He faithfully served Laban for over 14 years. Later, he wrestled with God. Although Jacob made many mistakes, his hard work teaches us about living a life of service for our Lord.
<b>G. THE STORY OF JOSEPH</b> (37:1–50:26) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Joseph is sold into slavery</li> <li>2. Judah and Tamar</li> <li>3. Joseph is thrown into prison</li> <li>4. Joseph is placed in charge of Egypt</li> <li>5. Joseph and his brothers meet in Egypt</li> <li>6. Jacob's family moves to Egypt</li> <li>7. Jacob and Joseph die in Egypt</li> </ol>	Joseph was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers and unjustly thrown into prison by his master. Through the life of Joseph, we learn that suffering, no matter how unfair, can develop strong character in us.

## Megathemes

### THEME

### EXPLANATION

#### *Beginnings*

Genesis explains the beginnings of many important realities: the universe, the earth, people, sin, and God's plan of salvation. Genesis teaches us that the earth is well made and good; people are special to God and unique; God creates and sustains all life; and God responds to sin both by bringing just judgment and by mercifully providing a way of salvation.

#### *Disobedience*

People are always facing choices. Disobedience occurs when they choose not to follow God's plan of living. Genesis explains that people have been choosing to do wrong ever since Adam and Eve. Even great Bible heroes failed God and disobeyed.

#### *Sin*

When people choose to disobey God's plan for living, they are choosing to sin. And sin ruins people's lives. Genesis shows that living God's way makes life fulfilling.

#### *Promises*

God has promised to help and protect his people. This kind of promise is called a covenant. God kept his promises then, and he keeps them now. He promises to love us, accept us, forgive us.

#### *Obedience*

The opposite of sin is obedience. God uses sinful people in his plan, but the only way to enjoy the full benefits of God's promises is to turn from sin and obey him.

#### *Israel*

God started the nation of Israel in order to have a dedicated people who would (1) keep his ways alive in the world, (2) proclaim to the world what he is really like, and (3) prepare the world for the birth of his Son, Jesus. God is looking for people today to follow him. We are to proclaim God's truth and love to all nations, not just our own. We must be faithful to carry out the mission God has given us.

*Jacob  
& Esau  
born  
2006  
(1840)*

*Jacob  
flees to  
Harran  
1929  
(1764)*

*Joseph  
born  
1915  
(1750)*

*Joseph  
sold into  
slavery  
1898  
(1733)*

*Joseph  
rules  
Egypt  
1885  
(1720)*

*Joseph  
dies  
1805  
(1640)*



Modern names and boundaries are shown in gray.

- **Garden of Eden** God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when he made them in his image. The Bible doesn't tell us exactly where Eden was located, except for a few clues that are difficult to decipher in Genesis 2:10-14.
- **Mountains of Ararat** After the great Flood, Noah's ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat, in modern-day Turkey (8:4). From here his sons and their descendants spread out to build new nations.
- **Babel** The tower of Babel was built in the fertile area between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, within the region of modern-day Iraq (11:2).
- **Ur of the Chaldeans** Abram, a descendant of Shem and father of the Hebrew nation, was born in this great city (11:27-28).
- **Haran** Terah, Abram, Sarai, and Lot left Ur and, following the fertile crescent of the Euphrates River, headed toward the land of Canaan. Along the way, they settled in the village of Haran for a while (11:31).
- **Shechem** God urged Abram to leave Haran and go to a place where he would become the father of a great nation (12:1-2). So Abram, Sarai, and Lot traveled to the land of Canaan and settled near a city called Shechem (12:6).
- **Hebron** Abraham moved on to Hebron, where he put down his deepest roots (13:18). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all lived and were buried here.
- **Beersheba** The well at Beersheba was a source of conflict between Abraham and King Abimelek and later became a sign of the oath that they swore here (21:31). Years later, as Isaac was moving from place to place, God appeared to him here and passed on to him the covenant he had made with his father, Abraham (26:23-25).
- **Bethel** After deceiving his father, Jacob left Beersheba and fled to Haran. Along the way, God revealed himself to Jacob in a dream and passed on the covenant he had made with Abraham and Isaac (28:10-22). Jacob lived in Haran, worked for Laban, and married Leah and Rachel (29:15-30). After a tense meeting with his brother, Esau, Jacob returned to Bethel (35:1).
- **Egypt** Jacob had 12 sons, including Joseph, Jacob's favorite. Joseph's ten older brothers grew jealous, and then one day the brothers sold him to Ishmaelite traders going to Egypt. Eventually, Joseph rose from Egyptian slave to Pharaoh's right-hand man, saving Egypt from famine. Jacob's entire family moved from Canaan to Egypt and settled here (46:3-7).

## A. THE STORY OF CREATION (1:1–2:3)

*We sometimes wonder how our world came to be. But here we find the answer. God created the earth and everything in it and made humans like himself. Although we may not understand the complexity of just how he did it, it is clear that God did create all life. This shows not only God's authority over humanity but also his deep love for all people.*

### The Beginning

**1** In the beginning<sup>a</sup> God created the heavens and the earth.<sup>b</sup> <sup>2</sup>Now the earth was formless and empty,<sup>c</sup> darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God<sup>d</sup> was hovering over the waters.

1:1

<sup>a</sup>Jn 1:1-2

<sup>b</sup>Job 38:4; Ps 90:2;

Isa 42:5; 44:24;

45:12,18; Ac 17:24;

Heb 11:3; Rev 4:11

1:2

<sup>c</sup>Jer 4:23

<sup>d</sup>Ps 104:30

**1:1-31** The simple statement that God created the heavens and the earth is one of the most challenging concepts confronting the modern mind. The vast galaxy we live in is spinning at the incredible speed of about 490,000 miles an hour. But even at this breakneck speed, our galaxy still

needs over 200 million years to make one rotation. And there are at least one trillion other galaxies in the universe.

It has been said that the number of stars in the universe is more than all the grains of sand on all the beaches of the world. Yet this complex

**1:3**  
<sup>e</sup>Ps 33:6,9; 148:5;  
 Heb 11:3  
<sup>f</sup>2Co 4:6\*

**1:5**  
<sup>g</sup>Ps 74:16

**1:6**  
<sup>h</sup>Jer 10:12

**1:7**  
<sup>i</sup>Job 38:8–11,16;  
 Ps 148:4

**1:9**  
<sup>j</sup>Job 38:8–11;  
 Ps 104:6–9; Pr 8:29;  
 Jer 5:22; 2Pe 3:5

**1:11**  
<sup>k</sup>Ps 65:9–13; 104:14

<sup>3</sup>And God said, <sup>e</sup>“Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>f</sup>God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” <sup>g</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning — the first day.

<sup>6</sup>And God said, “Let there be a vault<sup>h</sup> between the waters to separate water from water.”

<sup>7</sup>So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. <sup>i</sup>And it was so. <sup>8</sup>God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning — the second day.

<sup>9</sup>And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place,<sup>j</sup> and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup>Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation:<sup>k</sup> seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their

## BEGINNINGS

**THE BIBLE** does not discuss the subject of evolution. Rather, its worldview assumes God created the world. The biblical view of creation is not in conflict with science; rather, it is in conflict with any worldview that starts without a creator.

Equally committed and sincere Christians have struggled with the subject of beginnings and come to differing conclusions. This, of course, is to be expected because the evidence is very old and, due to the ravages of the ages, quite fragmented. Regardless of what position we take, we should avoid polarizations and black-and-white thinking. We must also be careful not to make either the Bible or science say what it doesn't say.

The most important aspect of the continuing discussion is not the process of creation but the origin of creation. The world is not a product of blind chance and probability; God created it.

The Bible not only tells us that the world was created by God; more importantly, it tells us who this God is. It reveals God's personality, his character, and his plan for his creation. It also reveals God's deepest desire: to relate to and fellowship with the people he created. God took the ultimate step toward fellowship with us through his historic visit to this planet in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ. We can know in a very personal way this God who created the universe. As we open his Word and start getting to know him, we begin the most exciting and fulfilling journey imaginable.

sea of spinning stars functions with remarkable order and efficiency. To say that the universe “just happened” or “evolved” requires more faith than to believe that God is behind these amazing statistics. God truly did create a wonderful universe, and he is worthy of our praise.

God did not *need* to create the universe; he *chose* to create it. Why? God is love, and love is best expressed toward something or someone else—so God created the world and people as an expression of his love. We should avoid reducing God's creation to merely scientific terms. Remember that God created the universe because he loves us.

**1:1–31** The Creation story teaches us much about God and ourselves. First, we learn about God: (1) He is creative; (2) as the Creator, he is distinct from his creation; (3) he is eternal and in control of the world. We also learn about ourselves: (1) Since God chose to create us, we are valuable in his eyes; (2) we have an important role in the created order that includes ruling over other living things.

**1:1–31** Just how did God create the earth? Even among believers, this is an ongoing subject of debate. Some believe God created it in seven, 24-hour days. Others believe it happened over millions of years under God's direction. Almost every ancient religion has its own story to explain how the earth came to be. And some scientists try to attribute our origins to natural causes alone. The Bible doesn't tell us how it all happened, but it does show us one supreme God creating the earth out of his great love and giving all people a special place in it. We may never know all the answers to how God created the earth, but we know from Scripture that God did create it. That fact alone gives worth and dignity to each of us.

**1:2** Who created God? To ask that question is to assume there was another creator before God, and who would have created that being? Eventually we are forced to stop asking that question and realize that there has to be something that has always existed. God is the infinite

Being who has always been and who was created by no one. This is difficult to understand because finite minds cannot comprehend the infinite. (For example, we can try to think of the highest number, but we can't do it.) We must not limit the infinite God by our finite understanding.

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

**1:2** The image of the Spirit of God hovering over the waters brings to mind a mother bird caring for and protecting her young (see Deuteronomy 32:11–12; Isaiah 31:5). God's Spirit was actively involved in the creation of the world. God's care for and protection of us are still active through the Holy Spirit today.

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

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

**1:6** The “vault between the waters” was a separation between the sea and the mists of the skies.

kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning — the third day.

<sup>14</sup>And God said, “Let there be lights<sup>1</sup> in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs<sup>2</sup> to mark sacred times,<sup>3</sup> and days and years,<sup>4</sup> and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so.

<sup>16</sup>God made two great lights — the greater light to govern<sup>5</sup> the day and the lesser light to govern<sup>6</sup> the night. He also made the stars.<sup>7</sup> <sup>17</sup>God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth,<sup>8</sup> to govern the day and the night,<sup>9</sup> and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning — the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” <sup>21</sup>So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it,<sup>10</sup> according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”<sup>11</sup> <sup>23</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning — the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup>God made the wild animals<sup>12</sup> according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let us<sup>13</sup> make mankind in our image,<sup>14</sup> in our likeness, so that they may rule<sup>15</sup> over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,<sup>16</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup>So God created mankind in his own image,<sup>17</sup> in the image of God he created them; male and female<sup>18</sup> he created them.

**1:14**  
<sup>1</sup>Ps 74:16  
<sup>2</sup>Jer 10:2  
<sup>3</sup>Ps 104:19

**1:16**  
<sup>5</sup>Ps 136:8  
<sup>6</sup>Ps 136:9  
<sup>8</sup>Job 38:7,31-32;  
Ps 8:3; Isa 40:26

**1:18**  
<sup>9</sup>Jer 33:20,25

**1:21**  
<sup>10</sup>Ps 104:25-26

**1:22**  
<sup>11</sup>ver 28; Ge 8:17

**1:25**  
<sup>12</sup>Jer 27:5

**1:26**  
<sup>13</sup>Ps 100:3  
<sup>14</sup>Ge 9:6; Jas 3:9  
<sup>16</sup>Ps 8:6-8

**1:27**  
<sup>17</sup>1Co 11:7  
<sup>18</sup>Ge 5:2; Mt 19:4\*;  
Mk 10:6\*

\* 26 Probable reading of the original Hebrew text (see Syriac); Masoretic Text *the earth*

DAYS OF CREATION	First Day	Light (so there was light and darkness)
	Second Day	Sky and water (waters separated)
	Third Day	Land and seas (waters gathered); vegetation
	Fourth Day	Sun, moon, and stars (to govern the day and the night and to mark seasons, days, and years)
	Fifth Day	Fish and birds (to fill the waters and the sky)
	Sixth Day	Animals (to fill the earth) Man and woman (to care for the earth and to commune with God) God considered all he had made to be very good
	Seventh Day	God rested and blessed the seventh day

**1:25** God saw that his work was good. People sometimes feel guilty for feeling good about an accomplishment. This need not be so. Just as God felt good about his work, we can be pleased with our work when it is well done. However, we should not feel good about our work if God would not be pleased with it. What are you doing that pleases both you and God?

**1:26** Why does God use the plural form—“Let us make mankind in our image” (emphasis added)? One view is that this is a reference to the Trinity—God the Father, Jesus Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit, all of whom are God. Another view is that the plural wording is used to denote majesty; kings have traditionally used the plural form in speaking of themselves. The grammar doesn’t decide the matter for us, but in either case it is God who created humans in his image, and God has revealed himself to us as a Trinity clearly through the whole of Scripture. From Job 33:4 and Psalm 104:30, we do know that God’s Spirit was present in the Creation. From Colossians 1:16, we know that Christ, God’s Son, was at work in the Creation.

**1:26** In what ways are we made in God’s image? God obviously did not create us exactly like himself because God has no physical body. Instead, we are reflections of God’s glory and character. Some feel that our reason, creativity, moral capacity, speech, or self-determination is the image of God. More likely, “the image of God” describes our entire self, not just one part of us. We will never be totally like God because he

is our supreme creator. But we do have the ability to reflect his character in our love, patience, forgiveness, kindness, and faithfulness.

Knowing that we are made in God’s image and thus share many of his characteristics provides a solid basis for self-worth. Human worth is not based on possessions, achievements, physical attractiveness, or public acclaim. Instead, it is based on being made in God’s image, which gives us an unshakable reason to feel positive about ourselves. Criticizing or downgrading ourselves is criticizing what God has made and the abilities he has given us. Knowing that you are a person of worth helps you love God, know him personally, and treat others as his image bearers.

**1:27** God made both man and woman in his image. Neither one is made more in the image of God than the other. From the beginning the Bible places both man and woman at the pinnacle of God’s creation. Neither gender is exalted over the other, and neither is depreciated. Our identity is given to us by God. It is not defined by culture, experience, or environment; he has the prior claim to us. Thus he is Lord of our gender and sexuality.

**1:28** To rule over something is to have absolute authority and control over it. God has ultimate rule over the earth, and he exercises his authority with loving care. When God delegated some of his authority to the human race, he expected us to take responsibility for the environment and the



1:28  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 9:1,7; Lev 26:9

1:29  
<sup>b</sup>Ps 104:14  
 1:30  
<sup>c</sup>Ps 104:14,27; 145:15

1:31  
<sup>d</sup>Ex 20:11; 31:17;  
 Heb 4:4\*  
 2:3  
<sup>e</sup>Lev 23:3; Isa 58:13

<sup>28</sup>God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth<sup>a</sup> and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

<sup>29</sup>Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.<sup>b</sup> <sup>30</sup>And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground — everything that has the breath of life in it — I give every green plant for food.<sup>c</sup>” And it was so.

<sup>31</sup>God saw all that he had made,<sup>d</sup> and it was very good.<sup>e</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning — the sixth day.

## 2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

<sup>2</sup>By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.<sup>f</sup> <sup>3</sup>Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy,<sup>g</sup> because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

### B. THE STORY OF ADAM (2:4–5:32)

*Learning about our ancestors often helps us understand ourselves. Adam and Eve, our first ancestors, were the highlight of God’s creation—the very reason God made the world. But they didn’t always live the way God intended. Through their mistakes, we can learn important lessons about the way God wants us to live. Adam and Eve teach us much about the nature of sin and its consequences.*

#### 1. Adam and Eve

<sup>4</sup>This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

<sup>5</sup>Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth<sup>a</sup> and no plant had yet sprung up,<sup>h</sup> for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth<sup>i</sup> and there was no one to work the ground,<sup>6</sup> but streams<sup>b</sup> came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground.<sup>7</sup> Then the LORD God formed a man<sup>c</sup> from the dust<sup>j</sup> of the ground<sup>k</sup> and breathed into his nostrils the breath<sup>l</sup> of life,<sup>m</sup> and the man became a living being.<sup>n</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 5 Or land; also in verse 6   <sup>b</sup> 6 Or mist   <sup>c</sup> 7 The Hebrew for man (adam) sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew for ground (adamah); it is also the name Adam (see verse 20).

#### WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT MARRIAGE

Genesis 2:18-24	Marriage is God’s idea.
Genesis 2:24	God designed marriage as the lifelong union of one man and one woman.
Genesis 24:58-60	Commitment is essential to a successful marriage.
Ecclesiastes 9:9	Marriage holds times of great joy.
Song of Songs 4:9-10	Romance is important.
Malachi 2:14-15	Marriage creates the best environment for raising children.
Matthew 5:32	Unfaithfulness breaks the bond of trust, the foundation of all relationships.
Matthew 19:6	Marriage is permanent.
Romans 7:2-3	Ideally, only death should dissolve marriage.
Ephesians 5:21-33	Marriage is based on the principled practice of love, not on feelings.
Ephesians 5:32	Marriage is a living symbol of Christ and the church.
Hebrews 13:4	Marriage is good and honorable.

other creatures that share our planet. We must not be careless and wasteful as we fulfill this charge. God was careful and creative when he made this earth. We must also be careful and creative in our stewardship of it.

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

**2:2-3** We live in an action-oriented world. There always seems to be something to do and no time to rest. Yet God demonstrated that rest is appropriate and right. If God himself rested from his work, we should not be surprised that we also need rest. Jesus demonstrated this principle when he regularly withdrew to the wilderness to pray (see Luke 5:16). Our times of rest refresh us for times of service.

**2:3** That God *blessed* the seventh day means that he set it apart for holy use. The Ten Commandments emphasize this distinction by commanding the observance of the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11).

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

<sup>8</sup>Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden;<sup>o</sup> and there he put the man he had formed. <sup>9</sup>The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground — trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life<sup>p</sup> and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.<sup>q</sup>

**2:8**  
<sup>o</sup>Ge 3:23,24; Isa 51:3  
**2:9**  
<sup>p</sup>Ge 3:22,24; Rev 2:7;  
 22:2,14,19  
<sup>q</sup>Eze 47:12

<sup>10</sup>A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. <sup>11</sup>The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. <sup>12</sup>(The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin<sup>a</sup> and onyx are also there.) <sup>13</sup>The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. <sup>b</sup> <sup>14</sup>The name of the third river is the Tigris;<sup>r</sup> it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

**2:14**  
<sup>r</sup>Da 10:4

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup>but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”<sup>s</sup>

**2:17**  
<sup>s</sup>Dt 30:15,19;  
 Ro 5:12; 6:23;  
 Jas 1:15

<sup>18</sup>The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”<sup>t</sup>

**2:18**  
<sup>t</sup>1Co 11:9

<sup>19</sup>Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals<sup>u</sup> and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature,<sup>v</sup> that was its name. <sup>20</sup>So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

**2:19**  
<sup>u</sup>Ps 8:7  
<sup>v</sup>Ge 1:24

But for Adam<sup>c</sup> no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs<sup>d</sup> and then closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib<sup>ew</sup> he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

**2:22**  
<sup>w</sup>1Co 11:8,9,12

<sup>23</sup>The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones  
 and flesh of my flesh;<sup>x</sup>  
 she shall be called ‘woman,’  
 for she was taken out of man.”

**2:23**  
<sup>x</sup>Ge 29:14;  
 Eph 5:28-30

<sup>24</sup>That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united<sup>y</sup> to his wife, and they become one flesh.<sup>z</sup>

**2:24**  
<sup>y</sup>Mal 2:15  
<sup>z</sup>Mt 19:5\*; Mk  
 10:7-8\*; 1Co 6:16\*;  
 Eph 5:31\*

<sup>25</sup>Adam and his wife were both naked,<sup>a</sup> and they felt no shame.

**2:25**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 3:7,10-11

## The Fall

**3** Now the serpent<sup>b</sup> was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

**3:1**  
<sup>b</sup>2Co 11:3; Rev 12:9;  
 20:2

<sup>a</sup> 12 Or good; pearls <sup>b</sup> 13 Possibly southeast Mesopotamia <sup>c</sup> 20 Or the man <sup>d</sup> 21 Or took part of the man’s side <sup>e</sup> 22 Or part

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

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

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

**2:16-17** Why would God place a tree in the Garden and then forbid Adam to eat from it? God wanted Adam to obey him, but God gave Adam

the freedom to choose. Without this freedom, Adam would have been like a prisoner, and his obedience would have been hollow. The two trees provided an exercise in choice, with rewards for choosing to obey and sad consequences for choosing to disobey. When you are faced with a choice between right and wrong, remember that God is giving you an opportunity to obey him.

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

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

**2:24** God gave marriage as a gift to Adam and Eve. They were created perfect for each other. Marriage was not just for convenience, nor was

<sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup>but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

<sup>4</sup>“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. <sup>c</sup> <sup>5</sup>“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, <sup>d</sup> knowing good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable<sup>e</sup> for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>f</sup> <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them

**3:4**  
<sup>c</sup>Jn 8:44; 2Co 11:3  
**3:5**  
<sup>d</sup>Isa 14:14; Eze 28:2  
**3:6**  
<sup>e</sup>Jas 1:14-15;  
 1Jn 2:16  
<sup>f</sup>Ti 2:14

# SATAN'S PLAN AGAINST US

Doubt	Makes you question God's Word and his goodness
Discouragement	Makes you look at your problems rather than at God
Diversion	Makes the wrong things seem attractive so that you will want them more than the right things
Defeat	Makes you feel like a failure so that you don't even try
Delay	Makes you put off doing something so that it never gets done

it brought about by any culture. It was instituted by God and has three basic aspects: (1) The man leaves his parents and, in a public act, promises himself to his wife; (2) the man and woman are joined together by taking responsibility for each other's welfare and by loving each other above all others; and (3) the two become one flesh in the intimacy and commitment of sexual union, which is reserved for marriage. Strong marriages include all three of these aspects. Jesus reinforced this teaching in Matthew 19:5.

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

**3:1-6** Why does Satan tempt us? Temptation is Satan's invitation to give in to his kind of life and give up on God's kind of life. Satan tempted Eve and succeeded in getting her to sin. Ever since then, he's been busy getting people to sin. He even tempted Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11). But Jesus did not sin!

How could Eve have resisted temptation? By following the same guidelines we can follow. First, we must realize that *being tempted* is not a sin. We have not sinned until we *give in* to the temptation. Then, to resist temptation, we must (1) pray for strength to resist, (2) run (sometimes literally), (3) say no when confronted with what we know is wrong, and (4) hold on firmly to God's Word. James 1:12 tells of the blessings and rewards for those who don't give in when tempted. Every time we resist temptation, we become more like Jesus.

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

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

**3:5** Adam and Eve got what they wanted: an intimate knowledge of

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

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

But to become like God is not the same as trying to become God. Rather, it is to reflect his characteristics and to recognize his authority over your life. Like Eve, we often have a worthy goal but try to achieve it in the wrong way. Before you start, check your steps. Do they honor God as well as pursue the goal?

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

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

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

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

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

were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup>Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking<sup>g</sup> in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid<sup>h</sup> from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

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

<sup>11</sup>And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

<sup>12</sup>The man said, “The woman you put here with me — she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me,<sup>i</sup> and I ate.”

<sup>14</sup>So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed<sup>j</sup> are you above all livestock  
and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly  
and you will eat dust<sup>k</sup>  
all the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup>And I will put enmity  
between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring<sup>a</sup> and hers;<sup>m</sup>  
he will crush<sup>b</sup> your head,<sup>n</sup>  
and you will strike his heel.”

<sup>16</sup>To the woman he said,

“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;  
with painful labor you will give birth to children.  
Your desire will be for your husband,  
and he will rule over you.”<sup>o</sup>

<sup>17</sup>To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

“Cursed<sup>p</sup> is the ground because of you;  
through painful toil you will eat food from it  
all the days of your life.<sup>q</sup>

<sup>18</sup>It will produce thorns and thistles for you,  
and you will eat the plants of the field.<sup>r</sup>

<sup>19</sup>By the sweat of your brow  
you will eat your food<sup>s</sup>  
until you return to the ground,  
since from it you were taken;  
for dust you are  
and to dust you will return.”<sup>t</sup>

3:8

<sup>g</sup>Dt 23:14;  
<sup>h</sup>Job 31:33;  
Ps 139:7-12;  
Jer 23:24

3:13

<sup>i</sup>2Co 11:3; 1Ti 2:14

3:14

<sup>j</sup>Dt 28:15-20  
<sup>k</sup>Isa 65:25; Mic 7:17

3:15

<sup>l</sup>Jn 8:44; Ac 13:10;  
1Jn 3:8  
<sup>m</sup>Isa 7:14; Mt 1:23;  
Rev 12:17  
<sup>n</sup>Ro 16:20; Heb 2:14

3:16

<sup>o</sup>1Co 11:3; Eph 5:22

3:17

<sup>p</sup>Ge 5:29;  
Ro 8:20-22  
<sup>q</sup>Job 5:7; 14:1;  
Ecc 2:23

3:18

<sup>r</sup>Ps 104:14

3:19

<sup>s</sup>2Th 3:10  
<sup>t</sup>Ge 2:7; Ps 90:3;  
104:29; Ecc 12:7

<sup>a</sup> 15 Or seed    <sup>b</sup> 15 Or strike

there. They make you aware of your sin so you can ask God’s forgiveness and then correct your wrongdoing.

**3:8-9** These verses show God’s desire to have fellowship with us. They also show why we are afraid to have fellowship with him. Adam and Eve hid from God when they heard him approaching. God wanted to be with them, but because of their sin, they were afraid to show themselves. Sin had broken their close relationship with God, just as it has broken ours. But Jesus Christ, God’s Son, opens the way for us to renew our fellowship with him. God longs to be with us. He actively offers us his unconditional love. Our natural response is fear because we feel we can’t live up to his standards. But understanding that he loves us, regardless of our faults, can help remove that dread.

**3:8** The thought of two humans covered with fig leaves trying to hide from the all-seeing, all-knowing God seems ridiculous. How could they be so silly as to think they could actually hide? Yet we do the same thing,

acting as though God doesn’t know what we’re doing. Have the courage to share all you do and think with him. And don’t try to hide—it can’t be done. Honesty will strengthen your relationship with God.

**3:11-13** Adam and Eve failed to heed God’s warning recorded in 2:16-17. They did not understand the reasons for his command, so they chose to act in another way that looked better to them. All of God’s commands are for our own good, but we may not always understand the reasons behind them. People who trust God will obey him because he asks them to, whether or not they understand his reasons.

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



## Adam

**WE CAN HARDLY IMAGINE** what it must have been like to be the first and only person on earth. It's one thing for us to be lonely; it was another for Adam, who had never known another human being. He missed out on much that makes us who we are—he had no childhood, no parents, no family or friends. He had to learn to be human on his own. Fortunately, God didn't let him remain alone too long before presenting him with an ideal companion and spouse, Eve. Theirs was a complete, innocent, and open oneness, without a hint of shame.

One of Adam's first conversations with his delightful new companion must have been about the rules of the Garden. Before God made Eve, he had already given Adam complete freedom in the Garden, with the responsibility to tend and care for it. But one tree was off-limits: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam would have told Eve all about this. She knew, when Satan approached her, that the tree's fruit was not to be eaten; however, she decided to eat the forbidden fruit anyway. Then she offered some to Adam. At that moment, the fate of creation was on the line. Sadly, Adam didn't pause to consider the consequences. He went ahead and ate.

In that moment of rebellion something beautiful and free was shattered—God's perfect creation. Adam was separated from God by his desire to act on his own. The effect on a plate-glass window is the same whether a stone or a boulder shatters it—the thousands of fragments can never be regathered.

In the case of Adam's sin, however, God already had a plan in motion to overcome the effects of the rebellion. The entire Bible is the story of how that plan unfolds, ultimately leading to God's own visit to earth through his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus' sinless life, death, and resurrection made it possible for God to offer forgiveness to all. Our own acts of rebellion—both large and small—prove that we are descendants of Adam. Only by asking for forgiveness through Jesus Christ can we become children of God.

### Strengths and accomplishments:

- Namer of the animals
- Caretaker of the Garden of Eden
- Father of the human race
- The first person made in the image of God, and the first human to share an intimate personal relationship with God

### Weaknesses and mistakes:

- Avoided responsibility and blamed others; chose to hide rather than to confront; made excuses rather than admitting the truth
- Greatest mistake: Along with Eve, brought sin into the world

### Lessons from his life:

- As Adam's descendants, we all reflect the image of God, and God wants to share a close relationship with us.
- Though people are free to do wrong, God wants us to choose instead to obey him.
- We should not blame others for our sins.
- We cannot hide from God.

### Vital statistics:

- Where: Garden of Eden, which was probably located in present-day Iraq or Iran
- Occupation: Caretaker, gardener, farmer
- Relatives: Wife: Eve. Sons: Cain, Abel, Seth, and numerous other children. Adam was the only man who never had an earthly mother or father.

### Key verses:

"The man said, 'The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.'" (Genesis 3:12)

"For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22)

Adam's story is told in Genesis 1:26–5:5. He is also mentioned in 1 Chronicles 1:1; Luke 3:38; Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45; 1 Timothy 2:13–14.

**3:14–24** Adam and Eve chose their course of action—disobedience—and then God chose his. As a holy God, he could respond only in a way consistent with his perfect moral nature. He could not allow sin to go unchecked; he had to punish it. If the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin seem extreme, remember that their sin set in motion the world's tendency toward disobeying God. That is why we sin today: Every human being ever born, with the exception of Jesus, has inherited the sinful nature of Adam and Eve (Romans 5:12–21). Adam and Eve's punishment reflects how seriously God views sin of any kind.

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

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

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



<sup>20</sup>Adam<sup>a</sup> named his wife Eve,<sup>b</sup> because she would become the mother of all the living.  
<sup>21</sup>The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. <sup>22</sup>And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life<sup>u</sup> and eat, and live forever.” <sup>23</sup>So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden<sup>v</sup> to work the ground<sup>w</sup> from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup>After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side<sup>c</sup> of the Garden of Eden cherubim<sup>x</sup> and a flaming sword<sup>y</sup> flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.<sup>z</sup>

**3:22**  
<sup>a</sup>Rev 22:14

**3:23**  
<sup>u</sup>Ge 2:8  
<sup>w</sup>Ge 4:2

**3:24**  
<sup>x</sup>Ex 25:18-22  
<sup>y</sup>Ps 104:4  
<sup>z</sup>Ge 2:9

## 2. Cain and Abel

**4** Adam<sup>a</sup> made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain.<sup>d</sup> She said, “With the help of the LORD I have brought forth<sup>e</sup> a man.” <sup>2</sup>Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.<sup>a</sup>

**4:2**  
<sup>a</sup>Lk 11:51

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. <sup>3</sup>In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. <sup>b</sup><sup>4</sup>And Abel also brought an offering — fat portions<sup>c</sup> from some of the firstborn of his flock. <sup>d</sup>The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,<sup>e</sup> <sup>5</sup>but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

**4:3**  
<sup>b</sup>Nu 18:12

**4:4**  
<sup>c</sup>Lev 3:16  
<sup>d</sup>Ex 13:2,12  
<sup>e</sup>Heb 11:4

<sup>6</sup>Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? <sup>7</sup>If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door;<sup>f</sup> it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.<sup>g</sup>”

**4:7**  
<sup>f</sup>Nu 32:23  
<sup>g</sup>Ro 6:16

<sup>8</sup>Now Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.”<sup>f</sup> While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.<sup>h</sup>

**4:8**  
<sup>h</sup>Mt 23:35; 1Jn 3:12

<sup>9</sup>Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”

“I don’t know,” he replied. “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

<sup>10</sup>The LORD said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground.<sup>i</sup> <sup>11</sup>Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup>When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.”

**4:10**  
<sup>i</sup>Ge 9:5; Nu 35:33;  
 Heb 12:24;  
 Rev 6:9-10

<sup>a</sup>20:1 Or *The man*    <sup>b</sup>20 Eve probably means *living*.    <sup>c</sup>24 Or *placed in front*    <sup>d</sup>1 Cain sounds like the Hebrew for *brought forth or acquired*.    <sup>e</sup>1 Or *have acquired*    <sup>f</sup>8 Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; Masoretic Text does not have “Let’s go out to the field.”

**3:22-24** Life in the Garden of Eden was like living in heaven. Everything was perfect, and if Adam and Eve had obeyed God, they could have lived there forever. But after they disobeyed him, God told Adam and Eve to leave. If they had continued to live in the Garden and had eaten from the tree of life, they would have lived forever. But eternal life in a state of sin would mean forever trying to hide from God. Like Adam and Eve, all of us have sinned and are separated from fellowship with God. But because of Jesus’ sacrificial death for us, we do not have to stay separated from God. In fact, God is preparing a new earth as an eternal paradise for his people (see Revelation 21–22). To ensure our place there one day, let us accept his invitation to come to him (Revelation 22:17).

**3:24** This is how Adam and Eve broke their relationship with God: (1) They became convinced their way was better than God’s and acted on that belief; (2) they became self-conscious and hid; and (3) they tried to excuse and defend themselves. To build a relationship with God we must reverse those steps: (1) We must drop our excuses and self-defenses; (2) we must seek God, not hide from him; and (3) we must become convinced that God’s way is better than our way and act accordingly.

**4:1** The phrase “made love to” is literally “knew.” Sexual union means oneness with and total knowledge of the other person. Sexual intercourse is the most intimate of acts, sealing a social, physical, and spiritual relationship. That is why God has reserved it for a man and a woman in marriage alone.

**4:2** No longer was everything provided for Adam and Eve as it had been in the Garden of Eden, where their daily tasks had been refreshing and delightful. Now they had to struggle against the elements in order to provide food, clothing, and shelter for themselves and their family. Cain became a farmer, while Abel was a shepherd. In parts of the Middle East today, these ancient occupations are still practiced much as they were in Cain and Abel’s time.

**4:3-5** The Bible doesn’t say why God did not accept Cain’s sacrifice. Perhaps Cain’s attitude was improper, or perhaps his offering was not

up to God’s standards. Proverbs 21:27 says, “The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable—how much more so when brought with evil intent!” God evaluates both our motives and the quality of what we offer him. When we give to God and others, we should have joyful hearts because of what we are able to give. We should not worry about how much we are giving up, for all things are God’s in the first place. Instead, we should joyfully give to God our best in time, money, possessions, and talents.

**4:6-7** How do you react when someone suggests you have done something wrong? Do you move to correct the mistake or deny that you need to correct it? After Cain’s sacrifice was rejected, God gave him the chance to right his wrong and try again. God even encouraged him to do this! But Cain refused, and the rest of his life is a startling example of what happens to those who refuse to admit their mistakes. The next time someone suggests you are wrong, take an honest look at yourself and choose God’s way instead of Cain’s.

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

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

**4:8-10** Adam and Eve’s disobedience brought sin into the human race. They may have thought their sin—eating a piece of fruit—wasn’t very bad, but notice how quickly their sinful nature developed in their children. Simple disobedience quickly degenerated into outright murder. Adam and Eve acted only against God, but Cain acted against both God and

**4:14**  
<sup>a</sup>2Ki 17:18; Ps 51:11;  
 139:7-12; Jer 7:15;  
 52:3  
<sup>k</sup>Ge 9:6;  
 Nu 35:19,21,27,33  
**4:15**  
<sup>l</sup>Eze 9:4,6  
<sup>m</sup>ver 24; Ps 79:12  
**4:16**  
<sup>n</sup>Ge 2:8  
**4:17**  
<sup>o</sup>Ps 49:11

<sup>13</sup>Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is more than I can bear. <sup>14</sup>Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence;<sup>j</sup> I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.”<sup>k</sup>

<sup>15</sup>But the LORD said to him, “Not so<sup>l</sup>; anyone who kills Cain<sup>l</sup> will suffer vengeance seven times over.”<sup>m</sup> Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. <sup>16</sup>So Cain went out from the LORD’s presence and lived in the land of Nod,<sup>b</sup> east of Eden.<sup>n</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Cain made love to his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son<sup>o</sup> Enoch. <sup>18</sup>To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech.

<sup>a</sup> 15 Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; Hebrew *Very well*    <sup>b</sup> 16 *Nod* means *wandering* (see verses 12 and 14).



## Eve

**WE KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT EVE**, the first woman in the world, yet she is the mother of us all. She was the final piece in the intricate and amazing puzzle of God’s creation. Adam now had another human being with whom to share life—someone made in God’s image just as he was. Here was someone alike enough for a deep connection, yet different enough for a vibrant relationship. Together they were greater than either could have been alone.

Eve was approached by Satan in the Garden of Eden, where she and Adam lived. He questioned her contentment. How could she be happy when she was not allowed to eat from one of the fruit trees? And he questioned God’s goodness. Why would God keep the knowledge of good and evil from them? Satan helped Eve shift her focus from all that God had done and given to the one thing he had withheld. And Eve was willing to accept Satan’s viewpoint without checking with God.

Sound familiar? How often is our attention drawn from the much that is ours to the little that isn’t? We get that “I’ve got to have it” feeling and don’t stop to think that God might have a good reason for keeping it from us. Eve was typical of us all, and we consistently show we are her descendants by repeating her mistake. Our desires, like Eve’s, can be quite easily manipulated. To avoid being deceived, we need to keep God in our decision-making process always. We can do this by reviewing our motives with him in prayer; seeking guidance in his Word, the Bible; and asking him to lead us through his Spirit.

### Strengths and accomplishments:

- First wife and mother
- First woman made in the image of God; as such, shared a special relationship with God and shared responsibility with Adam over creation

### Weaknesses and mistakes:

- Allowed her contentment to be undermined by Satan
- Acted impulsively without talking either to God or to her husband
- Not only sinned, but also shared her sin with Adam
- When confronted, blamed others

### Lessons from her life:

- Women share equally in the image of God.
- The necessary ingredients for a strong marriage are commitment to each other, companionship with each other, complete oneness, and absence of shame (Genesis 2:24-25).
- The basic human tendency to sin goes back to the beginning of the human race.
- We can trust that God’s commands come from his goodness.

### Vital statistics:

- Where: Garden of Eden
- Occupation: Comanager of Eden
- Relatives: Husband: Adam. Sons: Cain, Abel, Seth, and numerous other children.

### Key verse:

“The LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’” (Genesis 2:18)

Eve’s story is told in Genesis 2:18–4:26.

another person. A small sin has a way of growing out of control. Let God help you with your “little” sins before they turn into tragedies.

**4:11-15** Cain was severely punished for this murder. God judges all sins and punishes appropriately, not out of vengeance, but because he desires to correct us and restore our fellowship with him. When you’re corrected, don’t resent it. Instead, renew your fellowship with God.

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

Adam and Eve had numerous children; they had been told to “fill the

earth” (1:28). Cain’s guilt and fear over killing his brother were heavy, and he probably feared repercussions from his family. If he was capable of killing, so were they. Cain had set an example of disobedience, hatred, and anger. Vengeance would have been the likely outcome. The wife Cain chose may have been one of his sisters or a niece. The human race was still genetically pure, and there was no fear of side effects from marrying relatives.

**4:15** The expression “will suffer vengeance seven times over” means that the person’s punishment would be complete, thorough, and much worse than that received by Cain for his sin.



<sup>19</sup>Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah. <sup>20</sup>Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. <sup>21</sup>His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play stringed instruments and pipes. <sup>22</sup>Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of<sup>a</sup> bronze and iron. Tubal-Cain's sister was Naamah.

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

“Adah and Zillah, listen to me;  
wives of Lamech, hear my words.  
I have killed<sup>p</sup> a man for wounding me,  
a young man for injuring me.

<sup>24</sup>If Cain is avenged<sup>q</sup> seven times,<sup>r</sup>  
then Lamech seventy-seven times.”

<sup>25</sup>Adam made love to his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth,<sup>b,s</sup> saying, “God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him.”<sup>t</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh.

At that time people began to call on<sup>c</sup> the name of the LORD.<sup>u</sup>

**4:23**  
<sup>a</sup>Ex 20:13; Lev 19:18

**4:24**  
<sup>d</sup>Dt 32:35  
<sup>e</sup>ver 15

**4:25**  
<sup>f</sup>Ge 5:3  
<sup>g</sup>ver 8

**4:26**  
<sup>h</sup>Ge 12:8; 1Ki 18:24;  
Ps 116:17; Joel 2:32;  
Zep 3:9; Ac 2:21;  
1Co 1:2

### 3. Adam's descendants

#### From Adam to Noah

**5** This is the written account of Adam's family line.

When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God.<sup>v</sup> <sup>2</sup>He created them male and female<sup>w</sup> and blessed them. And he named them “Mankind”<sup>d</sup> when they were created.

<sup>3</sup>When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image;<sup>x</sup> and he named him Seth. <sup>4</sup>After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup>Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years, and then he died.<sup>y</sup>

<sup>6</sup>When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father<sup>e</sup> of Enosh. <sup>7</sup>After he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters. <sup>8</sup>Altogether, Seth lived a total of 912 years, and then he died.

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

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

<sup>14</sup>Altogether, Kenan lived a total of 910 years, and then he died.

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

<sup>18</sup>When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch.<sup>z</sup> <sup>19</sup>After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. <sup>20</sup>Altogether, Jared lived a total of 962 years, and then he died.

<sup>21</sup>When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. <sup>22</sup>After he

**5:1**  
<sup>v</sup>Ge 1:27; Eph 4:24;  
Col 3:10

**5:2**  
<sup>w</sup>Ge 1:27; Mt 19:4;  
Mk 10:6; Gal 3:28

**5:3**  
<sup>x</sup>Ge 1:26; 1Co 15:49

**5:5**  
<sup>y</sup>Ge 3:19

**5:18**  
<sup>z</sup>Jude 14

<sup>a</sup> 22 Or who instructed all who work in <sup>b</sup> 25 Seth probably means granted. <sup>c</sup> 26 Or to proclaim  
<sup>d</sup> 2 Hebrew adam <sup>e</sup> 6 Father may mean ancestor; also in verses 7–26.

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

**5:1–32** The Bible contains several lists of ancestors, called genealogies. They are not intended to be exhaustive and may include only famous people or the heads of families. The Hebrew word translated “became the father of” could refer not just to a son, but also to a more distant descendant.

Why are genealogies included in the Bible? The Hebrew people passed on their beliefs through oral tradition. For many years in many places, writing was primitive or nonexistent. Stories were told to children, who

passed them on to their children. Genealogies gave a skeletal outline that helped people remember the stories. For centuries these genealogies were added to and passed down from family to family. Even more important than preserving family tradition, genealogies were included in the Bible to confirm God's promise that the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, would be born into the line of Abraham.

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

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

**5:22**  
<sup>a</sup>Ver 24; Ge 6:9;  
 17:1; 48:15; Mic 6:8;  
 Mal 2:6  
**5:24**  
<sup>b</sup>Ver 22  
<sup>c</sup>2Ki 2:1,11; Heb 11:5

**5:29**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 3:17; Ro 8:20

became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God<sup>a</sup> 300 years and had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup>Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. <sup>24</sup>Enoch walked faithfully with God;<sup>b</sup> then he was no more, because God took him away.<sup>c</sup>

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

<sup>28</sup>When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. <sup>29</sup>He named him Noah<sup>a</sup> and said, “He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.” <sup>30</sup>After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup>Altogether, Lamech lived a total of 777 years, and then he died.

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

## C. THE STORY OF NOAH (6:1–11:32)

*Earth was no longer the perfect paradise that God had intended. It is frightening to see how quickly all humanity forgot about God. Incredibly, in all the world, only one man and his family still worshiped God. That man was Noah. Because of his faithfulness and obedience, God saved him and his family from a vast flood that destroyed every other human being on earth. This section shows us how God hates sin and judges those who enjoy it.*

### 1. The Flood

#### *Wickedness in the World*

**6** When human beings began to increase in number on the earth<sup>e</sup> and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup>the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. <sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with<sup>b</sup> humans forever;<sup>f</sup> for they are mortal;<sup>g</sup> their days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

<sup>a</sup> 29 Noah sounds like the Hebrew for *comfort*.

<sup>b</sup> 3 Or *My spirit will not remain in*

<sup>c</sup> 3 Or *corrupt*

**6:1**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 1:28

**6:3**  
<sup>f</sup>Isa 57:16  
<sup>g</sup>Psa 78:39



## Abel

**ABEL WAS** the second child born into the world, but the first one to obey God. All we know about this man is that his parents were Adam and Eve, he was a shepherd, he presented pleasing offerings to God, and his life was ended at the hands of his jealous older brother, Cain.

The Bible doesn't tell us why God liked Abel's gift and disliked Cain's, but both Cain and Abel knew what God expected. Only Abel obeyed. Throughout history, Abel is remembered for his obedience and faith (Hebrews 11:4), and he is called “righteous” (Matthew 23:35).

The Bible gives us guidance in how to live godly lives. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can choose to obey God even in difficult circumstances. Like Abel, we must obey regardless of the cost and trust God to make things right.

#### Strengths and accomplishments:

- First member of the “Hall of Faith” in Hebrews 11
- First shepherd
- First martyr for truth (Matthew 23:35)

#### Lessons from his life:

- God hears those who come to him.
- God recognizes the innocent person and sooner or later punishes the guilty.

#### Vital statistics:

- Where: Just outside Eden
- Occupation: Shepherd
- Relatives: Parents: Adam and Eve. Brother: Cain.

#### Key verse:

“By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.” (Hebrews 11:4)

Abel's story is told in Genesis 4:1-8. He is also mentioned in Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:51; Hebrews 11:4; 12:24.

**5:21-24** At first glance it looks as if Enoch fared worse than the other patriarchs—he lived on earth only 365 years! Hebrews 11:5 explains what Genesis 5:24 means: Enoch was taken directly to heaven without seeing death. Enoch, then, lived longer than any of the other patriarchs, for he never died at all.

**5:25-27** How did these people live so long? Some believe that the ages listed here were lengths of family dynasties rather than ages of individual people. Those who think these were actual ages offer three explanations: (1) The human race was genetically purer in this early time period with less disease to shorten life spans; (2) no rain had yet fallen on the earth,

and the “water above [the vault]” (1:7) kept out harmful cosmic rays and shielded people from environmental factors that hasten aging; and (3) God gave people longer lives so they would have time to “fill the earth” (1:28).

**6:1-4** Some people have thought that the “sons of God” were fallen angels. But this is unlikely, because angels do not marry or reproduce (Matthew 22:30; Mark 12:25). Some interpreters believe this phrase refers to the descendants of Seth who intermarried with Cain's evil descendants. This would have weakened the good influence of the faithful and increased moral depravity in the world, resulting in an explosion of evil.

**6:3** “Their days will be a hundred and twenty years” has been interpreted

<sup>4</sup>The Nephilim<sup>h</sup> were on the earth in those days — and also afterward — when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>6</sup>The LORD regretted<sup>j</sup> that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. <sup>7</sup>So the LORD said, “I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created — and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground — for I regret that I have made them.” <sup>8</sup>But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.<sup>k</sup>

**6:4**  
<sup>a</sup>Nu 13:33

**6:5**  
<sup>i</sup>Ge 8:21; Ps 14:1-3

**6:6**  
<sup>j</sup>Isa 11:11,35;  
Isa 63:10

**6:8**  
<sup>k</sup>Ge 19:19;  
Ex 33:12,13,17;  
Lk 1:30; Ac 7:46

## Noah and the Flood

<sup>9</sup>This is the account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time,<sup>l</sup> and he walked faithfully with God.<sup>m</sup> <sup>10</sup>Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.<sup>n</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. <sup>12</sup>God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.<sup>p</sup>

<sup>13</sup>So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.” <sup>14</sup>So make yourself an ark of cypress<sup>a</sup> wood;<sup>q</sup> make rooms in it and coat it with pitch<sup>s</sup> inside and out. <sup>15</sup>This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high.<sup>b</sup> <sup>16</sup>Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit<sup>c</sup> high all around.<sup>d</sup> Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. <sup>17</sup>I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. <sup>18</sup>But I will establish my covenant with you,<sup>u</sup> and you will enter the ark<sup>v</sup> — you and your sons and your wife and your sons’ wives with you. <sup>19</sup>You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. <sup>20</sup>Two<sup>w</sup> of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. <sup>21</sup>You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.”

<sup>22</sup>Noah did everything just as God commanded him.<sup>x</sup>

**6:9**  
<sup>l</sup>Ge 7:1;  
Eze 14:14,20;  
Heb 11:7; 2Pe 2:5  
<sup>m</sup>Ge 5:22

**6:10**  
<sup>n</sup>Ge 5:32

**6:11**  
<sup>p</sup>Eze 7:23; 8:17

**6:12**  
<sup>q</sup>Ps 14:1-3

**6:13**  
<sup>r</sup>ver 17; Eze 7:2-3

**6:14**  
<sup>s</sup>Heb 11:7; 1Pe 3:20  
<sup>t</sup>Ex 2:3

**6:17**  
<sup>u</sup>Ge 7:4,21-23;  
2Pe 2:5

**6:18**  
<sup>v</sup>Ge 9:9-16  
<sup>w</sup>Ge 7:1,7,13

**6:20**  
<sup>x</sup>Ge 7:15

**6:22**  
<sup>y</sup>Ge 7:5,9,16

<sup>a</sup> 14 The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain. <sup>b</sup> 15 That is, about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high or about 135 meters long, 23 meters wide and 14 meters high. <sup>c</sup> 16 That is, about 18 inches or about 45 centimeters. <sup>d</sup> 16 The meaning of the Hebrew for this clause is uncertain.

by some commentators to mean that God was allowing the people of Noah’s day 120 years to change their sinful ways. God shows his great patience with us as well (2 Peter 3:8-9). He is giving us time to quit living our way and begin living his way, the way he shows us in his Word. While 120 years may seem like a long time, eventually the time ran out, and the floodwaters swept across the earth. Your time also may be running out (2 Peter 3:10-14). Turn to God to forgive your sins. You don’t know how much time God will give you to turn to him, and once that time comes, there will be no more opportunities.

**6:4** The Nephilim were giants probably nine or ten feet tall. This same Hebrew term was used to name a tall race of people mentioned in Numbers 13:33—possibly the ancestors of Goliath, who was nine feet tall (1 Samuel 17). The Nephilim used their physical advantage to oppress the people around them.

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

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

**6:9** Saying that Noah was righteous and blameless does not mean that

he never sinned (the Bible records one of his sins in 9:20-21). Rather, it means that Noah wholeheartedly loved and obeyed God. For a lifetime he walked step by step in faith as a living example to his generation. Like Noah, we live in a world filled with evil. Are we influencing others or being influenced by them? Are our priorities being set by God and his people or by those who stand against him?

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

**6:18** When God said, “I will establish my covenant with you,” he was making a promise. This is a familiar theme in Scripture—God making covenants with his people. How reassuring it is to know God’s covenant is established with us. He is still our salvation, and we are kept safe through our relationship with him. (For more on covenants, see 9:8-17; 12:1-3; and 15:17-21.)

**6:22** Noah got right to work when God told him to build the ark. Other people must have been warned about the coming disaster, but apparently they did not expect it to happen (see 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5). Today things haven’t changed much. Each day thousands of people are warned of God’s inevitable judgment, yet most of them don’t really believe it will happen. Don’t expect people to welcome or accept your message of God’s coming judgment on sin. Those who don’t believe in God will deny his

7:1  
<sup>1</sup>Mt 24:38  
<sup>2</sup>Ge 6:9; Eze 14:14  
 7:2  
<sup>a</sup>ver 8; Ge 8:20;  
 Lev 10:10; 11:1-47

**7** The LORD then said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and your whole family,<sup>1</sup> because I have found you righteous<sup>2</sup> in this generation. <sup>2</sup>Take with you seven pairs of every kind of clean<sup>3</sup> animal, a male and its mate, and one pair of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate, <sup>3</sup>and also seven pairs of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth. <sup>4</sup>Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made.”

7:5  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 6:22

<sup>5</sup>And Noah did all that the LORD commanded him.<sup>b</sup>  
<sup>6</sup>Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. <sup>7</sup>And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. <sup>8</sup>Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, <sup>9</sup>male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, as God had commanded Noah. <sup>10</sup>And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth.

7:11  
<sup>c</sup>Eze 26:19  
<sup>d</sup>Ge 8:2

<sup>11</sup>In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month — on that day all the springs of the great deep<sup>c</sup> burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens<sup>d</sup> were opened. <sup>12</sup>And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.<sup>e</sup>

7:12  
<sup>e</sup>ver 4

<sup>13</sup>On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark. <sup>14</sup>They had with them every wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground according to its kind and every bird according to its kind, everything with wings. <sup>15</sup>Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and



## Cain

**IN SPITE OF** parents’ efforts and worries, conflicts between children in a family seem inevitable. Sibling relationships allow both competition and cooperation. In most cases, the mixture of loving and fighting eventually creates a strong bond between brothers and sisters. It isn’t unusual, though, to hear parents say, “They fight so much I hope they don’t kill each other before they grow up.” In Cain’s case, the troubling potential became a reality—the conflict and jealousy overcame whatever love he had for Abel. And while we don’t know many details of this first child’s life, his story can still teach us.

Cain was angry. Furious. Both he and his brother Abel had given offerings to God, and his had been rejected. Cain’s reaction gives us a clue that his attitude was probably wrong from the start. Cain had a choice to make. He could correct his attitude about his offering to God, or he could take his anger out on his brother. His decision is a clear reminder of how often we are aware of the right choice yet choose the wrong one, just as Cain did. We may not be choosing to murder, but we are still intentionally choosing what we shouldn’t.

The feelings motivating our behavior can’t always be changed by simple thought power. But here we can begin to experience God’s willingness to help. Asking for his help to do what is right can prevent us from setting into motion actions that we will later regret.

### Strengths and accomplishments:

- First human child
- First to follow in father’s profession, farming

### Weaknesses and mistakes:

- When disappointed, reacted in anger
- Took the negative option even when a positive possibility was offered
- Was the first murderer

### Lessons from his life:

- Anger itself 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 we are and have.
- The consequences of sin may last a lifetime.

### Vital statistics:

- Where: Near Eden
- Occupation: Farmer, then founder of a city
- Relatives: Parents: Adam and Eve. Brothers: Abel, Seth, and others not mentioned by name.

### Key verse:

“If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.” (Genesis 4:7)

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

judgment and try to get you to deny God as well. But remember God’s promise to Noah to keep him safe. This can inspire you to trust God for deliverance in the judgment that is sure to come.

**7:2-3** Pairs of every animal joined Noah in the ark; seven pairs were taken of those animals used for food and for sacrifice—the “clean” animals. It has been estimated that almost 45,000 animals could have fit into the ark.

entered the ark.<sup>f 16</sup>The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD shut him in.

<sup>17</sup>For forty days<sup>g</sup> the flood kept coming on the earth, and as the waters increased they lifted the ark high above the earth.<sup>18</sup>The waters rose and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water.<sup>19</sup>They rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered.<sup>h 20</sup>The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than fifteen cubits.<sup>a, b</sup><sup>21</sup>Every living thing that moved on land perished — birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind.<sup>i 22</sup>Everything on dry land that had the breath of life<sup>j</sup> in its nostrils died.<sup>23</sup>Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; people and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds were wiped from the earth.<sup>k</sup> Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.<sup>l</sup>

<sup>24</sup>The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days.<sup>m</sup>

**8** But God remembered<sup>n</sup> Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth,<sup>o</sup> and the waters receded.<sup>2</sup>Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens<sup>p</sup> had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky.<sup>3</sup>The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down,<sup>4</sup> and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.<sup>5</sup>The waters continued to recede until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible.

<sup>6</sup>After forty days Noah opened a window he had made in the ark<sup>7</sup> and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth.<sup>8</sup>Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground.<sup>9</sup>But the dove could find nowhere to perch because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark.<sup>10</sup>He waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark.<sup>11</sup>When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth.<sup>12</sup>He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

<sup>13</sup>By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry.<sup>14</sup>By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry.

<sup>15</sup>Then God said to Noah,<sup>16</sup>“Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives.<sup>q 17</sup>Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you — the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground — so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number on it.”<sup>r</sup>

<sup>18</sup>So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives.<sup>19</sup>All the

7:15  
Ge 6:19

7:17  
ver 4

7:19  
Ps 104:6

7:21  
Ge 6:7,13

7:22  
Ge 1:30

7:23  
Mt 24:39; Lk 17:27;  
1Pe 3:20; 2Pe 2:5  
Heb 11:7

7:24  
Ge 8:3

8:1  
Ge 9:15; 19:29;  
Ex 2:24; 1Sa 1:11,19  
Ex 14:21

8:2  
Ge 7:11

8:16  
Ge 7:13

8:17  
Ge 1:22

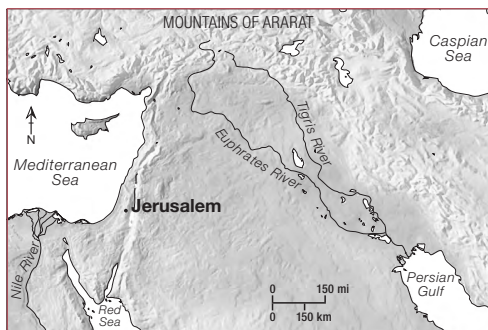
<sup>a</sup> 20 That is, about 23 feet or about 6.8 meters

<sup>b</sup> 20 Or rose more than fifteen cubits, and the mountains were covered

**7:16** Many have wondered how this animal kingdom roundup happened. Did Noah and his sons spend years collecting all the animals? In reality, the creation, just like Noah, was doing just as God had commanded (see 6:20). Noah didn't have to gather the animals—God took care of the details of that job while Noah was doing his part by building the ark. Often we do just the opposite of Noah. We worry about details over which we have no control while neglecting specific areas (such as attitudes, relationships, and responsibilities) that are under our control. Like Noah, concentrate on what God has given you to do, and leave the rest to God.

**7:16** The very last thing God did was to shut the door. During construction, the boarding of animals, and the beginning of rain, the path to salvation was open. This shows God's love and desire that all would come to him. Step through the door before God's time of welcome is up.

**8:6-16** Occasionally Noah would send a bird out as a test to see if the earth was dry. But Noah didn't get out of the ark until God told him to. He was waiting for God's timing. God knew that even though the water was receding, the earth was not dry enough for Noah and his family to venture out. What patience Noah showed, especially after spending an entire year inside his boat! We, like Noah, must trust God to give us patience during those difficult times when we must wait.



**MOUNTAINS OF ARARAT** Noah's ark touched land in the mountains of Ararat, located in modern-day Turkey. There it rested for almost eight months before Noah, his family, and the animals stepped onto dry land.

animals and all the creatures that move along the ground and all the birds — everything that moves on land — came out of the ark, one kind after another.

<sup>20</sup>Then Noah built an altar to the LORD<sup>s</sup> and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean<sup>t</sup> birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings<sup>u</sup> on it. <sup>21</sup>The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma<sup>v</sup> and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground<sup>w</sup> because of humans, even though<sup>a</sup> every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood.<sup>x</sup> And never again will I destroy all living creatures,<sup>y</sup> as I have done.

<sup>22</sup>“As long as the earth endures,  
seedtime and harvest,  
cold and heat,  
summer and winter,  
day and night  
will never cease.”<sup>z</sup>

8:20

<sup>t</sup>Ge 12:7-8; 13:18;  
22:9

<sup>v</sup>Ge 7:8;

Lev 11:1-47

<sup>u</sup>Ge 22:2,13;

Ex 10:25

8:21

<sup>s</sup>Lev 1:9,13; 2Co 2:15

<sup>w</sup>Ge 3:17

<sup>x</sup>Ge 6:5; Ps 51:5;

Jer 17:9

<sup>y</sup>Ge 9:11,15; Isa 54:9

8:22

<sup>z</sup>Ge 1:14;

Jer 33:20,25

## 2. Repopulating the earth God's Covenant With Noah

9:1

<sup>a</sup>Ge 1:22

**9** Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.<sup>a</sup> <sup>2</sup>The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands. <sup>3</sup>Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you.<sup>b</sup> Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

9:3

<sup>b</sup>Ge 1:29

<sup>a</sup> 21 Or *humans*, for



## Noah

**THE STORY OF NOAH'S LIFE** involves not one but two great and tragic floods. The world in Noah's day was flooded with evil. The number of those who remembered the one true God had dwindled to one—only Noah still worshiped God. God's response to the severe situation was a 120-year-long last chance, during which he had Noah build a large, real-life illustration of his message. Nothing like a huge boat on dry land to make a point! For Noah, obedience meant a long-term commitment to a project and preaching what would have been an unpopular message of judgment.

Many of us have trouble sticking with any project, whether or not it is directed by God. It is interesting that the length of Noah's obedience was greater than the life span of people today. The only comparable long-term project is our very lives. But perhaps this is the great challenge Noah's life gives us—to live, in acceptance of God's grace, an entire lifetime of obedience and gratitude.

### Strengths and accomplishments:

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

### Weaknesses and mistakes:

- Got drunk and embarrassed himself in front of his sons

### Lessons from his life:

- 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 remains with us.

### Vital statistics:

- Where: We're not told how far from the Garden of Eden people had settled
- Occupation: Farmer, shipbuilder, preacher
- Relatives: Grandfather: Methuselah. Father: Lamech. Sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

### Key verse:

“Noah did everything just as God commanded him.” (Genesis 6:22)

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

**8:21–22** Countless times throughout the Bible we see God showing his love and patience toward men and women in order to save them. Although he realizes that our hearts are evil, he continues to reach out to us. When we sin or fall away from God, we surely deserve to be destroyed

by his judgment. But God has promised never again to destroy everything on earth until the judgment day when Christ returns to destroy evil forever. Now every change of season is a reminder of his promise.



<sup>4</sup>“But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. <sup>c</sup> <sup>5</sup>And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. <sup>d</sup> And from each human being, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being. <sup>e</sup>

<sup>6</sup>“Whoever sheds human blood,  
by humans shall their blood be shed; <sup>f</sup>  
for in the image of God <sup>g</sup>  
has God made mankind.

<sup>7</sup>As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it. <sup>h</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: <sup>9</sup>“I now establish my covenant with you <sup>i</sup> and with your descendants after you <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that was with you — the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you — every living creature on earth. <sup>11</sup>I establish my covenant <sup>j</sup> with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth. <sup>k</sup>”

<sup>12</sup>And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant <sup>l</sup> I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: <sup>13</sup>I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup>Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>I will remember my covenant <sup>m</sup> between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. <sup>16</sup>Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant <sup>n</sup> between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”

<sup>17</sup>So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant <sup>o</sup> I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

### The Sons of Noah

<sup>18</sup>The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) <sup>p</sup> <sup>19</sup>These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the whole earth. <sup>q</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded <sup>a</sup> to plant a vineyard. <sup>21</sup>When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. <sup>22</sup>Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside. <sup>23</sup>But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father’s naked body. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked.

<sup>a</sup> 20 Or soil, was the first

9:4

<sup>c</sup>Lev 3:17;  
17:10–14;  
Dt 12:16,23–25;  
1Sa 14:33

9:5

<sup>d</sup>Ex 21:28–32  
<sup>e</sup>Ge 4:10

9:6

<sup>f</sup>Ge 4:14;  
Ex 21:12,14;  
Lev 24:17; Mt 26:52  
<sup>g</sup>Ge 1:26

9:7

<sup>h</sup>Ge 1:22

9:9

<sup>i</sup>Ge 6:18

9:11

<sup>j</sup>ver 16; Isa 24:5  
<sup>k</sup>Ge 8:21; Isa 54:9

9:12

<sup>l</sup>ver 17; Ge 17:11

9:15

<sup>m</sup>Ex 2:24;  
Lev 26:42,45; Dt 7:9;  
Eze 16:60

9:16

<sup>n</sup>ver 11;  
Ge 17:7,13,19;  
2Sa 7:13; 23:5

9:17

<sup>o</sup>ver 12; Ge 17:11

9:18

<sup>p</sup>ver 25–27;  
Ge 10:6,15

9:19

<sup>q</sup>Ge 10:32

**9:5–6** Here God explains why murder is so wrong: To kill a person is to kill one made in God’s image. Because all human beings are made in God’s image, all people possess the qualities that distinguish them from animals: morality, reason, creativity, and self-worth. When we interact with others, we are interacting with beings made to reflect God, beings to whom God offers eternal life. God wants us to recognize his image in all people.

**9:5** To “demand an accounting” means that God will require each person to account for his or her actions. We cannot harm or kill another human being without answering to God. God created human life with his breath (the Holy Spirit). He holds our lives in high esteem. Therefore consequences come when someone is murdered. A penalty must be paid. Justice will be served.

**9:8–17** Noah stepped out of the ark onto an earth devoid of human life. But God gave him a reassuring promise. This covenant had three parts: (1) Never again will a flood do such destruction; (2) as long as the earth remains, the seasons will always come as expected (8:22); and (3) a rainbow will be visible as a sign to all that God will keep his promises. The earth’s order and seasons are still preserved, and rainbows still remind us of God’s faithfulness to his word.

**9:20–27** Noah, the great hero of faith, got drunk—a poor example of godliness to his sons. And Ham’s mocking attitude revealed a severe lack of respect for his father and for God. Perhaps this story is included to show us that even godly people can sin and that their bad influence affects their families. Although the wicked people had all been killed, the possibility of evil still existed in the hearts of Noah and his family.

**9:25** This verse has been wrongfully used to support racial prejudice and even slavery. Noah’s curse, however, wasn’t directed toward any particular race, but rather at the Canaanite nation—a nation God knew would become wicked. The curse was fulfilled when the Israelites entered the Promised Land and drove the Canaanites out (see the book of Joshua).

**10:8–9** Who was Nimrod? Not much is known about him except that he was a mighty warrior and a great hunter. But people with great gifts can become proud, and that is probably what happened to Nimrod. Some consider him the founder of the great, godless Babylonian Empire.



9:25  
ver 18  
Ge 25:23; Jos 9:23

<sup>24</sup>When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, <sup>25</sup>he said,

“Cursed be Canaan!<sup>r</sup>  
The lowest of slaves  
will be to his brothers.<sup>s</sup>”

<sup>26</sup>He also said,

“Praise be to the LORD, the God of Shem!  
May Canaan be the slave of Shem.  
<sup>27</sup>May God extend Japheth’s<sup>a</sup> territory;  
may Japheth live in the tents of Shem,  
and may Canaan be the slave of Japheth.”

<sup>28</sup>After the flood Noah lived 350 years. <sup>29</sup>Noah lived a total of 950 years, and then he died.

### The Table of Nations

10:1  
Ge 2:4

**10** This is the account<sup>t</sup> of Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah’s sons, who themselves had sons after the flood.

### The Japhethites

10:2  
Eze 38:6  
Eze 38:2; Rev 20:8  
Isa 66:19  
10:3  
Jer 51:27  
Eze 27:14; 38:6  
10:4  
Eze 27:12,25;  
Jnh 1:3

- <sup>2</sup>The sons<sup>b</sup> of Japheth:  
Gomer,<sup>u</sup> Magog,<sup>v</sup> Madai, Javan, Tubal,<sup>w</sup> Meshek and Tiras.  
<sup>3</sup>The sons of Gomer:  
Ashkenaz,<sup>x</sup> Riphath and Togarmah.<sup>y</sup>  
<sup>4</sup>The sons of Javan:  
Elishah, Tarshish,<sup>z</sup> the Kittites and the Rodanites.<sup>c</sup> <sup>5</sup>(From these the maritime peoples spread out into their territories by their clans within their nations, each with its own language.)

### The Hamites

10:6  
ver 15; Ge 9:18

- <sup>6</sup>The sons of Ham:  
Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan.<sup>a</sup>  
<sup>7</sup>The sons of Cush:  
Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah and Sabteka.  
The sons of Raamah:  
Sheba and Dedan.

<sup>8</sup>Cush was the father<sup>d</sup> of Nimrod, who became a mighty warrior on the earth. <sup>9</sup>He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; that is why it is said, “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.” <sup>10</sup>The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon,<sup>b</sup> Uruk, Akkad and Kalneh, in<sup>e</sup> Shinar.<sup>fc</sup> <sup>11</sup>From that land he went to Assyria,<sup>d</sup> where he built Nineveh,<sup>e</sup> Rehoboth Ir,<sup>g</sup> Calah<sup>h</sup> and Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah — which is the great city.

10:10  
Ge 11:9  
Ge 11:2  
10:11  
Ps 83:8; Mic 5:6  
Jnh 1:2; 4:11; Na 1:1  
10:14  
Ge 21:32,34; 26:1,8

- <sup>13</sup>Egypt was the father of  
the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, <sup>14</sup>Pathrusites, Kasluhites (from whom the Philistines<sup>f</sup> came) and Caphtorites.

<sup>a</sup> 27 Japheth sounds like the Hebrew for extend. <sup>b</sup> 2 Sons may mean descendants or successors or nations; also in verses 3, 4, 6, 7, 20–23, 29 and 31. <sup>c</sup> 4 Some manuscripts of the Masoretic Text and Samaritan Pentateuch (see also Septuagint and 1 Chron. 1:7); most manuscripts of the Masoretic Text *Dodanites*  
<sup>d</sup> 8 Father may mean ancestor or predecessor or founder; also in verses 13, 15, 24 and 26. <sup>e</sup> 10 Or Uruk and Akkad—all of them in <sup>f</sup> 10 That is, Babylonia <sup>g</sup> 11 Or Nineveh with its city squares

### BIBLE NATIONS DESCENDED FROM NOAH'S SONS

Shem	Ham	Japheth	
Hebrews	Canaanites	Greeks	Shem's descendants were called Semites. Abraham, David, and Jesus descended from Shem. Ham's descendants settled in Canaan, Egypt, and the rest of Africa. Japheth's descendants settled for the most part in Europe and Asia Minor.
Chaldeans	Egyptians	Thracians	
Assyrians	Philistines	Scythians	
Persians	Hittites		
Arameans	Amorites		
(Syrians)			

<sup>15</sup>Canaan<sup>g</sup> was the father of Sidon<sup>h</sup> his firstborn,<sup>a</sup> and of the Hittites,<sup>i</sup> <sup>16</sup>Jebusites,<sup>j</sup> Amorites, Girgashites, <sup>17</sup>Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, <sup>18</sup>Arvadites, Zemarites and Hamathites.

Later the Canaanite<sup>k</sup> clans scattered <sup>19</sup>and the borders of Canaan<sup>l</sup> reached from Sidon<sup>m</sup> toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and then toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboyim, as far as Lasha.

<sup>20</sup>These are the sons of Ham by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations.

**10:15**  
<sup>a</sup>ver 6; Ge 9:18  
<sup>b</sup>Eze 28:21  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 23:3,20  
**10:16**  
<sup>d</sup>Ch 11:4  
**10:18**  
<sup>e</sup>Ge 12:6; Ex 13:11  
**10:19**  
<sup>f</sup>Ge 11:31; 13:12; 17:8  
<sup>g</sup>ver 15

*The Semites*

<sup>21</sup>Sons were also born to Shem, whose older brother was<sup>b</sup> Japheth; Shem was the ancestor of all the sons of Eber.<sup>n</sup>

<sup>22</sup>The sons of Shem:  
Elam,<sup>o</sup> Ashur, Arphaxad,<sup>p</sup> Lud and Aram.

<sup>23</sup>The sons of Aram:  
Uz,<sup>q</sup> Hul, Gether and Meshek.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>24</sup>Arphaxad was the father of<sup>d</sup> Shelah,  
and Shelah the father of Eber.<sup>r</sup>

<sup>25</sup>Two sons were born to Eber:  
One was named Peleg,<sup>e</sup> because in his time the earth was divided; his brother was named Joktan.

<sup>26</sup>Joktan was the father of  
Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, <sup>27</sup>Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>28</sup>Obal, Abimael, Sheba, <sup>29</sup>Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan.

**10:21**  
<sup>f</sup>ver 24; Nu 24:24  
**10:22**  
<sup>g</sup>Jer 49:34  
<sup>h</sup>Lk 3:36  
**10:23**  
<sup>i</sup>Job 1:1  
**10:24**  
<sup>j</sup>ver 21

<sup>30</sup>The region where they lived stretched from Mesha toward Sephar, in the eastern hill country.

<sup>31</sup>These are the sons of Shem by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations.

<sup>32</sup>These are the clans of Noah's sons,<sup>s</sup> according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the earth<sup>t</sup> after the flood.

**10:32**  
<sup>u</sup>ver 1  
<sup>v</sup>Ge 9:19

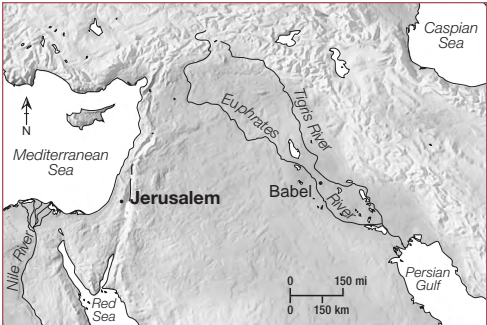
**3. The tower of Babel**

**11** Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. <sup>2</sup>As people moved eastward,<sup>1</sup> they found a plain in Shinar<sup>g,u</sup> and settled there.

<sup>3</sup>They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks<sup>v</sup> and bake them thoroughly." They

<sup>a</sup> 15 Or of the Sidonians, the foremost    <sup>b</sup> 21 Or Shem, the older brother of    <sup>c</sup> 23 See Septuagint and 1 Chron. 1:17; Hebrew Mash.    <sup>d</sup> 24 Hebrew; Septuagint father of Cainan, and Cainan was the father of    <sup>e</sup> 25 Peleg means division.    <sup>f</sup> 2 Or from the east; or in the east    <sup>g</sup> 2 That is, Babylonia

**11:2**  
<sup>h</sup>Ge 10:10  
**11:3**  
<sup>i</sup>Ex 1:14



**THE TOWER OF BABEL** The plain between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers offered a perfect location for the city and tower "that reaches to the heavens." The people's pride led them to sin. As punishment, God scattered the people by giving them different languages.

**11:3-4** The tower of Babel was most likely a ziggurat, a common structure in Babylonia at this time. Most often built as temples, ziggurats looked like pyramids with steps or ramps leading up the sides. Ziggurats could stand nearly 300 feet high and were often just as wide; thus, they were the focal point of the city. The people in this story built their tower as a monument to their own greatness, something for the whole world to see.

**11:3** The brick used to build this tower was man-made and not as hard as stone.

**11:4** The tower of Babel was a great human achievement, a wonder of the world. But it was a monument to the people themselves rather than to God. We may build monuments to ourselves (expensive clothes, big house, fancy car, important job) to call attention to our achievements. These may not be wrong in themselves, but when we use them to give ourselves identity and self-worth, they take God's place in our lives. We are free to develop in many areas, but we are not free to think we have replaced God. What "towers" have you built in your life?

**11:3**  
<sup>w</sup>Ge 14:10

**11:4**  
<sup>t</sup>Dt 1:28; 9:1  
<sup>y</sup>Ge 6:4  
<sup>t</sup>Dt 4:27

**11:5**  
<sup>a</sup>ver 7; Ge 18:21;  
 Ex 3:8; 19:11,18,20

**11:7**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 1:26  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 42:23

**11:8**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 9:19; Lk 1:51

**11:9**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 10:10

used brick instead of stone, and tar<sup>w</sup> for mortar. <sup>4</sup>Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens,<sup>x</sup> so that we may make a name<sup>y</sup> for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”<sup>z</sup>

<sup>5</sup>But the LORD came down<sup>a</sup> to see the city and the tower the people were building. <sup>6</sup>The LORD said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. <sup>7</sup>Come, let us<sup>b</sup> go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.”<sup>c</sup>

<sup>8</sup>So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth,<sup>d</sup> and they stopped building the city. <sup>9</sup>That is why it was called Babel<sup>ae</sup> — because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

### *From Shem to Abram*

<sup>10</sup>This is the account of Shem’s family line.

Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father<sup>b</sup> of Arphaxad. <sup>11</sup>And after he became the father of Arphaxad, Shem lived 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>12</sup>When Arphaxad had lived 35 years, he became the father of Shelah.<sup>f</sup> <sup>13</sup>And after he became the father of Shelah, Arphaxad lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.<sup>g</sup>

<sup>14</sup>When Shelah had lived 30 years, he became the father of Eber. <sup>15</sup>And after he became the father of Eber, Shelah lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>16</sup>When Eber had lived 34 years, he became the father of Peleg. <sup>17</sup>And after he became the father of Peleg, Eber lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>18</sup>When Peleg had lived 30 years, he became the father of Reu. <sup>19</sup>And after he became the father of Reu, Peleg lived 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>20</sup>When Reu had lived 32 years, he became the father of Serug.<sup>g</sup> <sup>21</sup>And after he became the father of Serug, Reu lived 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>22</sup>When Serug had lived 30 years, he became the father of Nahor. <sup>23</sup>And after he became the father of Nahor, Serug lived 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>24</sup>When Nahor had lived 29 years, he became the father of Terah.<sup>h</sup> <sup>25</sup>And after he became the father of Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>26</sup>After Terah had lived 70 years, he became the father of Abram,<sup>i</sup> Nahor<sup>j</sup> and Haran.

### *Abram’s Family*

<sup>27</sup>This is the account of Terah’s family line.

Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot.<sup>k</sup> <sup>28</sup>While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans,<sup>l</sup> in the land of his birth. <sup>29</sup>Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai,<sup>m</sup> and the name of Nahor’s wife was Milkah;<sup>n</sup> she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milkah and Iskah. <sup>30</sup>Now Sarai was childless because she was not able to conceive.<sup>o</sup>

<sup>31</sup>Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans<sup>p</sup> to go to Canaan.<sup>q</sup> But when they came to Harran, they settled there.

<sup>32</sup>Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Harran.

<sup>a</sup> 9 That is, Babylon; *Babel* sounds like the Hebrew for *confused*. <sup>b</sup> 10 *Father* may mean *ancestor*; also in verses 11–25. <sup>c</sup> 12,13 Hebrew, Septuagint (see also Luke 3:35; 36 and note at Gen. 10:24) 35 years, he became the father of Cainan. <sup>d</sup> 13 And after he became the father of Cainan, Arphaxad lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When Cainan had lived 130 years, he became the father of Shelah. And after he became the father of Shelah, Cainan lived 330 years and had other sons and daughters

**11:27-28** Abram grew up in Ur of the Chaldeans, an important city in the ancient world. Archaeologists have discovered evidence of a flourishing civilization there in Abram’s day. The city carried on an extensive trade with its neighbors and had a ziggurat, a temple, and a palace. Growing up in Ur, Abram was probably well educated.

**11:31** Terah left Ur to go to Canaan but settled in Harran instead. Why did he stop halfway? It may have been his health, the climate, or even fear. But this did not change Abram’s calling (“the LORD had

said to Abram”; 12:1). He had respect for his father’s leadership, but when Terah died, Abram moved on to Canaan. God’s will may come in stages. Just as the time in Harran was a transition period for Abram, God may give us transition periods and times of waiting to help us depend on him and trust his timing. If we patiently do his will during the transition times, we will be better prepared to serve him as we should when he calls us.

D. THE STORY OF ABRAHAM (12:1–25:18)

Despite God's swift judgment of sin, most people ignored him and continued to sin. But a handful of people really tried to follow him. One of these was Abraham. God appeared to Abraham one day and promised to make his descendants into a great nation. Abraham's part of the agreement was to obey God. Through sharp testing and an incident that almost destroyed his family, Abraham remained faithful to God. Throughout this section we discover how to live a life of faith.

1. God promises a nation to Abram

The Call of Abram

**12** The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."

<sup>2</sup>"I will make you into a great nation,<sup>s</sup>  
and I will bless you;<sup>t</sup>

I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;<sup>u</sup>  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you.<sup>v"</sup><sup>b</sup>

<sup>4</sup>So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran.<sup>w</sup> <sup>5</sup>He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people<sup>x</sup> they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

<sup>6</sup>Abram traveled through the land<sup>y</sup> as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh<sup>z</sup> at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites<sup>a</sup> were in the land. <sup>7</sup>The LORD appeared to Abram<sup>b</sup> and said, "To your offspring<sup>c</sup> I will give this land." <sup>8</sup>So he built an altar there to the LORD,<sup>d</sup> who had appeared to him.

<sup>8</sup>From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel<sup>e</sup> and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.<sup>f</sup>

Abram in Egypt

<sup>10</sup>Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. <sup>11</sup>As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. <sup>12</sup>When the Egyptians see

**12:1**  
<sup>t</sup>Ac 7:3\*; Heb 11:8

**12:2**  
<sup>s</sup>Ge 15:5; 17:2,4;  
18:18; 22:17; Dt 26:5  
<sup>t</sup>Ge 24:1,35

**12:3**  
<sup>u</sup>Ge 27:29; Ex 23:22;  
Nu 24:9  
<sup>v</sup>Ge 18:18; 22:18;  
26:4; Ac 3:25;  
Gal 3:8\*

**12:4**  
<sup>w</sup>Ge 11:31

**12:5**  
<sup>x</sup>Ge 14:14; 17:23

**12:6**  
<sup>y</sup>Heb 11:9  
<sup>z</sup>Ge 35:4; Dt 11:30  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 10:18

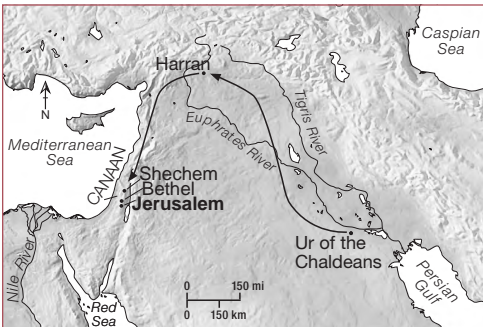
**12:7**  
<sup>b</sup>Ge 17:1; 18:1; Ex 6:3  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 13:15,17; 15:18;  
17:8; Ps 105:9-11  
<sup>d</sup>Ge 13:4

**12:8**  
<sup>e</sup>Ge 13:3

**12:9**  
<sup>f</sup>Ge 13:1,3

<sup>a</sup> 2 Or be seen as blessed    <sup>b</sup> 3 Or earth / will use your name in blessings (see 48:20)    <sup>c</sup> 7 Or seed

**12:1-3** When God called him, Abram moved out in faith from Ur to Harran and finally to Canaan. God then established a covenant with Abram, telling him that he would found a great nation. Not only would this nation be blessed, God said, but the other nations of the earth would be blessed



**ABRAM'S JOURNEY TO CANAAN** Abram, Sarai, and Lot traveled from Ur of the Chaldeans to Canaan by way of Harran. Though indirect, this route followed the rivers rather than attempting to cross the vast desert.

through Abram's descendants. The people of Israel, the nation that would come from Abram, were to follow God and influence those with whom they came in contact. But the greatest blessing of all is that through Abram's family tree, Jesus Christ was born to save humanity. Through Christ, people can have a personal relationship with God and be blessed beyond measure.

**12:2** God promised to bless Abram and make him great, but God had one condition: Abram had to do what God wanted him to do. This meant leaving his home and friends and traveling to a new land where God promised to build a great nation from Abram's family. Abram obeyed, walking away from his home for God's promise of even greater blessings in the future. God may be trying to lead you to a place of greater service and usefulness for him. Don't let the comfort and security of your present position make you miss out on greater opportunities God has for you.

**12:5** God planned to develop a nation of people he would call his own. He called Abram from the pagan, self-centered city of Ur to a fertile region called Canaan, where a God-centered, moral nation could be established. Though small in dimension, the land of Canaan was the focal point for most of the history of Israel as well as for the rise of Christianity. This small land given to one man, Abram, has had a tremendous impact on world history.

**12:7** Altars were used in many religions, but for God's people, altars were more than places of sacrifice. For them, altars symbolized communion with God and commemorated notable encounters with him. Built of rough stones and earth, altars often remained in place for years as continual reminders of God's protection and promises.

**12:13**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 20:2; 26:7

you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will let you live. <sup>13</sup>Say you are my sister,<sup>9</sup> so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.”

**12:17**  
<sup>a</sup>1Ch 16:21

**12:18**  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 20:9; 26:10

<sup>14</sup>When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. <sup>15</sup>And when Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. <sup>16</sup>He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

<sup>17</sup>But the LORD inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household<sup>n</sup> because of Abram’s wife Sarai. <sup>18</sup>So Pharaoh summoned Abram. “What have you done to me?”<sup>i</sup> he said. “Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife? <sup>19</sup>Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!” <sup>20</sup>Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

## 2. Abram and Lot Abram and Lot Separate

**13:1**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 12:9

**13** So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev,<sup>j</sup> with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. <sup>2</sup>Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold.

**13:3**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 26:12,8

**13:4**  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 12:7

**13:6**  
<sup>m</sup>Ge 36:7

**13:7**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 26:20,21  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 12:6

**13:8**  
<sup>a</sup>Pr 15:18; 20:3  
<sup>c</sup>Ps 133:1

**13:10**  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 19:22,30

<sup>3</sup>From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel,<sup>k</sup> to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier <sup>4</sup>and where he had first built an altar.<sup>l</sup> There Abram called on the name of the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. <sup>6</sup>But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together.<sup>m</sup> <sup>7</sup>And quarreling<sup>n</sup> arose between Abram’s herders and Lot’s. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land<sup>o</sup> at that time.

<sup>8</sup>So Abram said to Lot, “Let’s not have any quarreling between you and me,<sup>p</sup> or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives.<sup>q</sup> <sup>9</sup>Is not the whole land before you? Let’s part company. If you go to the left, I’ll go to the right; if you go to the right, I’ll go to the left.”

<sup>10</sup>Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar<sup>r</sup> was well

Abram regularly built altars to God for two reasons: (1) for prayer and worship, and (2) as reminders of God’s promise to bless him. Abram couldn’t survive spiritually without regularly renewing his love for and loyalty to God. Building altars helped Abram remember that God was at the center of his life. Regular worship helps us remember what God desires and motivates us to obey him.

**12:10** When famine struck, Abram went to Egypt, where there was food. Why would God allow a famine in the land where he had just called Abram? This was a test of Abram’s faith, and Abram passed. He didn’t question God’s leading when facing this difficulty. Many believers find that when they determine to follow God, they immediately encounter great obstacles. The next time you face such a test, don’t try to second-guess what God is doing. Use the intelligence God gave you, as Abram did when he temporarily moved to Egypt, and wait for new opportunities.

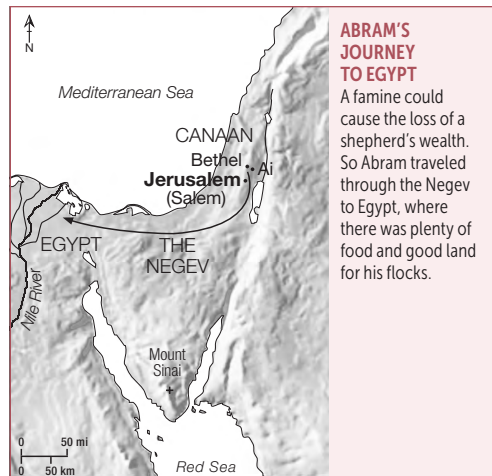
**12:11-13** Abram, acting out of fear, asked Sarai to tell a half-truth by saying she was his sister. She was his half sister (see 20:12), but she was also his wife—a practice that was considered acceptable at the time (it was only later forbidden by God; Leviticus 18:9).

Abram’s intent was to deceive the Egyptians. He feared that if they knew the truth, they would kill him to get Sarai. She would have been a desirable addition to Pharaoh’s harem because of her wealth, beauty, and potential for political alliance. As Sarai’s brother, Abram would have been given a place of honor. As her husband, however, his life would be in danger because Sarai could not enter Pharaoh’s harem unless Abram was dead. So Abram lost faith in God’s protection, even after all God had promised him, and told a half-truth. This shows how lying compounds the effects of sin. When Abram lied, his problems multiplied.

**13:1-2** In Abram’s day, sheep and cattle owners could acquire great wealth. Abram’s wealth included not only silver and gold but also livestock. These animals were a valuable commodity used for food, clothing, tent material, and sacrifices. They were often traded for other goods and services. Abram was able to watch his wealth grow and multiply daily.

**13:5-9** Facing a potential conflict with his nephew Lot, Abram took the initiative in settling the dispute. He gave Lot first choice, even though Abram, being older, had the right to choose first. Abram also showed a willingness to risk being cheated. Abram’s example shows us how to respond to difficult family situations: (1) Take the initiative in resolving conflicts; (2) let others have first choice, even if that means not getting what we want; and (3) put family peace above personal desires.

**13:7-8** Surrounded by hostile neighbors, the herdsmen of Abram and Lot should have pulled together. Instead, they let petty jealousy tear them





watered, like the garden of the LORD,<sup>5</sup> like the land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)<sup>†11</sup> So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company:<sup>12</sup> Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain<sup>u</sup> and pitched his tents near Sodom.<sup>v</sup> <sup>13</sup> Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.<sup>w</sup> <sup>14</sup> The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, “Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west.<sup>x</sup> <sup>15</sup> All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring<sup>a</sup> forever.<sup>y</sup> <sup>16</sup> I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. <sup>17</sup> Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land,<sup>z</sup> for I am giving it to you.” <sup>18</sup> So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre<sup>a</sup> at Hebron,<sup>b</sup> where he pitched his tents. There he built an altar to the LORD.<sup>c</sup>

Abram Rescues Lot

**14** At the time when Amraphel was king of Shinar,<sup>b,d</sup> Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goyim, <sup>2</sup> these kings went to war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboyim,<sup>e</sup> and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).<sup>f,3</sup> All these latter kings joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea Valley<sup>g</sup>). <sup>4</sup> For twelve years they had been subject to Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. <sup>5</sup> In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him went out and defeated the Rephaites<sup>h</sup> in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emites<sup>i</sup> in Shaveh Kiriathaim <sup>6</sup> and the Horites<sup>j</sup> in the hill country of Seir,<sup>k</sup> as far as El Paran<sup>l</sup> near the desert. <sup>7</sup> Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar.<sup>m</sup> <sup>8</sup> Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah,<sup>n</sup> the king of Admah, the king of Zeboyim<sup>o</sup> and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) marched out and drew up their battle lines in the Valley of Siddim <sup>9</sup> against Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goyim, Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar — four kings against five. <sup>10</sup> Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills.<sup>p</sup> <sup>11</sup> The four kings seized all the goods

<sup>a</sup> 15 Or seed; also in verse 16    <sup>b</sup> 1 That is, Babylonia; also in verse 9

**13:10**  
<sup>†</sup>Ge 2:8-10; Isa 51:3  
<sup>v</sup>Ge 14:8; 19:17-29  
**13:12**  
<sup>u</sup>Ge 19:17,25,29  
<sup>v</sup>Ge 14:12  
**13:13**  
<sup>w</sup>Ge 18:20;  
Eze 16:49-50;  
2Pe 2:8  
**13:14**  
<sup>x</sup>Ge 28:14; Dt 3:27  
**13:15**  
<sup>y</sup>Ge 12:7; Gal 3:16\*  
**13:17**  
<sup>z</sup>ver 15; Nu 13:17-25  
**13:18**  
<sup>a</sup>Ge 14:13,24; 18:1  
<sup>b</sup>Ge 35:27  
<sup>c</sup>Ge 8:20  
**14:1**  
<sup>d</sup>Ge 10:10  
**14:2**  
<sup>e</sup>Ge 10:19  
<sup>f</sup>Ge 13:10  
**14:3**  
<sup>g</sup>Nu 34:3,12; Dt 3:17;  
Jos 3:16; 15:2,5  
**14:5**  
<sup>h</sup>Ge 15:20;  
Dt 2:11,20  
<sup>i</sup>Dt 2:10  
**14:6**  
<sup>j</sup>Dt 2:12,22  
<sup>k</sup>Dt 2:1,5,22  
<sup>l</sup>Ge 21:21; Nu 10:12  
**14:7**  
<sup>m</sup>2Ch 20:2  
**14:8**  
<sup>n</sup>Ge 13:10;  
19:17-29  
<sup>o</sup>Dt 29:23  
**14:10**  
<sup>p</sup>Ge 19:17,30

apart. Similar situations exist today. Christians often bicker while Satan is at work all around them.

Rivalries, arguments, and disagreements among believers can be destructive in three ways: (1) They damage goodwill, trust, and peace—the foundations of good human relations; (2) they hamper progress toward important goals; and (3) they make us self-centered rather than love-centered. Jesus understood how destructive arguments among

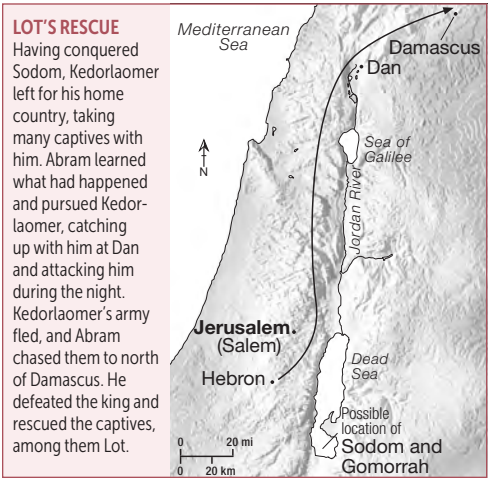
brothers and sisters could be. In his prayer on the night he was betrayed and arrested, Jesus asked God that his followers be “one” (John 17:21).

**13:10-11** Lot’s character is revealed by his choices. He took the best share of the land, even though it meant living near Sodom, a city known for its sin. He was greedy, wanting the best for himself, without thinking about his uncle Abram’s needs or what was fair.

Life presents a series of choices. We, too, can selfishly choose the best for ourselves while ignoring the needs and feelings of others. But this kind of choice, as Lot’s life shows, can lead to problems. When we stop choosing God’s best for our lives, we may not realize we are heading in the worst possible direction.

**13:12-13** Good pasture and available water seemed like a wise choice to Lot at first. But he failed to recognize that wicked Sodom could provide temptations strong enough to destroy his family. Have you chosen to live or work in a “Sodom”? Even though you may be strong enough to resist the temptations, other members of your family may not be. While God desires for us to reach people in the “Sodom” near us, we must be careful not to become like the very people we are trying to reach.

**14:4-16** Who was Kedorlaomer, and why was he important? In Abram’s time, most cities had their own kings. Wars and rivalries among kings were common. A conquered city paid tribute to the victorious king. Nothing is known about Kedorlaomer except what we read in the Bible, but apparently he was quite powerful. Five cities, including Sodom, had paid tribute to him for 12 years. The five cities formed an alliance and rebelled by withholding tribute. Kedorlaomer reacted swiftly and reconquered them all. When he defeated Sodom, he captured Lot, his family, and his possessions. Abram, with only 318 men, chased Kedorlaomer’s army and attacked him near Damascus. With God’s help, he defeated them and recovered Lot, the other captives, and all that had been taken.



of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. <sup>12</sup>They also carried off Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom.

<sup>13</sup>A man who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew. Now Abram was living near the great trees of Mamre<sup>a</sup> the Amorite, a brother<sup>a</sup> of Eshkol and Aner, all of whom were allied with Abram. <sup>14</sup>When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household<sup>c</sup> and went in pursuit as far as Dan. <sup>15</sup>During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. <sup>16</sup>He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.

<sup>17</sup>After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 13 Or a relative; or an ally

14:13

<sup>a</sup>ver 24; Ge 13:18

14:14

<sup>c</sup>Ge 15:3

<sup>d</sup>Dt 34:1; Jdg 18:29

14:17

<sup>2</sup>Sa 18:18



## Abraham

**ALL ACTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES.** What we do can set into motion a series of events that may continue long after we're gone. Unfortunately, when we are making a decision, most of us think only of the immediate consequences. These are often misleading because they are short-lived.

Abraham had a choice to make. His two options were setting out with his family and belongings for parts unknown or staying right where he was. He had to decide between the security of what he already had and the uncertainty of traveling under God's direction. All he had to go on was God's promise to guide and bless him. Abraham could hardly have been expected to visualize how much of the future was resting on his decision of whether to go or stay, but his obedience affected the history of the world. His decision to follow God set into motion the development of the nation that God would eventually call his own when he visited earth himself. When Jesus Christ came to earth, God's promise was fulfilled; through Abraham, the entire world was blessed.

You probably don't know the long-term effects of most decisions you make. But shouldn't the fact that there will be long-term results cause you to think carefully and seek God's guidance as you make choices and take action today?

### Strengths and accomplishments:

- Had faith that pleased God
- Ancestor of God's people, Israel
- Was a caring father to his own family and practiced hospitality to others
- Was a successful and wealthy rancher
- Usually avoided conflicts, but when they were unavoidable, allowed his opponent to set the rules for settling the dispute

### Weaknesses and mistakes:

- Under direct pressure, distorted the truth
- Along with Sarai, tried to fulfill God's promise of a son in his own way and timing, which led to much conflict and bitterness

### Lessons from his life:

- God desires dependence, trust, and faith in him—not faith in our ability to please him.
- God's plan from the beginning has been to make himself known to all people.
- God's timing is perfect, and trying to force God's plan into action usually leads to bitterness and strife.

### Vital statistics:

- Where: Born in Ur of the Chaldeans; spent most of his life in the land of Canaan
- Occupation: Wealthy livestock owner
- Relatives: Brothers: Nahor and Haran. Father: Terah. Wife: Sarah. Nephew: Lot. Sons: Ishmael and Isaac.
- Contemporaries: Abimelek, Melchizedek

### Key verse:

"Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness." (Genesis 15:6)

Abraham's story is told in Genesis 11–25. He is also mentioned in Exodus 2:24; Matthew 1:1–2; Luke 3:34; Acts 7:2–8; Romans 4; Galatians 3; Hebrews 2: 6–7; 11.

**14:12** Lot's greedy desire for the best of everything led him into sinful surroundings. His burning desire for possessions and success cost him his freedom and enjoyment. As a captive to Kedorlaomer, he faced torture, slavery, or death. In much the same way, we can be enticed into doing things or going places we shouldn't. The prosperity we long for is captivating; it can both entice us and enslave us if our motives are not in line with God's desires.

**14:14–16** This incident portrays three of Abram's characteristics: (1) He had courage that came from God; facing a powerful foe, he attacked. (2) He was prepared; he had taken time to train his men for a potential

conflict. (3) He had high regard for his family. We never know when we will be called upon to complete difficult tasks. Like Abram, we should prepare for those times and take courage from God when they come.

**14:14–16** When Abram learned that Lot was a prisoner, he harbored no grudge and immediately tried to rescue him. It would have been easier and safer not to become involved. But with his nephew in serious trouble, Abram acted at once. Sometimes we must get involved in messy or painful situations in order to help others. We should be willing to act immediately when others need our help.



<sup>18</sup>Then Melchizedek<sup>u</sup> king of Salem<sup>v</sup> brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, <sup>19</sup>and he blessed Abram,<sup>w</sup> saying,

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,  
Creator of heaven and earth.<sup>x</sup>

<sup>20</sup>And praise be to God Most High,<sup>y</sup>  
who delivered your enemies into your hand.”

Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.<sup>z</sup>

<sup>21</sup>The king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself.”

<sup>22</sup>But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “With raised hand<sup>a</sup> I have sworn an oath to the LORD, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth,<sup>b</sup> <sup>23</sup>that I will accept nothing belonging to you,<sup>c</sup> not even a thread or the strap of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, ‘I made Abram rich.’ <sup>24</sup>I will accept nothing but what my men have eaten and the share that belongs to the men who went with me—to Aner, Eshkol and Mamre. Let them have their share.”

### 3. God promises a son to Abram

#### The LORD's Covenant With Abram

**15** After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram<sup>d</sup> in a vision:

“Do not be afraid,<sup>e</sup> Abram.  
I am your shield,<sup>af</sup>  
your very great reward.<sup>b</sup>”

<sup>2</sup>But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless<sup>g</sup> and the one who will inherit<sup>f</sup> my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” <sup>3</sup>And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant<sup>h</sup> in my household will be my heir.”

<sup>4</sup>Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” <sup>5</sup>He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars<sup>j</sup>—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring<sup>d</sup> be.”<sup>k</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.<sup>l</sup>

<sup>7</sup>He also said to him, “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.”

<sup>a</sup> 1 Or sovereign <sup>b</sup> 1 Or shield; / your reward will be very great phrase is uncertain. <sup>d</sup> 5 Or seed

<sup>c</sup> 2 The meaning of the Hebrew for this

**14:18**

<sup>u</sup>Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6

<sup>v</sup>Ps 76:2; Heb 7:2

**14:19**

<sup>w</sup>Heb 7:6

<sup>x</sup>ver 22

**14:20**

<sup>y</sup>Ge 24:27

<sup>z</sup>Ge 28:22; Dt 26:12;

Heb 7:4

**14:22**

<sup>a</sup>Ex 6:8; Da 12:7;

Rev 10:5-6

<sup>b</sup>ver 19

**14:23**

<sup>c</sup>2Ki 5:16

**15:1**

<sup>d</sup>Da 10:1

<sup>e</sup>Ge 21:17;

26:24; 46:3;

2Ki 6:16; Ps 27:1;

Isa 41:10,13-14

<sup>f</sup>Dt 33:29;

2Sa 22:3,31; Ps 3:3

**15:2**

<sup>g</sup>Ac 7:5

**15:3**

<sup>h</sup>Ge 24:2,34

**15:4**

<sup>i</sup>Gal 4:28

**15:5**

<sup>j</sup>Ps 147:4; Jer 33:22

<sup>k</sup>Ge 12:2; 22:17;

<sup>l</sup>Ex 32:13; Ro 4:18\*;

Heb 11:12

**15:6**

<sup>m</sup>Ps 106:31;

Ro 4:3\*; 20-24\*;

Gal 3:6\*; Jas 2:23\*

**14:18** Who was Melchizedek? He was obviously a God-fearing man—a “priest of God Most High” who recognized God as the creator of heaven and earth. His name means “king of righteousness,” and *king of Salem* means “king of peace” (see Hebrews 7:1-2). While some have suggested that Melchizedek was an appearance on earth of the preincarnate Christ in a temporary bodily form, a more likely possibility is that Melchizedek was a “type” of Christ (Hebrews 7:3). A type is a biblical person, event, or symbol that points to something or someone that comes later in Scripture. Types often point to Christ, illustrating lessons about him by their similarities to who he is or what he did.

**14:20-24** Abram gave one-tenth of the goods he recovered to Melchizedek. Even in some pagan religions, it was traditional to give a tenth of one’s earnings to the gods. Abram followed accepted tradition; however, he refused to take any of the recovered goods from the king of Sodom. Even though this huge amount would significantly increase what he could have given to God, he chose to reject it for more important reasons—he didn’t want the ungodly king of Sodom to say, “I made Abram rich.” Instead, Abram wanted him to say, “God has made Abram rich.” In this case, accepting the gifts would have focused everyone’s attention on Abram or the king of Sodom rather than on God, the giver of victory. When people look at us, they need to see what God has accomplished in our lives. When people look at our accomplishments and praise us, are we quick to give God the credit, or do we keep it for ourselves?

**15:1** Why would Abram be afraid? He had gained great influence in the land. Perhaps he feared revenge from the kings he had just defeated (14:15). God gave him two good reasons for courage: (1) He promised to

protect Abram (“I am your shield”), and (2) he promised to be Abram’s “very great reward.” When you fear what lies ahead, remember that God will stay with you through difficult times and that he promises you a great reward.

**15:2-3** Eliezer was Abram’s most trusted servant, acting as household administrator. According to custom, if Abram were to die without a son, this eldest servant would become his heir. Although Abram loved his servant, he wanted a son to carry on the family line. He had not seen God’s promise fulfilled, so he thought this the only possibility. God can do more than we can imagine.

**15:5** Abram wasn’t promised wealth or fame here; he already had that. Instead, God promised him descendants like the stars in the sky or the grains of sand on the seashore (22:17)—too numerous to count. To appreciate the vast number of stars scattered through the sky, you need to be, like Abram, away from any interfering lights or buildings. Or pick up a handful of sand and try to count the grains—it can’t be done! Just when Abram was despairing of ever having an heir, God promised him descendants too numerous to imagine. God’s blessings are beyond our imaginations!

**15:6** Although Abram had been demonstrating his faith through his actions, it was his belief in the Lord, not his actions, that made Abram right with God (Romans 4:1-5). We, too, can have a right relationship with God by trusting him. Our outward actions—church attendance, prayer, acts of service—will not by themselves make us right with God. A right relationship is based on faith—the heartfelt inner confidence that God is who he says he is and does what he says he will do. Right actions will follow naturally as by-products.

15:8

<sup>m</sup>Lk 1:18

15:10

<sup>n</sup>ver 17; Jer 34:18

<sup>o</sup>Lev 1:17

15:12

<sup>p</sup>Ge 2:21

15:13

<sup>q</sup>ver 16; Ex 12:40;

Ac 7:6,17

<sup>r</sup>Ex 1:11

15:14

<sup>s</sup>Ac 7:7\*

<sup>t</sup>Ex 12:32-38

15:15

<sup>u</sup>Ge 25:8

15:16

<sup>v</sup>Ki 21:26

<sup>8</sup>But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, how can I know<sup>m</sup> that I will gain possession of it?”

<sup>9</sup>So the LORD said to him, “Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.”

<sup>10</sup>Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other;<sup>n</sup> the birds, however, he did not cut in half. <sup>o</sup><sup>11</sup>Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup>As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep,<sup>p</sup> and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years<sup>q</sup> your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved<sup>r</sup> and mistreated there. <sup>14</sup>But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out<sup>s</sup> with great possessions.<sup>t</sup> <sup>15</sup>You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age.<sup>u</sup> <sup>16</sup>In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites<sup>v</sup> has not yet reached its full measure.”



## Melchizedek

**DO YOU LIKE A GOOD MYSTERY?** One of the most mysterious people in the Bible is the king of Salem, Melchizedek. He appeared one day in the life of Abraham (then Abram) and was never heard from again. What happened that day, however, was to be remembered

throughout history and eventually became a subject of the New Testament letter of Hebrews.

This meeting between Abram and Melchizedek was most unusual. Although the two men were strangers and foreigners to each other, they shared a most important characteristic: Both worshiped and served the one true God, who made heaven and earth.

This was a great moment of triumph for Abram. He had just defeated an army and regained the freedom of his nephew Lot and many other captives. If there was any doubt in Abram’s mind about whose victory it was, Melchizedek set the record straight by reminding him, “And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand” (Genesis 14:20). Abram recognized that this man worshiped the same God he did.

Melchizedek was one of a small group of God-honoring people throughout the Old Testament who came in contact with the Israelites but were not Israelites themselves. This indicates that the requirement to be a follower of God is not genetic but is based on recognizing his greatness and faithfully obeying his teachings.

Do you let God speak to you through other people? In evaluating others, do you consider God’s impact on their lives? Are you aware of the similarities between you and others who worship God, even if their form of worship is quite different from yours? Do you know the God of the Bible well enough to know if you truly worship him? Allow Melchizedek, Abraham, David, and Jesus, along with many other persons in the Bible, to show you this great God, Creator of heaven and earth. He wants you to know how much he loves you; he wants you to know him personally.

### Strengths and accomplishments:

- The first priest-king in Scripture—a leader with a heart tuned to God
- Good at encouraging others to serve God wholeheartedly
- A man whose character reflected his love for God
- A person in the Old Testament who reminds us of Jesus

### Lessons from his life:

- Live for God and you’re likely to be at the right place at the right time. Examine your heart: To whom or what is your greatest loyalty? If you can honestly answer *God*, you are living for him.

### Vital statistics:

- Where: Ruled in Salem, site of the future Jerusalem
- Occupation: King of Salem and priest of God Most High

### Key verses:

“This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him. . . . Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder!” (Hebrews 7:1, 4)

Melchizedek’s story is told in Genesis 14:17-20. He is also mentioned in Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5–7.

**15:8** Abram was looking for confirmation and assurance that God would deliver on his promise. We also want assurance of God’s promises when we ask for help. Abram didn’t have the Bible—but we do. We must rest in the fact that all God’s past promises have come true, and so there is no reason to believe his future promises won’t come true as well. God’s past track record motivates us to trust in his absolute moral character and believe that he will keep his promises and do what is best for us in the future.

**15:13-14** The book of Exodus tells the story of the enslavement and miraculous deliverance of Abram’s descendants.

**15:16** The Amorites were one of the nations living in Canaan, the land God promised Abram. God knew the people would grow more wicked and would someday need to be punished. Part of that punishment would involve taking away their land and giving it to Abram’s descendants. God, in his mercy, was giving the Amorites plenty of time to repent, but he

2:16  
<sup>b</sup>Lk 2:49

2:17  
<sup>c</sup>Ps 69:9

2:18  
<sup>d</sup>Mt 12:38

2:19  
<sup>e</sup>Mt 26:61; 27:40;  
 Mk 14:58; 15:29

2:21  
<sup>f</sup>1Co 6:19

2:22  
<sup>g</sup>Lk 24:5-8; Jn 12:16;  
 14:26

2:23  
<sup>h</sup>ver 13

2:25  
<sup>i</sup>Mt 9:4; Jn 6:61,64;  
 13:11

3:1  
<sup>j</sup>Jn 7:50; 19:39  
<sup>k</sup>Lk 23:13

3:2  
<sup>l</sup>Jn 9:16,33  
<sup>m</sup>Ac 2:22; 10:38

3:3  
<sup>n</sup>Jn 1:13; 1Pe 1:23

temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup>To those who sold doves he said, “**Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house<sup>b</sup> into a market!**” <sup>17</sup>His disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”<sup>ac</sup>

<sup>18</sup>The Jews then responded to him, “What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?”<sup>d</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Jesus answered them, “**Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.**”<sup>e</sup>

<sup>20</sup>They replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?” <sup>21</sup>But the temple he had spoken of was his body.<sup>f</sup> <sup>22</sup>After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said.<sup>g</sup> Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

<sup>23</sup>Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival,<sup>h</sup> many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name.<sup>b</sup> <sup>24</sup>But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. <sup>25</sup>He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.<sup>i</sup>

### Nicodemus Visits Jesus at Night (24)

**3** Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus<sup>j</sup> who was a member of the Jewish ruling council.<sup>k</sup> <sup>2</sup>He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs<sup>l</sup> you are doing if God were not with him.”<sup>m</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Jesus replied, “**Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.**”<sup>c,n</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 17 Psalm 69:9    <sup>b</sup> 23 Or in him    <sup>c</sup> 3 The Greek for *again* also means *from above*; also in verse 7.

worshippers and as a way to make money for temple upkeep. But the religious leaders did not seem to care that the Court of the Gentiles was so full of merchants that foreigners found it difficult to worship. Worship was the main purpose for visiting the temple. No wonder Jesus was angry!

**2:14** The temple tax had to be paid in local currency, so foreigners had to have their money changed. But the money changers often charged exorbitant exchange rates. The people were also required to make sacrifices for sins. Because of the long journey, many could not bring their own animals. Some who brought animals had them rejected for imperfections. So animal merchants conducted a flourishing business in the temple courtyard. The price of sacrificial animals was much higher in the temple area than elsewhere. Jesus was angry at the dishonest, greedy practices of the money changers and merchants, and he particularly disliked their presence on the temple grounds. They were making a mockery of God’s house of worship. Our attitude toward the church is wrong if we see it as a place for personal contacts or business advantage. Make sure you attend church to worship God and enjoy spiritual fellowship with others.

**2:15-16** Jesus was obviously angry at the merchants who were exploiting those who had come to God’s house to worship. There is a difference between uncontrolled rage and righteous indignation—yet both are called anger. We must be very careful how we use the powerful emotion of anger. It is right to be angry about injustice and sin; it is wrong to be angry over trivial personal offenses.

**2:15-16** Jesus made a whip and chased out the money changers. Does his example permit us to use violence against wrongdoers? Certain authority is granted to some, but not to all. For example, the authority to use weapons and restrain people is granted to police officers, but not to the general public. The authority to imprison people is granted to judges, but not to individual citizens. Jesus had God’s authority, something we cannot have. While we want to live like Jesus, we should never try to claim his authority where it has not been given to us.

**2:17** Jesus took the evil acts in the temple as an insult against God, and thus, he did not deal with them halfheartedly. He was consumed with righteous anger against such flagrant disrespect for God.

**2:19-20** The Jews understood Jesus to mean the temple out of which he had just driven the merchants and money changers. This was the temple Zerubbabel had built over 500 years earlier, but Herod the Great had begun remodeling it, making it much larger and far more beautiful.

It had been 46 years since this remodeling had started (20 BC), and it still wasn’t completely finished. They understood Jesus’ words to mean that this imposing building could be torn down and rebuilt in three days, and they were astonished.

**2:21-22** Jesus was not talking about the temple made of stones but about his body. His listeners didn’t realize it, but Jesus was greater than the temple (Matthew 12:6). His words would take on meaning for his disciples after his resurrection. That Jesus so perfectly fulfilled this prediction became strong proof for his claim to be God.

**2:23-25** The Son of God knows all about human nature. Jesus was well aware of the truth of Jeremiah 17:9, which states, “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” Jesus was discerning, and he knew that the faith of some followers was superficial. Some of the same people claiming to believe in him at this time would later yell, “Crucify him!” Believing comes easily when it is exciting and everyone else agrees with you. But keep your faith firm even when following Jesus isn’t popular.

**3:1-21** Nicodemus came to Jesus personally, although he could have sent one of his assistants. He wanted to examine Jesus for himself to separate fact from rumor. Perhaps Nicodemus was afraid of what his peers, the Pharisees, would say about his visit, so he came after dark. Later, when he understood that Jesus was truly the Messiah, he spoke up boldly in his defense (7:50-51). Like Nicodemus, we must examine Jesus’ life and teachings for ourselves—others cannot do it for us. No one has improved upon his teachings in 2,000 years. No one has lived out his teachings better than he did. No one has predicted his or her death and resurrection as he did. If we believe he is who he says, we will want to follow him and speak up for him.

**3:1** Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member of the ruling council (called the high council, or the Sanhedrin). The Pharisees were a group of religious leaders whom Jesus and John the Baptist often criticized for being hypocrites (see the note on Matthew 3:7 for more on the Pharisees). Most Pharisees were intensely jealous of Jesus because he undermined their authority and challenged their views. But Nicodemus was searching, and he believed that Jesus had some answers. A learned teacher himself, he came to Jesus to be taught. No matter how intelligent and well educated you are, you must come to Jesus with an open mind and heart so he can teach you the truth about God.

**3:3** What did Nicodemus know about the kingdom? From the Bible,

<sup>4</sup>“How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

<sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.<sup>c</sup> <sup>6</sup>Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit<sup>a</sup> gives birth to spirit.<sup>b</sup> <sup>7</sup>You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You<sup>b</sup> must be born again.’

<sup>8</sup>The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”<sup>c</sup>

<sup>9</sup>“How can this be?”<sup>a</sup> Nicodemus asked.

<sup>10</sup>“You are Israel’s teacher,”<sup>r</sup> said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things?

<sup>11</sup>Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know,<sup>s</sup> and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony.<sup>t</sup> <sup>12</sup>I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ever gone into heaven<sup>u</sup> except the one who came from heaven<sup>v</sup>—the Son of Man.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness,<sup>w</sup> so the Son of Man must be lifted up,<sup>ex</sup> <sup>15</sup>that everyone who believes<sup>y</sup> may have eternal life in him.”<sup>f</sup>

<sup>16</sup>For God so loved<sup>z</sup> the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.<sup>a</sup> <sup>17</sup>For God did not send his Son into the

**3:5**  
<sup>c</sup>Titus 3:5

**3:6**  
<sup>e</sup>Jn 1:13; 1Co 15:50

**3:9**  
<sup>g</sup>Jn 6:52,60

**3:10**  
<sup>h</sup>Lk 2:46

**3:11**  
<sup>i</sup>Jn 1:18; 7:16,17  
<sup>j</sup>ver 32

**3:13**  
<sup>k</sup>Pr 30:4; Ac 2:34  
<sup>l</sup>Jn 6:38,42

**3:14**  
<sup>m</sup>Nu 21:8,9  
<sup>n</sup>Jn 8:28; 12:32

**3:15**  
<sup>o</sup>ver 16,36

**3:16**  
<sup>p</sup>Ro 5:8; Eph 2:4  
<sup>q</sup>ver 36; Jn 6:29,40

<sup>a</sup>6 Or but spirit <sup>b</sup>7 The Greek is plural. <sup>c</sup>8 The Greek for Spirit is the same as that for wind. <sup>d</sup>13 Some manuscripts Man, who is in heaven <sup>e</sup>14 The Greek for lifted up also means exalted. <sup>f</sup>15 Some interpreters end the quotation with verse 21.

he knew it would be ruled by God, it would be restored on earth, and it would incorporate God’s people. Jesus revealed to this devout Pharisee that the kingdom would come to the whole world (3:16), not just the Jews, and that Nicodemus wouldn’t be a part of it unless he was personally born again (3:5). This was a revolutionary concept: Jesus’ kingdom is personal, not national or ethnic, and his entrance requirements are repentance and spiritual rebirth. Jesus later taught that God’s kingdom has *already begun* in the hearts of believers (Luke 17:21). It will be fully realized when Jesus returns again to judge the world and abolish evil forever (Revelation 21–22).

**3:5–6** “Born of water and the Spirit” could refer to (1) the contrast between physical birth (water) and spiritual birth (Spirit) or (2) being regenerated by the Spirit, a rebirth signified through Christian baptism. The water may also represent the cleansing action of God’s Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). Nicodemus undoubtedly would have been familiar with God’s promise to give a new heart and a new spirit to the faithful (Ezekiel 36:25–26). Jesus was explaining the importance of a spiritual rebirth, saying that people enter the kingdom not by living a better life but by receiving a new life from God.

**3:6** Who is the Holy Spirit? God is three persons in one—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God became a human in Jesus so that Jesus could die for our sins. Jesus rose from the dead to offer salvation to all people through spiritual renewal and rebirth. When Jesus ascended into heaven, his physical presence left the earth, but he promised to send the Holy Spirit so that his spiritual presence would still be among humankind (see Luke 24:49). The Holy Spirit first became available to all believers at Pentecost (Acts 2). Whereas in Old Testament days the Holy Spirit empowered specific individuals for specific purposes at specific times, now all believers have the power of the Holy Spirit available to them all the time. (For more on the Holy Spirit, see John 14:16–28; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; and 2 Corinthians 1:22.)

**3:8** Jesus explained that we cannot control the work of the Holy Spirit. He works in ways we cannot predict or understand. Just as you did not control your physical birth, you cannot control your spiritual birth. It is a gift from God through the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16; 1 Corinthians 2:10–12; 1 Thessalonians 1:5–6).

**3:9** No one is beyond the touch of God’s Spirit. Are there people you disregard, thinking they could never be brought to God—a world leader you have never prayed for or a difficult person you have never shared the Good News with? Don’t ever assume that a certain person will never respond to the gospel. God, through his Holy Spirit, can reach anyone, and you should pray diligently for whomever he brings to your mind. Be a witness and an example to everyone you are in contact with. God

may touch those you consider most unreachable—and he may use you to do it.

**3:10–11** This Jewish teacher of the Bible knew the Old Testament thoroughly, but he didn’t understand what it said about the Messiah. Intellectual knowledge does not guarantee true understanding or salvation. You should know the Bible, but even more important, you need a relationship with the God whom the Bible reveals so you can receive the salvation that he offers.

**3:14–15** When the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, God sent a plague of snakes to punish them for their rebellious attitudes. Those doomed to die from snake bites could be healed by obeying God’s command to look up at the elevated bronze snake and believing that God would heal them if they did (see Numbers 21:8–9). Similarly, our salvation happens when we look up to Jesus, believing he will save us. God has provided this way for us to be healed of sin’s deadly bite.

**3:16** The entire gospel comes to a focus in this verse. God’s love is not static or self-centered; it reaches out and draws others in. Here God sets the pattern of true love, the basis for all love relationships—when you love someone dearly, you are willing to give to them freely, to the point of self-sacrifice. God paid dearly with the life of his Son, the highest price he could pay. Jesus accepted our punishment, paid the price for our sins, and then offered us the new life that he had bought for us. When we share the gospel with others, our love must be like Jesus’—willing to give up our own comfort and security so that others might join us in receiving God’s love.

**3:16** Some people are not interested in the idea of eternal life because their lives are miserable. They wouldn’t want them to go on forever. But eternal life is not an extension of a person’s mortal life. In eternal life, there is no death, sickness, enemy, evil, or sin. When we don’t know Jesus, we make choices as though this life is all there is, and we can’t imagine the bad being eliminated or redeemed into something good and wonderful. In reality, eternal life can be entirely different from the life you are living now. But you will need to ask Jesus for the new life he offers and follow him in order to receive it. Then you will begin to evaluate all that happens to you from an eternal perspective, and you will begin to truly look forward to eternity.

**3:16** To believe is more than to give intellectual agreement that Jesus is God. It means to put our trust and confidence in him that he alone can save us. It is to put Jesus in charge of our present plans and eternal destiny. Believing is both trusting his words as reliable and relying on him for the power to change. If you have never trusted Jesus with your whole life, let this promise of everlasting life be yours—believe.

3:17

<sup>a</sup>Jn 6:29,57; 10:36;  
11:42; 17:8,21; 20:21  
<sup>c</sup>Jn 12:47; 1Jn 4:14

3:18

<sup>d</sup>Jn 5:24  
<sup>e</sup>1Jn 4:9

3:19

<sup>f</sup>Jn 1:4; 8:12

3:20

<sup>g</sup>Eph 5:11,13

world<sup>b</sup> to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.<sup>c</sup> <sup>18</sup>Whoever believes in him is not condemned,<sup>d</sup> but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.<sup>e</sup> <sup>19</sup>This is the verdict: Light<sup>f</sup> has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup>Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.<sup>g</sup> <sup>21</sup>But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

### John the Baptist Tells More about Jesus (25)

<sup>22</sup>After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them, and baptized.<sup>h</sup> <sup>23</sup>Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized. <sup>24</sup>(This was before John was put in prison.)<sup>i</sup> <sup>25</sup>An argument developed between some of

3:22

<sup>h</sup>Jn 4:2

3:24

<sup>i</sup>Mt 4:12; 14:3

## Nicodemus

**GOD SPECIALIZES IN** finding and changing people we consider out of reach. It took a while for Nicodemus to come out of the dark, but God was patient with this "undercover" believer.

Afraid of being discovered, Nicodemus made an appointment to see Jesus at night. Daylight conversations between Pharisees and Jesus tended to be antagonistic, but Nicodemus really wanted to learn. He probably got a lot more than he expected—a challenge to a new life! We know very little about Nicodemus, but we know he left that evening's encounter a changed man. He came away with a whole new understanding of both God and himself.

Nicodemus next appears in the story as part of the Jewish high council (John 7:50). As the group discussed ways to eliminate Jesus, Nicodemus raised the question of justice. Although his objection was overruled, he had spoken up. He had begun to make his faith public.

Our last picture of Nicodemus shows him joining Joseph of Arimathea in asking for Jesus' body in order to provide for its burial (John 19:39). Realizing what he was risking, Nicodemus was making a bold move. He was continuing to grow.

God wants us to continually grow in our faith; he isn't looking for instant perfection. How well have you continued to grow spiritually in good times and bad?

#### Strengths and accomplishments:

- One of the few religious leaders who believed in Jesus
- A member of the powerful Jewish high council (the Sanhedrin)
- Although a Pharisee, was attracted by Jesus' character and miracles
- Joined with Joseph of Arimathea in burying Jesus

#### Weaknesses and mistakes:

- Limited by his fear of being publicly exposed as Jesus' follower

#### Lessons from his life:

- Unless we are born again, we can never be part of the kingdom of God.
- God is able to change those we might consider unreachable.
- God is patient but persistent.
- If we are available, God can use us.

#### Vital statistics:

- Where: Jerusalem
- Occupation: Religious leader
- Contemporaries: Jesus, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, Joseph of Arimathea

#### Key verse:

"How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" (John 3:4)

Nicodemus's story is told in John 3:1-21; 7:50-52; 19:39-40.

**3:18** People often try to protect themselves from their fears by putting their faith in something they do or have: good deeds, skill or intelligence, money or possessions. But only God can save us from the one danger we really need to fear—eternal condemnation. We believe in God by recognizing the insufficiency of our own efforts to merit salvation and by asking him to do his work in us. When Jesus talks about unbelievers, he means those who reject or ignore him completely, not those who have momentary doubts.

**3:19-21** Many people don't want their lives exposed to God's light because they are afraid of what will be revealed. They don't want to change their ways. Don't be surprised when these same people are threatened

by your desire to obey God and do what is right, because they are afraid that the light in you may expose some of the darkness in their lives. Rather than giving in to discouragement, keep praying that they will come to see how much better it is to live in light than in darkness.

**3:25-30** Some people look for points of disagreement so they can sow seeds of discord, discontent, and doubt in order to make themselves feel better. John the Baptist ended this theological argument by focusing on his devotion to Jesus. To try to force others to believe our way is divisive. Instead, let's witness about what Jesus has done for us. How can anyone argue with us about that?



John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing.<sup>j</sup> <sup>26</sup>They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi,<sup>k</sup> that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan — the one you testified<sup>l</sup> about — look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

<sup>27</sup>To this John replied, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven.

<sup>28</sup>You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.'<sup>m</sup> <sup>29</sup>The bride belongs to the bridegroom.<sup>n</sup> The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.<sup>o</sup> <sup>30</sup>He must become greater; I must become less."<sup>a</sup>

<sup>31</sup>The one who comes from above<sup>p</sup> is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth.<sup>q</sup> The one who comes from heaven is above all. <sup>32</sup>He testifies to what he has seen and heard,<sup>r</sup> but no one accepts his testimony.<sup>s</sup>

<sup>33</sup>Whoever has accepted it has certified that God is truthful. <sup>34</sup>For the one whom God has sent<sup>t</sup> speaks the words of God, for God<sup>b</sup> gives the Spirit<sup>u</sup> without limit. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.<sup>v</sup> <sup>36</sup>Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life,<sup>w</sup> but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

### Jesus Talks to a Woman at the Well (27)

**4** Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John<sup>x</sup> — <sup>2</sup>although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. <sup>3</sup>So he left Judea<sup>y</sup> and went back once more to Galilee.

<sup>4</sup>Now he had to go through Samaria. <sup>5</sup>So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.<sup>z</sup> <sup>6</sup>Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup>When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"<sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone into the town<sup>a</sup> to buy food.)

<sup>a</sup> 30 Some interpreters end the quotation with verse 36. <sup>b</sup> 34 Greek *he*

3:25

<sup>j</sup>Jn 2:6

3:26

<sup>k</sup>Mt 23:7

<sup>l</sup>Jn 1:7

3:28

<sup>m</sup>Jn 1:20,23

3:29

<sup>n</sup>Mt 9:15

<sup>o</sup>Jn 16:24; 17:13

3:31

<sup>p</sup>Ver 13

<sup>q</sup>Jn 8:23; 1Jn 4:5

3:32

<sup>r</sup>Jn 8:26; 15:15

<sup>s</sup>Ver 11

3:34

<sup>t</sup>Ver 17

<sup>u</sup>Mt 12:18; Lk 4:18

3:35

<sup>v</sup>Mt 28:18;

Jn 5:20,22; 17:2

3:36

<sup>w</sup>Ver 15; Jn 5:24;

6:47

4:1

<sup>x</sup>Jn 3:22,26

4:3

<sup>y</sup>Jn 3:22

4:5

<sup>z</sup>Ge 33:19; 48:22;

Jos 24:32

4:8

<sup>a</sup>Ver 5,39

**3:26** John the Baptist's disciples were disturbed because people were following Jesus instead of John. It is easy to grow jealous of the popularity of another person's ministry. But we must remember that our true mission is to influence people to follow Jesus, not us.

**3:27** Why did John the Baptist continue to baptize after Jesus came onto the scene? Why didn't he become a disciple too? John explained that because God had given him his work, he had to continue it until God called him to do something else. John's main purpose was to point people to Jesus. Even with Jesus beginning his own ministry, John could still point people to him.

**3:30** John's willingness to decrease in importance shows unusual humility. Pastors and other Christian leaders can be tempted to focus more on the success of their ministries than on Jesus. Beware of those who put more emphasis on their own achievements than on God's kingdom.

**3:31-35** Your whole spiritual life depends on your answer to one question: Who is Jesus Christ? If you accept Jesus as only a prophet or teacher, you have to reject his teaching, for he claimed to be God's Son—to be God himself. The heartbeat of John's Gospel is the dynamic truth that Jesus Christ is God's Son, the Messiah and the Savior, who existed from the beginning and will continue to live forever. Jesus' testimony was trustworthy because he had come from heaven and was speaking of what he had seen there. His words were the very words of God. This same Jesus has invited us to accept him and live with him eternally. When we understand who Jesus is, we are compelled to believe what he said.

**3:34** God gives the Spirit without measure or limit. Jesus was always filled, empowered, and totally connected to the heart and mind of God. Thus, Jesus was the highest revelation of God to humanity (Hebrews 1:2). He always spoke the words of God.

**3:36** Jesus says that those who believe in him *have* (not *will have*) eternal life. To receive eternal life is to join in God's life, which by nature is eternal. Thus, eternal life begins at the moment of spiritual rebirth.

**3:36** John, the author of this Gospel, wrote to demonstrate that Jesus is the true Son of God. Jesus sets before us the greatest choice in life. We are responsible for deciding today whom we will obey (Joshua 24:15), and God wants us to choose him and life (Deuteronomy 30:15-20). "God's

wrath" refers to his final rejection of those who reject him. To put off the choice means choosing not to follow Jesus. Indecision is a fatal decision.

**4:1-3** Already opposition was rising against Jesus, especially from the Pharisees. They resented Jesus' popularity as well as his message, which challenged much of their teaching. Because Jesus was just beginning his ministry, the time was not yet right to confront these leaders openly. He left Jerusalem and traveled north toward Galilee.

**4:4** To go from the territory of Judea to Galilee meant passing through a central territory called Samaria. Most Jews did everything they could to avoid traveling through Samaria. The reason goes way back into their history.

After the northern kingdom, with its capital at Samaria, fell to the Assyrians, many Jews were deported to Assyria, and foreigners were brought in to settle the land and help keep the peace (2 Kings 17:24). The intermarriage between those foreigners and the remaining Jews resulted in a mixed race, a people who were impure in the opinion of Jews who lived in the southern kingdom. Thus, the pure Jews hated this mixed race, called Samaritans, because they felt that their fellow Jews who had intermarried had betrayed their people and nation. The Samaritans had set up an alternate center for worship on Mount Gerizim (John 4:20) to parallel the temple at Jerusalem, but it had been destroyed 150 years earlier. While there was long-standing prejudice between Jews and Samaritans, Jesus did not live by such restrictions. The route through Samaria was shorter, and that was the route he took.

**4:5-7** Jacob's well was on the property originally owned by Jacob (Genesis 33:18-19). It was not a spring-fed well but a well into which water would seep from rain and dew, collecting at the bottom. Wells were almost always located outside the city along the main road. Twice each day, morning and evening, women would come to draw water. This woman came at noon, however, probably to avoid meeting people who knew her reputation. Jesus gave this woman an extraordinary message about fresh and pure water that would quench her spiritual thirst forever (John 4:13-14).

**4:7-9** This woman was (1) a Samaritan, a member of the hated mixed race; (2) known to be living with a man but not married; and (3) in a public place. No respectable Jewish man would talk to a woman under such circumstances. But Jesus did. The gospel is for every person, regardless

**4:9**  
<sup>a</sup>Mt 10:5; Lk 9:52,53

**4:10**  
<sup>c</sup>Isa 44:3; Jer 2:13;  
 Zec 14:8; Jn 7:37,38;  
 Rev 21:6; 22:1,17

**4:12**  
<sup>a</sup>ver 6

**4:14**  
<sup>e</sup>Jn 6:35  
<sup>f</sup>Jn 7:38  
<sup>g</sup>Mt 25:46

**4:15**  
<sup>h</sup>Jn 6:34

**4:19**  
<sup>i</sup>Mt 21:11

**4:20**  
<sup>j</sup>Dt 11:29; Jos 8:33  
<sup>k</sup>Lk 9:53

**4:21**  
<sup>l</sup>Jn 5:28; 16:2  
<sup>m</sup>Mal 1:11; 1Ti 2:8

**4:22**  
<sup>n</sup>2Ki 17:28-41  
<sup>o</sup>Isa 2:3; Ro 3:1,2;  
 9:4,5

<sup>9</sup>The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan<sup>b</sup> woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.<sup>a</sup>)

<sup>10</sup>Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”<sup>c</sup>

<sup>11</sup>“Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? <sup>12</sup>Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well<sup>d</sup> and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?”

<sup>13</sup>Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup>but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst.<sup>e</sup> Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water<sup>f</sup> welling up to eternal life.”<sup>g</sup>

<sup>15</sup>The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty<sup>h</sup> and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

<sup>16</sup>He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”

<sup>17</sup>“I have no husband,” she replied.

Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. <sup>18</sup>The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

<sup>19</sup>“Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet.<sup>i</sup> <sup>20</sup>Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain,<sup>j</sup> but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”<sup>k</sup>

<sup>21</sup>“Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming<sup>l</sup> when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.<sup>m</sup> <sup>22</sup>You Samaritans worship what you do not know;<sup>n</sup> we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.<sup>o</sup> <sup>23</sup>Yet a time

<sup>a</sup> 9 Or do not use dishes Samaritans have used

of his or her race, social position, and past sins. We must be prepared to share the gospel at any time and in any place. Jesus crossed all social, cultural, and political barriers to share the gospel, and we who follow him must do no less. What barriers do you need to cross?

**4:10** What did Jesus mean by “living water”? In the Old Testament, many verses speak of thirsting after God as one thirsts for water (Psalm 42:1; Isaiah 55:1; Jeremiah 2:13; Zechariah 13:1). God is called the fountain of life (Psalm 36:9) and the spring of living water (Jeremiah 17:13). In saying he would bring living water that could forever quench a person’s thirst for God, Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah. Only the Messiah could give this gift that satisfies the soul’s desire.

**4:13-15** Many spiritual functions parallel physical functions. As our bodies hunger and thirst, so do our souls. But our souls need *spiritual* food and water. The woman confused the two kinds of water, perhaps because no one had ever talked with her about her spiritual hunger and thirst before. We would not think of depriving our bodies of food and water when they hunger or thirst. Why, then, should we deprive our souls? The living Word, Jesus Christ, and the written Word, the Bible, satisfy our hungry and thirsty souls.

**4:15** The woman mistakenly believed that if she received the water Jesus offered, she would not have to return to the well each day. She was interested in Jesus’ message because she thought it could make her life easier. But if that were always the case, people would accept the Good News for the wrong reasons. Jesus did not come to take away challenges but to change us on the inside and to empower us to deal with problems from God’s perspective.

**4:16-20** When this woman discovered that Jesus knew all about her private life, she quickly changed the subject. Often people become uncomfortable when the conversation gets too close to home, and they try to talk about something else. As we talk to others, we should feel free to gently guide the conversation back to Jesus and what he has done for us. Jesus’ presence exposes sin and can make people uncomfortable, but only he can forgive sin and give new life. We must recognize and embrace this tension that we will often experience when we share our faith with others.

**4:20-24** The woman brought up a popular theological issue—the correct place to worship. But her question was a smoke screen, a diversion, to keep the conversation from becoming too personal and vulnerable. Her

lifestyle had most likely brought much ridicule and rejection from others, and she probably expected this from Jesus as well. Jesus directed the conversation to a much more important point: The *location* of worship is not nearly as important as the one whom we worship. Jesus knew that once the woman recognized him as the Messiah, her life choices would change as she was transformed into a person constantly refreshed with living water.

**4:22** When Jesus said, “Salvation is from the Jews,” he meant that only through the Jewish Messiah would the whole world find salvation. God had promised that through the Jewish people the whole earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:3). The Old Testament prophets had called the Jews to be a light to the other nations of the world, bringing them to a knowledge of God and showing them God’s way to live and how to treat others. They had also predicted the Messiah’s coming. The woman at the well may have known of these passages and been expecting the Messiah, but she didn’t realize that she was talking to him!



#### THE VISIT IN SAMARIA

Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover, cleared the temple, and talked with Nicodemus, a religious leader, about eternal life. He then left Jerusalem and traveled to Galilee. On his way to Galilee, he visited Sychar and other villages in Samaria. Unlike most Jews of the day, he did not try to avoid the region of Samaria.



is coming and has now come<sup>p</sup> when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit<sup>q</sup> and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup>God is spirit,<sup>r</sup> and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

<sup>25</sup>The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ)<sup>s</sup> “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

<sup>26</sup>Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you — I am he.”<sup>t</sup>

### Jesus Tells about the Spiritual Harvest (28)

<sup>27</sup>Just then his disciples returned<sup>u</sup> and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

<sup>28</sup>Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,

<sup>29</sup>“Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did.<sup>v</sup> Could this be the Messiah?”<sup>w</sup>

<sup>30</sup>They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

<sup>31</sup>Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi,<sup>x</sup> eat something.”

<sup>32</sup>But he said to them, “I have food to eat<sup>y</sup> that you know nothing about.”

<sup>33</sup>Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?”

<sup>34</sup>“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will<sup>z</sup> of him who sent me and to finish his work.”<sup>a</sup>

<sup>35</sup>Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. <sup>b</sup><sup>36</sup>Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests<sup>c</sup> a crop for eternal life,<sup>d</sup> so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. <sup>37</sup>Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’<sup>e</sup> is true. <sup>38</sup>I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”

### Many Samaritans Believe in Jesus (29)

<sup>39</sup>Many of the Samaritans from that town<sup>f</sup> believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.”<sup>g</sup> <sup>40</sup>So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. <sup>41</sup>And because of his words many more became believers.

<sup>42</sup>They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”<sup>h</sup>

### Jesus Preaches in Galilee (30/Matthew 4:12–17; Mark 1:14–15; Luke 4:14–15)

<sup>43</sup>After the two days<sup>i</sup> he left for Galilee. <sup>44</sup>(Now Jesus himself had pointed out that a prophet has no honor in his own country.)<sup>j</sup> <sup>45</sup>When he arrived in Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival,<sup>k</sup> for they also had been there.

4:23

<sup>a</sup>Jn 5:25; 16:32

<sup>q</sup>Php 3:3

4:24

<sup>r</sup>Php 3:3

4:25

<sup>s</sup>Mt 1:16

4:26

<sup>t</sup>Jn 8:24; 9:35–37

4:27

<sup>u</sup>ver 8

4:29

<sup>v</sup>ver 17:18

<sup>w</sup>Mt 12:23

4:31

<sup>x</sup>Mt 23:7

4:32

<sup>y</sup>Job 23:12; Mt 4:4

4:34

<sup>z</sup>Mt 26:39; Jn 6:38

<sup>a</sup>Jn 19:30

4:35

<sup>b</sup>Mt 9:37; Lk 10:2

4:36

<sup>c</sup>Ro 1:13

<sup>d</sup>Mt 25:46

4:37

<sup>e</sup>Job 31:8; Mic 6:15

4:39

<sup>f</sup>ver 5

<sup>g</sup>ver 29

4:42

<sup>h</sup>Lk 2:11; 1Jn 4:14

4:43

<sup>i</sup>ver 40

4:44

<sup>j</sup>Mt 13:57; Lk 4:24

4:45

<sup>k</sup>Jn 2:23

**4:24** “God is spirit” means that he is not a physical being limited to one place. He is present everywhere, and he can be worshiped anywhere, at any time. Where we worship is not what counts but how we worship. Is your worship genuine and true? Do you have the Holy Spirit’s help? How

does the Holy Spirit help us worship? The Holy Spirit prays for us (Romans 8:26), reminds us of the words of Jesus (John 14:26), cleanses our minds and consciences (Titus 3:4–7), and tells us we are loved (Romans 5:5).

**4:34** The “food” Jesus was speaking of was his spiritual nourishment. His spiritual nourishment came from doing God’s will and, in this case, helping to bring his work of salvation to this woman. For us, it includes more than Bible study, prayer, and attending church. We are nourished not only by what we take in but also by what we give out for God. Later, Jesus referred to completing God’s work on earth (17:4).

**4:35** Sometimes Christians excuse themselves from sharing their faith by saying that their family members or friends aren’t ready to believe. Jesus, however, makes it clear that around us a continual harvest waits to be reaped. Don’t let Jesus find you making excuses. Look around. You will find people ready to hear God’s Word.

**4:36–38** The wages Jesus offers are the joy of working for him and seeing the harvest of believers. These wages come to sower and reaper alike because both find joy in seeing new believers come into Christ’s kingdom. The statement “others have done the hard work” (4:38) may refer to the Old Testament prophets and to John the Baptist, who paved the way for the gospel.

**4:39** The Samaritan woman immediately shared her experience with others. Despite her reputation, many took her up on her invitation and came out to meet Jesus. Perhaps you have past sins that make you ashamed. But Jesus changes us. As people see these changes, they become curious. Use stories of your experiences, including your past mistakes, as opportunities to introduce others to the new life Jesus offers.

### JESUS RETURNS TO GALILEE

Jesus stayed in Sychar for two days, then went on to Galilee. He visited Nazareth and various towns in Galilee before arriving in Cana. From there he simply spoke the word, and a government official’s son in Capernaum was healed. The Gospel of Matthew tells us that Jesus then settled in Capernaum (Matthew 4:12–13).



Jesus Heals a Government Official's Son (31)

4:46  
Jn 2:1-11  
4:47  
ver 3,54

<sup>46</sup>Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine.<sup>47</sup>When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea,<sup>m</sup> he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

4:48  
Da 4:2,3; Jn 2:11;  
Ac 2:43; 14:3;  
Ro 15:19; 2Co 12:12;  
Heb 2:4

<sup>48</sup>“Unless you people see signs and wonders,”<sup>n</sup> Jesus told him, “you will never believe.”  
<sup>49</sup>The royal official said, “Sir, come down before my child dies.”  
<sup>50</sup>“Go,” Jesus replied, “your son will live.”

4:53  
Ac 11:14

The man took Jesus at his word and departed.<sup>51</sup>While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living.<sup>52</sup>When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, “Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him.”

4:54  
ver 48; Jn 2:11

<sup>53</sup>Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So he and his whole household<sup>o</sup> believed.

<sup>54</sup>This was the second sign<sup>p</sup> Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

Jesus Heals a Lame Man by a Pool (42)

5:2  
Ne 3:1; 12:39  
Jn 19:13,17,20;  
20:16; Ac 21:40;  
22:2; 26:14

**5** Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals.<sup>2</sup>Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate<sup>q</sup> a pool, which in Aramaic<sup>r</sup> is called Bethesda<sup>a</sup> and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades.<sup>3</sup>Here a great number of disabled

<sup>a</sup> 2 Some manuscripts *Bethzatha*; other manuscripts *Bethsaida*

THE CLAIMS OF CHRIST	Who Jesus Claimed to Be	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
	The fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies	5:17; 26:31, 53-56	14:21, 61-62	4:16-21; 7:18-23; 18:31; 22:37; 24:44	2:22; 5:45-47; 6:45; 7:40; 10:34-36; 13:18; 15:25; 20:9
	The Son of Man	8:20; 12:8; 16:27; 19:28; 20:18-19; 24:27, 44; 25:31; 26:2, 45, 64	8:31, 38; 9:9; 10:45; 14:41	6:22; 7:33-34; 12:8; 17:22; 18:8, 31; 19:10; 21:36	1:51; 3:13-14; 6:27, 53; 12:23, 34
	The Son of God	11:27; 14:33; 16:16-17; 27:43	3:11-12; 14:61-62	8:28; 10:22	1:18; 3:35-36; 5:18-26; 6:40; 10:36; 11:4; 17:1; 19:7
	The Messiah/ the Christ	23:9-10; 26:63-64	8:29-30	4:41; 23:1-2; 24:25-27	4:25-26; 10:24-25; 11:27
	Teacher/Master	26:18			13:13-14
	One with authority to forgive		2:1-12	7:48-49	
	Lord		5:19		13:13-14; 20:28-29
	Savior			19:10	3:17; 10:9

**4:46-49** This royal official was probably an officer in Herod's service. He had walked 20 miles to see Jesus and addressed him as "Sir," putting himself under Jesus even though he had legal authority over Jesus.

**4:48** This miracle was more than a favor to one official; it was a sign to all the people. John's Gospel was written to all humankind to urge us toward faith in Jesus. Here a royal official had faith that Jesus could do what he claimed. The official believed; *then* he saw a miraculous sign.

**4:50** This royal official not only believed Jesus could heal but also obeyed Jesus by returning home, thus demonstrating his faith. Merely saying we believe that Jesus can take care of our problems isn't enough. We need to act as if he can. When you pray about a need or problem, live as though you believe Jesus can do what he says.

**4:51** Jesus' miracles were not illusions. Although the official's son was 20 miles away, he was healed when Jesus spoke the word. Just as he had mastered physical elements to create wine, Jesus now overcame space. Distance was no problem because he has mastery not only over disease but also over time and space. We can never put so much distance between ourselves and Jesus that we are beyond his reach.

**4:53** Notice how the official's faith grew. First, he believed enough to ask Jesus to help his son. Second, he believed Jesus' assurance that his son would live, and he acted on it. Third, he and his whole household believed in Jesus. Faith grows as we use it.

**5:1** Three festivals required all Jewish males to come to Jerusalem: (1) the Festival of Passover and Unleavened Bread, (2) the Festival of Weeks (also called Pentecost), and (3) the Festival of Tabernacles.

# Table of Weights & Measures

	BIBLICAL UNIT	APPROXIMATE AMERICAN EQUIVALENT	APPROXIMATE METRIC EQUIVALENT
<b>WEIGHTS</b>	talent (60 minas)	75 pounds	34 kilograms
	mina (50 shekels)	1 1/4 pounds	560 grams
	shekel (2 bekas)	2/5 ounce	11.5 grams
	pim (2/3 shekel)	1/4 ounce	7.8 grams
	beka (10 gerahs)	1/5 ounce	5.7 grams
	gerah	1/50 ounce	0.6 gram
	daric	1/3 ounce	8.4 grams
<b>LENGTHS</b>	cubit	18 inches	45 centimeters
	span	9 inches	23 centimeters
	handbreadth	3 inches	7.5 centimeters
	stadion (pl. stadia)	600 feet	183 meters
<b>CAPACITIES</b>	<i><b>Dry Measures</b></i>		
	cor [homer] (10 ephahs)	6 bushels	220 liters
	letheh (5 ephahs)	3 bushels	110 liters
	ephah (10 omers)	3/5 bushel	22 liters
	seah (1/3 ephah)	7 quarts	7.5 liters
	omer (1/10 ephah)	2 quarts	2 liters
	cab (1/18 ephah)	1 quart	1 liter
	<i><b>Liquid Measures</b></i>		
	bath (1 ephah)	6 gallons	22 liters
	hin (1/6 bath)	1 gallon	3.8 liters
	log (1/72 bath)	1/3 quart	0.3 liter

The figures of the table are calculated on the basis of a shekel equaling 11.5 grams, a cubit equaling 18 inches and an ephah equaling 22 liters. The quart referred to is either a dry quart (slightly larger than a liter) or a liquid quart (slightly smaller than a liter), whichever is applicable. The ton referred to in the footnotes is the American ton of 2,000 pounds. These weights are calculated relative to the particular commodity involved. Accordingly, the same measure of capacity in the text may be converted into different weights in the footnotes.

This table is based upon the best available information, but it is not intended to be mathematically precise; like the measurement equivalents in the footnotes, it merely gives approximate amounts and distances. Weights and measures differed somewhat at various times and places in the ancient world. There is uncertainty particularly about the ephah and the bath; further discoveries may shed more light on these units of capacity.

As a believer in Christ, you will often be asked questions about your faith—sometimes these are from honest seekers with tough questions that have bothered them; sometimes they're questions used by the questioners assuming you won't be able to answer them. In either case, it helps to be prepared with answers, or at least to know where to find them. The *Life Application Study Bible* notes were written not only to help explain the contents of the Bible and to get people started in thinking about application but also to answer some of these key questions.

The treasures are here, and they have been located for you in this section. The following can guide you to the notes that best answer questions in the following 25 categories. The references noted after each question are for the note or notes that will best help you to answer that question. (A number in parentheses indicates which note is being referred to if there is more than one note on a particular Scripture verse or passage.)

## **BELIEF**

Why should I believe? *See notes on Genesis 15:6; Exodus 9:12.*

What does it mean to believe in Jesus? *See note on John 3:16 (3).*

## **BIBLE**

Why should I read the Bible? *See notes on 2 Chronicles 17:7-9; 34:31; Psalm 119:19.*

Why should I trust the Bible? *See notes on Psalm 33:4; Proverbs 16:22; 2 Peter 1:16-21.*

Why do we call the Bible God's Word? *See note on 2 Timothy 3:16-17.*

How is the Bible different from other religious literature? *See note on 2 Timothy 3:16.*

## **CHURCH**

How should I choose a church? *See notes on 1 Corinthians 3:10-11; 1 Peter 5:8-9.*

If eternal life is free, what's this 10 percent I keep hearing about? *See notes on Deuteronomy 14:22-23; 2 Corinthians 8:10-15; 8:12 (1 and 2).*

Isn't participation in church optional? *See note on Luke 4:16.*

## **DEATH**

What happens when people die? *See notes on 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 2:14-15.*

How can I be ready to die? *See notes on Genesis 50:24; Psalm 23:4.*

## **DEVIL**

Is the devil real? *See notes on Job 1:6-12; Matthew 4:1.*

What does the devil do? *See notes on Genesis 3:5; 3:6.*

How powerful is the devil? *See note on Joshua 6:2-5.*

## **FAITH**

How strong does my faith have to be? *See notes on Matthew 17:17-20; Luke 17:6; Romans 14:1-23.*

Is faith enough? That seems too easy. *See notes on 2 Kings 5:12; Matthew 3:9-10; Philippians 3:2-3 (2); James 2:1-26.*

How can I tell others about my faith? *See notes on Exodus 3:16-17; Revelation 1:5-6.*

## **FORGIVENESS**

How can I know that God forgives me? *See notes on Psalm 32:1-2; Isaiah 1:18; Hebrews 10:17; 1 John 1:9 (1).*

## **FUTURE**

What can God tell me about the future? *See notes on Job 19:25-27; Matthew 24:3-51; John 14:19-21; Revelation 21:7-8; 22:20.*

How will the world end? *See notes on Mark 13:5-7; Luke 12:40; 1 John 2:18-23.*

## **GOD**

What is God really like? *See notes on Genesis 1:1-31 (1); 18:14; Numbers 14:17-20; Deuteronomy 27:15-26; Psalms 34:9-10; 36:5-8; 99:5; John 14:5-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.*

What are idols, and what's wrong with them? *See notes on Exodus 20:1-6; 32:4-5; 1 Kings 18:29.*

Isn't God only all about rules? *See note on Isaiah 5:11-13.*

## **GOSPEL**

What is the gospel? *See notes on Matthew 4:23-24; John 3:16 (1); Romans 1:3-5; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.*

## **GRACE**

What is grace? *See note on Ephesians 1:7-8.*

How important is it to have God's grace? *See note on Nehemiah 9:28-31.*

## **HEAVEN/HELL**

What does the Bible really say about heaven? *See notes on Mark 12:24; 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Peter 2:11.*

What does the Bible really say about hell? *See*

notes on *Matthew 25:46*; *2 Thessalonians 1:9*;  
*Jude 1:7*; *Revelation 20:14*.

### HOLY SPIRIT

Who is the Holy Spirit? *See notes on Psalm 48:14*;  
*John 14:15-16*; *14:17*; *Acts 1:5*.

### JESUS

How do we know Jesus wasn't just an excellent teacher? *See notes on Matthew 17:5*; *Luke 24:6-7 (2)*; *John 5:31-47*; *Philippians 2:5-11 (1)*.

What do you mean when you say Jesus is God? *See notes on Hebrews 1:1-2*; *1:3 (1)*.

What did Jesus do for me? *See notes on Mark 15:31*; *2 Corinthians 5:21*; *Colossians 1:12-14*;  
*Hebrews 9:22*.

### LIFE

What does God want from me? *See notes on Numbers 9:23*; *Judges 21:25*; *Proverbs 13:6*; *Ecclesiastes 1:8-11*; *1 John 4:20-21*.

Doesn't God want me to be perfect? How can I do that? *See notes on Matthew 5:48*; *Romans 5:20*;  
*Hebrews 10:14*.

How can I "commit" my life to God? *See notes on Proverbs 16:3*; *1 Peter 1:14-16 (2)*.

How am I supposed to live as a Christian? *See notes on Exodus 23:24-25*; *Joshua 1:5*; *John 17:18*;  
*Romans 13:1-14*; *1 Peter 1:8-9*.

### OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament seems so—old. How much of it really applies to me today? *See notes on Deuteronomy 4:8*; *Matthew 5:17-20*; *Acts 21:23-24 (2)*.

How do the Old and New Testaments relate? *See notes on Leviticus 1:2*; *Matthew 13:52*; *Hebrews 3:5*.

### ONLY ONE WAY

How can Christians insist that Jesus is the only way to God? *See notes on John 6:67-68*; *Acts 4:12*;  
*1 Timothy 2:5-6*; *2 Timothy 4:3-5*; *Hebrews 10:26*.  
Why isn't just being "good" good enough? *See notes on Colossians 1:21-22*; *Hebrews 7:28*; *9:14*.

### OTHER RELIGIONS

How can you say that devout people who follow other religions are wrong? *See notes on Colossians 2:20-23 (2)*; *2:22-23*; *2 John 1:1-2*; *1:3-4*.

What makes Christianity different from other religions? *See notes on Hebrews 7:25*; *1 John 5:12*; *5:13*.

### PRAYER

What good does prayer do? *See notes on 2 Chronicles 6:19-42*; *Psalms 4:3*; *Mark 9:29*.

If God knows everything, why pray? *See notes on Isaiah 38:1-5*; *Acts 1:12-13*.

How should I pray? *See notes on Jonah 2:1-9*;  
*Mark 11:22-25*; *Hebrews 4:16*; *1 John 5:14-15*.

### REPENTANCE/CONFESSION

Why are confession and repentance necessary? *See notes on Leviticus 5:5*; *2 Samuel 12:14 (1)*;  
*Matthew 3:1-2 (1)*; *1 John 1:9 (1 and 2)*.

### SIN

What is sin? *See note on James 4:17*.

Why is sin dangerous? What's the big deal? *See notes on 2 Samuel 11:1-12:19*; *1 Kings 11:9-10*;  
*1 Chronicles 21:13-15*; *21:14-15*; *1 Corinthians 6:12-13 (1)*; *1 Thessalonians 4:4-5*; *Revelation 9:20-21*.

Why should I call myself a sinner when I can think of a lot of people who are really bad? *See note on Romans 3:23*.

How could a loving God send sincere people to hell? *See notes on Deuteronomy 7:2*; *Romans 1:18-20 (1 and 2)*.

Can someone be too sinful to be saved? *See notes on 2 Chronicles 33:12-13*; *Psalms 51:1-19*; *51:1-7*.

### SPIRITUAL GIFTS

What are spiritual gifts? Does everyone have one? *See notes on Romans 12:6-8*; *12:6 (1)*; *Ephesians 4:11-12*.

### SUFFERING

Why do bad things happen to good people? *See notes on Job 1:1-2:13*; *2:10*; *Acts 12:2-11*; *Romans 8:28*.

How does God help me deal with the problems in my life? *See notes on Exodus 5:22-23*; *Job 5:17-26*;  
*Psalms 106:40-42*; *Philippians 1:29*; *1 Thessalonians 3:1-3*; *Hebrews 11:35-39*.

### TEMPTATION

How does the devil tempt me? *See notes on Luke 4:3 (1 and 2)*.

Why does the devil tempt me? *See notes on Genesis 3:1-6 (1 and 2)*.

At what point does temptation become sin? *See note on Matthew 4:1-11 (2)*.

How do I handle temptation? *See notes on Matthew 26:40-41*; *Luke 4:1-13*; *1 Corinthians 10:13*.

### TRINITY

Why isn't the Trinity like believing in three gods? *See notes on Matthew 3:16-17*; *Mark 1:10-11*; *Acts 1:4-5*.

# Master Index

This is an index to the notes, charts, maps, and personality profiles in the *Life Application Study Bible*. Every entry concerning a note has a Bible reference and a page number; every entry concerning a chart, map, or personality profile has a page number. In some instances, a Bible reference is followed by a number in parentheses to draw attention to one note in particular on that Scripture. For example, *Rv 1:1(3)* means that the reader should look up the third note with the heading of 1:1 in Revelation. In most cases, the entries follow a biblical/canonical order (i.e., from Genesis to Revelation). In some cases, however, the entries follow a chronological order—this is especially true with important people in the Bible. Following the general index are special indexes: Index to Charts, Index to Maps, and Index to Personality Profiles. Because of the emphasis on application in the *Life Application Study Bible*, these indexes are helpful guides for personal and group Bible study, sermon preparation, and teaching.

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# NIV Dictionary/Concordance

## A

**ABANDON(ED)** *to withdraw one's protection, support, or help; to forsake*  
he will not *a* or destroy you ... Dt 4:31  
and will not *a* my people Israel ... 1 Kgs 6:13  
compassion you did not *a* them ... Neh 9:19  
not *a* me to the realm of the dead, ... Ps 16:10  
not *a* me to the realm of the dead, ... Acts 2:27  
persecuted, but not *a*; struck down, ...  
2 Cor 4:9

in later times some will *a* the faith ... 1 Tm 4:1

**ABBA** *Aramaic for "daddy"; see FATHER*  
"A, Father," he said, "everything is ... Mk 14:36  
And by him we cry, "A, Father." ... Rom 8:15  
the Spirit who calls out, "A, Father ... Gal 4:6

**ABHOR(S)** *to detest or loathe; see HATE*  
of your idols, and I will *a* you ... Lv 26:30  
I *a* the assembly of evildoers ... Ps 26:5  
and *a* those who are in rebellion against  
you ... Ps 139:21  
I *a* the pride of Jacob ... Am 6:8  
You who *a* idols, do you rob ... Rom 2:22

**ABILITY, ABLE** *marked by power, intelligence, competence, skill, giftedness*  
The LORD was not *a* ... Nm 14:16  
for it is he who gives you the *a* ... Dt 8:18  
that we should be *a* to give ... 1 Chr 29:14  
who is *a* to build *a* temple for him, ...  
2 Chr 2:6

According to their *a* they gave ... Ezr 2:69  
and gold will not be *a* to deliver them ...  
Ezk 7:19  
the God we serve is *a* to save us ... Dn 3:17  
walk in pride he is *a* to humble ... Dn 4:37  
Do you believe that I am *a* ... Mt 9:28  
one bag, each according to his *a* ... Mt 25:15  
will try to enter and will not be *a* to ...  
Lk 13:24

to build and wasn't *a* to finish ... Lk 14:30  
none of your adversaries will be *a* ... Lk 21:15  
disciples, as each one was *a* ... Acts 11:29  
will be *a* to separate us ... Rom 8:39  
for the Lord is *a* to make them stand ...  
Rom 14:4  
to him who is *a* to establish you ... Rom 16:25  
far beyond our *a* to endure, ... 2 Cor 1:8  
were able, and even beyond their *a* ...  
2 Cor 8:3

God is *a* to bless you abundantly, ... 2 Cor 9:8  
him who is *a* to do immeasurably ... Eph 3:20  
you may be *a* to stand your ground, ...  
Eph 6:13

respectable, hospitable, *a* to teach, ...  
1 Tm 3:2

and am convinced that he is *a* ... 2 Tm 1:12

he is *a* to help those who are being ...  
Heb 2:18

he is *a* to save completely ... Heb 7:25

To him who is *a* to keep you ... Jude 1:24  
He is *a* to open the scroll ... Rv 5:5

**ABOLISH(ED)(ING)** *to do away with; to destroy completely*

I will *a* from the land, ... Hos 2:18  
that I have come to *a* the Law ... Mt 5:17  
the offense of the cross has been *a* ...  
Gal 5:11

**ABOMINATION** *anything extremely repulsive to God*

set up the *a* that causes desolation. ...  
Dn 11:31

*a* that causes desolation is set up, ... Dn 12:11  
the holy place 'the *a* that causes ... Mt 24:15  
you see 'the *a* that causes ... Mk 13:14

**ABOUND(ING)** *to have more than enough*

slow to anger, *a* in love ... Ex 34:6  
*a* in love and forgiving sin ... Nm 14:18  
slow to anger and *a* in love ... Neh 9:17  
*a* in love to all who call to you ... Ps 86:5  
slow to anger, *a* in love ... Ps 86:15  
slow to anger and *a* in love, ... Jl 2:13  
slow to anger and *a* in love, ... Jon 4:2  
that your love may *a* more ... Phil 1:9

**ABSTAIN(S)** *to refrain from something by one's own choice*

they must *a* from wine and other ... Nm 6:3  
them to *a* from food polluted ... Acts 15:20  
thanks to God; and whoever *a* ... Rom 14:6  
to *a* from sinful desires, ... 1 Pt 2:11

**ABUNDANCE, ABUNDANT** *great or plentiful amount*

Seven years of great *a* are coming ... Gn 41:29  
will grant you *a* prosperity ... Dt 28:11  
and *a* showers fall on mankind ... Jb 36:28  
but you brought us to *a* place of *a* ... Ps 66:12  
You gave *a* showers, O God; ... Ps 68:9  
gave them water as *a* as the seas; ... Ps 78:15  
I will bless her with *a* provisions; ... Ps 132:15  
They celebrate your *a* goodness ... Ps 145:7  
work their land will have *a* food, ... Prv 12:11  
their *a* permits them no sleep ... Eccl 5:12  
and delight in her overflowing *a* ... Is 66:11  
given more, and they will have an *a* ...  
Mt 13:12

consist in an *a* of possessions ... Lk 12:15  
who receive God's *a* provision ... Rom 5:17  
Grace and peace be yours in *a* ... 1 Pt 1:2  
yours in *a* through the knowledge ... 2 Pt 1:2  
peace and love be yours in *a* ... Jude 1:2

**ACCEPT(ABLE)(ANCE)(ED)(S)** *to receive or approve with favor*

will you not be *a*? But if you do not ... Gn 4:7  
Do not *a* a bribe, ... Ex 23:8  
and I will *a* his prayer and not deal ... Jb 42:8  
the LORD *a* my prayer ... Ps 6:9  
The wise in heart *a* commands, ... Prv 10:8  
Listen to advice and *a* discipline, ... Prv 19:20

is more *a* to the LORD ... Prv 21:3  
no prophet is *a* in his hometown ... Lk 4:24  
whoever *a* anyone I send *a* me; ... Jn 13:20  
what will their *a* be but life ... Rom 11:15  
*A* one another, then, just ... Rom 15:7  
you *a* gospel other than what you *a*, ... Gal 1:9  
humbly *a* the word planted in you, ... Jas 1:21

**ACCESS** *the right to enter or approach*  
through whom we have gained *a* ... Rom 5:2  
For through him we both have *a* ... Eph 2:18

**ACCOUNT** *description of facts or events; a report*

to give *a* on the day of judgment ... Mt 12:36  
each of us will give an *a* of ourselves ...  
Rom 14:12

of him to whom we must give *a* ... Heb 4:13

**ACCOUNTABLE** *to be held responsible*  
and I will hold you *a* for their blood ...  
Ezk 3:18

but I will hold the watchman *a* ... Ezk 33:6  
and will hold them *a* for my flock ... Ezk 34:10  
Do not hold us *a* for killing ... Jon 1:14  
and the whole world held *a* to God ...  
Rom 3:19

**ACCUSATION(S)** *a charge of wrongdoing*  
Do not entertain an *a* ... 1 Tm 5:19

**ACCUSE(S), ACCUSING** *to charge with wrongdoing*

Let him who *a* God answer him! ... Jb 40:2  
Do not *a* anyone for no reason ... Prv 3:30  
and don't *a* people falsely ... Lk 3:14  
and their thoughts sometimes *a* ... Rom 2:15  
who *a* them before our God day ... Rv 12:10

**ACCUSER** *one who makes a charge of wrongdoing*

Your *a* is Moses, on whom your ... Jn 5:45  
For the *a* of our brothers, ... Rv 12:10

**ACKNOWLEDGE(D)(S)** *to express gratitude for; to recognize as being valid or having power; to confess*

for he *a* my name ... Ps 91:14  
Only *a* your guilt ... Jer 3:13  
let us press on to *a* him ... Hos 6:3  
Whoever *a* me before others, ... Mt 10:32  
*a* before my Father in heaven ... Mt 10:32  
*a* that God's way was right, ... Lk 7:29  
publicly *a* me before others, ... Lk 12:8  
whoever *a* the Son has the Father ... 1 Jn 2:23  
Every spirit that *a* that Jesus Christ ... 1 Jn 4:2  
If anyone *a* that Jesus is the Son ... 1 Jn 4:15

**ACT(S), ACTION(S)** *deed; the process of doing*

tell of all his wonderful *a* ... 1 Chr 16:9  
proclaim your mighty *a*, ... Ps 71:16  
tell of all his wonderful *a* ... Ps 105:2  
Who can proclaim the mighty *a* ... Ps 106:2

It is time for you to a, LORD; ... Ps 119:126  
they tell of your mighty a. ... Ps 145:4  
Praise him for his a of power; ... Ps 150:2  
all our righteous a are like filthy ... Is 64:6  
has stirred most of them to a. ... 2 Cor 9:2  
Each one should test their own a. ... Gal 6:4  
but by their a they deny him. ... Ti 1:16  
if it is not accompanied by a. ... Jas 2:17

**ADMONISH(ING)** *to warn or give advice*  
a and teaching everyone ... Col 1:28  
and a one another with all wisdom, ...  
Col 3:16  
you in the Lord and who a you. ... 1 Thes 5:12

**ADOPTED, ADOPTION** *to take another's*  
*child into one's own family*  
as we wait eagerly for our a to sonship, ...  
Rom 8:23  
Theirs is the a to sonship; theirs ... Rom 9:4  
he predestined us for a to sonship ... Eph 1:5

**ADULTERER(S), ADULTERESS** *one who*  
*commits adultery*  
both the a and the adulteress are ... Lv 20:10  
she is loved by another man and is an a. ...  
Hos 3:1  
idolaters nor a nor men who have ... 1 Cor 6:9  
God will judge the a ... Heb 13:4

**ADULTEROUS** *given to physical or spiritual*  
*adultery*  
in this a and sinful generation, ... Mk 8:38  
You a people, don't you know that ... Jas 4:4

**ADULTERY** *voluntary sexual intercourse*  
*between a married person and someone*  
*other than the lawful spouse; symbolic*  
*of idolatry*  
You shall not commit a. ... Ex 20:14  
that it was said, 'You shall not commit a.' ...  
Mt 5:27  
lustfully has already committed a. ... Mt 5:28  
a divorced woman commits a. ... Mt 5:32  
murder, a, sexual immorality, theft ...  
Mt 15:19  
marries another woman commits a. ... Mt 19:9  
You shall not commit a, you shall not steal, ...  
Mt 19:18  
woman was caught in the act of a. ... Jn 8:4  
of the earth committed a with her. ... Rv 18:3

**AFFLICT(ED)** *to oppress, trouble, mistreat;*  
*to bring low*  
and a Job with painful sores ... Jb 2:7  
but gives the a their rights. ... Jb 36:6  
he does not ignore the cries of the a. ...  
Ps 9:12  
Before I was a I went astray, ... Ps 119:67  
and that in faithfulness you have a me. ...  
Ps 119:75  
will have compassion on his a ones. ...  
Is 49:13  
stricken by him, and a. ... Is 53:4

**AFFLICTION(S)** *great suffering that*  
*produces sorrow*  
bread of a, because you left Egypt ... Dt 16:3  
he lifted the needy out of their a. ... Ps 107:41  
of adversity and the water of a. ... Is 30:20  
in the furnace of a. ... Is 48:10  
For he does not willingly bring a. ... Lam 3:33  
patient in a, faithful in prayer. ... Rom 12:12  
lacking in regard to Christ's a. ... Col 1:24

**AFRAID** *to be fearful or apprehensive*  
*about an unwanted or uncertain situation;*  
*see FEAR*  
and I was a because I was naked; ... Gn 3:10  
Do not be a, for I am with you; ... Gn 26:24  
Then Moses was a and thought, ... Ex 2:14  
because he was a to look at God. ... Ex 3:6  
Do not be a; do not be discouraged ... Dt 1:21  
Do not be fainthearted or a; ... Dt 20:3  
of whom shall I be a? ... Ps 27:1  
When I am a, I put my trust in you. ... Ps 56:3  
in God I trust and am not a. ... Ps 56:4  
lie down, you will not be a; ... Prv 3:24  
I will trust and not be a. ... Is 12:2  
Do not tremble, do not be a. ... Is 44:8  
Do not be a of them, for I am ... Jer 1:8  
You of little faith, why are you so a. ... Mt 8:26  
be a of the One who can destroy ... Mt 10:28  
So don't be a; you are worth more ... Mt 10:31  
Don't be a; just believe. ... Mk 5:36  
they were a as they entered ... Lk 9:34  
hearts be troubled and do not be a. ...  
Jn 14:27  
beside me and said, 'Do not be a, ...  
Acts 27:24  
Lord is my helper; I will not be a. ... Heb 13:6

**AGE(S)** *long period of time; a measure of*  
*history or culture*  
the mystery hidden for long a past, ...  
Rom 16:25  
that in the coming a he might show ... Eph 2:7  
which for a past was kept hidden ... Eph 3:9  
that has been kept hidden for a ... Col 1:26

**AGED** *having lived a long time; old*  
Is not wisdom found among the a? ...  
Jb 12:12  
children are a crown to the a, ... Prv 17:6

**ALIENATED** *made enemies of; caused to*  
*turn away; estranged*  
by the law have been a from Christ; ... Gal 5:4  
Once you were a from God ... Col 1:21

**ALIVE** *having life; active; aware*  
LORD brings death and makes a; ... 1 Sm 2:6  
vision of angels, who said he was a. ...  
Lk 24:23  
convincing proofs that he was a. ... Acts 1:3  
but a to God in Christ Jesus. ... Rom 6:11  
so in Christ all will be made a. ... 1 Cor 15:22  
made us a with Christ ... Eph 2:5

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

**ALTAR** *place of worship where sacrifices*  
*are offered or incense burned*  
Then Noah built an a to the LORD ... Gn 8:20  
So he built an a there to the LORD ... Gn 12:7  
There he built an a to the LORD ... Gn 13:18  
Abraham built an a there ... Gn 22:9  
Isaac built an a there and called ... Gn 26:25  
and build an a there to God, ... Gn 35:1  
Moses built an a and called it ... Ex 17:15  
Build an a of acacia wood, ... Ex 27:1  
Make an a of acacia wood ... Ex 30:1  
They made the a of incense out ... Ex 37:25  
an a to the LORD your God, an a ... Dt 27:5

on Mount Ebal an a to the LORD, ... Jos 8:30  
built an imposing a there ... Jos 22:10  
So Gideon built an a to the LORD ... Jgs 6:24  
the next day the people built an a ... Jgs 21:4  
he built an a there to the LORD ... 1 Sm 7:17  
Then Saul built an a to the LORD; ...  
1 Sm 14:35  
David built an a to the LORD ... 2 Sm 24:25  
sacrifices on the a he had built ... 1 Kgs 12:33  
A, a! This is what the LORD ... 1 Kgs 13:2  
He set up an a for Baal ... 1 Kgs 16:32  
he repaired the a of the LORD ... 1 Kgs 18:30  
So Uriah the priest built an a ... 2 Kgs 16:11  
David built an a to the LORD ... 1 Chr 21:26  
made a bronze a twenty cubits ... 2 Chr 4:1  
the golden a; the tables ... 2 Chr 4:19  
He repaired the a of the LORD ... 2 Chr 15:8  
You must worship before one a ... 2 Chr 32:12  
he restored the a of the LORD ... 2 Chr 33:16  
to build the a of the God of Israel ... Ezr 3:2  
taken with tongs from the a. ... Is 6:6  
the a was in front of the temple. ... Ezk 40:47  
if you are offering your gift at the a. ... Mt 5:23  
found an a with this inscription: ... Acts 17:23  
We have an a from which those ... Heb 13:10  
I saw under the a the souls ... Rv 6:9

**AMBASSADOR(S)** *representative;*  
*spokesperson*  
We are therefore Christ's a, ... 2 Cor 5:20  
for which I am an a in chains. ... Eph 6:20

**AMBITION** *aspiration to achieve a particular*  
*goal, good or bad*  
It has always been my a ... Rom 15:20  
fits of rage, selfish a, dissensions, ... Gal 5:20  
preach Christ out of selfish a, ... Phil 1:17  
Do nothing out of selfish a ... Phil 2:3  
make it your a to lead a quiet life: ...  
1 Thes 4:11  
and selfish a in your hearts, ... Jas 3:14  
where you have envy and selfish a, ... Jas 3:16

**ANGEL(S)** *spiritual being; messenger*  
*of God*  
The a of the LORD found Hagar ... Gn 16:7  
But the a of the LORD called out ... Gn 22:11  
I am sending an a ahead of you ... Ex 23:20  
When the donkey saw the a ... Nm 22:23  
The a of the LORD went up ... Jgs 2:1  
Gideon realized that it was the a ... Jgs 6:22  
Manoah said to the a of the LORD ... Jgs 13:15  
The a of the LORD was then ... 2 Sm 24:16  
The a of the LORD came back ... 1 Kgs 19:7  
That night the a of the LORD went ...  
2 Kgs 19:35  
The a of the LORD encamps ... Ps 34:7  
command his a concerning you ... Ps 91:11  
He struggled with the a ... Hos 12:4  
an a of the Lord appeared ... Mt 2:13  
command his a concerning you, ... Mt 4:6  
of the age, and the harvesters are a. ...  
Mt 13:39  
The a will come and separate ... Mt 13:49  
For I tell you that their a ... Mt 18:10  
prepared for the devil and his a ... Mt 25:41  
for an a of the Lord came ... Mt 28:2  
God sent the a Gabriel ... Lk 1:26  
An a of the Lord appeared to them, ... Lk 2:9  
command his a concerning you ... Lk 4:10  
for they are like the a ... Lk 20:36  
An a from heaven appeared to him ... Lk 22:43  
his face was like the face of an a. ... Acts 6:15

Suddenly an *a* of the Lord ... Acts 12:7  
you not know that we will judge *a*? ...  
1 Cor 6:3  
in the tongues of men or of *a*, ... 1 Cor 13:1  
Satan himself masquerades as an *a* ...  
2 Cor 11:14  
or an *a* from heaven should preach ... Gal 1:8  
and the worship of *a* disqualify you ...  
Col 2:18  
as much superior to the *a* ... Heb 1:4  
Let all God's *a* worship him ... Heb 1:6  
Are not all *a* ministering spirits ... Heb 1:14  
made them a little lower than the *a*; ...  
Heb 2:7  
people have shown hospitality to *a* ...  
Heb 13:2  
Even a long to look ... 1 Pt 1:12  
For if God did not spare *a* ... 2 Pt 2:4  
*a* who did not keep their positions ... Jude 1:6

**ANGER, ANGRY** *strong feeling of displeasure or hostility*  
You unleashed your burning *a*; ... Ex 15:7  
My *a* will be aroused, and I will kill ... Ex 22:24  
alone so that my *a* may burn ... Ex 32:10  
Turn from your fierce *a*; relent ... Ex 32:12  
his *a* burned and he threw ... Ex 32:19  
slow to *a*, abounding in love ... Ex 34:6  
then in my *a* I will be hostile ... Lv 26:28  
slow to *a*, abounding in love ... Nm 14:18  
has turned my *a* away ... Nm 25:11  
LORD's *a* was aroused that day ... Nm 32:10  
feared the *a* and wrath ... Dt 9:19  
In furious *a* and in great wrath ... Dt 29:28  
Burning with *a*, he returned ... Jgs 14:19  
David burned with *a* ... 2 Sm 12:5  
Great is the LORD's *a* that burns ... 2 Kgs 22:13  
slow to *a* and abounding in love ... Neh 9:17  
Kiss the son, or he will be *a* ... Ps 2:12  
For his *a* lasts only a moment ... Ps 30:5  
Time after time he restrained his *a* ... Ps 78:38  
slow to *a*, abounding in love ... Ps 86:15  
We are consumed by your *a* ... Ps 90:7  
For forty years I was *a* ... Ps 95:10  
slow to *a*, abounding in love ... Ps 103:8  
a harsh word stirs up *a* ... Prv 15:1  
An *a* person stirs up conflict, ... Prv 29:22  
so stirring up *a* produces strife ... Prv 30:33  
slow to *a* and abounding in love ... Jon 4:2  
But I tell you that anyone who is *a* ... Mt 5:22  
"In your *a* do not sin"; Do not let ... Eph 4:26  
slow to speak and slow to become *a* ...  
Jas 1:19  
human *a* does not produce ... Jas 1:20

**ANGUISH** *great pain or suffering*  
Oh, my *a*, my *a*! ... Jer 4:19  
a day of distress and *a*, ... Zep 1:15  
nations will be in *a* and perplexity ... Lk 21:25  
in *a*, he prayed more earnestly, ... Lk 22:44  
and unceasing *a* in my heart ... Rom 9:2

**ANOINT(ED)(ING)** *to pour oil upon; used for healing or consecration to sacred duty; used for burial; figurative for divine appointment; see OIL*  
use it to the Tent of Meeting, ... Ex 30:26  
A Aaron and his sons ... Ex 30:30  
some of the *a* oil on Aaron's head ... Lv 8:12  
A him ruler over my people Israel ... 1 Sm 9:16  
to *a* you king over his people Israel; ...  
1 Sm 15:1  
what the LORD says: I *a* you king ... 2 Kgs 9:3

Do not touch my *a* ones; ... 1 Chr 16:22  
*a* him before the LORD to be ruler ...  
1 Chr 29:22  
You *a* my head with oil; ... Ps 23:5  
by *a* you with the oil of joy ... Ps 45:7  
Do not touch my *a* ones; ... Ps 105:15  
because the LORD has *a* me ... Is 61:1  
prophecy and to *a* the Most Holy ... Dn 9:24  
the *A* One will be put to ... Dn 9:26  
because he has *a* me ... Lk 4:18  
how God *a* Jesus of Nazareth ... Acts 10:38  
by *a* you with the oil of joy ... Heb 1:9  
and *a* them with oil in the name ... Jas 5:14  
you have an *a* from the Holy One, ... 1 Jn 2:20

**ANTICHRIST** *opponent of Christ; the personification of evil*  
have heard that the *a* is coming, ... 1 Jn 2:18  
such a person is the *a* ... 1 Jn 2:22  
of the *a*, which you have heard is ... 1 Jn 4:3  
person is the deceiver and the *a* ... 2 Jn 1:7

**ANXIETY, ANXIOUS** *uneasiness; fearful or worried*  
A weighs down the heart, ... Prv 12:25  
drunkenness and the *a* of life, ... Lk 21:34  
Do not be *a* about anything, ... Phil 4:6  
Cast all your *a* on him ... 1 Pt 5:7

**APOSTLE(S)** *messenger or "sent one"; generally but not exclusively applied to the original 12 disciples of Christ and to Paul*  
I will send them prophets and *a*, ... Lk 11:49  
so he was added to the eleven *a* ... Acts 1:26  
signs performed by the *a* ... Acts 2:43  
as I am the *a* to the Gentiles, ... Rom 11:13  
Am I not an *a*? Have I not seen ... 1 Cor 9:1  
God has placed in the church first of all *a*, ...  
1 Cor 12:28  
For I am the least of the *a* ... 1 Cor 15:9  
masquerading as *a* of Christ ... 2 Cor 11:13  
the marks of a true *a*, ... 2 Cor 12:12  
Peter as an *a* to the circumcised, ... Gal 2:8  
built on the foundation of the *a* ... Eph 2:20  
So Christ himself gave the *a*, ... Eph 4:11  
was appointed a herald and an *a* ... 1 Tm 2:7  
I was appointed a herald and an *a* ... 2 Tm 1:11  
as our *a* and high priest ... Heb 3:1  
names of the twelve *a* of the Lamb ...  
Rv 21:14

**APPEAR(ED)(ING)(S)** *to come into sight or public view*  
to one place, and let dry ground *a* ... Gn 1:9  
I will *a* in the cloud over the atonement ...  
Lv 16:2  
glory of the LORD *a* at the Tent ... Nm 14:10  
Who can stand when he *a*? ... Mal 3:2  
an angel of the Lord *a* to him ... Mt 1:20  
will *a* the sign of the Son of Man ... Mt 24:30  
false prophets will *a* and perform ... Mk 13:22  
An angel of the Lord *a* to them, ... Lk 2:9  
of God was going to *a* at once ... Lk 19:11  
and that he *a* to Cephas, ... 1 Cor 15:5  
we must all *a* before the judgment ...  
2 Cor 5:10  
When Christ, who is your life, *a*, ... Col 3:4  
until the *a* of our Lord Jesus Christ, ...  
1 Tm 6:14  
through the *a* of our Savior, ... 2 Tm 1:10  
to all who have longed for his *a* ... 2 Tm 4:8  
the *a* of the glory of our great God ... Ti 2:13  
now to *a* for us in God's presence ... Heb 9:24

And when the Chief Shepherd *a*, ... 1 Pt 5:4  
But we know that when Christ *a*, ... 1 Jn 3:2

**APPEARANCE(S)** *outward or visible aspect of someone or something*  
Do not consider his *a* ... 1 Sm 16:7  
his *a* was so disfigured beyond that ... Is 52:14  
in his *a* that we should desire him ... Is 53:2  
Stop judging by mere *a*, ... Jn 7:24

**APPOINT(ED)** *to ordain or designate*  
*a* them to have authority over you ... Dt 1:15  
*a* your love and faithfulness ... Ps 61:7  
an end will still come at the *a* time ...  
Dn 11:27  
For the revelation awaits an *a* time; ... Hab 2:3  
chose you and *a* you so that you might go ...  
Jn 15:16  
At the *a* time I will return, ... Rom 9:9  
For God did not *a* us ... 1 Thes 5:9  
and *a* elders in every town, ... Ti 1:5

**APPROVAL, APPROVE(D)(S)** *to have or express a favorable opinion of*  
Your journey has the LORD's *a*, ... Jgs 18:6  
the Father has placed his seal of *a*, ... Jn 6:27  
if you know his will and *a* ... Rom 2:18  
and *a* what God's will is ... Rom 12:2  
pleasing to God and receives human *a*, ...  
Rom 14:18  
to show which of you have God's *a* ...  
1 Cor 11:19  
who commends himself who is *a*, ...  
2 Cor 10:18  
trying to win the *a* of human beings, ...  
Gal 1:10  
as those *a* by God to be entrusted ...  
1 Thes 2:4  
to present yourself to God as one *a*, ...  
2 Tm 2:15

**ARK** *commonly, a portable wooden chest or box; of Noah, a large boat; of the covenant, a sacred housing for the law of Moses*  
So make yourself an *a* ... Gn 6:14  
and put in the *a* the tablets, ... Ex 25:21  
put the tablets in the *a* I had made, ... Dt 10:5  
The *a* of God was captured, ... 1 Sm 4:11  
the *a* remained at Kiriath ... 1 Sm 7:2  
They brought the *a* of the LORD ... 2 Sm 6:17  
There was nothing in the *a*, ... 1 Kgs 8:9  
out his hand to steady the *a*, ... 1 Chr 13:9  
Put the sacred *a* in the temple that ...  
2 Chr 35:3  
This *a* contained the gold jar ... Heb 9:4  
in holy fear built an *a*, ... Heb 11:7  
within his temple was seen the *a*, ... Rv 11:19

**ARM(S)** *upper limb of the body; figurative of power or might*  
Is the LORD's *a* too short? ... Nm 11:23  
hand and an outstretched *a*, ... Dt 4:34  
mighty hand and outstretched *a*, ... Dt 7:19  
underneath are the everlasting *a*, ... Dt 33:27  
it was your right hand, your *a*, ... Ps 44:3  
his right hand and his holy *a*, ... Ps 98:1  
her *a* are strong for her tasks, ... Prv 31:17  
He gathers the lambs in his *a*, ... Is 40:11  
outstretched *a* I made the earth, ... Jer 27:5  
And he took the children in his *a*, ... Mk 10:16  
strengthen your feeble *a*, ... Heb 12:12  
*a* yourselves also with the same ... 1 Pt 4:1



**ARMIES, ARMY** *large band of men organized and armed for war; any large multitude devoted to a cause*

Philistine that he should defy the a . . .  
1 Sm 17:26

No king is saved by the size of his a . . .  
Ps 35:16

a large and mighty a comes, . . . J1 2:2  
a of heaven were following him, . . . Rv 19:14

**ARMOR** *weapons of war or self-defense; figurative of spiritual resources*  
deeds of darkness and put on the a . . .  
Rom 13:12

Put on the full a of God . . . Eph 6:11  
Therefore put on the full a of God, . . . Eph 6:13

**ARROGANCE, ARROGANT** *feeling or attitude of superiority shown by presumptuous manners or claims; see PRIDE*  
or let your mouth speak such a . . . 1 Sm 2:3  
The a cannot stand . . . Ps 5:5  
May the a be put to shame . . . Ps 119:78  
I hate pride and a, . . . Prv 8:13  
a person—"Mocker" is his name; . . . Prv 21:24  
lewdness, envy, slander, a and folly . . . Mk 7:22  
God-haters, insolent, a . . . Rom 1:30  
Do not be a, but be afraid. . . Rom 11:20  
slander, gossip, a and disorder. . . 2 Cor 12:20  
in this present world not to be a . . . 1 Tm 6:17

**ASCEND(ED)(ING)** *to go or move upward*  
and the angels of God were a . . . Gn 28:12  
Who will a into heaven to get it . . . Dt 30:12  
Who may a the mountain of the LORD? . . .  
Ps 24:3

When you a on high, . . . Ps 68:18  
I will a to the heavens; . . . Is 14:13  
I will a above the tops of the clouds . . . Is 14:14  
and the angels of God a . . . Jn 1:51  
of Man a to where he was before! . . . Jn 6:62  
For David did not a to heaven, . . . Acts 2:34  
'Who will a into heaven?' . . . Rom 10:6  
When he a on high, . . . Eph 4:8

**ASHAMED** *feeling of shame, guilt, or disgrace; see SHAME*  
If anyone is a of me and my words . . . Mk 8:38  
I am not a of the gospel, . . . Rom 1:16  
So do not be a of the testimony about our . . .  
2 Tm 1:8  
who does not need to be a . . . 2 Tm 2:15

**ASHES** *burnt residue; denotes grief, repentance, or humiliation*  
and repent in dust and a . . . Jb 42:6  
ago in sackcloth and a . . . Mt 11:21

**ASLEEP** *state of body rest; figurative for dull to spiritual things; see SLEEP*  
who have fallen a in Christ are lost. . .  
1 Cor 15:18

**ASSURANCE, ASSURED** *characterized by full conviction or confidence; made certain*  
the will of God, mature and fully a . . . Col 4:12  
with a sincere heart and with the full a that  
faith . . . Heb 10:22

**ASTRAY** *wandering; lost; on the wrong path; see STRAYED*  
Before I was afflicted I went a, . . . Ps 119:67  
ignores correction leads others a . . . Prv 10:17

whoever is led a by them is not . . . Prv 20:1  
We all, like sheep, have gone a, . . . Is 53:6  
their shepherds have led them a . . . Jer 50:6  
For "you were like sheep going a," . . . 1 Pt 2:25  
do not let anyone lead you a. . . 1 Jn 3:7

**ATONE(D)** *to reconcile; to make amends for an offense*  
to the LORD to a for your lives. . . Ex 30:15  
Then the bloodshed will be a for. . . Dt 21:8  
guilt of Eli's house will never be a . . . 1 Sm 3:14  
for a sin offering to a for all Israel, . . .  
2 Chr 29:24  
faithfulness sin is a for; . . . Prv 16:6  
guilt is taken away and your sin a . . . Is 6:7  
your dying day this sin will not be a . . . Is 22:14  
then, will Jacob's guilt be a for, . . . Is 27:9  
an end to sin, to a for wickedness, . . . Dn 9:24

**ATONEMENT** *the reconciliation of God and mankind; making amends for an offense; cleansing*  
Make an a cover of pure gold . . . Ex 25:17  
Once a year Aaron shall make a . . . Ex 30:10  
it is the blood that makes a . . . Lv 17:11  
this seventh month is the Day of A . . . Lv 23:27  
and made a for the Israelites. . . Nm 25:13  
presented Christ as a sacrifice of a, . . .  
Rom 3:25  
that he might make a for the sins . . . Heb 2:17

**ATTITUDE(S)** *state of mind or feeling with regard to some matter*  
new in the a of your minds; . . . Eph 4:23  
it judges the thoughts and a . . . Heb 4:12  
yourselves also with the same a, . . . 1 Pt 4:1

**AUTHORITIES, AUTHORITY** *persons having rightful power; the right to govern; the freedom or ability to act*  
because he taught as one who had a . . .  
Mt 7:29  
the Son of Man has a on earth . . . Mt 9:6  
All a in heaven and on earth has . . . Mt 28:18  
a to lay it down and a . . . Jn 10:18  
the Father has set by his own a . . . Acts 1:7  
that the law has a over someone only . . .  
Rom 7:1  
a that exist have been established . . . Rom 13:1  
for the a are God's servants, . . . Rom 13:6  
a woman ought to have a over her own. . .  
1 Cor 11:10  
he has destroyed all dominion, a . . .  
1 Cor 15:24  
and a in the heavenly realms, . . . Eph 3:10  
but against the rulers, against the a, . . .  
Eph 6:12  
thrones or powers or rulers or a; . . . Col 1:16  
having disarmed the powers and a, . . .  
Col 2:15  
for kings and all those in a, . . . 1 Tm 2:2  
to teach or to assume a over a man; . . .  
1 Tm 2:12

Encourage and rebuke with all a . . . Ti 2:15  
people to be subject to rulers and a, . . . Ti 3:1  
your leaders and submit to their a . . .  
Heb 13:17  
a and powers in submission to him. . .  
1 Pt 3:22  
**AVENGE(S), AVENGING** *to take revenge or punish an evildoer; see VENGEANCE*  
sword on you to a the breaking . . . Lv 26:25

It is mine to a; I will repay. . . Dt 32:35  
and from a yourself with your own . . .  
1 Sm 25:26  
The LORD is a God who a . . . Ps 94:1  
The LORD is a jealous and a God; . . . Na 1:2  
It is mine to a; I will repay, . . . Rom 12:19  
It is mine to a; I will repay, . . . Heb 10:30  
of the earth and a our blood? . . . Rv 6:10

**AVENGER** *someone who takes revenge or punishes an evildoer*  
the a of blood may kill the accused . . .  
Nm 35:27  
find protection from the a of blood. . .  
Jos 20:3  
to silence the foe and the a . . . Ps 8:2

**AVOID(ED)(S)** *to depart from or stay away from*  
A it, do not travel on it; . . . Prv 4:15  
of the LORD evil is a . . . Prv 16:6  
The highway of the upright a evil; . . .  
Prv 16:17  
It is to one's honor to a strife, . . . Prv 20:3  
so a anyone who talks too much. . . Prv 20:19  
Whoever fears God will a all extremes. . .  
Eccl 7:18  
you should a sexual immorality; . . . 1 Thes 4:3  
A godless chatter, because those . . . 2 Tm 2:16  
But a foolish controversies . . . Ti 3:9

**AWE** *amazement; reverential fear*  
So all the people stood in a . . . 1 Sm 12:18  
they held the king in a, . . . 1 Kgs 3:28  
Dominion and a belong to God; . . . Jb 25:2  
I stand in a of your laws. . . Ps 119:120  
will stand in a of the God of Israel. . . Is 29:23  
and have no a of me, . . . Jer 2:19  
they will be in a and will tremble . . . Jer 33:9  
I stand in a of your deeds, . . . Hab 3:2  
and stood in a of my name. . . Mal 2:5  
they were filled with a; . . . Mt 9:8  
All the neighbors were filled with a, . . . Lk 1:65  
They were filled with a and said, . . . Lk 5:26  
They were all filled with a . . . Lk 7:16  
Everyone was filled with a, . . . Acts 2:43  
acceptably with reverence and a, . . .  
Heb 12:28

**AWESOME** *amazing; characterized by reverential fear*  
and said, "How a is this place! . . . Gn 28:17  
a in glory, . . . Ex 15:11  
among will see how a is the work . . . Ex 34:10  
or by great and a deeds, . . . Dt 4:34  
is among you, is a great and a God. . . Dt 7:21  
the great God, mighty and a, . . . Dt 10:17  
revere this glorious and a name . . . Dt 28:58  
performed the a deeds that Moses . . . Dt 34:12  
like an angel of God, very a . . . Jgs 13:6  
a wonders by driving out nations . . . 2 Sm 7:23  
a wonders by driving out nations . . .  
1 Chr 17:21  
of heaven, the great and a God, . . . Neh 1:5  
and a, and fight for your families, . . . Neh 4:14  
the great God, mighty and a, . . . Neh 9:32  
again display your a power . . . Jb 10:16  
God comes in a majesty. . . Jb 37:22  
let your right hand achieve a deeds. . .  
Ps 45:4  
For the LORD Most High is a, . . . Ps 47:2  
us with a and righteous deeds, . . . Ps 65:5  
to God, "How a are your deeds! . . . Ps 66:3