



THE  
one  
year<sup>®</sup>

# Chronological

## STUDY BIBLE

NEW LIVING TRANSLATION.



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**DATE**

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*“Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us.  
And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we  
wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled.”*

**ROMANS 15:4**



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NEW LIVING TRANSLATION<sup>®</sup>



**NLT**<sup>®</sup>

TYNDALE HOUSE PUBLISHERS  
CAROL STREAM, ILLINOIS





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# Introduction

Have you ever wondered when an event in Scripture occurred? Have you ever puzzled over the order of biblical events or how much time passed between those events? Have you struggled just to read through the Bible? Perhaps what you need is a Bible that is easy to read and will help you understand the flow of the biblical story.

*The One Year Chronological Study Bible* contains the entire text of the New Living Translation, arranged in the order the events actually occurred. This unique viewpoint allows you to read the whole Bible as a single story and to see the unfolding of God's plan in history.

Reading the Bible in chronological order will help you gain a unique perspective on Scripture that you could not get from reading a regular Bible cover to cover. For example, after you read in 1 Samuel 19:1-17 about the time David escaped the soldiers who were sent to capture him, you will immediately read in Psalm 59 how David poured out his heart to God in response to this situation. When you read one of the Gospel writer's accounts of something Jesus said or did (for instance, Mark 14:12-16), you will also be able to see what the other Gospel writers recorded for this event (for instance, Matthew 26:17-19 and Luke 22:7-13). When you read the letters of Paul, you will see how they fit into the framework of his missionary journeys recorded in the book of Acts. You will be able to see how various passages fit together into a single, unfolding story.

*The One Year Chronological Study Bible* has been prepared especially for Bible readers wishing to read through the entire Bible chronologically in one year. Instead of following a Bible reading chart and experiencing the delay of flipping from place to place in the Bible, you will find this text in chronological sequence, arranged for your easy reading, study, and meditation. Each day's reading is identified by a calendar date and a corresponding numerical day (1-365). This affords readers the ability to start at Genesis at any point in the year.

It is our hope that you will enjoy this fresh, new way of reading through the Bible and that it will enrich your walk with Christ and give you a deeper understanding of God's Word.

*The Publishers*

# BEGINNING PAGES FOR Books of the Bible

## OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis.....	7	2 Chronicles .....	475	Daniel.....	779
Exodus.....	105	Ezra .....	910	Hosea .....	611
Leviticus.....	157	Nehemiah.....	945	Joel.....	967
Numbers.....	191	Esther.....	932	Amos.....	590
Deuteronomy .....	233	Job .....	67	Obadiah.....	866
Joshua .....	274	Psalms .....	654	Jonah.....	588
Judges.....	303	Proverbs .....	498	Micah .....	600
Ruth.....	328	Ecclesiastes .....	528	Nahum .....	757
1 Samuel.....	334	Song of Songs .....	521	Habakkuk.....	760
2 Samuel.....	372	Isaiah.....	624	Zephaniah .....	763
1 Kings.....	427	Jeremiah .....	742	Haggai .....	917
2 Kings.....	564	Lamentations .....	860	Zechariah .....	918
1 Chronicles .....	13	Ezekiel.....	816	Malachi .....	964

## NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew.....	980	Ephesians.....	1208	Hebrews .....	1238
Mark.....	980	Philippians .....	1218	James.....	1222
Luke.....	980	Colossians .....	1214	1 Peter .....	1250
John.....	980	1 Thessalonians.....	1144	2 Peter .....	1255
Acts .....	1112	2 Thessalonians.....	1147	1 John .....	1258
Romans .....	1170	1 Timothy .....	1226	2 John .....	1262
1 Corinthians.....	1152	2 Timothy .....	1234	3 John .....	1262
2 Corinthians.....	1186	Titus.....	1233	Jude .....	1263
Galatians .....	1134	Philemon.....	1218	Revelation .....	1266

# A Note to Readers

The *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, was first published in 1996. It quickly became one of the most popular Bible translations in the English-speaking world. While the NLT's influence was rapidly growing, the Bible Translation Committee determined that an additional investment in scholarly review and text refinement could make it even better. So shortly after its initial publication, the committee began an eight-year process with the purpose of increasing the level of the NLT's precision without sacrificing its easy-to-understand quality. This second-generation text was completed in 2004, with minor changes subsequently introduced in 2007, 2013, and 2015.

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

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

## *The Publishers*

*A full introduction to the NLT can be found at [tyndale.com/nlt/process](http://tyndale.com/nlt/process).*

*A complete list of the translators can be found at [tyndale.com/nlt/scholars](http://tyndale.com/nlt/scholars).*

# User's Guide

BY CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE TEACHING

## How to Read the Bible as a Story

Everyone loves stories. Stories captivate the minds and hearts of both young and old. Stories shape the trajectories of our lives, and the best stories end up being told again and again, simply recast in new skin but with the same skeleton. Such stories instill hope and express the grand narrative of cultures.

So it is with the Bible. The Bible is a story—a story that invites us to know it and share it with others. Joshua narrates Israel's story from Abraham to the settling of Canaan in a mere twelve verses (Joshua 24:2-13). The writer of Psalm 78 recounts Israel's story from the Exodus to King David. The Levites rehearse Israel's story from Abraham to the return from Babylonian exile in thirty-three verses (Nehemiah 9:5-37). Stephen tells the story from Abraham to David in Acts 7:2-50. Similarly, in Acts 13:17-41, Paul relates Israel's story beginning with Abraham and concluding with Jesus. All these leaders understand the Bible as one story.

How do they distill the story of the Bible into a simple and brief retelling? They go back to the beginning of the story, identify a key promise (the promise made to Abraham by God), and track how God works in a broken world with broken people to fulfill that promise. And they connect the big pieces of the story.

The chronological nature of the biblical story lends itself to a framework, similar in function to a storyboard, which provides the story arc for the sixty-six inspired books. Each author contributes unique components to the story while at the same time furthering the development and flow of the story. Though unseen, the Divine Author, who lives both within and outside of the story, oversees and weaves together the entire story, which makes it the greatest story ever written.

All great stories employ intriguing contexts, absorbing characters, and a compelling plot. The Bible has all these and more. The story begins with Genesis 1–11, where the Author establishes the context, creates interesting characters, and introduces the plot of the story. The remainder of the Old Testament (Genesis 12—Malachi) develops and expands the seminal ideas presented in the early chapters of Genesis. The New Testament introduces and applies the resolution to the plot. The story culminates in the greatest “happily ever after” with a wedding, the defeat of all evil, and the restoration of all things under the rightful King.

The collected narratives, laws and regulations, prophecies, poems, and genealogies form the story arc of the Bible. Each book offers its own piece to the interlocking puzzle that is brought together as the story unfolds. Each writer adds pieces and reveals themes.

There are no random details or stories. In fact, some of the most “boring” sections of Scripture take on new life when seen in the context of the big story. For example, the book of Leviticus, which details a multitude of seemingly minute instructions, often presents a challenge to readers. But when this book is understood as God’s instructions for the physical and spiritual well-being of His people as they prepare to possess the land promised to their ancestor Abraham, Leviticus takes on a new, contextually critical purpose. Readers who see Leviticus in this light come to understand that God cares deeply for the flourishing of His people. Likewise, the many genealogies recorded in the Bible, though tedious to read, keep the story line intact and draw out important connections. Readers can link such passages to the overarching story with questions such as, Why would God give this instruction or provide this detail? How would this instruction, promise, or prohibition promote faith to the immediate audience? How does this story or detail fit into the greater story being told?

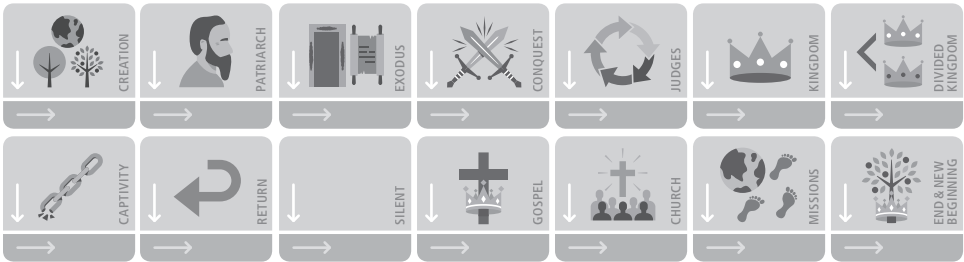
The Bible is also unsanitized in that it does not leave out difficult or painful stories, and this can be challenging for readers too. But understanding that the Bible is one grand story can help us ask the right types of questions of these stories as well. Reading stories about rape, incest, murder, and destruction can prompt readers to ask big-picture questions, such as, Why would God include this story? Or, What does this story reveal about humanity? Asking good questions, especially while reading the challenging portions of Scripture, trains the mind to understand the story being told. (For more on asking questions, see the article “Asking Discovery Questions” on page A24.)

As in every well-told story, certain phrases and elements are repeated throughout the Bible. These threads (or themes), such as sin, pride, envy, disobedience, grace, mercy, humility, redemption, and salvation, are woven together to reveal key truths and aid readers to develop their understanding. The progression of the story leads the reader to anticipate the fulfillment of promises, the execution of judgments, and the hope of future wholeness in a broken world.

Finally, reading the story of the Bible without seeking to apply it leaves the process incomplete. Paul concludes that everything written beforehand in Scripture has been recorded for our benefit: “Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled” (Romans 15:4). Humans are shaped by stories. Reading the Bible as story allows us to discover the overarching narrative, to understand the ways of God as they are imprinted on our hearts and minds, and to participate in His plan of redemption.

# 14-Era

## STORY ARC OF THE BIBLE



**CONNECTING THE STORY LINE OF THE BIBLE** resembles the assembly of a puzzle. With a puzzle, the picture on the cover acts as a guide, while the pieces with straight edges and corners provide the framework for the remaining pieces. Without this picture and framework, puzzle assembly becomes frustrating, impractical, and very difficult.

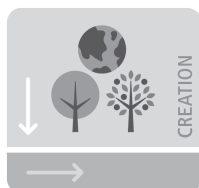
The 14-Era Chronological Framework of the Bible (represented in the graphics above) provides a simple structure that builds the story line of the Bible, with each era capturing a passage of time. The simple graphics representing each era capture the big-picture action within that era. Each graphic contains a vertical arrow that symbolizes God's speaking in that era and a horizontal arrow that symbolizes God's action to fulfill what He has spoken. The Divine Author's story line becomes clear when readers connect God's speaking—His promises, commands, warnings, and prohibitions—to His activity. These connections across time reveal the narrative of the Bible. You'll find these graphics at the bottom of most pages in the Bible, with the pertinent icon highlighted within each particular section of Scripture.

### ***Learn the Story***

The story of the Bible is knowable and shareable. The 14-Era Framework (beginning on page A14) provides an overview of the story arc of the Bible in summary fashion and includes a list of facts for each era. These "Era Highlights" are designed to be a tool for helping readers with retention. Readers are encouraged to consult the 14-Era Framework throughout their reading, particularly at the end of each era and upon completion of the Bible.



# i4-Era Framework



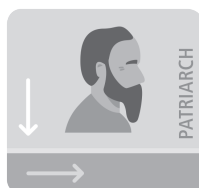
## Creation Era

Genesis 1:1–11:26, which comprises the Creation Era, begins with the eternally existent God and introduces five stories: Creation, the Fall, Cain and Abel, Noah and the Flood, and the Tower of Babel. This first era explains the formation of the universe and all that it contains, the creation

and purpose of God's image bearers, the origin of sin and suffering, the consequences and extent of sin (personal, generational, national, and even universal), and God's determined activity to keep His promises. It also introduces God's promise of the Seed of the woman, who would crush the head of the serpent, and the use of sacrifice to cover sinful humanity. These are stories of origins, purpose, tragedy, and redemption.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

- Five stories: Creation, Fall, Cain and Abel, Noah and the Flood, Tower of Babel
- Four consequences of sin: fear, shame, guilt, and separation
- Two ways of walking: faith or unbelief
- One promise of redemption (Genesis 3:15)
- One picture of redemption (Genesis 3:21)
- Covers approximately 2,000 years
- Shem's genealogy (Genesis 11:10-26) transitions the story to the Patriarch Era



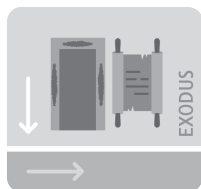
## Patriarch Era

The Patriarch Era includes the remainder of the book of Genesis as well as the book of Job. The lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob propel the story forward as God works to fulfill the promise made in Genesis 3:15. God selects Abraham from all peoples to carry the promise of the

Seed—who would also be the Ruler from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10)—and to bless the nations. The story of Joseph ushers in the transition from the Patriarch Era to the Exodus Era.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

- Three patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
- Two ways of walking: faith or unbelief
- One spiritual-formation process: receive a promise from God, believe that He will fulfill His promise, and wait on Him
- Covers approximately 640 years
- Job shows evidence of being written in patriarchal times
- Joseph's story both concludes the Patriarch Era and introduces the Exodus Era

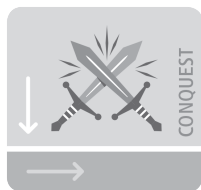


## Exodus Era

Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy narrate the Exodus Era. God liberates the Hebrews from slavery just as He had promised Abraham in Genesis 15:13-14. He gives the new Israelite nation purpose and forms their identity by teaching them to walk with Him by faith. Walking by faith means that they believe His promises, follow His instructions, heed His warnings, and approach Him His way through honoring the sacrificial system. Their physical and spiritual well-being depend upon their faith in God. Because of a lack of faith, the first generation has to wander in the wilderness, awaiting the time when God would lead the following generation to conquer the land He had promised to them.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

- God's people living in covenant with Him and in community by tribe
- Ten Commandments & the rest of the Law of Moses
- Four books: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- Three categories of laws: moral, ceremonial, civil
- Two ways of walking and their consequences—blessings or curses
- Covers approximately 120 years
- The death of Moses transitions the story to the Conquest Era

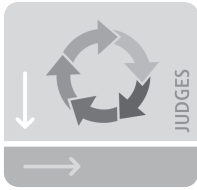


## Conquest Era

The Conquest Era is recounted in the book of Joshua. The stories of the previous eras and the Law given through Moses provide the Israelites with a road map for success as they enter the land given to them by God. God would bless His people as they believe His words and obey Him by honoring the boundaries that He has established. Under Joshua's leadership, they conquer the land and divide it among the twelve tribes.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

- Major battles, starting with Jericho
- Two ways of walking—demonstrated through Rahab and Achan
- Conquest & division of the land among the 12 tribes
- One treaty: with the Gibeonites
- Covers approximately 30 years
- The death of Joshua and the elders transitions the story to the Judges Era



## Judges Era

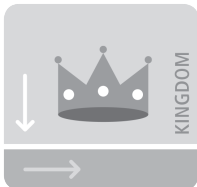
The books of Judges and Ruth comprise the Judges Era. After Joshua and the elders die, the people of Israel fail to walk according to the Book of the Law and to live in light of God's good character and His gracious promises.

They are determined to do what's right in their own eyes, and they fall into a repeated cycle of disobedience and failure, which results in their repeated subjugation to the very enemies they fail to remove from the land. Even the spiritual leaders contribute to this decline, as shown by the two stories involving Levites at the end of the book of Judges. The story of Ruth reminds readers of God's promise regarding the line of Judah.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

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- Seven cycles that include sin, oppression, crying out to God, deliverance, and a time of peace
- Twelve judges (or military leaders)
- A broken priesthood
- A ray of hope: the book of Ruth
- Covers approximately 300 years
- The failure of the Levites concludes the Judges Era, and Samuel's ministry introduces the Kingdom Era



## Kingdom Era

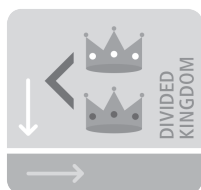
The story of the Kingdom Era covers several books, including some or all of 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. In Deuteronomy 17:14-20, Moses had prepared Israel for the day they would demand an earthly king, and he recorded

five regulations to guide Israel's kings. That day arrived with the crowning of Saul. This era encompasses the reign of Israel's first three kings: Saul of the tribe of Benjamin, David of Judah, and David's son Solomon.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

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- Three kings: Saul of Benjamin, David of Judah, Solomon of Judah
- Construction of the Temple
- Solomon's reign concludes the Kingdom Era; the nation divides after his death
- Failure or success in adhering to the five regulations for Israel's kings (be an Israelite, avoid Egypt, do not take many wives, do not be greedy, know God's Word; Deuteronomy 17:14-20)
- Covers approximately 120 years

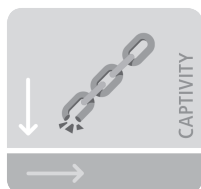


## Divided Kingdom Era

A significant portion of the Old Testament—some or all of 1 and 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah—fit within the Divided Kingdom Era. After King Solomon dies, the kingdom of Israel divides. Solomon's son Rehoboam rules over the two southern tribes—Benjamin and Judah—while Solomon's former administrator Jeroboam becomes king of the ten northern tribes of Israel. Jeroboam disregards the Book of the Law and establishes distinct, idolatrous religious practices. The story follows the kings and prophets of both nations until Assyria takes Israel into captivity and Babylon takes Judah into captivity. Meanwhile, the prophets anticipate the coming of the Seed, the righteous descendant of David (Isaiah 11:1-5; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 33:14-16).

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

- Two nations: Israel (with no good kings) and Judah (with four good kings)
- Israel lasts 209 years; Judah lasts 345 years
- Many prophets
- Two great revivals: Hezekiah and Josiah
- Covers approximately 345 years
- Judah's captivity and Jerusalem's destruction by the Babylonians conclude the Divided Kingdom Era

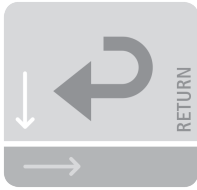


## Captivity Era

The Captivity Era is addressed in portions of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, along with the books of Lamentations and Obadiah. Moses had twice recorded the blessings that would result from Israel's obedience and the terrible consequences—including exile—that would result from their disobedience (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). After the Conquest Era, the Israelites did not serve the Lord God “with joy and enthusiasm for the abundant benefits [they had] received” (Deuteronomy 28:47); therefore, they served their enemies in their own land in the Judges Era. Now, in the Captivity Era, the Israelites serve their enemies outside their own land. The Babylonians take the southern kingdom of Judah away in three waves of captives (in 605, 597, and 586 BC).

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

- Three waves of captives from Judah: in 605 BC, 597 BC, and 586 BC
- Three leading prophets (Jeremiah to the remnant, Daniel to the court in Babylon, Ezekiel to the exiles in Babylon)
- Covers 70 years
- The decree of Cyrus permitting the Jews to return and rebuild transitions the story to the Return Era



## Return Era

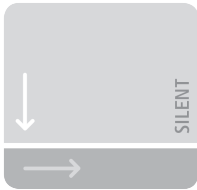
The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and (possibly) Joel tell the story of the Return Era. After the people of Judah (the Jews) spend seventy years in Babylon, God fulfills a promise made through Isaiah by raising up a pagan king who decrees their return

to Israel (Isaiah 44:28). The Jews return to the land to rebuild Jerusalem, the Temple, and their lives.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

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- Three waves of return: in 538 BC, 458 BC, and 445 BC
- Three rebuildings: Zerubbabel rebuilds the altar and Temple; Nehemiah rebuilds the walls; Ezra rebuilds the people's knowledge of the Book of the Law. Covers approximately 140 years
- Three leaders in Jerusalem: Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah
- Four prophets: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel
- Malachi's (or Joel's) final prophecy concludes the Return Era



## Silent Era

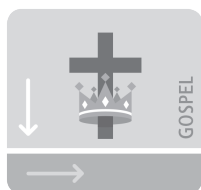
During the Silent Era, the four hundred years between the final prophets of the Old Testament and the birth of Christ, God preserves "Bible literacy" (the understanding of Scripture) through the reading of His Word and its translation into Greek. God also works in the geopolitical world in the suc-

cessive kingdoms of Persia, Greece, and Rome to prepare the world for the coming of the promised Redeemer. The Jews develop systems of religious governance as they live in their own land as servants instead of owners.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

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- Three empires: Persia, Greece, Rome
- Translation of Hebrew Scripture into Greek (the Septuagint, or LXX)
- Roman law, peace, and roads prepare the way for the gospel's spread
- Development of synagogues
- Covers 400 years



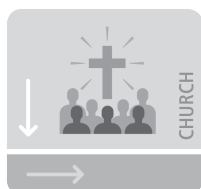
## Gospel Era

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John narrate the events of the Gospel Era. The genealogy of Abraham and David shows the fulfillment of the promises concerning the Seed, the Ruler from David's line. At the "right time" (Galatians 4:4), Jesus enters the world, born of the virgin Mary as announced by the angel Gabriel. Jesus fulfills the prophecies of Isaiah, Micah, and others. He lives a perfect life, serves others with perfect love, teaches with perfect truth, and ultimately dies as the perfect substitute for guilty sinners. God proves His acceptance of the Son's sacrifice by raising Him from the dead. Jesus promises eternal life to those who believe in Him, and He commissions His disciples to take the Good News (or gospel) of His death and resurrection to the whole world.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

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- Gabriel's announcement to Zechariah concludes the Silent Era
- Four complementary accounts: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- Two ways of walking: faith or unbelief
- One goal: "The Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost" (Luke 19:10)
- Covers approximately 35 years



## Church Era

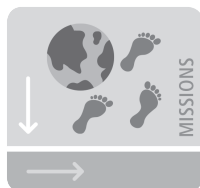
The opening chapters of Acts record the beginning of the Church Era, an era which continues today. The church is born after Jesus ascends to heaven and the Holy Spirit takes His place among His people who repent of their sins and identify with Him through baptism. Believers are formed

into local bodies called churches and are given gifts by the Spirit for use in the churches. God raises up leaders to teach doctrine and provide guidance in prayer, fellowship, and mission (Acts 2:42; see also Ephesians 4:11). The Spirit works through their proclamation of the gospel to draw others to Christ. While conflict often follows proclamation, many who hear the gospel believe and are saved.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

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- Jesus' command to His disciples to take the Good News to the nations concludes the Gospel Era
- One Kingdom of believers made up of many churches operating for more than 2,000 years
- Launch of the new community of God's people from a group of 120 believers to thousands of Christ followers
- Many gifts given to believers by the one Spirit

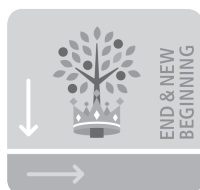


## Missions Era

The Missions Era is described in the bulk of Acts and in the letters of Paul, Peter, John, and Jude, along with the letter to the Hebrews. The Missions Era, like the Church Era, continues today, as those in the church fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). When God created humans, He gave them purpose—to be fruitful and multiply, filling the whole earth with more image bearers. Sin interrupted that purpose, as people instead produced more broken and sinful image bearers in need of redemption. When God established the church, He again gave His people purpose—to fill the whole earth with followers of Jesus.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

- One mission (Matthew 28:18-20) and four fields (Acts 1:8)
- One message: “It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile” (Romans 1:16)
- Philip takes the gospel to Samaria and Ethiopia; Peter and Paul take the gospel to the Gentiles
- Evangelism and church planting continue until Jesus returns
- Two ways of walking: by faith or by sight; in the Spirit or in the flesh



## End and New Beginning Era

The book of Revelation describes the last era in the story arc, the End and New Beginning. Those who read Revelation and heed its warnings will be blessed (Revelation 1:3). Life as we know it will end. For those whose hope is anchored in Jesus, the Eternal Lamb, and in His substitutionary death and resurrection, it will end in a new heaven and new earth—the new beginning. Those who reject Jesus will spend eternity in hell under the wrath of God along with the serpent and his minions.

### ERA HIGHLIGHTS

- The old is destroyed and the new is revealed (no sin, no curse, no pain, no enemy)
- Final judgment of humanity
- One people from every tribe, nation, and language whose names are recorded in the Book of Life
- One Lamb-King sitting upon heaven’s throne who is worshiped and adored by the redeemed

# Features Explanation

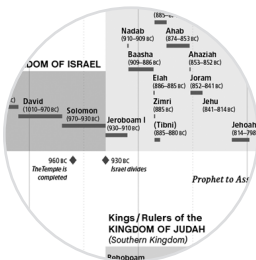
*The One Year Chronological Study Bible* is designed to enable the reader to build the story of the Bible and to experience enhanced engagement. Throughout the Bible, the reader will encounter five “building blocks” provided by Chronological Bible Teaching Ministries (CBT) that go along with the daily reading plan:



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**DISCOVER THE STORY** articles: Fourteen era overviews capture the story narrated within each era and help readers see the story arc of the Bible.

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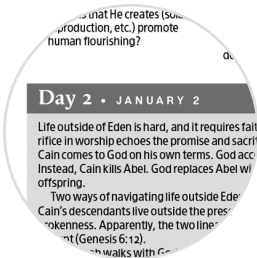


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**CHARTS/MAPS:** Each of the five graphics provides a visual reference to the developing story of a specific period and further enhances the construction of the story arc of the Bible. In addition to Old Testament and New Testament overview charts, you can find visuals on pages 20, 302, and 538-539.







**DAILY INTRODUCTIONS:** A brief introduction with each day's reading provides a snapshot of the developing story.



**DISCOVERY QUESTIONS:** Each day's reading concludes with three sets of thought-provoking questions that engage the reader's attention (see "Asking Discovery Questions" on page A24).



**UNDERSTAND THE STORY:** These sixteen articles address particular themes and track God's activity through the story. Each article connects God's activity from one era to both past and future eras.

One important caveat: If you, the reader, have time to do only one thing, READ THE TEXT of Scripture. While the introductions, questions, and other features serve as helpful guides to discovering, understanding, and telling the story, they are no substitute for God's Word.

# How To Use

## THIS BIBLE INDIVIDUALLY & COMMUNALLY

**CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE TEACHING MINISTRIES (CBT)** specializes in equipping people to discover, understand, and tell the story of the Bible as they read through *The One Year Chronological Study Bible*. Individuals and churches can benefit greatly from studying the Bible chronologically, chiefly in how it helps increase Bible literacy. Bible literacy energizes the believer's daily walk with the Lord, and biblically literate churches can flourish by knowing and applying God's Word and by building unity through a focus on Scripture. Here are some ideas for how to use this Bible both individually and communally:

### *Individually*

- Read through the Bible chronologically using *The One Year Chronological Study Bible*.
- Use a journal to record your observations and your answers to the discovery questions.
- Memorize the 14 eras and their bullet points in the 14-Era Framework section that begins on page A14.
- Use the Old Testament and New Testament overview charts to place the books of the Bible in order under each era.
- Identify major themes in the developing story, and look for those themes in each era as the story develops (for example, redemption, mercy, relational brokenness, pride, or judgment).
- Practice telling the story from time to time with a friend or family member.
- Use one or more of CBT's weekly resources (blog, podcast, videos) found at [14ErasBible.com](http://14ErasBible.com)
- Choose a verse (or several verses) out of the reading that captures God's good character, or human responsibility, or any other significant theme or idea, and memorize that verse(s).

### *Communally*

- Meet together weekly with a small group to discuss the readings and each person's insights.
- Have group members take turns telling the developing story from week to week.
- Use the daily introductions, discovery questions, and articles (or one of the many support resources available on the CBT website) to stimulate thought and discussion.
- Give each participant an opportunity to share how the developing story confronts his or her personal story.
- At the end of the year's reading (or any set amount of time), provide an opportunity for each group participant to share with the group a major insight that transformed an area of his or her life.

## ASKING Discovery Questions

**IT HAS BEEN SAID**, “If you ask the wrong questions, you will always get the wrong answers.” When studying God’s Word, people often ask lots of questions. As such, it can be helpful to think about the types of questions we’re asking. Readers can benefit greatly from questions that truly dig into the text and require understanding, thought, and engagement—namely, *discovery* questions. The Bible itself contains numerous questions that God asks of His people or that His people ask of Him. For example, in Genesis 3:9, God asks Adam, “Where are you?” Adam immediately answers by saying, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked” (Genesis 3:10). The question enables Adam to realize some things about himself—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. He is able to understand what it means to be uncovered, fearful, and spiritually separated from God. Would Adam have realized all this had God not asked, “Where are you?” Asking and answering questions leads to discovery.

Knowledge of the story alone does not lead to true transformation, however. True transformation occurs when knowledge of the story informs our understanding of God’s character and our own brokenness. As a result of such understanding, we respond and begin to live differently. God’s Word is “alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit. . . . It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires” (Hebrews 4:12). When the Word exposes our thoughts, we take a sober look into our own hearts. Asking questions of the text in relation to God’s character and His nature creates an environment where God can transform us into new people by changing the way we think (Romans 12:2).

Chronological Bible Teaching employs four types of questions to help readers think about, understand, and engage the text toward the goal of life change through Bible reading:

### **1. *Factual questions increase Bible memory***

These questions help readers visualize the stories in their minds and understand what the Bible says. They are simple questions that can be answered directly from the text, but they are beneficial in helping readers understand the details and retain what they’re learning. Some examples of factual questions might be:

- Who is involved in the story?
- What is the plot of the story?
- When and where have the events in the passage taken place?
- How do the characters differ, interact, etc.?

- How much time has passed?
- What is the main character's current geographical location?

## ***2. Inferential questions build biblical theology***

These questions allow readers to take the step from “What is happening?” (factual question) to “What does it mean?” If God creates lights in the sky to allow people to count times, dates, seasons, and years, what does this tell us about Him? If the world is formless and void when God speaks the universe into existence, what does this tell us about God's word? When Adam and Eve sew fig leaves together to cover their nakedness after they disobey God's command, what does this tell us about humanity's response to sin? Inferential questions invite readers to think critically about familiar texts and to mine them for meaning. Answering these types of questions requires active thinking, not simply passive reading. There is not just one right answer to these questions. They are often difficult to grasp at first but are one of the most beneficial tools for genuine understanding.

The temptation to skip over these thought-provoking questions will be real! We encourage you to wrestle with these, pray through them, and ask the Spirit to aid you in your understanding. Consider talking with friends, pastors, or family members to spur your thinking along. Don't miss the rich reward and insight inferential questions give as you move from factual information to genuine understanding. Some additional examples of inferential questions might be:

- What does this passage (or verse, or story) tell us about God and His ways?
- What does this text tell you about relationships?
- What does this story teach about character (or faith, or scheming, or obedience, or waiting, or prayer, etc.)?
- What does this story teach about sin and righteousness?

## ***3. Connection questions build the big story of the Bible***

These questions assist the reader in retaining and building the overarching story line. They are also greatly beneficial in building our biblical theology concerning God, humanity, why the world we live in is so chaotic, and how God is acting in the midst of it all.

The Bible covers all of history, from the beginning of time until the end. God (not humanity) is the main subject of the narrative—the only character who is present from beginning to end. As readers connect one story to the next, it becomes clear that God's character is consistent as He works in His followers' lives, teaching them to trust Him, keeping His promises to them, and acting on their behalf.

Early in the story, God promises to make Abraham into a great nation and says that all the families on the earth will be blessed through him (Genesis 12:1-3). But Abraham and Sarah struggle with barrenness. Abraham cannot become a great nation without descendants. They wait twenty-five years before the son of promise, Isaac, is born. Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, also struggle with barrenness (for twenty years), leading Isaac to pray for her, which results in her conceiving twins (Genesis 25:21).

When another story comes up in our reading in which someone struggles with barrenness or having to wait on God, a connection question can help us recall how God and the human characters acted in the past. (Where else in the story have we seen barrenness become a barrier? Where has God shown Himself faithful to those who are waiting for the fulfillment of His promises?) Tracing promises and their effects or fulfillments through multiple stories gives invaluable insight into God and His ways. Some additional examples of connection questions might be:

- Where else have we seen this truth (or this principle, or this promise, or this theme, or this type of event)?
- In which other stories have we seen God do . . . ? People do . . . ?

#### ***4. Application questions transform the reader***

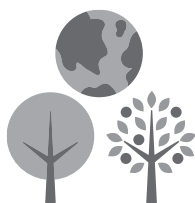
These questions seek ways to put that which has been learned into practice. As 2 Timothy 3:16 reminds us, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right." This verse provides a good guideline for application:

- How does this story **teach** us what we ought to believe? What actions should we take to live in accordance with that truth?
- In what ways does this story **correct** my wrong view of life or my wrong actions? How does this passage call me to turn from sinful or wrong actions?

In the example above of the stories of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Rebekah, the application questions might be: "What is an example from your own life where you had to wait a long time for something to occur? How did you handle that?" Or, "Now that we understand the stories of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Rebekah, what is one way you can respond in faith to God during a new season of waiting?" The goal is to move from understanding to obedience in faith. Some other examples of application questions might be:

- How is God speaking to you through this story? How will you integrate this truth into your life?
- Do you see yourself in this story?
- What questions does this story raise in relation to your own life?

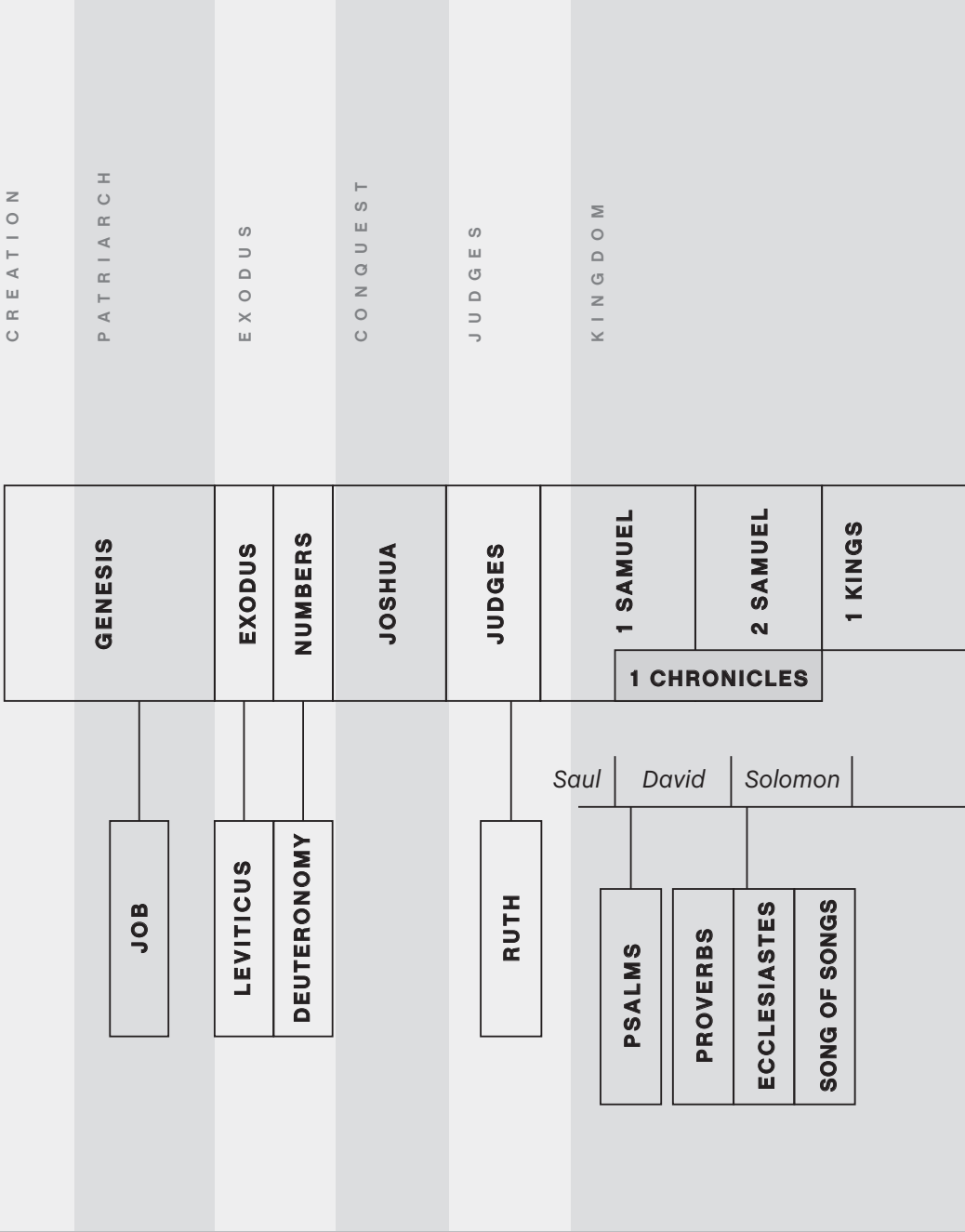
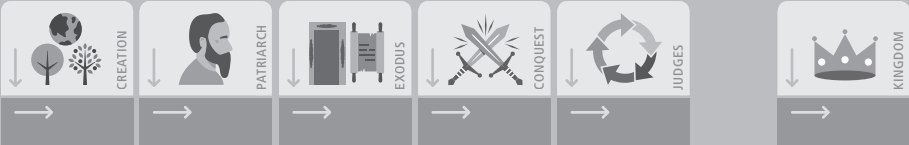
Asking good questions is a critical step in Bible study and leads to seeing life-changing answers. Along these lines, journaling can be a valuable tool for growth; writing down significant questions and answers helps us trace our own spiritual pilgrimage as it provides a visual aid so that we recognize spiritual formation and progress. Each daily reading in *The One Year Chronological Study Bible* ends with a set of Discovery Questions.

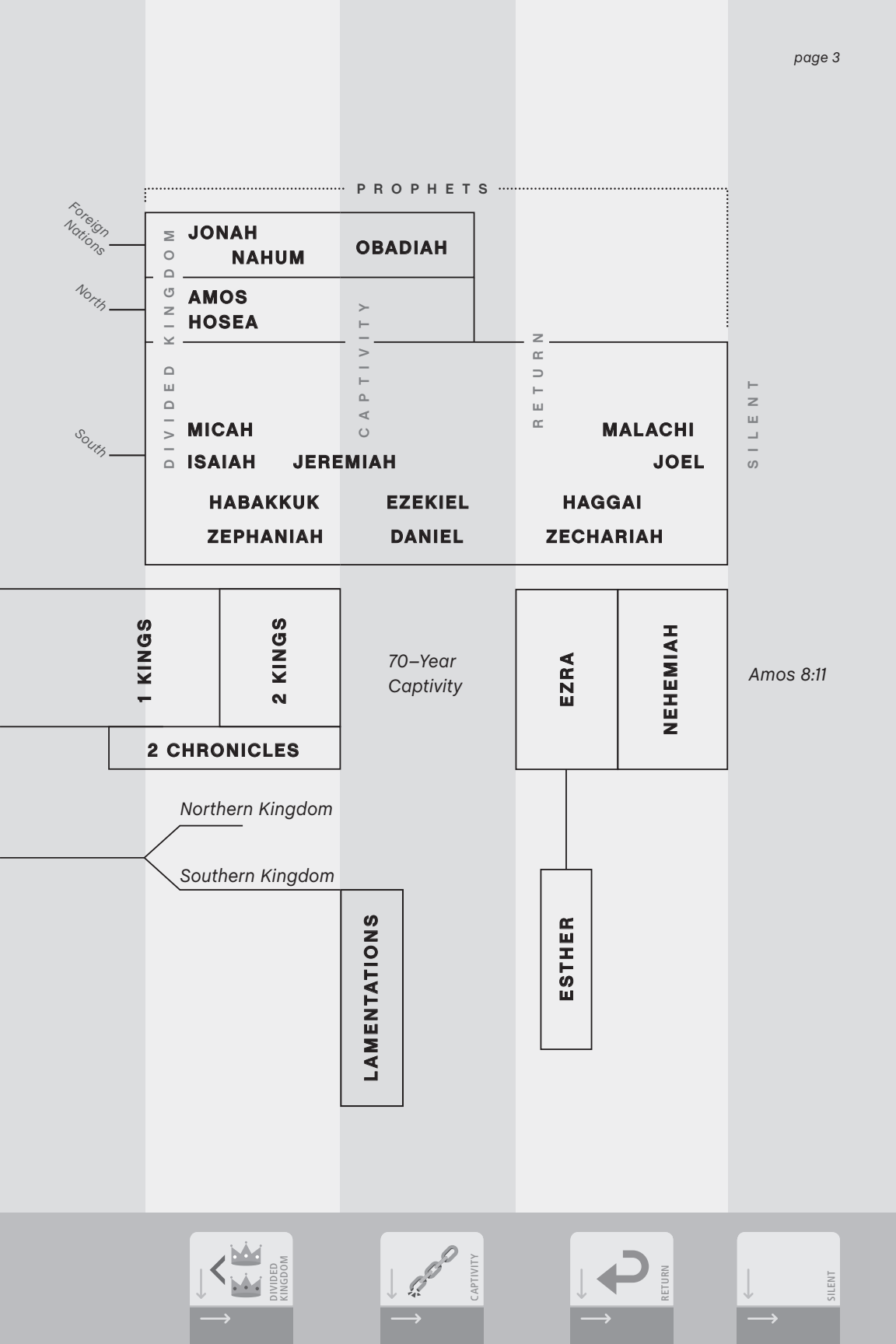


# OLD TESTAMENT

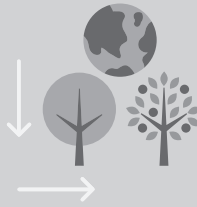
# Old Testament

OVERVIEW









DISCOVER THE STORY

# Creation Era

*Duration uncertain*

**THE CREATION ERA** contains five stories and four genealogical records that together establish a unified story line.

In Genesis 1–11, Moses records God’s revelation of Himself in creation, including His eternity and power; His design and desire for human flourishing; the origin of sin and its universal impact on individuals, marriages, families, and communities; and God’s promise of redemption. The original recipients of this written record were the Israelites, God’s chosen people, who had been liberated from slavery in Egypt. These stories were critical to their understanding about God, themselves, and their world. And for all readers, these stories are foundational for our understanding of God and His work in the world.

## Creation

The creation story sharpens its focus on the first humans, Adam and Eve, who are made in the image of God and placed in the Garden of Eden. God places two special trees among all the other trees in the Garden: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He gives a single prohibition regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, promising death for disobedience. As long as Adam believes in God’s goodness and the trustworthiness of His word, he would practice self-restraint and obedience.

## The Fall

But one day, Satan—God’s enemy—enters the Garden disguised as a cunning serpent. This serpent misrepresents God and deceives Eve. She eats fruit from the forbidden tree and gives some to Adam, who is by her side, and he also eats. Immediately, their eyes are “opened” (Genesis 3:7), but what they experience is fear, shame, and guilt. Naked and ashamed, Adam and Eve hide from God.

The Lord confronts the couple. Adam blames Eve, and Eve blames the serpent. In response, the Lord curses the serpent and promises a Coming Seed (or *offspring*) who would destroy Satan. God sheds innocent blood to produce the skins to cover Adam and Eve’s shame. He slays an innocent animal that He had just declared “good” (Genesis 1:24-25) in order to cover their nakedness, foreshadowing the means He would use to pay the penalty for sin. The promise of the Seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15) and the picture of redemption (Genesis 3:21) form the foundation of the messianic promises and the way God would deliver His people (substitutionary atonement—the shedding of the blood of the innocent on behalf of the guilty); these themes will appear throughout Scripture. In His mercy, God prevents the couple from going back into the Garden, eating from the tree of life, and living eternally condemned lives without the hope of redemption.

## Cain and Abel

Adam and Eve have children, born in their image and according to their kind—broken image bearers of God. When the time comes to worship God, Cain offers the fruit of the ground, while Abel sacrifices the firstborn of his flock. God looks upon Abel's sacrifice with pleasure, but He does not accept Cain's offering. (Perhaps animal sacrifice—which would become central in dealing with sin among God's people—had already become known as God's preference for offerings; see the article "Altar People Are Altered People" on page 177). God confronts an enraged Cain and warns him to resist sin's temptation. Cain, however, kills Abel; consequently, God curses Cain. Cain and his descendants develop a world for themselves apart from the presence of God.

God replaces Adam and Eve's dead son with another son, Seth (see Genesis 4:25). Through this son, the Seed who would crush the head of the serpent would come. Seth's descendants begin to worship the Lord by name.

## The Flood

The descendants of both Cain and Seth multiply and fill the earth. Genesis 6 seems to indicate that, over time, Seth's male descendants notice the beauty of Cain's female descendants and begin to intermarry with them, filling the world with violence and corruption. God grieves over humanity's wickedness, so He promises to destroy the earth and all its inhabitants with a flood. Noah, however, finds grace (or *favor*) with God. God instructs Noah to build a large boat with enough space for his family, a male and female of every animal, and seven pairs of each clean animal. Noah believes and obeys God.

All flesh on the earth—every animal and human outside the ark—dies in the flood. And after they spend a year on the boat, Noah, his family, and all the animals are released by the Lord. Noah's first action is to build an altar to the Lord on which he offers clean animals as a burnt offering. The sacrifice pleases the Lord, who says, "I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood" (Genesis 8:21). Noah's altar and offering echo both Abel's offering and God's sacrifice in the Garden. Noah understands—and has now experienced firsthand—that people are guilty sinners who deserve to die for their sins. Yet, as will be seen throughout Scripture, God accepts the substitutionary death of an innocent animal offered in faith.

God makes a covenant with Noah that He will never again destroy the earth by flood. He places a rainbow in the sky as a sign of His covenant and as a reminder to people of His faithfulness. Whenever God's people see the rainbow, they can remember this story and God's faithfulness.

## The Tower of Babel

Noah's sons and their wives begin to repopulate the earth. Their descendants, unwilling to obey God's command to fill the earth, stay in one place and build a huge tower called Babel. In response, the Lord scatters the people over the face of the earth and confuses their language.

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**THE CREATION ERA** reveals a **God who speaks**: He ascribes names, assesses goodness, gives instructions and boundaries, confronts and judges sin, and promises redemption.

The Creation Era reveals a **God who acts**: He provides for His image bearers, slays innocent animals on behalf of sinful people, opens the floodgates of heaven in judgment, and scatters people throughout the earth.

**God reveals** Himself as good and just, willing to redeem broken, sinful humanity.



# January

## Day I • JANUARY 1

The opening chapters of the Bible reveal God as eternal, wise, powerful, good, and committed to human flourishing. They also introduce the integrated systems that sustain life, explain the origin of sin, and point to God's plan and way of redemption.

God forms humanity in His image to govern His creation, reflect His glory, and fill the earth with His image bearers. He unites the first couple in marriage and places them in Eden with one prohibition, inviting them to live in relationship with Him by faith.

Tempted by the serpent, Eve violates the prohibition, as does Adam. They choose to determine good and evil by what they see instead of what God said. Sin thus enters the world and brings with it shame, fear, guilt, and separation. The couple is evicted from the Garden, but not before God graciously covers their nakedness by sacrificing an animal that He had called "good." Adam and Eve depart with a promise (Genesis 3:15) and a picture (Genesis 3:21) of redemption.

**The Bible begins in Genesis 1–11 with the dawn of Creation and the early history of the world.**

### ***The Account of Creation*** • GENESIS 1:1–2:4a

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>9</sup>Then God said, "Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear." And that is what happened.

<sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground "land" and the

waters "seas." And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup>Then God said, "Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came." And that is what happened. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

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

<sup>14</sup>Then God said, "Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them be signs to mark the seasons, days, and years.

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

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

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

<sup>20</sup>Then God said, "Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind." <sup>21</sup>So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that scurries and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird—each producing offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>22</sup>Then God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply. Let the fish fill the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth."

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>29</sup>Then God said, "Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food.

<sup>30</sup>And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life." And that is what happened.

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

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

<sup>1</sup>So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed.

<sup>2</sup>On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested\* from all his

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

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

### **The Man and Woman in Eden • GENESIS 2:4b-25**

<sup>4b</sup>When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup>neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. <sup>6</sup>Instead, springs\* came up from the ground and watered all the land. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person.

<sup>8</sup>Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made. <sup>9</sup>The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

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

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

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." <sup>19</sup>So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man\* to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. <sup>20</sup>He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him.

1:26a Or man; Hebrew reads *adam*. 1:26b As in Syriac version; Hebrew reads *all the earth*. 1:27 Or the man; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*. 2:2 Or ceased; also in 2:3. 2:6 Or mist. 2:19 Or *Adam*, and so throughout the chapter.



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

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

"This one is bone from my bone,  
and flesh from my flesh!  
She will be called 'woman,'  
because she was taken from 'man.'"

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

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

### **The Man and Woman Sin • GENESIS 3:1-24**

<sup>1</sup>The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>15</sup> And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike\* your head, and you will strike his heel."

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

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

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

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

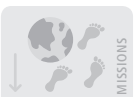
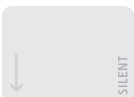
<sup>18</sup> It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains.

<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return."

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

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

2:21 Or took a part of the man's side. 3:8 Or Adam, and so throughout the chapter. 3:15 Or bruise; also in 3:15b. 3:16 Or And though you will have desire for your husband, / he will rule over you. 3:20 Eve sounds like a Hebrew term that means "to give life." 3:22 Or the man; Hebrew reads ha-adam.



## DAILY DISCOVERY

- What does the creation event reveal about God? How do the systems that He creates (solar, reproduction, etc.) promote human flourishing?
- In Genesis 1–2, God gives humanity a purpose and then provides for them so that they may fulfill their purpose. How does He provide, and what does this teach us about God?
- Why does God evict the couple from the Garden, and what hope does He give them (and all humanity)?

## Day 2 • JANUARY 2

Life outside of Eden is hard, and it requires faith in God's promises. Abel's offering of an acceptable sacrifice in worship echoes the promise and sacrifice made by God in the previous story (Genesis 3:15, 21). Cain comes to God on his own terms. God accepts Abel's sacrifice and warns Cain to do what's right. Instead, Cain kills Abel. God replaces Abel with Seth, preserving His promise to Eve regarding her offspring.

Two ways of navigating life outside Eden emerge. Seth's descendants worship the Lord by name, while Cain's descendants live outside the presence of God and are characterized by violence, murder, and sexual brokenness. Apparently, the two lineages intermarry (see Genesis 6:1-4), and the whole world becomes corrupt (Genesis 6:12).

Only Noah walks with God by faith. So God instructs Noah to build an ark and sends a flood to judge the rapid spread of sin among His image bearers.

**Cain, Abel, and Seth • GENESIS 4:1-26**

<sup>1</sup>Now Adam\* had sexual relations with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When she gave birth to Cain, she said, "With the LORD's help, I have produced\* a man!" <sup>2</sup>Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel.

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

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

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

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

"I don't know," Cain responded. "Am I my brother's guardian?"

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

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

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

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

<sup>17</sup>Cain had sexual relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Then Cain founded a city, which he named Enoch, after his son. <sup>18</sup>Enoch had a son named Irad. Irad became the father of\* Mehujael. Mehujael became the father of Methushael. Methushael became the father of Lamech.

<sup>19</sup>Lamech married two women. The first was named Adah, and the second was Zillah.

4:1a Or the man; also in 4:25. 4:1b Or I have acquired. Cain sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean "produce" or "acquire." 4:8 As in Samaritan Pentateuch, Greek and Syriac versions, and Latin Vulgate; Masoretic Text lacks "Let's go out into the fields." 4:13 Or My sin. 4:16 Nod means "wandering." 4:18 Or the ancestor of, and so throughout the verse.







# Understand the Story

## God Tells Us about Himself

“In the beginning God”: The opening words of the Bible announce God’s desire to make Himself known. The Bible is a book about God, His ways, and His people. Without His self-revelation, we could not know Him, discern His ways, or understand ourselves. Amazingly, God gave us this Book precisely because He wanted to be known and loved and to make His love known.

The truth of God’s existence is obvious: Even though we cannot see God, we can see His handiwork, through which He demonstrates His eternal power and divine nature. The earth and the sky reveal His invisible attributes (Romans 1:19-20). All of creation proclaims His existence. This *general revelation* testifies to all humanity that God is powerful, orderly, and purposeful. God has also revealed Himself throughout history through His miracles, through His Word, and through Jesus—*special revelation*—so that humans would know His goodness, love, and truth.

Moses records the detailed account of the creation of the universe. During their four-hundred-year stay in Egypt, the Hebrews (God’s chosen people) learned the Egyptian narrative that gods and goddesses governed the natural and supernatural worlds. God gave Moses this record of creation to dismantle the false Egyptian narrative and replace it with truth.

Truth starts with God Himself. From the beginning, He reveals that He exists. He demonstrates His power by simply speaking—when He speaks, things happen! Nothing becomes something.

God establishes Himself as the judge of good and evil; He evaluates what He makes and deems it good. And He immediately introduces boundaries, separating light from darkness, sky from earth, land from water, day from night, and aquatic life from aerial life. He also sets boundaries in reproduction—all animals and plants reproduce offspring of the same kind. God makes humanity in His image—morally, spiritually, and intellectually—and gives humans the ability to reproduce more image bearers, along with the right to reign over His creation. He blesses His image bearers and anticipates all of humanity’s needs before they even have needs.

God makes orderly, integrated systems within the boundaries He created, testifying further to His own creativity and design. The heavenly lights rule the times and seasons, the reproductive process provides ongoing life, and the rule of humans provides order and care for God’s creation. As He concludes this creation event—and before He elaborates more on the crown of His creation, humanity—God evaluates everything He has created as “very good” (Genesis 1:31).

The creation event also reveals *God’s* goodness. His design of the universe displays His desire for the flourishing of His image bearers and ensures their safety and provision. He places Adam in a beautiful garden loaded with resources. He fashions Adam to appreciate beauty and enjoy bounty. He gives Adam a complementary companion to share in

the beauty and bounty, to reign with him in the Garden over all the earth and its created order, and to extend God's Kingdom.

God's goodness in creation lays the foundation for the prohibition He gives regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the midst of abundant provision, He delineates one prohibition: "If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die" (Genesis 2:17). Though Adam has never seen death, God makes the word understandable and promises that death would follow eating from the forbidden tree. The prohibition is for their good, as are all the boundaries established in creation. Would His image bearers trust His goodness and exercise rule over their appetites?

Sadly, they listen to God's enemy—the serpent, who seeks to be the dominating voice that humanity hears—and they question God's goodness, doubt His word, and eat the forbidden fruit. Sin enters their hearts. They feel shame at their nakedness, fear that causes them to hide from God, and guilt that leads them to blame others for their own faults.

But God, in His goodness, seeks them in their hiding. His questions expose their sin, but His mercy provides both a promise of future restoration (Genesis 3:15) and a picture of that restoration (Genesis 3:21). God promises that an offspring of the woman would crush the head of the serpent.

The rest of the biblical story tracks God's goodness displayed against the backdrop of humanity's rebellion. The refrain "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good!" (Psalm 136:1) could be applied to each era of the Bible. God's goodness is displayed in the Patriarch Era when He chooses a man from an idolatrous family to found a nation. The Exodus Era narrates the goodness of God as He liberates His people from slavery and cares for them in the wilderness despite their frequent rebellion. God's goodness is celebrated in the Conquest Era as He splits the Jordan River for His people and gives them the land promised to Abraham and his descendants. In the Judges Era, God works behind the scenes and raises up a family from Judah through whom the redemption story continues. The goodness of God is paraded in the Kingdom Era through a king after God's own heart and through His glory settling on the Temple built by Solomon. God's goodness disciplines His people and calls them to repentance in the Divided Kingdom Era. His goodness sustains His people during the seventy years of Babylonian captivity, and then He brings His people back to their land and prepares them for the coming of the Messiah. In the Silent Era, God's goodness is displayed as He preserves both His people and His written Word.

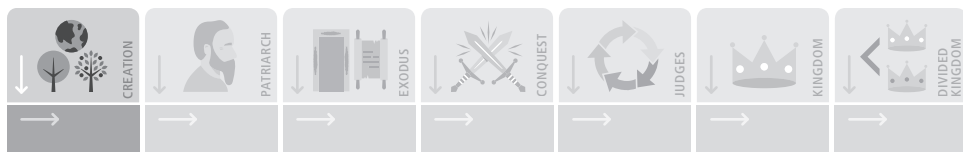
Finally, God's goodness is on ultimate display in Christ Jesus, who bears guilty humanity's penalty in His death on the cross and then bursts out of death's tomb and ascends to heaven, where "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good!" plays on gloriously for all eternity.

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

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

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

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





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

#### From Adam to Noah • GENESIS 5:1-32

<sup>1</sup>This is the written account of the descendants of Adam. When God created human beings,\* he made them to be like himself. <sup>2</sup>He created them male and female, and he blessed them and called them "human."

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

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

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

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

<sup>14</sup>Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

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

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

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

<sup>25</sup>When Methuselah was 187 years old, he

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

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

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

#### 1 CHRONICLES 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup>The descendants of Adam were Seth, Enosh,

<sup>2</sup>Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, <sup>3</sup>Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, <sup>4</sup>and Noah.

The sons of Noah were\* Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

#### Noah and the Flood • GENESIS 6:1-22

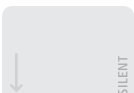
<sup>1</sup>Then the people began to multiply on the earth, and daughters were born to them. <sup>2</sup>The sons of God saw the beautiful women\* and took any they wanted as their wives. <sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not put up with\* humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years."

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

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

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

4:25 Seth probably means "granted"; the name may also mean "appointed." 5:1 Or man; Hebrew reads adam; similarly in 5:2. 5:6 Or the ancestor of; also in 5:9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25. 5:7 Or the birth of this ancestor of; also in 5:10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 26. 5:29 Noah sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean "relief" or "comfort." 1:4 As in Greek version (see also Gen 5:3-32); Hebrew lacks The sons of Noah were. 6:2 Hebrew daughters of men; also in 6:4. 6:3 Greek version reads will not remain in.



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

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

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

door on the side, and build three decks inside the boat—lower, middle, and upper.

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

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

#### DAILY DISCOVERY

- Where do you think Cain and Abel learned about sacrifice? What do Cain's and Abel's gifts reveal about their different views of God and His standards for worship?
- What does God reveal about Himself as He interacts with Cain? How does Cain respond to God's entreaties?
- Describe the differences between the lineages of Seth and Cain. What do these differences demonstrate about walking by faith versus going your own way?

## Day 3 • JANUARY 3

Noah and his family enter the ark along with animals of every kind (those considered clean and unclean). God closes the door, and it rains until the earth is flooded. They spend a year on the ark until the waters recede, after which the Lord releases Noah, his family, and the animals. By faith, Noah builds an altar to the Lord and sacrifices clean animals on it. God smells the pleasing aroma and promises to never again use a flood to destroy all living things. God then provides a rainbow as a sign of His promise and to teach future generations about His faithfulness.

Noah's three sons and their wives populate the earth; from their descendants all the peoples of the earth originate. Noah plants a vineyard for wine, and one day he gets drunk. Ham exploits his father's condition, and his descendants are cursed by Noah. The Flood did not remove sin's stain from the heart of humanity.

### The Flood Covers the Earth • GENESIS 7:1-24

<sup>1</sup>When everything was ready, the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth, I can see that you alone are righteous. <sup>2</sup>Take with you seven pairs—male and female—of each animal I have approved for eating and for sacrifice,\* and take one pair of each of the others. <sup>3</sup>Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird. There must be a male and a female in each pair to ensure that all life will survive on the earth after the flood. <sup>4</sup>Seven days from now I will make the rains pour down on the earth. And it will rain for forty days and forty nights, until I have wiped from the earth all the living things I have created.”

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

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

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

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



days, the waters of the flood came and covered the earth.

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

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

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

### **The Flood Recedes • GENESIS 8:1-22**

<sup>1</sup>But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and livestock with him in the boat. He sent a wind to blow across the earth, and the floodwaters began to recede. <sup>2</sup>The underground waters stopped flowing, and the torrential rains from the sky were stopped. <sup>3</sup>So the floodwaters gradually receded from the earth. After 150 days, <sup>4</sup>exactly five months from the time the flood began,\* the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup>Two and a half months later,\* as the waters continued to go down, other mountain peaks became visible.

<sup>6</sup>After another forty days, Noah opened the window he had made in the boat<sup>7</sup> and released a raven. The bird flew back and forth until the floodwaters on the earth had dried up. <sup>8</sup>He also released a dove to see if the water had receded and it could find dry ground. <sup>9</sup>But the dove could find no place to land because the water still covered the ground. So it

returned to the boat, and Noah held out his hand and drew the dove back inside. <sup>10</sup>After waiting another seven days, Noah released the dove again. <sup>11</sup>This time the dove returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. Then Noah knew that the floodwaters were almost gone. <sup>12</sup>He waited another seven days and then released the dove again. This time it did not come back.

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

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

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

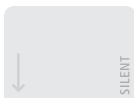
<sup>20</sup>Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and there he sacrificed as burnt offerings the animals and birds that had been approved for that purpose.\* <sup>21</sup>And the LORD was pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice and said to himself, “I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood. I will never again destroy all living things. <sup>22</sup>As long as the earth remains, there will be planting and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night.”

### **God's Covenant with Noah • GENESIS 9:1-17**

<sup>1</sup>Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth. <sup>2</sup>All the animals of the earth, all the birds of the sky, all the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the fish in the sea will look on you with fear and terror. I have placed them in your power. <sup>3</sup>I have given them to you for food, just as I have given you grain and vegetables. <sup>4</sup>But you must never eat any meat that still has the lifeblood in it.

<sup>5</sup>“And I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person's life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die. <sup>6</sup>If anyone takes a human

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



life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings\* in his own image.<sup>7</sup> Now be fruitful and multiply, and repopulate the earth."

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

<sup>12</sup>Then God said, "I am giving you a sign of my covenant with you and with all living creatures, for all generations to come. <sup>13</sup>I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my covenant with you and with all the earth. <sup>14</sup>When I send clouds over the earth, the rainbow will appear in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>and I will remember my covenant with you and with all living creatures. Never again will the floodwaters destroy all life. <sup>16</sup>When I see the rainbow in the clouds, I will remember the eternal covenant between God and every living creature on earth." <sup>17</sup>Then God said to Noah, "Yes, this rainbow is the sign of the covenant I am confirming with all the creatures on earth."

#### **Noah's Sons • GENESIS 9:18–10:1**

<sup>18</sup>The sons of Noah who came out of the boat with their father were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham is the father of Canaan.) <sup>19</sup>From these three sons of Noah came all the people who now populate the earth.

<sup>20</sup>After the flood, Noah began to cultivate the ground, and he planted a vineyard. <sup>21</sup>One day he drank some wine he had made, and he became drunk and lay naked inside his tent. <sup>22</sup>Ham, the father of Canaan, saw that his father was naked and went outside and told his brothers. <sup>23</sup>Then Shem and Japheth took a robe, held it over their shoulders, and backed into the tent to cover their father. As they did this, they looked the other way so they would not see him naked.

<sup>24</sup>When Noah woke up from his stupor, he learned what Ham, his youngest son, had done.

<sup>25</sup>Then he cursed Canaan, the son of Ham:

"May Canaan be cursed!

May he be the lowest of servants to his relatives."

<sup>26</sup>Then Noah said,

"May the LORD, the God of Shem, be blessed, and may Canaan be his servant!

<sup>27</sup> May God expand the territory of Japheth! May Japheth share the prosperity of Shem,\* and may Canaan be his servant."

<sup>28</sup>Noah lived another 350 years after the great flood. <sup>29</sup>He lived 950 years, and then he died.

<sup>1</sup>This is the account of the families of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the three sons of Noah. Many children were born to them after the great flood.

#### **Descendants of Japheth • GENESIS 10:2-5**

<sup>2</sup>The descendants of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

<sup>3</sup>The descendants of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.

<sup>4</sup>The descendants of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.\* <sup>5</sup>Their descendants became the seafaring peoples that spread out to various lands, each identified by its own language, clan, and national identity.

#### **1 CHRONICLES 1:5-7**

<sup>5</sup>The descendants of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

<sup>6</sup>The descendants of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath,\* and Togarmah.

<sup>7</sup>The descendants of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.

#### **Descendants of Ham • GENESIS 10:6-20**

<sup>6</sup>The descendants of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

<sup>7</sup>The descendants of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

<sup>8</sup>Cush was also the ancestor of Nimrod, who was the first heroic warrior on earth.

<sup>9</sup>Since he was the greatest hunter in the world,\* his name became proverbial. People would say, "This man is like Nimrod, the greatest hunter in the world." <sup>10</sup>He built his kingdom in the land of Babylonia,\* with the cities of Babylon, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh.

<sup>11</sup>From there he expanded his territory to Assyria,\* building the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, <sup>12</sup>and Resen (the great city located between Nineveh and Calah).

<sup>13</sup>Mizraim was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites,

9:6 Or man; Hebrew reads *ha-adam*. 9:27 Hebrew *May he live in the tents of Shem*. 10:4 As in some Hebrew manuscripts and Greek version (see also 1 Chr 1:7); most Hebrew manuscripts read *Dodanim*. 1:6 As in some Hebrew manuscripts and Greek version (see also Gen 10:3); most Hebrew manuscripts read *Diphath*. 10:9 Hebrew *a great hunter before the LORD*; also in 10:9b. 10:10 Hebrew *Shinar*. 10:11 Or *From that land Assyria went out*.



<sup>14</sup>Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines came.\*

<sup>15</sup>Canaan's oldest son was Sidon, the ancestor of the Sidonians. Canaan was also the ancestor of the Hittites,\* <sup>16</sup>Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, <sup>17</sup>Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, <sup>18</sup>Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites. The Canaanite clans eventually spread out, <sup>19</sup>and the territory of Canaan extended from Sidon in the north to Gerar and Gaza in the south, and east as far as Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, near Lasha.

<sup>20</sup>These were the descendants of Ham, identified by clan, language, territory, and national identity.

#### 1 CHRONICLES 1:8-16

<sup>8</sup>The descendants of Ham were Cush, Mizraim,\* Put, and Canaan.

<sup>9</sup>The descendants of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. <sup>10</sup>Cush was also the ancestor of Nimrod, who was the first heroic warrior on earth.

<sup>11</sup>Mizraim was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, <sup>12</sup>Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines came.\*

<sup>13</sup>Canaan's oldest son was Sidon, the ancestor of the Sidonians. Canaan was also the ancestor of the Hittites,\* <sup>14</sup>Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, <sup>15</sup>Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, <sup>16</sup>Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites.

#### Descendants of Shem • GENESIS 10:21-30

<sup>21</sup>Sons were also born to Shem, the older brother of Japheth.\* Shem was the ancestor of all the descendants of Eber.

<sup>22</sup>The descendants of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

<sup>23</sup>The descendants of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

<sup>24</sup>Arphaxad was the father of Shelah,\* and Shelah was the father of Eber.

<sup>25</sup>Eber had two sons. The first was named

Peleg (which means "division"), for during his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups. His brother's name was Joktan.

<sup>26</sup>Joktan was the ancestor 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 descendants of Joktan.

<sup>30</sup>The territory they occupied extended from Mesha all the way to Sephar in the eastern mountains.

#### 1 CHRONICLES 1:17-23

<sup>17</sup>The descendants of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

The descendants of Aram were\* Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.\*

<sup>18</sup>Arphaxad was the father of Shelah.

Shelah was the father of Eber.

<sup>19</sup>Eber had two sons. The first was named Peleg (which means "division"), for during his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups. His brother's name was Joktan.

<sup>20</sup>Joktan was the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, <sup>21</sup>Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>22</sup>Obal,\* Abimael, Sheba,

<sup>23</sup>Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were descendants of Joktan.

#### GENESIS 10:31-32

<sup>31</sup>These were the descendants of Shem, identified by clan, language, territory, and national identity.

<sup>32</sup>These are the clans that descended from Noah's sons, arranged by nation according to their lines of descent. All the nations of the earth descended from these clans after the great flood.

10:14 Hebrew Casluhites, from whom the Philistines came, and Caphtorites. Compare Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7. 10:15 Hebrew ancestor of Heth. 1:8 Or Egypt; also in 1:11. 1:12 Hebrew Casluhites, from whom the Philistines came, Caphtorites. See Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7. 1:13 Hebrew ancestor of Heth. 10:21 Or Shem, whose older brother was Japheth. 10:24 Greek version reads Arphaxad was the father of Cainan, Cainan was the father of Shelah. Compare Luke 3:36. 1:17a As in one Hebrew manuscript and some Greek manuscripts (see also Gen 10:23); most Hebrew manuscripts lack The descendants of Aram were. 1:17b As in parallel text at Gen 10:23; Hebrew reads and Meshech. 1:22 As in some Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac version (see also Gen 10:28); most Hebrew manuscripts read Ebal.

#### DAILY DISCOVERY

- How does God evaluate humanity in Genesis 6, and why is Noah exempt from God's judgment?
- Why does Noah offer a sacrifice after leaving the ark, and where do you think he gains his understanding about this practice? How does God respond to Noah's offering?
- This is the first time God makes a covenant (a binding agreement based on God's character and promises) in the Bible. What does this act reveal about God?







DISCOVER THE STORY

# Patriarch Era

2166–1526 BC

**TEN GENERATIONS AFTER THE FLOOD**, God speaks to a man named Abram. Abram's father, Terah, a descendant of Shem, was an idol worshiper (Joshua 24:2). God promises Abram that He will bless him and make him into a great nation, although Abram is seventy-five years old at the time and his wife, Sarai, is unable to have children. God also promises Abram that He will give his descendants a special land—the land of Canaan (Genesis 15:13-16). These promises extend beyond Abram, however, as God declares that through this family all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3).

God's promises obligate His activity and demand faith from Abram. Abram believes God, beginning his long journey of faith, and sets out for Canaan. God counts his faith as righteousness (Genesis 15:6). Immediately after arriving in Canaan, Abram builds an altar to the Lord, echoing the practices of Abel and Noah.

After ten years of waiting on God to fulfill His promise—including a detour to Egypt—Sarai succumbs to unbelief and persuades Abram to sleep with Hagar, her Egyptian servant. Hagar gives birth to a son, Ishmael, but he is not the child of the promise.

Even though Abram and Sarai attempt to rush God's plan on their own, God renews His covenant with them, illustrated through the changing of their names (to Abraham and Sarah). Abraham and his male descendants would also bear a physical reminder of this covenant through the sign of circumcision. Twenty-five years after the initial promise, God gives Abraham a son through Sarah named Isaac. Years later, Abraham's faith is tested when he is told to sacrifice Isaac, but God provides a substitute (a ram) in Isaac's place—a picture of the means God chooses to redeem His people.

God transfers the promises made to Abraham to succeeding generations. Isaac has two sons, Jacob and Esau, and God promises that the older son will serve the younger. Isaac's younger son, Jacob, has twelve sons. The eleventh son, Joseph, who is favored by Jacob, receives two dreams about the future but has to wait thirteen years for God to fulfill them. Jealous of Jacob's love for Joseph and angry at Joseph about the dreams, Joseph's older brothers sell him into slavery in Egypt. God shows favor to Joseph in Egypt, delivers him from his struggles, and raises him up to become the most powerful person in Egypt besides Pharaoh. Through Joseph's position in Egypt, God rescues all of Jacob's family during a famine and reunites them in Egypt. Before his death, Jacob blesses all his sons. He promises his son Judah that from his descendants God would produce kings—and eventually *the* King, who would rule over all.

Knowing the promises of God sustains His people during challenging times and uncertainty. Each of the patriarchs struggles at times to reconcile God's promises with their experiences. But God oversees the faith development of each of them and transforms them over time. He orchestrates the circumstances, teaches them to trust Him, and repeatedly demonstrates His covenant

faithfulness. Flawed people do not prevent God from fulfilling His promises; rather, He receives great glory for accomplishing His purposes through unlikely participants.

The stories of the patriarchs teach the Israelites about their God (He introduces Himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), about how He works, and about the importance of walking by faith, not by sight. The promises made to the Israelites' forefathers develop their identity and define their purpose.

The book of Job also falls into the Patriarch Era, as it records a story that likely occurred during that time period. Job, a wealthy man described by God as "blameless—a man of complete integrity" (Job 1:8), suffers unspeakable tragedy. He and his friends then attempt to make sense of what happened. In the end, God reveals Himself to Job and restores his wealth. The story highlights the experience of suffering, the limits of Satan's power, and the sovereignty of God. The story also corrects wrong ideas about God, suffering, and righteousness—especially the idea that only the wicked suffer and the righteous always prosper.

Throughout all these stories, God reveals the spiritual-formation process that He uses to develop the type of faith that pleases Him. A gap exists between the promises of God and the fulfillment of those promises. During this gap, people must learn to walk with God by faith (Hebrews 11:6). Things are never as they appear in the natural realm. Circumstances are often the least reliable gauge to spiritual reality.

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**THE PATRIARCH ERA** reveals a **God who speaks**: God initiates a relationship with Abram and commits Himself to Abram by promising him an heir, a land, and a nation that will be a blessing to all the families of the earth. He who spoke the world into existence, who formed and filled it, will do what He promises. God's detailed information about the future of Abraham's descendants, including the announcement of a four-hundred-year enslavement followed by liberation, reveals His foreknowledge and His determination to fulfill the promises He made to past generations.

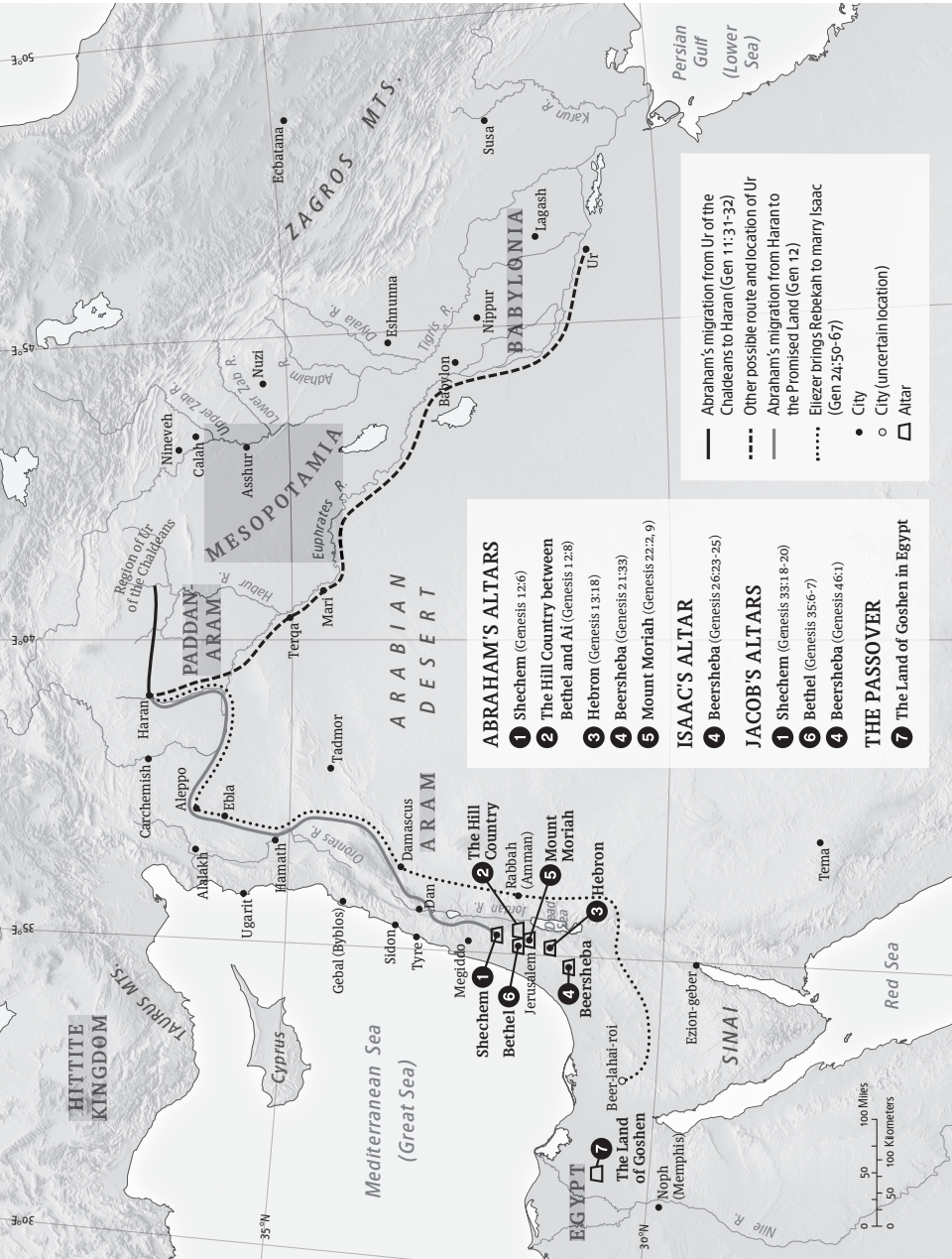
The Patriarch Era reveals a **God who acts**: He opens Sarah's barren womb twenty-five years after He first promised Abraham a son. He provides a substitute (a ram) in place of Isaac. He provides a wife for Isaac. He preserves Jacob while he's living in Haran with his crafty uncle Laban. He protects Jacob when he returns to Canaan. He gives dreams to Joseph and works through the betrayal of Joseph's brothers to position him in Egypt for their preservation. He defends Sarah, protects Hagar, and vindicates Judah's daughter-in-law Tamar, through whom runs the line of the promised Seed, the Messiah. God fulfills with His hands what His mouth has spoken.

**God reveals** Himself as sovereign and faithful to His promises.

*The Bible text for the Patriarch Era begins with Genesis 11:27-31 on page 22.*

WORLD OF THE PATRIARCHS MAP

God called Abraham to leave his homeland in Mesopotamia and travel to Canaan, which he promised to give to Abraham’s descendants. Abraham and his son Isaac lived out their lives in Canaan, and then in a time of famine Isaac’s son Jacob moved to Egypt with his entire family. The patriarchs erected numerous altars, demonstrating their devotion to God and their understanding of sacrifice and worship.





## Day 4 • JANUARY 4

Genealogies, like the one tracing the line from Shem to Abram, help the Israelites understand their origin and their place in God's story. God calls Abram from his idolatrous family (see Joshua 24:2) into His story of redemption. This call, and the promise that his descendants would bear the promised Seed and bless all nations, becomes the focal point of Abram's life. God teaches Abram to have confidence in His promises and walk by faith—a faith lived out by many of his forefathers and required of his descendants.

God's promises to Abram involve a land, a son, a nation, and a blessing to all nations. Abram believes God, and God considers him righteous. The altar that Abram builds when he arrives in Canaan echoes the altar scenes of Abel and Noah and points forward to the sacrificial system given to the Israelites in the wilderness. The Israelites could look back to God's promises to Abram and to Abram's faith journey to give them assurance that God keeps His promises.

### *The Tower of Babel* • GENESIS 11:1-9

<sup>1</sup>At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. <sup>2</sup>As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia\* and settled there.

<sup>3</sup>They began saying to each other, "Let's make bricks and harden them with fire." (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.) <sup>4</sup>Then they said, "Come, let's build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world."

<sup>5</sup>But the LORD came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. <sup>6</sup>"Look!" he said. "The people are united, and they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them! <sup>7</sup>Come, let's go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won't be able to understand each other."

<sup>8</sup>In that way, the LORD scattered them all over the world, and they stopped building the city. <sup>9</sup>That is why the city was called Babel,\* because that is where the LORD confused the people with different languages. In this way he scattered them all over the world.

### *From Shem to Abram* • GENESIS 11:10-26

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

Two years after the great flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of\* Arphaxad. <sup>11</sup>After the birth of\* Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>12</sup>When Arphaxad was 35 years old, he became the father of Shelah. <sup>13</sup>After the birth of Shelah, Arphaxad lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters.\*

<sup>14</sup>When Shelah was 30 years old, he became the father of Eber. <sup>15</sup>After the birth of Eber, Shelah lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>16</sup>When Eber was 34 years old, he became the father of Peleg. <sup>17</sup>After the birth of Peleg, Eber lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>18</sup>When Peleg was 30 years old, he became the father of Reu. <sup>19</sup>After the birth of Reu, Peleg lived another 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>20</sup>When Reu was 32 years old, he became the father of Serug. <sup>21</sup>After the birth of Serug, Reu lived another 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>22</sup>When Serug was 30 years old, he became the father of Nahor. <sup>23</sup>After the birth of Nahor, Serug lived another 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

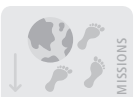
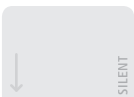
<sup>24</sup>When Nahor was 29 years old, he became the father of Terah. <sup>25</sup>After the birth of Terah, Nahor lived another 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

<sup>26</sup>After Terah was 70 years old, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

### 1 CHRONICLES 1:24-27

<sup>24</sup>So this is the family line descended from Shem: Arphaxad, Shelah,\* <sup>25</sup>Eber, Peleg, Reu, <sup>26</sup>Serug, Nahor, Terah, <sup>27</sup>and Abram, later known as Abraham.

11:12 Hebrew *Shinar*. 11:9 Or *Babylon*. *Babel* sounds like a Hebrew term that means "confusion." 11:10 Or the ancestor of; also in 11:12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24. 11:11 Or the birth of this ancestor of; also in 11:13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25. 11:12-13 Greek version reads <sup>12</sup>When Arphaxad was 135 years old, he became the father of Cainan. <sup>13</sup>After the birth of Cainan, Arphaxad lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When Cainan was 130 years old, he became the father of Shelah. After the birth of Shelah, Cainan lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. Compare Luke 3:35-36. 1:24 Some Greek manuscripts read Arphaxad, Cainan, Shelah. See notes on Gen 10:24; 11:12-13.



**The Family of Terah • GENESIS 11:27-31 /**

2166 or 2000 BC

Beginning with the history of Terah's family, two dates are given: a traditional, earlier date and an alternative, later date. All dates are approximate.

<sup>27</sup>This is the account of Terah's family. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot. <sup>28</sup>But Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, the land of his birth, while his father, Terah, was still living. <sup>29</sup>Meanwhile, Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. (Milcah and her sister Iscah were daughters of Nahor's brother Haran.) <sup>30</sup>But Sarai was unable to become pregnant and had no children.

<sup>31</sup>One day Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai (his son Abram's wife), and his grandson Lot (his son Haran's child) and moved away from Ur of the Chaldeans. He was headed for the land of Canaan, but they stopped at Haran and settled there.

**The Call of Abram • GENESIS 12:1-9 /**

2091 or 1925 BC

Some years later, when Abram was grown and married and still living with his father in Haran, the Lord called Abram to go to a new land.

<sup>1</sup>The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

<sup>4</sup>So Abram departed as the LORD had instructed, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. <sup>5</sup>He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth—his livestock and all the people he had taken into his household at Haran—and headed for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in Canaan, <sup>6</sup>Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites.

<sup>7</sup>Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants.\*" And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the LORD, who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup>After that, Abram traveled south and set up camp in the hill country, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the

east. There he built another altar and dedicated it to the LORD, and he worshiped the LORD. <sup>9</sup>Then Abram continued traveling south by stages toward the Negev.

**Abram and Sarai in Egypt • GENESIS 12:10-20**

<sup>10</sup>At that time a severe famine struck the land of Canaan, forcing Abram to go down to Egypt, where he lived as a foreigner. <sup>11</sup>As he was approaching the border of Egypt, Abram said to his wife, Sarai, "Look, you are a very beautiful woman. <sup>12</sup>When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife. Let's kill him; then we can have her!'" <sup>13</sup>So please tell them you are my sister. Then they will spare my life and treat me well because of their interest in you."

<sup>14</sup>And sure enough, when Abram arrived in Egypt, everyone noticed Sarai's beauty. <sup>15</sup>When the palace officials saw her, they sang her praises to Pharaoh, their king, and Sarai was taken into his palace. <sup>16</sup>Then Pharaoh gave Abram many gifts because of her—sheep, goats, cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

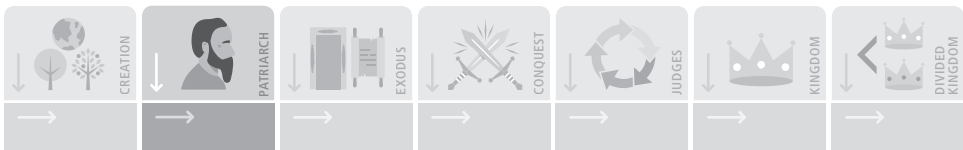
<sup>17</sup>But the LORD sent terrible plagues upon Pharaoh and his household because of Sarai, Abram's wife. <sup>18</sup>So Pharaoh summoned Abram and accused him sharply. "What have you done to me?" he demanded. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife?" <sup>19</sup>Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' and allow me to take her as my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and get out of here!" <sup>20</sup>Pharaoh ordered some of his men to escort them, and he sent Abram out of the country, along with his wife and all his possessions.

**Abram and Lot Separate • GENESIS 13:1-18**

<sup>1</sup>So Abram left Egypt and traveled north into the Negev, along with his wife and Lot and all that they owned. <sup>2</sup>(Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold.) <sup>3</sup>From the Negev, they continued traveling by stages toward Bethel, and they pitched their tents between Bethel and Ai, where they had camped before. <sup>4</sup>This was the same place where Abram had built the altar, and there he worshiped the LORD again.

<sup>5</sup>Lot, who was traveling with Abram, had also become very wealthy with flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and many tents. <sup>6</sup>But the land could not support both Abram and Lot with all their flocks and herds living so close together. <sup>7</sup>So disputes broke out between the herdsmen of

12:7 Hebrew seed.



Abram and Lot. (At that time Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land.)

<sup>8</sup>Finally Abram said to Lot, “Let’s not allow this conflict to come between us or our herds-men. After all, we are close relatives!<sup>9</sup>The whole countryside is open to you. Take your choice of any section of the land you want, and we will separate. If you want the land to the left, then I’ll take the land on the right. If you prefer the land on the right, then I’ll go to the left.”

<sup>10</sup>Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the LORD or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) <sup>11</sup>Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram. <sup>12</sup>So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. <sup>13</sup>But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>After Lot had gone, the LORD said to Abram, “Look as far as you can see in every direction—north and south, east and west. <sup>15</sup>I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants\* as a permanent possession. <sup>16</sup>And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! <sup>17</sup>Go and walk through the land in every direction, for I am giving it to you.”

<sup>18</sup>So Abram moved his camp to Hebron and settled near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. There he built another altar to the LORD.

#### **Abram Rescues Lot • GENESIS 14:1-16**

<sup>1</sup>About this time war broke out in the region. King Amraphel of Babylonia,\* King Arioch of Ellasar, King Kedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim <sup>2</sup>fought against King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (also called Zoar).

<sup>3</sup>This second group of kings joined forces in Siddim Valley (that is, the valley of the Dead Sea\*). <sup>4</sup>For twelve years they had been subject to King Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled against him.

<sup>5</sup>One year later Kedorlaomer and his allies arrived and defeated the Rephaites at Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzites at Ham, the Emitees at Shaveh-kiriathaim, <sup>6</sup>and the Horites at Mount

Seir, as far as El-paran at the edge of the wilderness. <sup>7</sup>Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (now called Kadesh) and conquered all the territory of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites living in Hazazon-tamar.

<sup>8</sup>Then the rebel kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela (also called Zoar) prepared for battle in the valley of the Dead Sea.\* <sup>9</sup>They fought against King Kedorlaomer of Elam, King Tidal of Goiim, King Amraphel of Babylonia, and King Arioch of Ellasar—four kings against five. <sup>10</sup>As it happened, the valley of the Dead Sea was filled with tar pits. And as the army of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into the tar pits, while the rest escaped into the mountains. <sup>11</sup>The victorious invaders then plundered Sodom and Gomorrah and headed for home, taking with them all the spoils of war and the food supplies. <sup>12</sup>They also captured Lot—Abram’s nephew who lived in Sodom—and carried off everything he owned.

<sup>13</sup>But one of Lot’s men escaped and reported everything to Abram the Hebrew, who was living near the oak grove belonging to Mamre the Amorite. Mamre and his relatives, Eshcol and Aner, were Abram’s allies.

<sup>14</sup>When Abram heard that his nephew Lot had been captured, he mobilized the 318 trained men who had been born into his household. Then he pursued Kedorlaomer’s army until he caught up with them at Dan. <sup>15</sup>There he divided his men and attacked during the night. Kedorlaomer’s army fled, but Abram chased them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. <sup>16</sup>Abram recovered all the goods that had been taken, and he brought back his nephew Lot with his possessions and all the women and other captives.

#### **Melchizedek Blesses Abram • GENESIS 14:17-24**

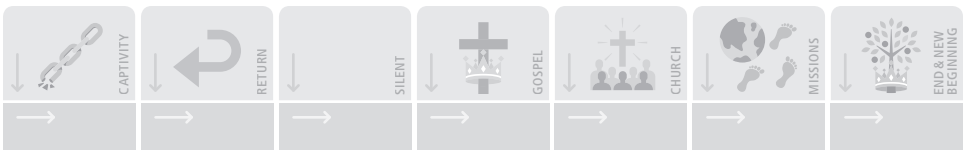
<sup>17</sup>After Abram returned from his victory over Kedorlaomer and all his allies, the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley).

<sup>18</sup>And Melchizedek, the king of Salem and a priest of God Most High,\* brought Abram some bread and wine. <sup>19</sup>Melchizedek blessed Abram with this blessing:

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,  
Creator of heaven and earth.

<sup>20</sup> And blessed be God Most High,  
who has defeated your enemies for you.”

13:15 Hebrew *seed*; also in 13:16. 14:1 Hebrew *Shinar*; also in 14:9. 14:3 Hebrew *Salt Sea*. 14:8 Hebrew *Siddim Valley* (see 14:3); also in 14:10. 14:18 Hebrew *El-Elyon*; also in 14:19, 20, 22.



Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods he had recovered.

<sup>21</sup>The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give back my people who were captured. But you may keep for yourself all the goods you have recovered."

<sup>22</sup>Abram replied to the king of Sodom, "I solemnly swear to the LORD, God Most High, Creator

of heaven and earth,<sup>23</sup> that I will not take so much as a single thread or sandal thong from what belongs to you. Otherwise you might say, 'I am the one who made Abram rich.' <sup>24</sup>I will accept only what my young warriors have already eaten, and I request that you give a fair share of the goods to my allies—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre."

DAILY DISCOVERY

- What does the tower of Babel story reveal about human nature? How does God judge those involved, and why is this judgment fitting?
- How does Abram respond to God's call, and how does his response challenge all believers to follow the Lord?
- When Abram and Lot separate, how does Lot choose where he will live? Where else in the biblical story so far have people made decisions based only on what they saw?

Day 5 • JANUARY 5

The God who revealed himself to Abram is also the God of the Israelites, the people descended from Abram. Critical moments in Abram's life would instruct them and build their faith. In fact, the Israelites' identity and purpose are bound to God's promises to Abram. God keeps the promises that He makes, including His promise to liberate His people from slavery in Egypt (Genesis 15:13-14).

God makes a covenant (a binding agreement based on God's character and promises) with Abram, promising innumerable descendants who would make a great nation and live in the land that God gives them (Genesis 15). God later reaffirms His promises to Abram by giving him a new name and a physical mark (circumcision) that would perpetually serve as a sign of the covenant (Genesis 17). This repeated covenant with Abram establishes the identity of God's people: They would enjoy a special relationship with God and have a unique role in His redemption of the world.

The LORD's Covenant with Abram •

GENESIS 15:1-21

<sup>1</sup>Some time later, the LORD spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, "Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great."

<sup>2</sup>But Abram replied, "O Sovereign LORD, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? Since you've given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. <sup>3</sup>You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir."

<sup>4</sup>Then the LORD said to him, "No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own who will be your heir." <sup>5</sup>Then the LORD took Abram outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!"

<sup>6</sup>And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith.

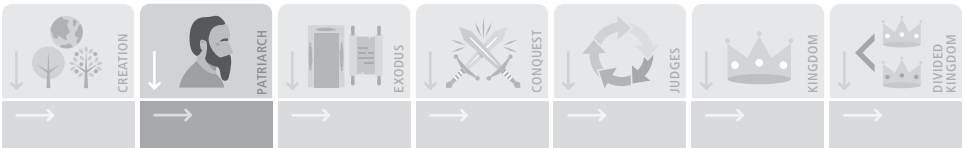
<sup>7</sup>Then the LORD told him, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as your possession."

<sup>8</sup>But Abram replied, "O Sovereign LORD, how can I be sure that I will actually possess it?"

<sup>9</sup>The LORD told him, "Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

<sup>10</sup>So Abram presented all these to him and killed them. Then he cut each animal down the middle and laid the halves side by side; he did not, however, cut the birds in half. <sup>11</sup>Some vultures swooped down to eat the carcasses, but Abram chased them away.

<sup>12</sup>As the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a terrifying darkness came down over him. <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD said to Abram, "You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, where they will be oppressed as slaves for 400 years. <sup>14</sup>But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and in the end they will come away with great wealth. <sup>15</sup>(As for you, you will die in peace and be buried at a ripe old age.) <sup>16</sup>After four generations your descendants will return here to this land, for the sins of the Amorites do not yet warrant their destruction."



<sup>17</sup>After the sun went down and darkness fell, Abram saw a smoking firepot and a flaming torch pass between the halves of the carcasses.

<sup>18</sup>So the LORD made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt\* to the great Euphrates River—<sup>19</sup>the land now occupied by the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup>Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, <sup>21</sup>Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites."

***The Birth of Ishmael* • GENESIS 16:1-16 / 2080 or 1914 BC**

<sup>1</sup>Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar. <sup>2</sup>So Sarai said to Abram, "The LORD has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her." And Abram agreed with Sarai's proposal. <sup>3</sup>So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.)

<sup>4</sup>So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt. <sup>5</sup>Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The LORD will show who's wrong—you or me!"

<sup>6</sup>Abram replied, "Look, she is your servant, so deal with her as you see fit." Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away.

<sup>7</sup>The angel of the LORD found Hagar beside a spring of water in the wilderness, along the road to Shur. <sup>8</sup>The angel said to her, "Hagar, Sarai's servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

"I'm running away from my mistress, Sarai," she replied.

<sup>9</sup>The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority."

<sup>10</sup>Then he added, "I will give you more descendants than you can count."

<sup>11</sup>And the angel also said, "You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son. You are to name him Ishmael (which means 'God hears'), for the LORD has heard your cry of distress. <sup>12</sup>This son of yours will be a wild man, as untamed as a wild donkey! He will raise his fist against everyone, and everyone will be against him. Yes, he will live in open hostility against all his relatives."

<sup>13</sup>Thereafter, Hagar used another name to refer

to the LORD, who had spoken to her. She said, "You are the God who sees me."\* She also said, "Have I truly seen the One who sees me?" <sup>14</sup>So that well was named Beer-lahai-roi (which means "well of the Living One who sees me"). It can still be found between Kadesh and Bered.

<sup>15</sup>So Hagar gave Abram a son, and Abram named him Ishmael. <sup>16</sup>Abram was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born.

***Abram Is Named Abraham* • GENESIS 17:1-8 / 2067 or 1901 BC**

<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am El-Shaddai—'God Almighty.' Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life. <sup>2</sup>I will make a covenant with you, by which I will guarantee to give you countless descendants."

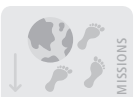
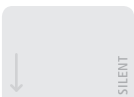
<sup>3</sup>At this, Abram fell face down on the ground. Then God said to him, <sup>4</sup>"This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations! <sup>5</sup>What's more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham,\* for you will be the father of many nations. <sup>6</sup>I will make you extremely fruitful. Your descendants will become many nations, and kings will be among them!"

<sup>7</sup>"I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants\* after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you. <sup>8</sup>And I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants. It will be their possession forever, and I will be their God."

***The Sign of Circumcision* • GENESIS 17:9-14**

<sup>9</sup>Then God said to Abraham, "Your responsibility is to obey the terms of the covenant. You and all your descendants have this continual responsibility. <sup>10</sup>This is the covenant that you and your descendants must keep: Each male among you must be circumcised. <sup>11</sup>You must cut off the flesh of your foreskin as a sign of the covenant between me and you. <sup>12</sup>From generation to generation, every male child must be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. This applies not only to members of your family but also to the servants born in your household and the foreign-born servants whom you have purchased. <sup>13</sup>All must be circumcised. Your bodies will bear the mark of my everlasting covenant. <sup>14</sup>Any male who fails to

<sup>15:18</sup> Hebrew *the river of Egypt*, referring either to an eastern branch of the Nile River or to the Brook of Egypt in the Sinai (see Num 34:5). <sup>16:13</sup> Hebrew *El-roi*. <sup>17:5</sup> *Abram* means "exalted father"; *Abraham* sounds like a Hebrew term that means "father of many." <sup>17:7</sup> Hebrew *seed*; also in 17:7b, 8, 9, 10, 19.





be circumcised will be cut off from the covenant family for breaking the covenant.”

**Sarai Is Named Sarah • GENESIS 17:15-27**

<sup>15</sup>Then God said to Abraham, “Regarding Sarai, your wife—her name will no longer be Sarai. From now on her name will be Sarah.” <sup>16</sup>And I will bless her and give you a son from her! Yes, I will bless her richly, and she will become the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will be among her descendants.”

<sup>17</sup>Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but he laughed to himself in disbelief. “How could I become a father at the age of 100?” he thought. “And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?” <sup>18</sup>So Abraham said to God, “May Ishmael live under your special blessing!”

<sup>19</sup>But God replied, “No—Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac,\* and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant.

<sup>20</sup>As for Ishmael, I will bless him also, just as you have asked. I will make him extremely fruitful and multiply his descendants. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. <sup>21</sup>But my covenant will be confirmed with Isaac, who will be born to you and Sarah about this time next year.” <sup>22</sup>When God had finished speaking, he left Abraham.

<sup>23</sup>On that very day Abraham took his son, Ishmael, and every male in his household, including those born there and those he had bought. Then he circumcised them, cutting off their foreskins, just as God had told him. <sup>24</sup>Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, <sup>25</sup>and Ishmael, his son, was thirteen. <sup>26</sup>Both Abraham and his son, Ishmael, were circumcised on that same day, <sup>27</sup>along with all the other men and boys of the household, whether they were born there or bought as servants. All were circumcised with him.

**DAILY DISCOVERY**

- How does Abram struggle with God’s promises, and what do his struggles teach us about those whom God calls? How does God answer Abram’s struggles, and what does this response teach us about God?
- How does the story of Hagar reveal both Abram’s and Sarai’s unbelief? What are the relational consequences of Abram’s and Sarai’s choice?
- How long does it take Abraham to obey the command regarding circumcision? Why do believers sometimes delay obeying God?

**Day 6 • JANUARY 6**

God would certainly act on His promises, but Abraham and Sarah would have to continue waiting. The Lord’s announcement of judgment on Sodom (where Abraham’s nephew Lot lives) provides Abraham an opportunity to practice intercession, and God rescues Lot in answer to Abraham’s prayer. The story of Sodom and Gomorrah demonstrates to the Israelites the danger of living among the wicked, God’s certain judgment of evil, and the origins of the Moabites and Ammonites.

Abraham struggles to trust God while living as a foreigner in Gerar. He deceives Abimelech regarding Sarah’s relationship to him, and she is taken to Abimelech’s palace. God interrupts Abimelech’s intentions and rescues Sarah. Abraham then prays that God would do for Abimelech and his family what He has yet to do for Abraham and Sarah—give them children. Soon afterward, the Lord opens Sarah’s womb, and Sarah gives birth to Isaac.

God shows Abraham—and the later Israelites—His faithfulness to fulfill His promises despite Abraham’s sins.

**A Son Promised to Sarah • GENESIS 18:1-15 /**

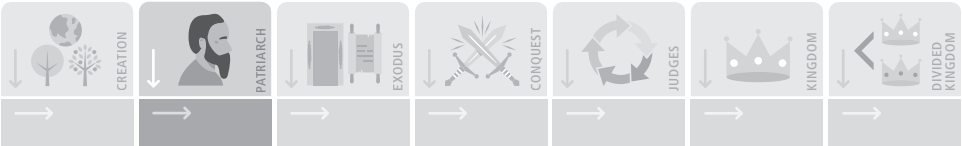
2067 or 1901 BC

<sup>1</sup>The LORD appeared again to Abraham near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. One day Abraham was sitting at the entrance to his tent during the hottest part of the day. <sup>2</sup>He looked up and noticed three men standing nearby. When he

saw them, he ran to meet them and welcomed them, bowing low to the ground.

<sup>3</sup>“My lord,” he said, “if it pleases you, stop here for a while. <sup>4</sup>Rest in the shade of this tree while water is brought to wash your feet. <sup>5</sup>And since

17:15 Sarai and Sarah both mean “princess”; the change in spelling may reflect the difference in dialect between Ur and Canaan.  
17:19 Isaac means “he laughs.”



you've honored your servant with this visit, let me prepare some food to refresh you before you continue on your journey."

"All right," they said. "Do as you have said."

<sup>6</sup>So Abraham ran back to the tent and said to Sarah, "Hurry! Get three large measures\* of your best flour, knead it into dough, and bake some bread." <sup>7</sup>Then Abraham ran out to the herd and chose a tender calf and gave it to his servant, who quickly prepared it. <sup>8</sup>When the food was ready, Abraham took some yogurt and milk and the roasted meat, and he served it to the men. As they ate, Abraham waited on them in the shade of the trees.

<sup>9</sup>"Where is Sarah, your wife?" the visitors asked.

"She's inside the tent," Abraham replied.

<sup>10</sup>Then one of them said, "I will return to you about this time next year, and your wife, Sarah, will have a son!"

Sarah was listening to this conversation from the tent. <sup>11</sup>Abraham and Sarah were both very old by this time, and Sarah was long past the age of having children. <sup>12</sup>So she laughed silently to herself and said, "How could a worn-out woman like me enjoy such pleasure, especially when my master—my husband—is also so old?"

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh? Why did she say, 'Can an old woman like me have a baby?' <sup>14</sup>Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son."

<sup>15</sup>Sarah was afraid, so she denied it, saying, "I didn't laugh."

But the LORD said, "No, you did laugh."

### ***Abraham Intercedes for Sodom •***

GENESIS 18:16-33

<sup>16</sup>Then the men got up from their meal and looked out toward Sodom. As they left, Abraham went with them to send them on their way.

<sup>17</sup>"Should I hide my plan from Abraham?" the LORD asked. <sup>18</sup>"For Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him. <sup>19</sup>I have singled him out so that he will direct his sons and their families to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just. Then I will do for Abraham all that I have promised."

<sup>20</sup>So the LORD told Abraham, "I have heard a great outcry from Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sin is so flagrant. <sup>21</sup>I am going down to see if their actions are as wicked as I have heard. If not, I want to know."

<sup>22</sup>The other men turned and headed toward Sodom, but the LORD remained with Abraham.

<sup>23</sup>Abraham approached him and said, "Will you sweep away both the righteous and the wicked?"

<sup>24</sup>Suppose you find fifty righteous people living there in the city—will you still sweep it away and not spare it for their sakes? <sup>25</sup>Surely you wouldn't do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked. Why, you would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely you wouldn't do that! Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?"

<sup>26</sup>And the LORD replied, "If I find fifty righteous people in Sodom, I will spare the entire city for their sake."

<sup>27</sup>Then Abraham spoke again. "Since I have begun, let me speak further to my Lord, even though I am but dust and ashes. <sup>28</sup>Suppose there are only forty-five righteous people rather than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?"

And the LORD said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five righteous people there."

<sup>29</sup>Then Abraham pressed his request further. "Suppose there are only forty?"

And the LORD replied, "I will not destroy it for the sake of the forty."

<sup>30</sup>"Please don't be angry, my Lord," Abraham pleaded. "Let me speak—suppose only thirty righteous people are found?"

And the LORD replied, "I will not destroy it if I find thirty."

<sup>31</sup>Then Abraham said, "Since I have dared to speak to the Lord, let me continue—suppose there are only twenty?"

And the LORD replied, "Then I will not destroy it for the sake of the twenty."

<sup>32</sup>Finally, Abraham said, "Lord, please don't be angry with me if I speak one more time. Suppose only ten are found there?"

And the LORD replied, "Then I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten."

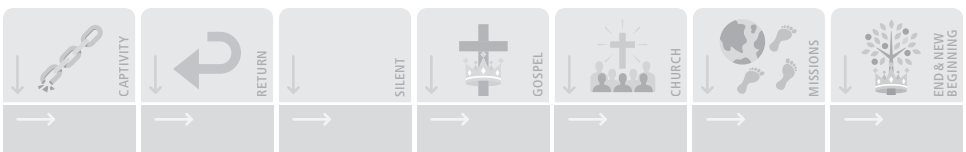
<sup>33</sup>When the LORD had finished his conversation with Abraham, he went on his way, and Abraham returned to his tent.

### ***Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed •***

GENESIS 19:1-29

<sup>1</sup>That evening the two angels came to the entrance of the city of Sodom. Lot was sitting there, and when he saw them, he stood up to meet them. Then he welcomed them and bowed with his face to the ground. <sup>2</sup>"My lords," he said,

18:6 Hebrew 3 *seahs*, about half a bushel or 22 liters.



"come to my home to wash your feet, and be my guests for the night. You may then get up early in the morning and be on your way again."

"Oh no," they replied. "We'll just spend the night out here in the city square."

<sup>3</sup>But Lot insisted, so at last they went home with him. Lot prepared a feast for them, complete with fresh bread made without yeast, and they ate. <sup>4</sup>But before they retired for the night, all the men of Sodom, young and old, came from all over the city and surrounded the house. <sup>5</sup>They shouted to Lot, "Where are the men who came to spend the night with you? Bring them out to us so we can have sex with them!"

<sup>6</sup>So Lot stepped outside to talk to them, shutting the door behind him. <sup>7</sup>"Please, my brothers," he begged, "don't do such a wicked thing. <sup>8</sup>Look, I have two virgin daughters. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do with them as you wish. But please, leave these men alone, for they are my guests and are under my protection."

<sup>9</sup>"Stand back!" they shouted. "This fellow came to town as an outsider, and now he's acting like our judge! We'll treat you far worse than those other men!" And they lunged toward Lot to break down the door.

<sup>10</sup>But the two angels\* reached out, pulled Lot into the house, and bolted the door. <sup>11</sup>Then they blinded all the men, young and old, who were at the door of the house, so they gave up trying to get inside.

<sup>12</sup>Meanwhile, the angels questioned Lot. "Do you have any other relatives here in the city?" they asked. "Get them out of this place—your sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone else. <sup>13</sup>For we are about to destroy this city completely. The outcry against this place is so great it has reached the LORD, and he has sent us to destroy it."

<sup>14</sup>So Lot rushed out to tell his daughters' fiancés, "Quick, get out of the city! The LORD is about to destroy it." But the young men thought he was only joking.

<sup>15</sup>At dawn the next morning the angels became insistent. "Hurry," they said to Lot. "Take your wife and your two daughters who are here. Get out right now, or you will be swept away in the destruction of the city!"

<sup>16</sup>When Lot still hesitated, the angels seized his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters and rushed them to safety outside the city, for the LORD was merciful. <sup>17</sup>When they were safely out of the city, one of the angels ordered, "Run for your lives! And don't look back

or stop anywhere in the valley! Escape to the mountains, or you will be swept away!"

<sup>18</sup>"Oh no, my lord!" Lot begged. <sup>19</sup>"You have been so gracious to me and saved my life, and you have shown such great kindness. But I cannot go to the mountains. Disaster would catch up to me there, and I would soon die. <sup>20</sup>See, there is a small village nearby. Please let me go there instead; don't you see how small it is? Then my life will be saved."

<sup>21</sup>"All right," the angel said, "I will grant your request. I will not destroy the little village. <sup>22</sup>But hurry! Escape to it, for I can do nothing until you arrive there." (This explains why that village was known as Zoar, which means "little place.")

<sup>23</sup>Lot reached the village just as the sun was rising over the horizon. <sup>24</sup>Then the LORD rained down fire and burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah. <sup>25</sup>He utterly destroyed them, along with the other cities and villages of the plain, wiping out all the people and every bit of vegetation. <sup>26</sup>But Lot's wife looked back as she was following behind him, and she turned into a pillar of salt.

<sup>27</sup>Abraham got up early that morning and hurried out to the place where he had stood in the LORD's presence. <sup>28</sup>He looked out across the plain toward Sodom and Gomorrah and watched as columns of smoke rose from the cities like smoke from a furnace.

<sup>29</sup>But God had listened to Abraham's request and kept Lot safe, removing him from the disaster that engulfed the cities on the plain.

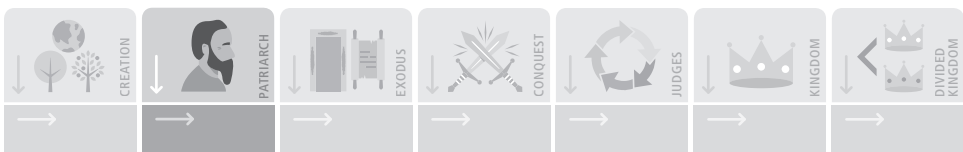
### Lot and His Daughters • GENESIS 19:30-38

<sup>30</sup>Afterward Lot left Zoar because he was afraid of the people there, and he went to live in a cave in the mountains with his two daughters. <sup>31</sup>One day the older daughter said to her sister, "There are no men left anywhere in this entire area, so we can't get married like everyone else. And our father will soon be too old to have children. <sup>32</sup>Come, let's get him drunk with wine, and then we will have sex with him. That way we will preserve our family line through our father."

<sup>33</sup>So that night they got him drunk with wine, and the older daughter went in and had intercourse with her father. He was unaware of her lying down or getting up again.

<sup>34</sup>The next morning the older daughter said to her younger sister, "I had sex with our father last night. Let's get him drunk with wine again tonight, and you go in and have sex with him. That way we will preserve our family line

19:10 Hebrew *men*; also in 19:12, 16.





through our father.”<sup>35</sup> So that night they got him drunk with wine again, and the younger daughter went in and had intercourse with him. As before, he was unaware of her lying down or getting up again.

<sup>36</sup>As a result, both of Lot’s daughters became pregnant by their own father. <sup>37</sup>When the older daughter gave birth to a son, she named him Moab.\* He became the ancestor of the nation now known as the Moabites. <sup>38</sup>When the younger daughter gave birth to a son, she named him Ben-ammi.\* He became the ancestor of the nation now known as the Ammonites.

#### **Abraham Deceives Abimelech • GENESIS 20:1-18**

<sup>1</sup>Abraham moved south to the Negev and lived for a while between Kadesh and Shur, and then he moved on to Gerar. While living there as a foreigner, <sup>2</sup>Abraham introduced his wife, Sarah, by saying, “She is my sister.” So King Abimelech of Gerar sent for Sarah and had her brought to him at his palace.

<sup>3</sup>But that night God came to Abimelech in a dream and told him, “You are a dead man, for that woman you have taken is already married!”

<sup>4</sup>But Abimelech had not slept with her yet, so he said, “Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation? <sup>5</sup>Didn’t Abraham tell me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘Yes, he is my brother.’ I acted in complete innocence! My hands are clean.”

<sup>6</sup>In the dream God responded, “Yes, I know you are innocent. That’s why I kept you from sinning against me, and why I did not let you touch her. <sup>7</sup>Now return the woman to her husband, and he will pray for you, for he is a prophet. Then you will live. But if you don’t return her to him, you can be sure that you and all your people will die.”

<sup>8</sup>Abimelech got up early the next morning and quickly called all his servants together. When he told them what had happened, his men were terrified. <sup>9</sup>Then Abimelech called for Abraham. “What have you done to us?” he demanded. “What crime have I committed that deserves treatment like this, making me and my

kingdom guilty of this great sin? No one should ever do what you have done! <sup>10</sup>Whatever possessed you to do such a thing?”

<sup>11</sup>Abraham replied, “I thought, ‘This is a godless place. They will want my wife and will kill me to get her.’ <sup>12</sup>And she really is my sister, for we both have the same father, but different mothers. And I married her. <sup>13</sup>When God called me to leave my father’s home and to travel from place to place, I told her, ‘Do me a favor. Wherever we go, tell the people that I am your brother.’”

<sup>14</sup>Then Abimelech took some of his sheep and goats, cattle, and male and female servants, and he presented them to Abraham. He also returned his wife, Sarah, to him. <sup>15</sup>Then Abimelech said, “Look over my land and choose any place where you would like to live.” <sup>16</sup>And he said to Sarah, “Look, I am giving your ‘brother’ 1,000 pieces of silver\* in the presence of all these witnesses. This is to compensate you for any wrong I may have done to you. This will settle any claim against me, and your reputation is cleared.”

<sup>17</sup>Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants, so they could have children. <sup>18</sup>For the LORD had caused all the women to be infertile because of what happened with Abraham’s wife, Sarah.

#### **The Birth of Isaac • GENESIS 21:1-7 / 2066 or 1900 BC**

<sup>1</sup>The LORD kept his word and did for Sarah exactly what he had promised. <sup>2</sup>She became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. This happened at just the time God had said it would. <sup>3</sup>And Abraham named their son Isaac. <sup>4</sup>Eight days after Isaac was born, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. <sup>5</sup>Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born.

<sup>6</sup>And Sarah declared, “God has brought me laughter.\* All who hear about this will laugh with me. <sup>7</sup>Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse a baby? Yet I have given Abraham a son in his old age!”

19:37 Moab sounds like a Hebrew term that means “from father.”  
19:38 Ben-ammi means “son of my kinsman.” 20:16 Hebrew 1,000 [shekels] of silver, about 25 pounds or 11.4 kilograms in weight.  
21:6 The name Isaac means “he laughs.”

#### **DAILY DISCOVERY**

- Why does Sarah laugh at God’s promise, and what does God’s fulfillment reveal about His power and His promises?
- What does Lot lose when God judges Sodom? What does Lot’s life teach us about compromise?
- What does the twenty-five-year waiting period between promise and fulfillment show us about God’s timing and the nature of faith?

