



TEEN STUDY BIBLE



**TEEN
STUDY
BIBLE**

**LOVING GOD WITH YOUR
HEAD, HEART & HANDS**

English Standard Version



CROSSWAY

WHEATON, ILLINOIS - ESV.ORG

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE ESV TEEN STUDY BIBLE

Welcome to the *ESV Teen Study Bible*! This study Bible has been intentionally developed for you—teenagers—to help you dig into the riches of God’s Word with faith and understanding as you continue to grow to serve and worship Jesus Christ. There is simply no substitute for regular reading and study of God’s Word. The Bible is God’s speaking to us; as his people, we need to listen, seek to understand, and learn to obey our gracious and good God. Bible reading is not meant to be boring, tedious, or just a spiritual ritual or chore; it is a worshipful and joyful experience of hearing from the God who has saved us from our sin through the work of his Son and now indwells us through the Holy Spirit. We want you to read the Bible—and, as you do, to fall more in love with your Savior God who speaks to you through his Word!

While the most important thing you can do is to ready the Bible *itself*, we have included some resources in this particular study Bible that we think will be helpful for you as you grow in understanding and knowledge of the Scriptures. These resources are intended to impact your entire life—your head (doctrine), your heart (reflection), and your hands (application). After all, God’s Word is to transform every aspect of our being. It directs what we are to know and believe about God—our heads. It reorients our emotions, our passions, our love for God—our hearts. And it directs how we are to live out our faith each and every day—our hands.

Reflections

The 365 reflections spaced throughout this study Bible move sequentially through the storyline of the Bible, covering key passages along the way. Each reflection, indicated by a heart, is around a page in length and is linked to a key passage of Scripture. You can choose to read some of these along the way for additional information, or you can read one each day as part of a devotional plan that will take you through the whole storyline of the Bible in one year. If you choose that path, you will read one key passage of the Bible a day for a year, going from Genesis to Revelation in 365 days (covering key chapters but not every chapter of Scripture). To follow this plan, see the Reflections Reading Plan included on page ix. We hope they will be a great tool for helping you dive into God’s Word daily.

Application Sidebars

You will discover regular sidebars in this study Bible that are designed to help you think through the ways in which a certain passage or biblical theme applies to your life. There are 150 of these sidebars interspersed throughout the biblical text, indicated by an open hand. As we study God’s Word, we certainly want to be learning the *truths* it teaches us—truths about God, our world, and human beings. But we also must be stopping to ask, “How does this truth affect the way I think, speak, and act?” Being a good student of the Bible involves learning God’s truth *and* applying it obediently to our lives as we follow Jesus; these sidebars are meant to equip you in this discipline of obedience.

Doctrine Sidebars

God’s Word comes to us in a variety of literary forms and genres: stories, poetry, visions, letters, and even songs. The Bible is not a set of definitions, and it does not read like a theology textbook! So, as we come to develop our understanding of theology, or *doctrine*, it is often helpful to think through a certain theme or concept a little more intentionally and systematically. Fifty sidebars in this study Bible, indicated by the outline of a human head, are designed to help you dig deeply for a few moments into a truth about God, sin, human beings, or salvation, with the intent of helping you understand that concept more clearly. These theological themes will often emerge in a passage of Scripture found near the sidebars’ placement in the study Bible, and so you will have an opportunity to learn the theological truth and see the way it is developed, explained, or identified in the passage you are reading and studying.

Articles on Key Topics

In the back of this study Bible you will find fourteen articles written by pastors, theologians, and Christian authors—five related to big-picture issues and truths in the Christian life and nine related more directly to issues you may be wrestling through during your teenage years. The authors of these articles have sought to apply the truths of God’s Word carefully and clearly to these matters, helping to guide you in the way you think about issues of sexuality, relationships, identity, and more. We know this list is not exhaustive! But we hope these articles will be helpful resources that

demonstrate the applicability of God's Word to the issues you face in your everyday life.

As you make use of this *ESV Teen Study Bible*, our hope is that you engage God's Word humbly, prayerfully, and thankfully. Engage it humbly: you are hearing from the holy and Almighty God who created you!

Engage it prayerfully: ask God to teach and instruct you in his ways by the power of the Holy Spirit. Engage it thankfully: the mighty creator of the universe has chosen to speak to you, sharing his merciful news of salvation through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ.

REFLECTIONS READING PLAN

As mentioned in the Introduction, these 365 reflections, and the key passages they focus on, make for a great daily reading plan that covers many key chapters of the Bible. Use this resource to keep track of your progress throughout the year. May God bless you as you dive deep into his Word.

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<input type="checkbox"/> 234	6	For the Praise of His Glorious Name	1326
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<input type="checkbox"/> 235	1:1–2:13	Prophesying through Actions and Words	1343
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<input type="checkbox"/> 255	17:1–13	The Transfiguration	1513
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Mark			
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<input type="checkbox"/> 263	5:1–20	Changed by Mighty Jesus	1550
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<input type="checkbox"/> 266	13	Be Ready!	1568
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<input type="checkbox"/> 275	3:1–21	Born Again	1640
<input type="checkbox"/> 276	8:12–59	Jesus and the Pharisees	1649
<input type="checkbox"/> 277	11:1–44	The Resurrection and the Life	1656
<input type="checkbox"/> 278	13:1–20	We Serve Because He Served	1660
<input type="checkbox"/> 279	14	The Way, the Truth, and the Life	1663
<input type="checkbox"/> 280	15:1–11	Abide in Jesus	1664
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<input type="checkbox"/> 287	2:1–13	Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit	1685
<input type="checkbox"/> 288	2:14–41	Peter Points to Jesus at Pentecost	1688
<input type="checkbox"/> 289	2:42–47	The Early Church	1690
<input type="checkbox"/> 290	5:1–11	From the Inside Out	1693
<input type="checkbox"/> 291	7	Stephen's Speech	1698
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Day	Reference	Title	Page
Acts			
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<input type="checkbox"/> 294	10	Full Inclusion for Gentiles	1707
<input type="checkbox"/> 295	13:13–52	First Gospel Missionaries	1712
<input type="checkbox"/> 296	15:1–21	Faith Alone in Christ Alone	1715
<input type="checkbox"/> 297	17:16–34	Paul in Athens	1721
<input type="checkbox"/> 298	20:17–38	Rooted and Bearing Fruit	1727
<input type="checkbox"/> 299	26	The Whole Gospel Brings Radical Change	1735
<input type="checkbox"/> 300	28:11–31	The End of Acts	1739
Romans			
<input type="checkbox"/> 301	1:1–17	Not Ashamed of the Gospel	1746
<input type="checkbox"/> 302	1:18–32	The Wrath of God	1748
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<input type="checkbox"/> 304	5:12–21	Jesus, the New and Better Adam	1755
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<input type="checkbox"/> 308	12:1–2	Jesus Wants All of You	1768
1 Corinthians			
<input type="checkbox"/> 309	1	Church Disunity	1779
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Galatians			
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Ephesians			
<input type="checkbox"/> 321	1:1–14	Every Spiritual Blessing	1838
<input type="checkbox"/> 322	2:1–10	A Miracle of Grace	1841
Philippians			
<input type="checkbox"/> 323	1	To Live Is Christ	1853
<input type="checkbox"/> 324	2:1–11	The Mind of Christ	1855
Colossians			
<input type="checkbox"/> 325	1:15–23	The Supremacy and Sufficiency of Jesus	1863
<input type="checkbox"/> 326	3:1–17	Christian Clothing	1867
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2 Thessalonians			
<input type="checkbox"/> 328	3:6–15	A Contradiction in Terms	1882
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<input type="checkbox"/> 329	1:1–11	Spiritual Mentors	1887
<input type="checkbox"/> 330	3:1–13	Godly Leaders	1890
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Day	Reference	Title	Page	
2 Timothy				
<input type="checkbox"/>	332	1	Hold Fast to the Gospel	1898
<input type="checkbox"/>	333	4:1–5	The Gift of Good Pastors	1902
Titus				
<input type="checkbox"/>	334	2	Spiritual Training	1910
Philemon				
<input type="checkbox"/>	335	Philemon	Countercultural Reconciliation	1915
Hebrews				
<input type="checkbox"/>	336	1	Jesus Is Better!	1921
<input type="checkbox"/>	337	4:14–5:10	Jesus, Our Perfect Priest	1925
<input type="checkbox"/>	338	8	Blood Sacrifice	1930
<input type="checkbox"/>	339	9	Once for All	1932
<input type="checkbox"/>	340	11	The Hall of Faith	1937
<input type="checkbox"/>	341	12:1–2	Responding to Jesus	1939
James				
<input type="checkbox"/>	342	2:14–26	Faith That Works	1949
<input type="checkbox"/>	343	3:1–12	More Dangerous Than Sticks and Stones	1950
1 Peter				
<input type="checkbox"/>	344	1	Hope and Holiness amid Exile	1960
<input type="checkbox"/>	345	4:12–19	Christian Suffering	1965
2 Peter				
<input type="checkbox"/>	346	1:1–15	Make Every Effort	1970
<input type="checkbox"/>	347	1:16–21	Eyewitness and a Better Witness	1972
<input type="checkbox"/>	348	3:1–13	It's Not Science Fiction	1975
1 John				
<input type="checkbox"/>	349	1:1–2:6	Walk in the Light	1982
<input type="checkbox"/>	350	3:11–24	How Do I Know That I Am Saved?	1985
2 John				
<input type="checkbox"/>	351	2 John	Deceivers and True Believers	1990
3 John				
<input type="checkbox"/>	352	3 John	Gaius and Diotrefes	1993
Jude				
<input type="checkbox"/>	353	Jude	Stay in the Love of God	2000
Revelation				
<input type="checkbox"/>	354	1:1–3	The Beginning of the End	2005
<input type="checkbox"/>	355	1:4–20	Jesus Speaks	2007
<input type="checkbox"/>	356	3:1–13	Great in Jesus' Eyes	2011
<input type="checkbox"/>	357	3:14–22	A Strong, Fierce Jesus	2012
<input type="checkbox"/>	358	4	Into the Throne Room of God	2014
<input type="checkbox"/>	359	7	A Great Multitude	2018
<input type="checkbox"/>	360	12	Jesus Will Win	2023
<input type="checkbox"/>	361	14	The Only Categories That Matter	2027
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<input type="checkbox"/>	363	20	Lake of Fire and Book of Life	2035
<input type="checkbox"/>	364	21	Will You Be There?	2037
<input type="checkbox"/>	365	22	Amen!	2039

ABBREVIATIONS

GENERAL

AD	.....	<i>anno Domini</i> (year of our Lord)	Hb.	.....	Hebrew
BC	.....	before Christ	i.e.	.....	that is
c.	.....	about, approximately	NT	.....	New Testament
ch., chs.	.....	chapter(s)	OT	.....	Old Testament
e.g.	.....	for example	p., pp.	.....	page(s)
esp.	.....	especially	r.	.....	reigned
ESV	.....	English Standard Version	v., vv.	.....	verse(s)
etc.	.....	and so on	vs.	.....	versus
Gk.	.....	Greek			

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Genesis	.....	Gen.	Nahum	.....	Nah.
Exodus	.....	Ex.	Habakkuk	.....	Hab.
Leviticus	.....	Lev.	Zephaniah	.....	Zeph.
Numbers	.....	Num.	Haggai	.....	Hag.
Deuteronomy	.....	Deut.	Zechariah	.....	Zech.
Joshua	.....	Josh.	Malachi	.....	Mal.
Judges	.....	Judg.	Matthew	.....	Matt.
Ruth	.....	Ruth	Mark	.....	Mark
1 Samuel	.....	1 Sam.	Luke	.....	Luke
2 Samuel	.....	2 Sam.	John	.....	John
1 Kings	.....	1 Kings	Acts	.....	Acts
2 Kings	.....	2 Kings	Romans	.....	Rom.
1 Chronicles	.....	1 Chron.	1 Corinthians	.....	1 Cor.
2 Chronicles	.....	2 Chron.	2 Corinthians	.....	2 Cor.
Ezra	.....	Ezra	Galatians	.....	Gal.
Nehemiah	.....	Neh.	Ephesians	.....	Eph.
Esther	.....	Est.	Philippians	.....	Phil.
Job	.....	Job	Colossians	.....	Col.
Psalms	.....	Ps., Pss.	1 Thessalonians	.....	1 Thess.
Proverbs	.....	Prov.	2 Thessalonians	.....	2 Thess.
Ecclesiastes	.....	Eccles.	1 Timothy	.....	1 Tim.
Song of Solomon	.....	Song	2 Timothy	.....	2 Tim.
Isaiah	.....	Isa.	Titus	.....	Titus
Jeremiah	.....	Jer.	Philemon	.....	Philem.
Lamentations	.....	Lam.	Hebrews	.....	Heb.
Ezekiel	.....	Ezek.	James	.....	James
Daniel	.....	Dan.	1 Peter	.....	1 Pet.
Hosea	.....	Hos.	2 Peter	.....	2 Pet.
Joel	.....	Joel	1 John	.....	1 John
Amos	.....	Amos	2 John	.....	2 John
Obadiah	.....	Obad.	3 John	.....	3 John
Jonah	.....	Jonah	Jude	.....	Jude
Micah	.....	Mic.	Revelation	.....	Rev.

CONTRIBUTORS

GENERAL EDITOR

Jon Nielson

CROSSWAY EDITORIAL TEAM

Josh Dennis

President and CEO

Douglas Sean O'Donnell

Senior VP of Bible Publishing

Erika Allen

Director of Bible Editorial

Elliott Pinegar

Senior Bible Editor

Davis Wetherell

Bible Copyeditor

ARTICLE CONTRIBUTORS

What Is the Bible?

David Sunday

Pastor, New Covenant Bible Church, Elgin, Illinois;
President, WordPartners

The Church

Will Chester

Deacon, Church of the Resurrection, Wheaton, Illinois

Online Life and the Importance of the Church

Collin Hansen

Vice President for Content and Editor in Chief, The
Gospel Coalition

Discipleship

David Mathis

Senior Teacher and Executive Editor,
desiringGod.org; Pastor, Cities Church, Saint Paul,
Minnesota; Adjunct Professor, Bethlehem College
and Seminary

Discerning God's Will for My Life

Kevin DeYoung

Senior pastor, Christ Covenant Church, Matthews,
North Carolina; Associate Professor of Systematic
Theology, Reformed Theological Seminary,
Charlotte

Evangelism

Jeremy Treat

Pastor for preaching and vision, Reality LA, Los
Angeles; Adjunct Professor, Biola University

Relationships with Parents

Jon Nielson

Senior Pastor, Christ Presbyterian Church (PCA),
Wheaton, Illinois

Doubt

Rebecca McLaughlin

Author, *Confronting Christianity*

Anxiety, Depression, and the Bible

David Murray

Senior Pastor, First Byron Christian Reformed
Church, Byron Center, Michigan

Identity

Rosaria Butterfield

Author, *The Gospel Comes with a House Key*

Sex and Gender

Rachel Gilson

Director of Theological Development, Cru
Northeast; Author, *Born Again This Way*

Sexual Purity

Douglas Sean O'Donnell

Senior Vice President of Bible Editorial, Crossway

Dating and Marriage

Jay Thomas

Lead Pastor, Chapel Hill Bible Church, Chapel Hill,
North Carolina

Justice

Irwyn L. Ince, Jr.

Coordinator, Mission to North America (PCA)

PREFACE

TO THE ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION

The Bible

"This Book [is] the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God." With these words the Moderator of the Church of Scotland hands a Bible to the new monarch in Britain's coronation service. These words echo the King James Bible translators, who wrote in 1611, "God's sacred Word . . . is that inestimable treasure that excelleth all the riches of the earth." This assessment of the Bible is the motivating force behind the publication of the English Standard Version.

Translation Legacy

The English Standard Version (ESV) stands in the classic mainstream of English Bible translations over the past half-millennium. The fountainhead of that stream was William Tyndale's New Testament of 1526; marking its course were the King James Version of 1611 (KJV), the English Revised Version of 1885 (RV), the American Standard Version of 1901 (ASV), and the Revised Standard Version of 1952 and 1971 (RSV). In that stream, faithfulness to the text and vigorous pursuit of precision were combined with simplicity, beauty, and dignity of expression. Our goal has been to carry forward this legacy for this generation and generations to come.

To this end each word and phrase in the ESV has been carefully weighed against the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, to ensure the fullest accuracy and clarity and to avoid under-translating or overlooking any nuance of the original text. The words and phrases themselves grow out of the Tyndale–King James legacy, and most recently out of the RSV, with the 1971 RSV text providing the starting point for our work. Archaic language has been brought into line with current usage and significant corrections have been made in the translation of key texts. But throughout, our goal has been to retain the depth of meaning and enduring quality of language that have made their indelible mark on the English-speaking world and have defined the life and doctrine of its church over the last five centuries.

Translation Philosophy

The ESV is an "essentially literal" translation that seeks as far as possible to reproduce the precise wording of the original text and the personal style of each Bible

writer. As such, its emphasis is on "word-for-word" correspondence, at the same time taking full account of differences in grammar, syntax, and idiom between current literary English and the original languages. Thus it seeks to be transparent to the original text, letting the reader see as directly as possible the structure and exact force of the original.

In contrast to the ESV, some Bible versions have followed a "thought-for-thought" rather than "word-for-word" translation philosophy, emphasizing "dynamic equivalence" rather than the "essentially literal" meaning of the original. A "thought-for-thought" translation is of necessity more inclined to reflect the interpretive views of the translator and the influences of contemporary culture.

Every translation is at many points a trade-off between literal precision and readability, between "formal equivalence" in expression and "functional equivalence" in communication, and the ESV is no exception. Within this framework we have sought to be "as literal as possible" while maintaining clarity of expression and literary excellence. Therefore, to the extent that plain English permits and the meaning in each case allows, we have sought to use the same English word for important recurring words in the original; and, as far as grammar and syntax allow, we have rendered Old Testament passages cited in the New in ways that show their correspondence. Thus in each of these areas, as well as throughout the Bible as a whole, we have sought to capture all the echoes and overtones of meaning that are so abundantly present in the original texts.

As an essentially literal translation, taking into account grammar and syntax, the ESV thus seeks to carry over every possible nuance of meaning in the original words of Scripture into our own language. As such, the ESV is ideally suited for in-depth study of the Bible. Indeed, with its commitment to literary excellence, the ESV is equally well suited for public reading and preaching, for private reading and reflection, for both academic and devotional study, and for Scripture memorization.

Translation Principles and Style

The ESV also carries forward classic translation principles in its literary style. Accordingly it retains theological terminology—words such as grace, faith, justification, sanctification, redemption, regeneration,

reconciliation, propitiation—because of their central importance for Christian doctrine and also because the underlying Greek words were already becoming key words and technical terms among Christians in New Testament times.

The ESV lets the stylistic variety of the biblical writers fully express itself—from the exalted prose that opens Genesis, to the flowing narratives of the historical books, to the rich metaphors and dramatic imagery of the poetic books, to the ringing rhetoric in the prophetic books, to the smooth elegance of Luke, to the profound simplicities of John, and the closely reasoned logic of Paul.

In punctuating, paragraphing, dividing long sentences, and rendering connectives, the ESV follows the path that seems to make the ongoing flow of thought clearest in English. The biblical languages regularly connect sentences by frequent repetition of words such as “and,” “but,” and “for,” in a way that goes beyond the conventions of current literary English. Effective translation, however, requires that these links in the original be reproduced so that the flow of the argument will be transparent to the reader. We have therefore normally translated these connectives, though occasionally we have varied the rendering by using alternatives (such as “also,” “however,” “now,” “so,” “then,” or “thus”) when they better express the linkage in specific instances.

In the area of gender language, the goal of the ESV is to render literally what is in the original. For example, “anyone” replaces “any man” where there is no word corresponding to “man” in the original languages, and “people” rather than “men” is regularly used where the original languages refer to both men and women. But the words “man” and “men” are retained where a male meaning component is part of the original Greek or Hebrew. Likewise, the word “man” has been retained where the original text intends to convey a clear contrast between “God” on the one hand and “man” on the other hand, with “man” being used in the collective sense of the whole human race (see Luke 2:52). Similarly, the English word “brothers” (translating the Greek word *adelphoi*) is retained as an important familial form of address between fellow-Jews and fellow-Christians in the first century. A recurring note is included to indicate that the term “brothers” (*adelphoi*) was often used in Greek to refer to both men and women, and to indicate the specific instances in the text where this is the case. In addition, the English word “sons” (translating the Greek word *huioi*) is retained in specific instances because the underlying Greek term usually includes a male meaning component and it was used as a legal term in the adoption and inheritance laws of first-century Rome. As used by the apostle Paul, this term refers to the status of all Christians, both men and women, who, having been adopted into God’s family, now enjoy all the privileges, obligations, and inheritance rights of God’s children.

The inclusive use of the generic “he” has also regularly been retained, because this is consistent with similar usage in the original languages and because an essentially literal translation would be impossible without it.

In each case the objective has been transparency to the original text, allowing the reader to understand the original on its own terms rather than in the terms of our present-day Western culture.

The Translation of Specialized Terms

In the translation of biblical terms referring to God, the ESV takes great care to convey the specific nuances of meaning of the original Hebrew and Greek words. First, concerning terms that refer to God in the Old Testament: God, the Maker of heaven and earth, introduced himself to the people of Israel with a special personal name, the consonants for which are YHWH (see Exodus 3:14–15). Scholars call this the “Tetragrammaton,” a Greek term referring to the four Hebrew letters YHWH. The exact pronunciation of YHWH is uncertain, because the Jewish people considered the personal name of God to be so holy that it should never be spoken aloud. Instead of reading the word YHWH, therefore, they would normally read the Hebrew word *’adonay* (“Lord”), and the ancient translations into Greek, Syriac, and Aramaic also followed this practice. When the vowels of the word *’adonay* are placed with the consonants of YHWH, this results in the familiar word *Jehovah* that was used in some earlier English Bible translations. As is common among English translations today, the ESV usually renders the personal name of God (YHWH) by the word LORD (printed in small capitals). An exception to this is when the Hebrew word *’adonay* appears together with YHWH, in which case the two words are rendered together as “the Lord [in lowercase] GOD [in small capitals].” In contrast to the personal name for God (YHWH), the more general name for God in Old Testament Hebrew is *’elohim* and its related forms of *’el* or *’eloah*, all of which are normally translated “God” (in lowercase letters). The use of these different ways to translate the Hebrew words for God is especially beneficial to English readers, enabling them to see and understand the different ways that the *personal* name and the *general* name for God are both used to refer to the *One True God* of the Old Testament.

Second, in the New Testament, the Greek word *Christos* has been translated consistently as “Christ.” Although the term originally meant simply “anointed,” among Jews in New Testament times it had specifically come to designate the Messiah, the great Savior that God had promised to raise up. In other New Testament contexts, however, especially among Gentiles, *Christos* (“Christ”) was on its way to becoming a proper name. It is important, therefore, to keep the context in mind in understanding the various ways that *Christos* (“Christ”) is used in the New Testament. At the same time, in accord

with its “essentially literal” translation philosophy, the ESV has retained consistency and concordance in the translation of *Christos* (“Christ”) throughout the New Testament.

Third, a particular difficulty is presented when words in biblical Hebrew and Greek refer to ancient practices and institutions that do not correspond directly to those in the modern world. Such is the case in the translation of *‘ebed* (Hebrew) and *doulos* (Greek), terms which are often rendered “slave.” These terms, however, actually cover a range of relationships that requires a range of renderings—“slave,” “bondservant,” or “servant”—depending on the context. Further, the word “slave” currently carries associations with the often brutal and dehumanizing institution of slavery particularly in nineteenth-century America. For this reason, the ESV translation of the words *‘ebed* and *doulos* has been undertaken with particular attention to their meaning in each specific context. Thus in Old Testament times, one might enter slavery either voluntarily (e.g., to escape poverty or to pay off a debt) or involuntarily (e.g., by birth, by being captured in battle, or by judicial sentence). Protection for all in servitude in ancient Israel was provided by the Mosaic Law, including specific provisions for release from slavery. In New Testament times, a *doulos* is often best described as a “bondservant”—that is, someone in the Roman Empire officially bound under contract to serve his master for seven years (except for those in Caesar’s household in Rome who were contracted for fourteen years). When the contract expired, the person was freed, given his wage that had been saved by the master, and officially declared a freedman. The ESV usage thus seeks to express the most fitting nuance of meaning in each context. Where absolute ownership by a master is envisaged (as in Romans 6), “slave” is used; where a more limited form of servitude is in view, “bondservant” is used (as in 1 Corinthians 7:21–24); where the context indicates a wide range of freedom (as in John 4:51), “servant” is preferred. Footnotes are generally provided to identify the Hebrew or Greek and the range of meaning that these terms may carry in each case. The issues involved in translating the Greek word *doulos* apply also to the Greek word *sundoulos*, translated in the text as “fellow servant.”

Fourth, it is sometimes suggested that Bible translations should capitalize pronouns referring to deity. It has seemed best not to capitalize deity pronouns in the ESV, however, for the following reasons: first, there is nothing in the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts that corresponds to such capitalization; second, the practice of capitalizing deity pronouns in English Bible translations is a recent innovation, which began only in the mid-twentieth century; and, third, such capitalization is absent from the KJV Bible and the whole stream of Bible translations that the ESV carries forward.

A fifth specialized term, the word “behold,” usually has been retained as the most common translation for the Hebrew word *hinneh* and the Greek word *idou*. Both of these words mean something like “Pay careful attention to what follows! This is important!” Other than the word “behold,” there is no single word in English that fits well in most contexts. Although “Look!” and “See!” and “Listen!” would be workable in some contexts, in many others these words lack sufficient weight and dignity. Given the principles of “essentially literal” translation, it is important not to leave *hinneh* and *idou* completely untranslated and so to lose the intended emphasis in the original languages. The older and more formal word “behold” has usually been retained, therefore, as the best available option for conveying the original weight of meaning.

Textual Basis and Resources

The ESV is based on the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible as found in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (5th ed., 1997), and on the Greek text in the 2014 editions of the *Greek New Testament* (5th corrected ed.), published by the United Bible Societies (UBS), and *Novum Testamentum Graece* (28th ed., 2012), edited by Nestle and Aland. The currently renewed respect among Old Testament scholars for the Masoretic text is reflected in the ESV’s attempt, wherever possible, to translate difficult Hebrew passages as they stand in the Masoretic text rather than resorting to emendations or to finding an alternative reading in the ancient versions. In exceptional, difficult cases, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac Peshitta, the Latin Vulgate, and other sources were consulted to shed possible light on the text, or, if necessary, to support a divergence from the Masoretic text. Similarly, in a few difficult cases in the New Testament, the ESV has followed a Greek text different from the text given preference in the UBS/Nestle-Aland 28th edition. Throughout, the translation team has benefited greatly from the massive textual resources that have become readily available recently, from new insights into biblical laws and culture, and from current advances in Hebrew and Greek lexicography and grammatical understanding.

Textual Footnotes

The footnotes that are included in most editions of the ESV are therefore an integral part of the ESV translation, informing the reader of textual variations and difficulties and showing how these have been resolved by the ESV translation team. In addition to this, the footnotes indicate significant alternative readings and occasionally provide an explanation for technical terms or for a difficult reading in the text.

Publishing Team

The ESV publishing team has included more than a hundred people. The fourteen-member Translation Oversight Committee benefited from the work of

more than fifty biblical experts serving as Translation Review Scholars and from the comments of the more than fifty members of the Advisory Council, all of which was carried out under the auspices of the Crossway Board of Directors. This hundred-plus-member team shares a common commitment to the truth of God's Word and to historic Christian orthodoxy and is international in scope, including leaders in many denominations.

To God's Honor and Praise

We know that no Bible translation is perfect; but we also know that God uses imperfect and inadequate things to his honor and praise. So to our triune God and to his people we offer what we have done, with our prayers that it may prove useful, with gratitude for much help given, and with ongoing wonder that our God should ever have entrusted to us so momentous a task.

*Soli Deo Gloria! —To God alone be the glory!
The Translation Oversight Committee*

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

How does the Bible as a whole fit together? The events recorded in the Bible took place over a span of thousands of years and in several different cultural settings. What is their unifying thread?

One unifying thread in the Bible is its divine authorship. *Every book of the Bible is God's word.* The events recorded in the Bible are there because God wanted them to be recorded, and he had them recorded with his people and their instruction in mind: "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

God's Plan for History

God also has a *unified plan for history* (Eph. 1:10, 12). The work of Christ on earth, especially his crucifixion and resurrection, is the climax of history. It is the great turning point. The present era looks *back* on Christ's completed work but also *forward* to the consummation of his work when he will come again in the new heavens and earth.

God's Promises and Predictions

The Old Testament directly points forward to Christ through promises of God's salvation. God gave some *specific* promises in the Old Testament relating to the coming of Christ as the Messiah, the Savior in the line of David. But God often gives more *general* promises concerning a future great day of salvation, without spelling out all the details of how he will accomplish it. Sometimes the promises take *explicit* form (e.g., the coming of the Messiah), and sometimes they take *symbolic* form (e.g., the animal sacrifices). All of the OT promises find their "yes" in Jesus (2 Cor. 1:20).

God's Warnings and Curses

God's relation to people also includes warnings, threatenings, and cursings, which anticipate and point forward to Christ in two distinct ways. First, *Christ is the Lamb of God* who bore the curse of sin on the cross (John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 2:24). Every instance of the wrath of God against sin, and his punishment of sin, looks forward to the wrath that was poured out on Christ on the cross. Second, *Christ will wage war against sin and exterminate it* at his second coming. All earlier judgments against sin anticipate the final judgment.

God's Covenant Commitment and Instruction

The promises of God in the Old Testament come in the context not only of God's *commitment* to his people but also of *instruction* about the people's commitment and obligations to God. When God makes a covenant with man, God is the sovereign, so he specifies the obligations on both sides. "I will be their God" is the fundamental obligation on God's side, while "they shall be my people" is the fundamental obligation on the human side.

For example, in the first call of Abram (Gen. 12:1–2) God's commitment takes the form of promises, blessings, and curses. The *promises and blessings* point forward to Christ, who is the fulfillment of the promises and the source of final blessings. The *curses* point forward to Christ both in his bearing the curse and in his execution of judgment and curse against sin, especially at the second coming.

Christ fulfilled the *obligations* of God's covenants through perfect obedience (Heb. 5:8), receiving the reward of obedience in his resurrection and ascension (Phil. 2:9–10). By dealing with God's wrath against sin, Christ reconciled believers to God, bringing about the intimacy with God that all of the OT covenants anticipated.

Christ Is the Offspring of Abraham and the Last Adam

God's promises to Abraham were the foundation for the nation of Israel. Abraham was obligated to walk blamelessly before God (Gen. 17:1). But only Christ is without sin (Heb. 4:15), making him the ultimate offspring to whom the other offspring all point (Gal. 3:16). Through Christ, believers are united to him and thereby themselves become "Abraham's offspring" (Gal. 3:29). Believers, Jews and Gentiles alike, become heirs to the promises of God made to Abraham and his offspring (Gal. 3:28–29).

Christ is not only the offspring of Abraham, but—reaching back farther in time to an earlier promise of God—the offspring of the woman: "I will put enmity between you [the serpent] and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). The conquest over the serpent, and therefore the conquest of evil and the reversal of its effects, is to take place through the offspring of the woman. One

can trace this offspring down from Eve through Seth and his godly descendants, through Noah, and down to Abraham, where God's promise takes the specific form of offspring for Abraham. Thus Christ is not only the offspring of Abraham but the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45–49). Like Adam, he represents all who belong to him. And he reverses the effects of Adam's fall.

Shadows, Prefigures, and "Types" of Christ

The Old Testament anticipates Christ the Savior by "shadows" and "types"—examples, symbols, pictures—of the things that were to come (see 1 Cor. 10:6, 11; Heb. 8:5). *Animal sacrifices* in the Old Testament prefigure the final sacrifice of Christ. The *temple*, as a dwelling place for God, prefigured Christ, who is the final "dwelling place" of God, and through whom God is with his people (Matt. 1:23; John 2:21). The OT *priests* were types of Christ, the final high priest (Heb. 7:11–8:7).

The fulfillment of all these OT shadows and types takes place preeminently in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20; Eph. 1:10). But in the New Testament those people who are "in Christ," who place their trust in him and experience fellowship with his person and his blessings, receive the benefits of what he has accomplished. Therefore one can also find anticipations or "types" in the Old Testament that point forward to the NT church, the people in the New Testament who belong to Christ.

Some OT symbols also may point forward especially to the consummation of salvation that takes place

in the new heaven and the new earth yet to come (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1–22:5). Old Testament Jerusalem prefigured the new Jerusalem that will come "down out of heaven from God" (Rev. 21:2).

Christ Is the Mediator

Sinful man needs a *mediator* who will approach God on his behalf. Jesus Christ, who is both God and man, and who is innocent of sin, is the only one who can mediate (1 Tim. 2:5–6) and the only one who can save (Acts 4:12).

All the instances of salvation and mediation in the Old Testament prefigure Christ. *Prophets* bring God's word to his people. *Godly kings* bring God's rule to bear on the people. *Priests* represent the people in coming before God's presence. Christ is the prophet, king, and priest who fulfills all three functions in a final way (Heb. 1:1–3).

We can also look at *wise men*, who bring God's wisdom to others; *warriors*, who bring God's deliverance from enemies; and *singers*, who bring praise to God on behalf of the people and speak of God to the people. *Covenants* bring God's word to the people. The *temple* brings God's presence to the people. *Animal sacrifices* bring God's forgiveness to the people. In reading the Bible, we should look for ways in which God brings his word and his presence to people through the *means* he establishes. All these means perform a mediatorial role, and because there is only one mediator, clearly they all point to Christ.

The
OLD TESTAMENT

OLD TESTAMENT TIMELINE: AN OVERVIEW*

The following dates (all BC) are based on comparing information in the Bible with other ancient Near Eastern documents and archaeological evidence. Lists and records of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Egyptian kings and their interactions with one another are especially helpful. The amount of relevant information is greater during and after David's time than before, which makes earlier events harder to date. See Introductions to Genesis and Exodus.

Patriarchs to Judges (c. 2000–1050)		
	Dates	Notes
Abraham	c. 2000**	Father of Isaac; grandfather of Jacob
The exodus from Egypt	c. 1446***	
Entrance into Canaan	c. 1406	
Period of the judges	c. 1375–1050	
United Monarchy (c. 1050–930)		
Saul's reign	1050–1010	Numerals relating to Saul's age and length of reign may be missing in the Hebrew text (see 1 Sam. 13:1)****
David's reign	1010–970	
Solomon's reign	970–930	Begins to build Jerusalem temple c. 966
Divided Monarchy to Exile (930–587)		
Kingdom divides	930	See <i>The Divided Kingdom: Rulers of Judah/Israel</i> , pp. 574–575.
Assyria conquers Israel	732	Israelite king allowed to remain as a vassal ruler
Assyria conquers Israel's capital, Samaria	722	End of Israel's monarchy
Josiah's reforms	c. 628–622	
Babylon conquers Assyria	612–609	
Babylon conquers Judah	597	Judahite king allowed to remain as a vassal ruler
Babylon conquers Judah's capital, Jerusalem	587	End of Judah's monarchy
Return from Exile (538–445)		
Persia conquers Babylon	539	
Decree of Cyrus	538	Allows Jews to return to their homeland
First exiles return to Israel	538–537	
Temple rebuilding begins	538–537	
Temple completed	516	Building was paused 535–518
Events of Esther in Persia	c. 483–473	
Ezra comes to Jerusalem	458	
Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem	445	

**See also The Divided Kingdom: Rulers of Judah/Israel, pp. 574–575.*

***See Introduction to Genesis: Setting for information on dating events in Genesis.*

****There are viable arguments to be made for two potential dates of the exodus. This study Bible prefers 1446 as the date. See Special Note: The Date of Israel's Exodus from Egypt, in the Introduction to Exodus.*

*****Possible dates for the beginning of Saul's reign are calculated based on other data in the OT: e.g., David's age at accession and length of reign (2 Sam. 5:4–5); Ish-bosheth's age when he became king (2 Sam. 2:10); and Jonathan's probable age in relation to both Ish-bosheth and David, presuming that Jonathan was Saul's firstborn son (1 Sam. 14:49; 31:2) and was at least 20 when referred to as a commander of troops early in Saul's reign (1 Sam. 13:2).*

INTRODUCTION TO THE PENTATEUCH

The Bible's first five books are often called "the Pentateuch," a Greek word meaning "five books." Their Hebrew name is *torah*. This word means "law" or "instruction," which summarizes the books' contents. They are also sometimes called "the five books of Moses" after their main character and primary author. The Pentateuch provides the foundation for the whole Bible. References to it fill later books. Thus, understanding these books is necessary for all Bible readers.

The Pentateuch teaches that one God created the heavens and the earth. This same God created people in his image. God's image-bearers rule his creation in fellowship with him and under his authority. These books show how sin entered the world. They also introduce God's promise to redeem and restore his creation. These promises anticipate the final redemption Jesus will accomplish.

The Pentateuch also teaches about who God is and how his people should live. God is merciful and compassionate. He cares deeply for humankind and he provides what they need. God's people must reflect his character. They worship him exclusively and love one another generously. The Pentateuch's accounts of divine punishment demonstrate the danger of disregarding God's standards and deserting him for other gods. Though he is patient and long-suffering, he will not "clear the guilty" who refuse to ask him for forgiveness (see Ex. 34:5–7). God's punishment is always intended to restore relationship.

Background

It is difficult to date the events in Gen. 1:1–11:26, partly due to the lack of corresponding dateable writing or historical artifacts. The case is different for Gen. 11:27–50:26. Various archaeological discoveries have shown that its names, customs, and events fit the Middle Bronze Age (2200–1550 BC). Abraham most likely lived around 2000 BC. Scholars agree that the events described in Exodus–Deuteronomy fit the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC; see Introduction to Exodus). Furthermore, Deuteronomy reflects a treaty format from this era (see Introduction to Deuteronomy).

The Bible credits Moses as the Pentateuch's original author (see Introduction to Genesis). He led Israel out of Egypt c. 1446 BC (see Introduction to Exodus). It is likely that Israelite scribes revised the Pentateuch's spelling and grammar to help later readers. They also

added a few helpful clarifications (e.g., Gen. 35:6–7). Someone besides Moses wrote about his death (Deut. 34:1–12). These are small adjustments, not proof that Moses was not the author of the rest of the material.

Literary Features

The Pentateuch's main literary genre is historical narrative. Historical narratives give accurate accounts of past events. The Pentateuch tells Israel's history by presenting fascinating men and women, action-packed plots, and various themes. These books do not include every event from Israel's history. Rather, the biblical authors selected particular stories to communicate important truths.

At various points the narrative includes genealogies (Genesis 5; 10; 36; Ex. 6:14–27), poetry (Gen. 2:23; Exodus 15), and detailed legal language (Exodus 20–24). Ancient genealogies used key people to divide history into significant time periods (see Introduction to Genesis; 1 Chronicles 1–9; Matt. 1:1–17; Luke 3:23–38) and to give the background of important places. The legal sections help God's people know how to apply God's law to daily life.

The Pentateuch should be studied as a unit. Together, these books tell the earliest history of God's people and his promises to them. Genesis 1–11 tells how God's good creation fell into chaos because of human sin. This downward spiral shows the need for God's redemptive work in the world. God responds to sin with mercy (Genesis 12–50). He calls Abraham to be the father of a new and chosen people, Israel.

In Exodus and Leviticus, God teaches his people what is needed to remain in relationship with him. Exodus begins with God's people enslaved in Egypt. God hears their cries and chooses Moses to deliver them. The Lord establishes the blessings that await Israel if they choose to love and obey him, and the consequences that will come if they serve other gods instead. He gives the law to show them how to live in a way that pleases him.

Numbers and Deuteronomy display God's graciousness to his rebellious people. When Numbers begins, God has led Israel to the edge of Canaan, the land he had promised to Abraham. They fail to trust the Lord and refuse to enter. Therefore, God cannot give this unfaithful generation the good things that were awaiting them. They must live a nomadic life in the

desert. Forty years later, Deuteronomy ends with Moses' words to Israel as a more committed people again prepare to enter the land.

Themes

God's Promises to Abraham. God calls Abraham to go to a land that he will show him (Gen. 12:1). He promises Abraham offspring, land, and blessing. He also promises that Abraham's family will bless "all the families of the earth" (see note on Gen. 12:1–3). These promises shape the rest of the Pentateuch. Since the promises develop slowly over a long time, the Pentateuch emphasizes God's faithfulness. He does what he says he will do. Therefore, God's people trust as they wait.

God's covenants. In the Pentateuch, the relationship between God and his people is shown through the making of covenants (see note on Gen. 6:18). He makes connected covenants to redeem creation and humanity through Noah (see Gen. 6:18; 8:20–9:17), Abraham (see Gen. 12:1–17:14), and Israel (see Exodus 19–24). These covenants govern existing relationships through reminders of past faithfulness, promises of

future blessing, and consequences for breaking the covenant.

God's law. The covenants require obedience to God. Abraham believed and obeyed God (see Gen. 12:1–9; 15:6; 26:5). Having led Israel out of slavery, God teaches Israel to live as "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6). He provides instructions to guide their daily living (Exodus 19–24). God's laws reveal individual and corporate sin. They are based on love — God's love for his people (see Deut. 7:6–11) and their love for him (see Deut. 6:4–9) and their neighbors (see Lev. 19:18).

God's mercy. The Pentateuch is a story of the Lord's provision. God's people sin, even the best of them. Abraham lies (Gen. 12:10–20). Jacob cheats his brother (Genesis 25:19–27:40). Israel worships an idol (Exodus 32–34). Still, God extends forgiveness when they repent. The Pentateuch even portrays God's judgment as a kind of mercy. Through discipline, God calls rebellious people back to himself (see Lev. 26:14–39). Those who turn to God from sin receive forgiveness and restored relationship (see Leviticus 16).

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS

God then starts anew with humanity. He makes a covenant with Noah and creation (6:18; 8:20–9:17). From Noah's family, humanity grows again (10:1–32), but they continue to sin. Humans seek their own glory, mixing pride and technology to do so (11:1–9).

In 11:27–50:26, Abraham and his descendants carry forward God's promises to Eve (3:15) and Noah (8:20–9:17). God promises Abraham a large family, a homeland (Canaan), and protection. He promises that all nations will be blessed by Abraham's family (12:1–9; 17:1–14). God provides for Abraham (11:27–25:18), his son Isaac (21:1–35:29), and his grandson Jacob (25:21–49:33), whom God renames Israel. As the Bible proceeds, their descendant Jesus Christ provides redemption for all families of the earth. By the end of Genesis, God has kept his promise to preserve Abraham's family by sending them to Egypt to survive a terrible drought.

Key Themes for Understanding Genesis

Creation (1:1–2:25)

Provision (1:1–2:25; 3:20–21; 8:20–9:17;
50:19–20)

Sin (3:1–4:26; 6:1–8; 9:20–27; 11:1–9;
12:10–20; 19:30–38; 37:12–26)

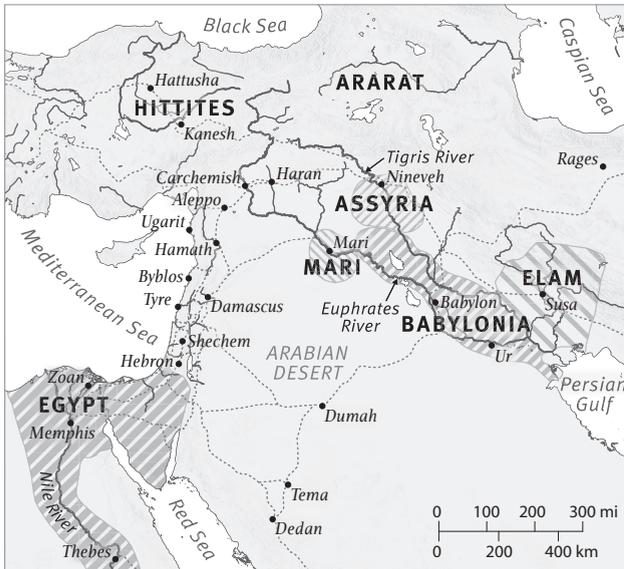
Judgment (3:8–24; 4:11–12; 7:1–24; 19:23–29)

Covenant (6:18; 8:20–9:17; 12:1–9; 15:1–21;
17:1–14; 26:1–5; 28:10–22)

Outline

- I. God Creates the Heavens and the Earth (1:1–2:4)
- II. Adam and Eve and Their Descendants (2:5–6:7)
- III. Noah and His Descendants (6:8–11:26)
- IV. Abraham and His Descendants (11:27–50:26)

The Near East at the Time of Genesis



GENESIS

The Creation of the World

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be an expanse¹ in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷And God made² the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. ⁸And God

¹Or a canopy; also verses 7, 8, 14, 15, 17, 20 ²Or fashioned; also verse 16 ³Or Sky; also verses 9, 14, 15, 17, 20, 26, 28, 30; 2:1 ⁴Or Land; also verses 11, 12, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30; 2:1 ⁵Or small plants; also verses 12, 29

called the expanse Heaven.³ And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth,⁴ and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

¹¹And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants⁵ yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

1:1–2:4 God Creates the Heavens and the Earth

1:1 In the beginning. Of everything that has come into existence (compare Col. 1:16). God. The word translated “God” is plural, possibly to express God’s majesty. Individual gods often have plural names in other ancient texts. Unlike other ancient creation accounts, however, the OT teaches that there is only one

God. **created.** This verb is singular, indicating that God is one being. God is the only subject of this verb in the OT. No one else truly creates anything; instead, they make things out of existing matter. **heavens and the earth.** Here refers to the whole of creation. God created the universe from nothing, not from preexisting matter.

1:2 without form and void . . . darkness. Implies a lack of the order and substance that exists later (see vv. 3–5). **the Spirit of God.** Not identical to God, yet one with God. The giver of life (see Ezek. 37:1–11). **was hovering.** Ready to act immediately. There is no indication that a long time elapsed between Gen. 1:1 and v. 2.

1:3–5 And God said. God speaks, and things come into being. Compare Ps. 33:6, 9; Rom. 4:17; Heb. 11:3. This shows God’s absolute authority. **good.** As God intended, as it ought to be. Everything God makes meets this standard (see vv. 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). **God called.** In the ancient world, naming something or someone indicated one’s authority over that person or thing. Since he rules over Day and Night, God rules time. **there was evening and there was morning, the first day.** God built a time of daily rest (evening) after daily work into the fabric of creation.

1:6–8 expanse . . . Heaven. Probably no single English word can accurately translate this Hebrew term (see ESV footnote on “Heaven”). Here, it refers to what humans see above them, such as the sun, moon, stars, and birds (see vv. 14–17; 20).

1:9–13 dry land. See ESV footnote on “Earth.” **vegetation.** Thus, there will be food for animals and people (vv. 24–26).



Creation Ex Nihilo

GENESIS 1:1–3

One distinguishing mark of biblical Christianity throughout the ages has been the doctrine of God’s creation *ex nihilo* (“out of nothing”). According to Genesis 1 God did not create the universe from pre-existing material but called it into existence out of nothing, merely through the power of his spoken word. The author of Hebrews makes this doctrine explicit as well: “By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible” (Heb. 11:3). This doctrine points to the immense power of our Creator God: he creates by his word, relying only on his power to call the universe into being from absolute nothingness. There was a time in ages past when God alone existed—and nothing else.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons,¹ and for days and years,¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds² fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” ²¹So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. ²⁵And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that

creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man³ in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

²⁸And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

The Seventh Day, God Rests

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ²And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh

¹Or appointed times ²Or flying things; see Leviticus 11:19–20 ³The Hebrew word for man (*adam*) is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name *Adam*

1:14–15 lights. They govern time (“rule the day . . . night,” v. 16) and provide light upon the earth. They are also for signs and for seasons . . . days and years. See ESV footnote on “seasons.” These terms indicate that the movements of the sun and moon define the passing of time from this point on.

1:16–17 made. Signifies completed work; the lights’ existence and purpose came from God. By using the terms greater light and lesser light, the author avoids terms that were also proper names for foreign gods linked to the sun and the moon. rule the day . . . rule the night. They govern time, and the stars. The immense universe that God created (compare Isa. 40:25–26) receives only brief mention. Genesis 1–2 focuses on the earth. expanse. See note on Gen. 1:6–8.

1:20–21 birds. General term for “flying things” (ESV footnote). great sea creatures. General term that can apply to whales, sharks, crocodiles, etc.

1:24–25 livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth. Three very general terms for land creatures.

1:26–27 Let us make. Whoever God is addressing here shares in this act of creation. In context, the Spirit of God is participating (see vv. 1–2). Since God alone creates, many Christians believe God speaks to himself here. If so, this would begin the

Bible’s revelation of the Trinity (see 2 Cor. 13:14; note on John 1:1). See Col. 1:15–16. man. The Hebrew word for “man” (*adam*) is often a generic term for both males and females (i.e., mankind). Sometimes it refers to man in distinction from woman (e.g., Gen. 2:22, 23; 3:8). It can also serve as the proper name “Adam” (see 2:20; 3:17; 4:1; 5:1). in our image . . . in the image of God. Of all that God created, only humans are described this way. Humans resemble God in their ability to think, plan, communicate, understand right and wrong, make things, and form relationships with God and one another. Men and women represent God as they exercise stewardship in creation (see 1:26 and note on 1:28).

1:28 Be fruitful and multiply. Compare v. 22. subdue. Indicates it will take work and understanding for humanity to live well on earth. This verb in no way allows for harsh treatment of creation. have dominion. As God’s stewards, humanity must rule according to God’s wise instructions. Humans may not abuse the earth or its creatures, since God does not.

1:31 behold, it was very good. Creation retains its goodness through God’s provision to this day (see 8:20–9:17; Psalm 104; 1 Tim. 4:4).

2:2 God . . . rested. Not because he was weary, but simply because he had finished his work.

AND GOD SAID

GENESIS 1



Imagine your family has a big, strong, beautiful English boxer. Seventy-five pounds of pure muscle, he can jump several feet in the air and sprint much faster than anyone. The dog gets excited when new people come to your house and jumps all over them, pawing at their clothes. Sometimes he wants to play so badly that he'll start trying to bite ankles or shoelaces. He knows how to sit, but when he gets wound up, he doesn't listen to anything you say. In this house—with regard to this dog—words have very little power!

Contrast this with the creation of the world. "In the beginning," we read, "the earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters" (1:1–2). Then something happens: "And God *said*" (1:3). Have you ever really considered this? When God created the world, he didn't even get his hands dirty. He spoke *words*. The God we worship, know, love, and follow *spoke* an entire universe into existence.

This refrain ("And God said") as God creates everything in the world is echoed by another refrain: "And God saw that it was good." God was pleased with all that he had made; it was good.

Then comes something different. God has a brief "conversation" within the Godhead. The God we worship—one God in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit)—says, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness" (1:26). God creates human beings in a completely different way—for a completely different purpose—than anything else in all creation! Human beings alone are created in the image of the eternal, glorious, three-person God. God gives these beings dominion over the earth, and he blesses them and tells them to multiply.

So begins the story of the Bible—the story of the whole world. It begins with God speaking the world and human beings into existence. It begins with God's affirmation of every good thing he had made. And it begins with God's setting apart human beings in a special way for a special purpose. This, to God, is "very good" (1:31).

Take some time to praise God, the marvelous creator of all things, including you. Marvel at the power of his Word. Remember that he made you for his specific purpose. Don't forget to pray about the specific concerns and joys of your day today.

day from all his work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

The Creation of Man and Woman

⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

⁵When no bush of the field¹ was yet in the land² and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶and a mist³ was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—⁷ then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. ⁸And the LORD God

planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹²And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

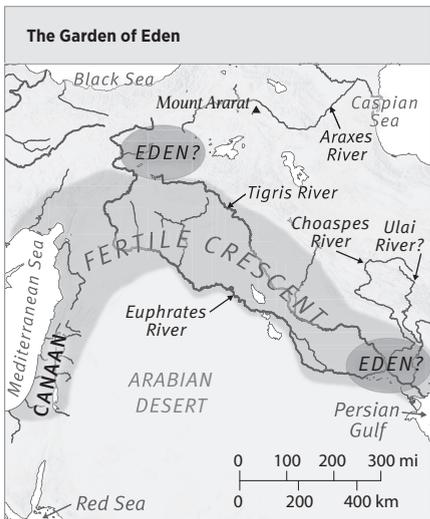
¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man,

¹Or open country ²Or earth; also verse 6 ³Or spring

2:3 God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. He “set it apart” (holy) “for the good of” (blessed) people and creation. His resting sets an example for his people (see Ex. 20:8–11).

2:4 These are the generations of. This is the first of 11 times this phrase occurs in Genesis (5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 36:9; 37:2). The phrase can either end or begin a section or subsection of the book. On genealogies, see Introduction. **LORD.** This verse introduces God’s personal name, “Yahweh.” Most English Bible versions render this name as “LORD,” using small capital letters. This practice comes from the Jewish tradition of showing reverence for God’s name by substituting “LORD” for “Yahweh” when reading the Bible aloud. See notes on Ex. 3:14; 3:15.

2:5–6:7 Adam and Eve and Their Descendants



2:5 bush . . . plant. General terms covering a wide variety of plants. Compare notes on 1:9–13; 1:20–21; 1:24–25.

2:6 mist. May refer to an overflowing underground freshwater stream like those that source the Nile River.

2:7 the LORD God. See note on v. 4. **formed the man.** Like a potter fashioning clay into a particular shape. **of dust from the ground.** The Hebrew words ‘adam for “man” and ‘adamah for “the ground” reflect the close relationship between humanity and the earth. **living creature.** The same Hebrew term occurs in 1:20, 24 for sea and land creatures (see 1 Cor. 15:45).

2:8–9 God planted . . . put. God prepares a home for the first people that they receive as a gift. **garden.** Flourishing place. This Hebrew word usually applies to parks and orchards. **Eden.** The name suggests a place with plenty of water and lush plants. **in the east.** Toward the rising sun; a very general statement. **every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.** Signifies the abundance God prepared for the garden’s inhabitants. **The tree of life.** Source of long life. See note on 3:22–24; compare Prov. 3:16–18. **tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** The Hebrew word translated “knowledge” includes experiencing the effects and having awareness of the implications of an action. See note on Gen. 2:16–17.

2:10–14 river. Otherwise unidentified. **four rivers.** Implies that Eden occupied a central location in the ancient world. However, Eden’s location remains a mystery. **Tigris . . . Euphrates.** Two rivers that surround Mesopotamia. See map on the left. The rivers Pishon and Gihon and the regions of Havilah and Cush have not been satisfactorily identified. The reference to **gold** and **onyx** indicates the land’s rich resources.

2:15 put. See note on vv. 8–9. **to work it.** See note on 1:28. Work is a gift. It did not come as a result of sin. **keep it.** According to God’s directions (see 1:26–31; 2:16–17). The Hebrew word here often describes obeying God and his commands (see 17:9–10; Ex. 31:16; Lev. 18:5).

2:16–17 commanded the man. Gave him the standards for continued life in the garden. God expects Adam to trust him and obey his word based on all he has done for him. The word “covenant” does not appear here. However, a relationship built on trust is

A DAY OF REST

GENESIS 2:1-3



The first chapter of Genesis focused on God's work during the six days of creation. God is so powerful that all he had to do was speak and everything came into existence. And God is so powerful that he accomplished everything he had set out to do. Genesis 2:2 tells us, "On the seventh day God finished his work that he had done." Having finished, God did not work on this new day but "rested" (2:2), and through that rest God "blessed the seventh day and made it holy" (2:3).

This passage may only be three verses, but they are verses that introduce a key concept that will echo throughout the whole Bible story: the *rest* of God. This rest of God becomes the foundation for the Sabbath day for God's people—a day for them to celebrate and remember God's rest. Followers of Jesus celebrate this as the Lord's Day until Jesus' return.

I want you to notice something interesting about this short passage. Do you remember the repeated phrase at the end of each of the first six days of creation? "And there was evening and there was morning, the *n*th day." Look at verses 1–3 again. Can you find that phrase after the seventh day? It's not there. The seventh day never ended. In other words, we are living in the seventh day right now! God, enthroned in heaven, is dwelling now in a state of perfect rest. It's not that God has stopped working completely, but he has stopped the work of creation.

Much later in the Bible story, this theme of God's rest comes up again. The author of Hebrews references Genesis 2:1–3 and says these words: "So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest" (Heb. 4:9–11). What is the rest of God, which is ultimately foreshadowed in this passage from Genesis? It is the joyful rest of humans who are saved, not by works, but by grace. Have you entered God's rest—his gracious salvation—through Jesus Christ, who lived and died for you?

Take some time to praise God that he worked magnificently in creation. Think about the fact that now God rests—that we live in the seventh day of creation. Ask him to give you the deepest rest in your soul as you seek to know him more and follow him completely through faith in Jesus Christ, his Son.

saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat¹ of it you shall surely die.”

¹⁸Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for² him.” ¹⁹Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed³ every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam⁴ there was not found a helper fit for him. ²¹So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²²And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made⁵ into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man.”⁶

¹Or when you eat ²Or corresponding to; also verse 20 ³Or And out of the ground the LORD God formed ⁴Or the man ⁵Hebrew built ⁶The Hebrew words for woman (ishshah) and man (ish) sound alike ⁷In Hebrew you is plural in verses 1-5 ⁸Or to give insight

²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You¹ shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” ²And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise,⁸ she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes

the basis on which God makes covenants later (see 8:20–9:17; 17:1–14; Ex. 20:1–2). **tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** Compare note on Gen. 2:8–9. If Adam and Eve disobey God and eat the fruit of this tree, they will have gained knowledge of evil by committing evil. In the day that you eat of it. Indicates that eating the fruit begins a process that cannot be reversed. **you shall surely die.** An emphatic statement meant to stress the certainty, not the type (i.e., physical vs. spiritual), of death.

2:18 I will make him can also be translated “I will make for him,” which explains Paul’s statement in 1 Cor. 11:9. **helper.** One to work alongside him (see Gen. 2:15). **fit for him.** See ESV footnote. Appropriate for him and the responsibilities God has given him (see 1:26–31).

2:20 The man gave names. This demonstrates his authority over and responsibility for the other creatures (see 1:26–31). **Adam.** See notes on 1:26–27; 5:1–2.

2:23–24 This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. Expresses complete unity (compare 29:14). **Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother.** Marriage creates the closest of all human relationships. Heterosexual monogamy is the divine pattern for marriage that God established at creation. Marriage creates responsibilities that are more important than one’s duty to one’s parents. In the ancient world, sons lived near their parents and inherited their father’s land. But they “left” their parents in the sense of putting their wife’s welfare before that of their parents. **hold fast to his wife.** The term is used elsewhere for practicing covenant faithfulness (e.g., Deut. 10:20). Other texts call marriage a “covenant” (e.g., Prov. 2:17; Mal. 2:14). **they shall become one flesh.** A union of man and woman. This oneness is consummated sexually. Jesus appeals to this verse and to Gen. 1:27 when teaching about marriage in Matt. 19:4–5. Paul bases his teaching on marriage in Eph. 5:21–32 on this text.

2:25 naked and . . . not ashamed. Complete unity of flesh and purpose.

3:1 the serpent. Perhaps a symbolic name for the first supernatural creature the Bible describes. The cherubim in v. 24 will be the second. The Hebrew word *Satan* (Adversary) became the most-used name for this character in the Bible. See Rev. 12:9; 20:2. The name describes his character, as “the adversary” describes his role in Job 1–2; Zech. 3:1. Ancient cultures often portrayed serpents as crafty, elusive, and poisonous. Genesis 3 does not reveal the serpent’s origins, except to say he is a creature, not a deity. It does not reveal when he became a rebel against God, but 1:31 indicates that evil has not always existed. **more crafty than any.** Puts the serpent in a separate category than other creatures. Compare Num. 12:1–9, where a similar phrase occurs to separate Moses from his siblings. The Hebrew word usually translated “other” does not occur in Gen. 3:1. **beast of the field.** General term for the creatures God made. Compare 2:5 and note. **Did God actually say?** Invites doubt, not obedience.

3:2–3 neither shall you touch it. Perhaps an addition to what God said (see 2:16–17), though it is impossible to eat something without touching it.

3:4–5 You will not surely die. Emphatic statement denying God’s emphatic warning in 2:16–17. **be like God.** Unlike the serpent, Adam and Eve were already “like God,” for they were made in his image (see 1:26–27). **knowing good and evil.** See notes on 2:8–9; 2:16–17. They have met evil in the person of the serpent. They know as much about it as they need to know.

3:6 good for food. See note on 2:8–9. **delight to the eyes.** As most good food is. **make one wise.** To have new insight into good and evil. See ESV footnote. This is the very thing God commanded them to avoid (see 2:16–17). **she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.** Both Adam and Eve deliberately rebelled against God. They share the blame for their decision.

WORKING FOR GOD'S GLORY

GENESIS 2:4-25



Our world sometimes has a warped view of work. People complain about having to work at all, wishing they could quit their jobs and just relax forever. Others make work an idol, viewing it as a way to gain influence, value, and prestige and deceiving themselves into thinking they are like gods because of their success. Sometimes these people desire success in their work so strongly that they neglect to invest in their relationships. In contrast to these views, Genesis 2:4-25 depicts a biblical framework for work.

Note that this passage takes place *before* the fall—before Adam and Eve give in to temptation and disobey the word of God. Therefore, we get a glimpse in Genesis 2 of what God intended for human beings. Here we see that God made the man to work under the authority of God's Word in a God-designed, foundational relationship with the woman.

Look at verse 15: "The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to *work* it and keep it." Work is not a result of the fall; work is a good thing! Work is a God-given responsibility designed to bring joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment. How is Adam to work? Under the authority and guidance of God's word. In verses 16-17, God gives instructions to Adam about how he should live in the garden; he gives Adam his word to guide his life and work. Finally, we come to the record of God's creation of the woman. This is the perfect, God-designed helper for the man. You can see how fundamental and prominent this relationship is in verse 24. This is the beginning of marriage.

At the outset of the great story of God's work in the world, we find ourselves with a God-designed pattern for man. We were made to work. We were made to live under—and by—the word of our Creator God. And we were made as male and female because God invented the perfect pattern of companionship. Sadly, we'll see in Genesis 3 how human sin horrifically damaged this entire pattern.

Begin today by thanking God for his creative and generous gift of this amazing pattern. Then look at your life. Confess the ways that you do not work for the glory of God. Confess the areas of your life that may not be totally guided by God's Word. Pray that God would help you live today with a clear realization that he is your Creator and that you need to be guided by his Word every minute.

of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

“What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

↷ Resisting Temptation

GENESIS 3:1-7

This infamous scene in the garden of Eden, where Satan (in the form of a serpent) tempts and draws Eve and Adam into sin and disobedience, has immense significance for the way we understand ourselves as human beings born into a world now plagued by sin. Through Adam and Eve, sin enters God’s beautiful creation; all humans inherit both their guilt and their sinful nature. As followers of Jesus, however, believers are indwelt by God the Holy Spirit and empowered to resist sin and temptation. Notice Satan’s strategy in tempting Eve, first questioning God’s word and then denying the truth of God’s word and warning (3:1-5). In the moment of temptation God’s people must run to the truth of God’s Word and hold on, in faith, to his promises. When you are tempted to sin, what truths, promises, and even warnings from Scripture might you turn to for help?

¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring³ and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

¹⁶To the woman he said,

“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to⁴ your husband, but he shall rule over you.”

¹⁷And to Adam he said,

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread,

⁸And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool¹ of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”² ¹⁰And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” ¹¹He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹²The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman,

¹Hebrew wind ²In Hebrew you is singular in verses 9 and 11 ³Hebrew seed; so throughout Genesis ⁴Or shall be toward (see 4:7)

3:9 the LORD God called to the man . . . , “Where are you?” Both “man” and “you” are singular in Hebrew. God confronts Adam first, since he was charged with the primary responsibility for working and keeping the garden (2:15; compare 2:18).

3:14 above all livestock. As in v. 1 (see note), the Hebrew here places “the serpent” in a different category from creatures of the earth. on your belly. Position associated with defeat. dust you shall eat. Compare Isa. 65:25. The serpent will share only the worst habits of snakes. He will be dirty and elusive.

3:15 enmity. Ongoing opposition to one another. your offspring. Represents those who obey him. her offspring. . . he shall bruise your head. An individual descendant of Eve will overcome the serpent. bruise his heel. Cause him pain but lose the battle. Since this verse promises the serpent’s defeat, it has been labeled the “Protoevangelium,” Latin for “the first announcement of the gospel.” Jesus Christ will eventually fulfill this promise (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8; compare John 12:31).

3:16 Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you. Compare 2:23-24. Their complete unity has been broken. They will have conflict. On Christian marriage, see notes on Mal. 2:10-16; Eph. 5:21-32; Col. 3:18-21.

3:17-18 Adam will no longer enjoy the garden’s abundance but will have to labor over the ground from which he was taken (v. 23; see note on 2:8-9). The punishment is not the work itself (see note on 2:15) but rather the hardship and frustration that it will involve. cursed is the ground. . . thorns and thistles. Creation will suffer because of human sins and mistakes (see Lev. 26:34; Isa. 5:8-10). The ground will no longer produce as it did in Eden. In the future, God will set nature free from the consequences of human sin (see Isa. 65:17-25; Rom. 8:19-22).

3:19 By the sweat of your face. Hardship that did not exist previously. Perhaps refers to the need to overcome new obstacles, such as thorns and thistles (see v. 18). return to the ground. Adam will die. Death was not humanity’s original destiny. Compare note on 2:7; see Rom. 5:12.

ATTACK ON GOD'S WORD

GENESIS 3:1-7



The famous World War II invasion of the beaches of Normandy (known to most of us now as D-Day) has been immortalized in movies, books, and television shows. It was an amazing battle and one that cost the Allied forces around ten thousand casualties. In any war there are certain arenas—key geographical points—that must be secured to achieve victory. The beaches of Normandy were such a point. The victory there by the Allied forces led to the German army's loss of position in most of France. The battle for the beaches of Normandy was in some ways *the* key battle of the entire war.

There is an epic battle going on in Genesis 3:1-7. The key arena is not a beach; it is God's word. The Serpent—Satan himself—chooses the word of God as the key arena for his battle against God and humans. Look at the very first phrase out of the Serpent's mouth: "Did God actually say . . . ?" His first strategic move is to question the reliability and truth of what God has said. What should Eve do without hesitation? She should cry out, "Yes, God said it! I believe it! Everything he says is faithful and true, and I will live by and under his word!" But she doesn't. In fact, she attacks God's word in a different way. She adds to it. And Satan, seeing that God's word has already lost its grip on the humans' hearts, seduces them into rebellion against God's word with the promise of knowledge and life.

Men, where is Adam during this whole conversation? Surely if Adam had been there, he would have shut down the smooth arguments of the Serpent! Look again at verse 6: "She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband *who was with her*." Adam is right there. He watches as God's word is attacked by the Serpent and doubted by his wife. And he does nothing.

The Serpent attacks God's word, Eve begins to doubt the truth of God's word, and Adam does not stand up for God's word. The man and woman rebel, and sin enters the world. This is a very sad day.

Begin today by thanking God for his Word. Are you doubting it? Do you add things to it? Do you not stand up for its truth? Pray that today God would help you to listen more carefully to his Word.

till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

²⁰The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.¹

²¹And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

²²Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” ²³therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Cain and Abel

4 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten² a man with the help of the LORD.” ²And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. ³In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. ⁶The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and

why has your face fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? ⁸And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to⁴ you, but you must rule over it.”

⁸Cain spoke to Abel his brother.⁵ And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. ⁹Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” ¹⁰And the LORD said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. ¹¹And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. ¹²When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.”

¹³Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear.” ¹⁴Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” ¹⁵Then the LORD said to him, “Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. ¹⁶Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod,⁷ east of Eden.

¹⁷Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. ¹⁸To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered

¹Eve sounds like the Hebrew for *life-giver* and resembles the word for *living* ²Cain sounds like the Hebrew for *gotten* ³Hebrew *will there not be a lifting up [of your face]?* ⁴Or is toward ⁵Hebrew; Samaritan, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate add *Let us go out to the field* ⁶Or *My guilt is too great to bear* ⁷Nod means *wandering*

3:20–21 Eve. Means “life-giver” (see ESV footnote). The name may reflect God’s promise in v. 15. **God . . . clothed them.** God continues to provide for Adam and Eve after they sin. **garments of skins.** Their covering requires an animal’s death. This may begin the offering of sacrifices for sin (see 4:4) that ends with the death of Christ as the final atonement for sin (see Heb. 9:11–12).

3:22–24 God begins a sentence in v. 22 and breaks off without finishing it. For the man to eat of the **tree of life** and **live forever** in his sinful condition is unbearable. God takes action to prevent it. **therefore.** Due to God’s kindness. **sent him out from the garden.** To live as vv. 14–19 have described. **east of . . . Eden.** Compare 2:8. **cherubim.** Like the serpent, supernatural creatures (see note on 3:1). In the OT, they **guard** God’s presence (see Ex. 25:18–20; Ezek. 10:1–9) from intruders. **tree of life.** See note on Gen. 2:8–9; compare Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19.

4:3–5 **fruit of the ground.** A suitable offering under proper conditions. See Deut. 26:2. **firstborn of his flock.** Also a suitable sacrifice under proper conditions. See Num. 18:17. **had regard for Abel and his offering.** Since both types of sacrifices were likely acceptable, God’s acceptance of Abel and rejection of Cain were based on their heart attitudes in making their offerings.

4:6–7 **If you do well.** Indicates that Cain is angry at God, when

Cain is the one at fault. **desire is contrary.** Compare 3:16. He is in conflict with sin. **you must rule over it.** Cain must overcome sin, in this case his resentment and anger. He can still respond positively to God.

4:8 **killed him.** Cain allows sin to rule him. Thus, he commits the first murder recorded in Scripture.

4:9 **am I my brother’s keeper?** Cain continues to respond to God angrily (see vv. 3–7).

4:10–12 **from the ground.** Creation is God’s ally here and elsewhere in the Bible. It testifies against Cain. **no longer yield to you its strength.** Creation will punish Cain for polluting it with Abel’s blood.

4:13–16 **a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.** Having no home, which the ancient world considered a terrible fate. **will kill me.** As he killed Abel. **mark on Cain.** A visible sign, but the text gives no specific details about it. God graciously protects Cain, though he does not deserve it.

4:17 **Cain knew his wife.** Presumably, Cain married his sister, since the whole human race descends from Adam and Eve (see 5:4). Later laws prohibit this practice (see Lev. 18:9).

4:18–22 **Lamech’s** immediate descendants are stockmen, musicians, and artisans.

RUN AND HIDE

GENESIS 3:8-24



One of the scariest phrases an eight-year-old can imagine is when his mother says, “Wait until your father gets home.” That phrase, spoken after the boy has done something wrong, is a clear warning—a serious spanking is coming. When that boy hears the door open and his father’s footsteps approaching, there is one thing we know he wants to do more than anything else: run and hide!

That’s a little, tiny picture of what Adam and Eve are feeling in Genesis 3 after they have blatantly disobeyed the word of God and eaten the fruit that he commanded them not to eat. As soon as they hear God approaching them, they run and hide like scared children. It’s not a pretty picture for Adam and Eve when God confronts them, either. They begin to play the blame game. “The woman whom *you gave to be with me*,” Adam begins, daring to point the finger first at his wife and then even at God himself (3:12). Eve blames it all on the Serpent: “The serpent deceived me, and I ate” (3:13). God, of course, knows how it all went down. The Serpent—Satan himself—is not without blame. But Adam and Eve must be punished as well. Ultimately they will pay the price with their very lives, and they are sent out from the garden to live and work in toil and struggle until the day of their death.

Where’s the hope in all this? It’s a chapter full of sin, sadness, judgment, and loss of life. It is the very end of paradise! Yet God speaks a word of grace into this seemingly hopeless situation. In the midst of his curse on the Serpent, God points forward to the ultimate victory over Satan, sin, and death won by a descendant of Adam and Eve. The offspring of Eve will one day bruise the head of the offspring of the serpent. This promise in verse 15, sometimes called the *protoevangelium* or “first gospel,” is God’s way of pointing us to his Son, Jesus, even at the darkest point of the story thus far. Jesus, who is God in human flesh, is the one who will one day clean up this mess, conquer death and sin, and finally crush the head of Satan. The war is not lost!

Take some time to think about the wonder of God’s grace—that he would promise victory over sin and death even in the midst of human sin and resulting judgment. Praise him for Jesus, who has won the ultimate victory over Satan (and our sin!) by dying on a cross for us and rising from the dead.

Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech.
¹⁹And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.
²⁰Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock.
²¹His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.
²²Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

²³Lamech said to his wives:

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
 you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say:
 I have killed a man for wounding me,
 a young man for striking me.

²⁴ If Cain's revenge is sevenfold,
 then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold.”

²⁵And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, “God has appointed¹ for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.”
²⁶To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.

Adam's Descendants to Noah

5 This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.² Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man² when they were created.
³When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.
⁴The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters.
⁵Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.

⁶When Seth had lived 105 years, he fathered Enosh.
⁷Seth lived after he fathered Enosh 807

years and had other sons and daughters.
⁸Thus all the days of Seth were 912 years, and he died.

⁹When Enosh had lived 90 years, he fathered Kenan.
¹⁰Enosh lived after he fathered Kenan 815 years and had other sons and daughters.
¹¹Thus all the days of Enosh were 905 years, and he died.

¹²When Kenan had lived 70 years, he fathered Mahalalel.
¹³Kenan lived after he fathered Mahalalel 840 years and had other sons and daughters.
¹⁴Thus all the days of Kenan were 910 years, and he died.

¹⁵When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he fathered Jared.
¹⁶Mahalalel lived after he fathered Jared 830 years and had other sons and daughters.
¹⁷Thus all the days of Mahalalel were 895 years, and he died.

¹⁸When Jared had lived 162 years, he fathered Enoch.
¹⁹Jared lived after he fathered Enoch 800 years and had other sons and daughters.
²⁰Thus all the days of Jared were 962 years, and he died.

²¹When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah.
²²Enoch walked with God³ after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters.
²³Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years.
²⁴Enoch walked with God, and he was not,⁴ for God took him.

²⁵When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he fathered Lamech.
²⁶Methuselah lived after he fathered Lamech 782 years and had other sons and daughters.
²⁷Thus all the days of Methuselah were 969 years, and he died.

²⁸When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son²⁹ and called his name Noah, saying, “Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed, this one shall bring us relief⁵ from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.”

³⁰Lamech lived after he fathered Noah 595 years and had other sons and daughters.
³¹Thus all the days of Lamech were 777 years, and he died.

¹Seth sounds like the Hebrew for *he appointed* ²Hebrew *adam* ³Septuagint *pleased God*; also verse 24 ⁴Septuagint *was not found* ⁵Noah sounds like the Hebrew for *rest*

4:23–24 Lamech killed a man merely for wounding or striking him. His response is out of proportion to the injury. **sevenfold . . . seventy-sevenfold.** Shows his vengeful spirit. Like Cain, he cannot control his anger.

4:25–26 another offspring. Compare “her offspring” (3:15). The birth of Seth marks a new beginning for humanity. **people began to call upon the name of the LORD.** Probably refers to public worship, initially within Adam's family.

5:1–2 book. Indicates a written record, either a scroll or a clay tablet. Both were used in ancient times to compile permanent records. **of the generations of Adam.** Compare 5:1–32 with 1 Chron. 1:1–4. On genealogies, see Introduction. **likeness of God.** See note on Gen. 1:26–27. **named them Man.** See note on 1:26–27.

5:3–5 fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image. This

echoes 1:26–27. **Seth.** See note on 4:25–26. The genealogy in 5:1–32 traces Seth's line. For Cain's line, see 4:17–18. **930 years.** The genealogies after the flood account (6:9–8:19) report smaller numbers of years for human lives. The same is true in the genealogies of other ancient lands.

5:22–24 Enoch. Not the individual in 4:17, who was from Cain's lineage. **walked with God.** Conveys a close relationship with God (compare 3:8; 6:9; 17:1; 24:40). He was a person of great faith (see Heb. 11:5). **he was not, for God took him.** Because of this special relationship, Enoch did not die (compare 2 Kings 2:1–12; Heb. 11:5).

5:28–31 Lamech. Not the individual in 4:18–24, who was from Cain's lineage. **Noah.** His name means “rest.” His father hopes he will be particularly skillful in farming the ground. See 9:20; compare 3:17–19.

A DEADLY CYCLE

GENESIS 4



In case we were wondering whether or not the fall of Adam and Eve really did something to the world, we have Genesis 4 as our clear answer. The sin that entered the world through our first parents' rebellion against God's word took immediate effect, even in the lives of their children. Think of sin as a deadly poison; it infects the entire world, dispersing itself to every corner of creation.

Genesis 4 is a sad chapter in the Bible. In verses 5–8, we see an effect of the fall—infectious sin—taking over Cain, the son of Adam and Eve. He evidently does not bring offerings of worship to God in the right way. He gets angry at God. Even after God warns him about the sin that threatens to devour him, Cain deceives his brother Abel, lures him into a field, and murders him in cold blood. This is a terrible day in God's creation.

Amazingly, God shows a measure of grace to Cain. While Cain will be a wanderer in the earth, God nevertheless puts a hedge of protection around Cain and warns any person who might try to hurt him. This is the second time in the Bible that God shows mercy to sinful human beings. Cain is an angry, bitter, selfish man who murders his own brother very intentionally. Does he deserve to die? Absolutely. But God gives him mercy.

Unfortunately the cycle and infestation of sin seems to get worse as the chapter goes on. We are introduced to Lamech, who seems to be a violent, prideful jerk of a man. He brags to his wives about killing a young man and claims that no one should dare come near him to do him harm. Adam and Eve have loosed a plague—an infection—that would creep into every corner of creation. But God is not done. There is a faint glimmer of hope as the chapter closes with the birth of a son named Seth and the beginning of the public worship of God. We have an ugly infestation—and a God who still has a plan for his people.

Look at the world around you. It is not hard to see how sin infects every part of life—government, politics, relationships, and, of course, our own hearts. Remember that God is not done! Think back to that promise that God gave to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 of the final victory over Satan, sin, and death. Hold on to Jesus today, as the only hope against sin's ugly—but temporary—hold on this world.

³²After Noah was 500 years old, Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Increasing Corruption on Earth

6 When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, ²the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. ³Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not abide in¹ man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.” ⁴The Nephilim² were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

⁵The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.” ⁸But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah and the Flood

⁹These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹Or My Spirit shall not contend with ²Or giants ³Hebrew The end of all flesh has come before me ⁴An unknown kind of tree; transliterated from Hebrew ⁵A cubit was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters ⁶Or skylight

¹¹Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹²And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. ¹³And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh,³ for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. ¹⁴Make yourself an ark of gopher wood.⁴ Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits,⁵ its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. ¹⁶Make a roof⁶ for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. ¹⁷For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die. ¹⁸But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁹And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. ²⁰Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. ²¹Also take with you every sort of food that is

6:1–2 sons of God . . . daughters of man. Perhaps refers to believing male descendants of Seth (see 5:1–32) marrying unbelieving female descendants of Cain (see 4:17–18). Elsewhere in Scripture, marriages between believers and unbelievers can have very negative consequences (see 1 Kings 11:1–8; 16:29–34; Mal. 2:10–16).

6:3 My Spirit shall not abide. Since God is the giver of life, whenever God withdraws his Spirit a person dies. **days shall be 120 years.** Expresses the outer limits of the post-flood human life span. See Deut. 34:6–7.

6:4 Nephilim. In context, a group of legendary warriors. The OT mentions them only here and in Num. 13:33.

6:6–7 regretted. The Hebrew word here means feeling sorrow keenly enough to yearn for relief. This feeling contributes to a person’s changing a current course of action. See 1 Sam. 15:11; Jonah 3:10. It does not necessarily mean that the earlier course of action was wrong. The ESV also translates this word as “relent” or “relented,” depending on the context (see Ex. 32:14; Amos 7:3, 6). God is **grieved** that his creation, which was very good (Gen. 1:31), is now filled with sin (compare 1 Sam. 15:29).

6:8–11:26 Noah and His Descendants

6:8–9 found favor. Or “grace.” Noah proves to be a man of faith (see Heb. 11:7). **righteous man.** One who trusts God and thus obeys him (Psalm 1). The term does not indicate sinlessness. **blameless.** Term applied to both people and animals in the OT.

Indicates that the person or animal is as it should be. **walked with God.** See note on Gen. 5:22–24.

6:11–12 earth was corrupt in God’s sight. Spoiled, injured, made sick by human sin (compare Rom. 8:21). **violence.** Cain’s and Lamech’s murderous and vengeful ways prevail (see Gen. 4:8, 23–24).

6:15 In modern measurements, the ark was about 450 feet (140 m) long, 75 feet (23 m) wide, and 45 feet (14 m) high. It would have displaced c. 43,000 tons (c. 39 million kg). The inside capacity would have been 1.4 million cubic feet (39,644 cubic m), with an approximate total deck area of 95,700 square feet (8,891 square m).

6:17 flood of waters upon the earth. Other ancient nations recorded flood accounts. They treat the flood as a turning point in human history. **Everything that is on the earth shall die.** Creation and humanity will gain a fresh start along with Noah’s family and the animals they preserve (see vv. 18–22).

6:18 I will establish my covenant with you. A “covenant” is an agreement between two or more parties who already know one another. It governs their relationship through promises of blessing and threats of consequences. God makes covenants to redeem people and creation. His character guarantees the eventual success of the covenants he makes. People enter into covenant with God by the faith shown through obedience. See 8:20–9:17. **you shall come into the ark.** Noah demonstrates his faith by following God’s directions (see Heb. 11:7). **with you.** Noah’s family benefits from this covenant.



GRACE AMID EVIL

GENESIS 6:1–8

When God created Adam and Eve, he gave them a wonderful command: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (Gen. 1:28). We see in that command God’s gracious intention for the human population to increase and live in the world he had created. But in Genesis 6 we begin to see how the multiplication of the descendants of Adam and Eve led to more and more people—and therefore more and more evil.

When you read the first few verses of Genesis 6, you probably asked yourself, “What in the world is going on here?” We read about sons of God marrying daughters of man and are introduced to a race of creatures called the Nephilim, who were mighty men in those days. Confusing stuff! It seems safe to say that the relationships between these sons of God and daughters of man were forbidden by God—probably because they involved relationships between God’s people and people who didn’t worship God and most definitely because they involved some kind of sexual perversion. The Nephilim (probably best understood as a race of giants) also seem to be lovers of violence and enemies of God, as they seem to be taking women by force.

One thing emerges clearly from this passage: evil has taken over the earth. We get a brutal summary of human life in the world in verse 5: “Every intention of the thoughts of [man’s] heart was only evil continually.” This grieves God because God is holy and hates sin. God promises judgment against sin, vowing that he will destroy the earth he has made, along with the people who have rebelled against him so terribly.

The “*but*” in verse 8 is a beautiful conjunction. In the midst of the evil that has taken over the world, one man emerges who finds favor (or *grace*) with God: Noah. We don’t know much about Noah at this point, although we learn later in the story that he is not a perfect man. What does Noah have? Noah has “favor in the eyes of the LORD” (6:8). Because of God’s grace to this one man, there will be grace for humanity; God will save some people, even in the midst of his holy judgment against sin.

Are you absolutely sure that you have favor—or grace—with God today? Have you put your faith in his Son, whose sacrificial death for your sins allows you to have favor with God? If so, rest in Jesus today! Thank God that you have favor in his eyes because of Jesus. Ask God for strength to obey his Word and follow him, even in the midst of a world that has turned its back on God.

eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them.”²²Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

7 Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. ²Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals,¹ the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, ³and seven pairs² of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. ⁴For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing³ that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.”⁵And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

⁶Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. ⁷And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. ⁸Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, ⁹two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

¹¹In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. ¹²And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. ¹³On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, ¹⁴they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that

creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. ¹⁵They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. ¹⁶And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.

¹⁷The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. ¹⁸The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. ¹⁹And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. ²⁰The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits⁴ deep. ²¹And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. ²²Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. ²⁴And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

The Flood Subsides

8 But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. ²The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, ³and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, ⁴and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the

¹Or seven of each kind of clean animal ²Or seven of each kind ³Hebrew all existence; also verse 23 ⁴A cubit was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

7:2 clean animals. Suitable for sacrifice and for eating (see 4:4; 8:20; 9:3; Lev. 11:1–47; Deut. 14:4–20). **seven pairs of all clean animals . . . a pair of . . . not clean.** After the flood, Noah will offer some clean animals as sacrifices (see Gen. 8:20). Thus, he gathers more than one pair of each kind.

7:11–12 year . . . month . . . day. These specific dates indicate that the flood was a real event. **all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened.** Metaphors indicating that water from both above and below covered the land.

7:16 the LORD shut him in. The use of God’s personal name (see note on 2:4) emphasizes his special relationship with Noah. See 6:18.

7:19 all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. Indicating the waters engulfed the whole earth (see v. 20).

7:21–22 all flesh. . . Everything on the dry land. Includes all types of living beings (birds, livestock, etc.).

7:24 waters prevailed on the earth 150 days. Includes the 40 days of rain v. 12 mentions (compare 8:3). Another seven months pass before the land dries enough to enable Noah and his family to leave the ark (see 8:13–14).

8:1 God remembered Noah. In the Bible this phrase means God is about to act for that person’s benefit (compare 9:15; 19:29; 30:22; Ex. 2:24; 32:13). God proceeds to renew what he created in Genesis 1. **God made a wind blow over the earth.** The Hebrew word for “wind” is also sometimes translated “Spirit” (e.g., 1:2; 6:3).

8:2–4 150 days. See note on 7:24. **mountains of Ararat.** Range of mountains in modern Turkey, of which Mount Ararat is the highest (16,854 feet [5,137 m]). The text does not name the specific mountain on which the ark came to rest.

JUDGMENT OF SINNERS AND RESCUE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

GENESIS 6:9–7:24



Do you remember singing children's songs about all the animals that paraded onto Noah's ark? They were quite nice—happy sounding and cheerful, with lyrics about the animals' bounding onto the ark two by two. Many of us sang those songs with big smiles on our faces! As nice as those songs are, they are not accurate representations of Genesis 6 and 7 at all! Why? Because the story of Noah and the ark is a story of God's righteous and terrible judgment against human sin.

Genesis 6 tells us that the earth is under the sight of God. God is not blind! He sees the violence and corruption happening in the earth he has created; he doesn't miss anything. And this infinitely holy creator of all things hates sin. The reality is that human sin against an infinitely holy God must mean judgment and ultimately death. This is what God determines and reveals to Noah: "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them" (6:13). This is an important lesson to learn about God—your Creator. He is holy; he hates sin; our sin against him brings judgment and death.

These chapters in Genesis are filled with death, destruction, and judgment. But what we see in this passage is the beginning of an important pattern for the way that God will work in the world he has made: God, even as he righteously judges sin, always provides gracious rescue for those who fear him and are righteous in his sight. "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God" (6:9). Noah was not a perfect man. But he walked with God. He lived under the grace of God. This makes him righteous.

We see in this passage also, for the first time in the Bible, a special word that will come up again and again in the Bible story: *covenant*. God tells Noah, this righteous man who has favor with him, that he will make a covenant with him—a promise to him. God promises to save Noah, to rescue him and his family and show him grace.

Think about the holiness of God. God hates sin. God will judge sin. Confess your sins to God today—and be specific! As you confess sin to God, remember that God has shown grace to you. Thank God today for Jesus, whose death in your place rescues you from God's judgment.

month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

⁶At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made ⁷and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. ⁸Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. ⁹But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. ¹⁰He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. ¹¹And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. ¹²Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore.

¹³In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. ¹⁴In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. ¹⁵Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶“Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁷Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” ¹⁸So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. ¹⁹Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

¹Or dishonor ²In Hebrew you is plural

God’s Covenant with Noah

²⁰Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, “I will never again curse¹ the ground because of man, for the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. ²²While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”

9 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. ²The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. ⁴But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. ⁵And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man.

⁶ “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.

⁷And you,² be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.”

⁸Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be

8:13 Compare 7:11–12.

8:20 burnt offerings. Completely consumed by the fire, with nothing eaten. God accepts these offerings as atonement for human sin when offered with a repentant heart (compare 4:7–8). The result is a reconciled relationship between the repentant person and God.

8:21–22 never again curse the ground. God promises not to send another comprehensive flood. The seasons God created in 1:1–31 shall not cease. Humanity’s kinship with the ground continues, as does the Lord’s provision.

9:1 blessed. Gave Noah and his family specific benefits. Be fruitful and multiply. Renews the blessing from 1:28.

9:2–3 fear . . . and . . . dread of you . . . upon every beast. Restates humanity’s role as God’s stewards of creation (compare 1:28). I give you everything. God increases the food available to people (compare 1:29).

9:4 not eat . . . its blood. Shows respect for the fact that all life comes from God (see Lev. 17:12–14).

9:5–6 require a reckoning. Hold accountable (see 4:10–12; Ex. 20:13; 21:28). Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed. Human beings are to hold one another accountable for murder and other violent acts. God made man in his own image. This is why human life is to be valued so highly. Sinning against a person God made is sinning against God himself (see Prov. 14:31; 19:17; Matt. 25:31–46).

cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”¹² And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.”¹⁷ God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

Noah's Descendants

¹⁸The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.)¹⁹ These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed.¹

¹Or from these the whole earth was populated ²Or Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard ³Japheth sounds like the Hebrew for enlarge

²⁰Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard.²¹ He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. ²²And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. ²³Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. ²⁴When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵he said,

“Cursed be Canaan;
a servant of servants shall he be to
his brothers.”

²⁶He also said,

“Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem;
and let Canaan be his servant.

²⁷ May God enlarge Japheth,³
and let him dwell in the tents of Shem,
and let Canaan be his servant.”

²⁸After the flood Noah lived 350 years. ²⁹All the days of Noah were 950 years, and he died.

9:9–11 covenant. See note on 6:18. **your offspring after you.** God makes this kind of covenant with a group of people (Noah and his descendants) through one or more persons (Noah and his sons) on behalf of the whole group (humanity; see 9:19). Everyone else then experiences the covenant by being included in the representative (see note on 12:1–3). **and with every living creature.** This covenant includes all creation. Compare 1:26–31. The creation will continue, for there will never be another **flood to destroy the earth.**

9:12 sign. Reminder of God's promise to humanity, and humanity's promises to him through Noah.

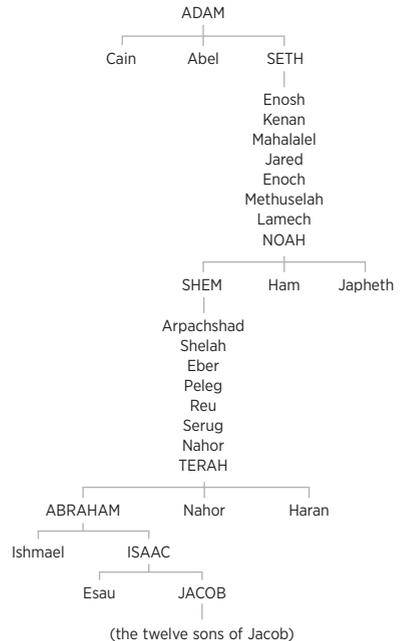
9:16 everlasting covenant. See 17:7; 2 Sam. 23:5; Isa. 61:8; Jer. 32:40; Ezek. 16:60; 37:26.

9:20 man of the soil. See note on 5:28–31. Noah's work points to a fresh start after the flood.

9:21–23 became drunk and lay uncovered. Indicates he has lost control of his actions. **saw.** Or “looked at.” He did not turn away. **nakedness of his father.** This is a different Hebrew word than the one translated “naked” in 2:25. This word indicates human genitals, which are to be respected by privacy. There is no indication that a sexual act was involved. Ham dishonored his father, as his brothers' actions in 9:23 show.

9:25–26 Cursed be Canaan. Named after Ham's son, this refers to a region that Ham and his descendants occupied. See map, p. 26. **servant of servants shall he be.** Refers to the fact that one ancient nation after another will dominate the region. This passage was wrongly used to justify the enslavement of African people, resulting in grievous abuse, injustice, and inhumanity to people created in the image of God. See ESV Preface: Translation of Specialized Terms (*'ebed* and *doulos*). **Shem.** Noah stresses Shem's importance. After 11:10, Genesis will focus on Shem's descendants.

The Genealogies of Genesis



Nations Descended from Noah

10 These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

²The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. ⁵From these the coastland peoples spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations.

¹Or he began to be a mighty man on the earth

⁶The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. ⁷The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. ⁸Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man.¹ ⁹He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD."¹⁰The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. ¹¹From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and ¹²Resen between Nineveh and

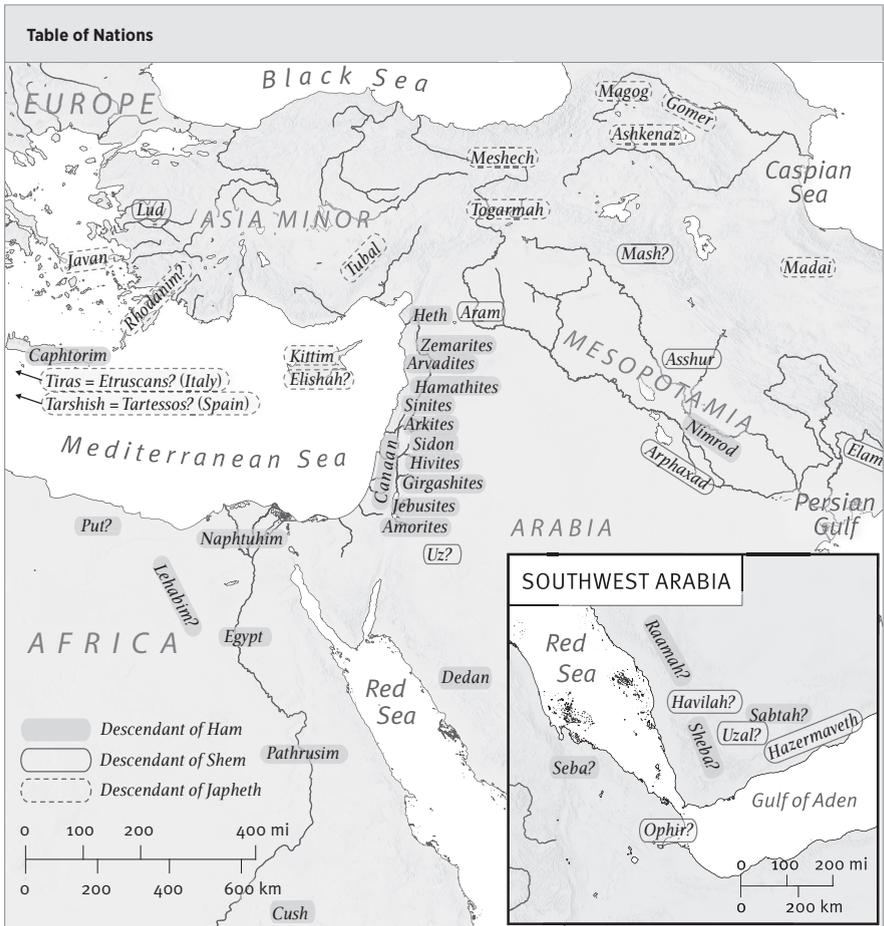
10:1 These are the generations. See note on 2:4. after the flood. Chapter 10 describes how Noah's descendants populated various regions of the earth.

10:2-31 For the people and places listed in vv. 2-5 (Japheth), vv. 6-20 (Ham), and vv. 21-31 (Shem), see map below. Each branch of Noah's family eventually had its own clans (separate,

related extended families), nations (distinct people groups made up of related clans), and languages (see vv. 5, 20, 31).

10:10 Babel. Testifies to the great antiquity of the city and land of Babylon. See 11:1-9.

10:12 The great city of Calah was a significant city before Nineveh was.





GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH

GENESIS 8:20–9:17

The great flood that God sent on the earth has finally subsided. This is in many ways a fresh start for human beings. God begins again with Noah and his family, and he even repeats the same command to them that he gave to Adam and Eve hundreds of years earlier: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (9:1). You can imagine how grateful to God Noah and his family must be! They alone have been spared from his judgment. They should be excited and ready to begin a new humanity, right?

I’m not so sure. Remember, God has just brought about the death of the vast majority of humanity because of their sin. Noah is a righteous man, yes, but what about his family? What about the children they will have? Who’s to say that God won’t judge the whole world again by the time Noah’s grandchildren get old enough to start killing one another and rebelling against God? If I were one of Noah’s sons, I would be terrified!

If you read through the whole Bible, there is one refrain that you will hear again and again: God is gracious and merciful. God shows us this again through the covenant he makes with Noah and his family. What is the covenant—the promise—that God gives to Noah and his family? It’s that he will never again send a flood to destroy the earth. God repeats this promise several times, and he even gives them a sign in the sky—a rainbow—that will act as a symbol of his promise to never do this to the earth again. Does God know that Noah’s descendants will grow up to sin and rebel against him? Of course he does. But God chooses to show mercy. There will come a day when sin will finally be dealt with permanently; God will finally judge the earth. But God is gracious and patient; he will let human life continue. Be amazed at this God today, who voluntarily makes promises to sinful people that he keeps perfectly—even though he doesn’t have to.

Think about how the very life we have on this earth is a gracious gift from God. Thank him for your life! Remember that God is a God who makes promises to people who are sinful and undeserving, promises that he keeps! If you belong to Jesus, God has made a promise to you too. It’s a promise that he will forgive you, accept you, guide you, and keep you until you see him face to face.