

# She Reads Truth

BIBLE

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## She Reads Truth Bible

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*"The instruction of the LORD is perfect,  
renewing one's life;  
the testimony of the LORD is trustworthy,  
making the inexperienced wise."*

PSALM 19:7

"Women in the Word of God every day" is our simple but significant mission. Even so, when the *She Reads Truth Bible* was a twinkle in our eyes, we trembled at the thought of interacting with God's Word in such an intimate way.

We believe there is nothing we or anyone else can add to Scripture to make it more relevant, more important, or more true. It is already all of those things. God's Word is living and active, and we confidently hold it higher than anything we do or say.

*So why create a She Reads Truth Bible?*

This Bible is our humble attempt to honor the inherently beautiful gospel with the aesthetic beauty it deserves. Scripture is a glorious collision of beauty, goodness, and truth, and we pray this book you hold in your hands represents that.

Our heart for the *She Reads Truth Bible* is not to add to or improve on the perfect and complete gift of Scripture God has given us. Rather, our heart is for everything we've included in this Bible to point back to God and His Word. Every human word and element in this book is an intentional invitation for you to both read Scripture and grow in your affection for it.

Each devotional seeks to show the gospel in every passage. We believe God is the main character of every story and it is our delight to find Him there.

The book introductions not only give cultural and geographical context, they place each book in context of the whole of Scripture. Each book also has its own reading plan with supplemental passages, intentionally making room for Scripture to interpret Scripture.

The Key Verse for each book was selected not simply as an artistic element, but as a tool to remember the theme of each individual book. Together, these 66 verses present the complete arc of Scripture, book by book.

Our earnest prayer is that our imperfect offerings on these pages highlight the perfection of Scripture, drawing you more deeply into the story of salvation. By the grace of God and the counsel of the Holy Spirit, may you become like the tree in Psalm 1, planted by streams of water, "that bears its fruit in its season and whose leaf does not wither" (v. 3). May you grow in affection for this beautiful, good, and true Book, and may you be a woman in the Word of God every day.

Grace and Peace to you,



Raechel Myers  
Amanda Bible Williams  
She Reads Truth, 2017



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## BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

### OLD TESTAMENT

|                                      |     |                                      |      |                                   |      |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|
| Genesis . . . . . Gn . . . . .       | 2   | 2 Chronicles . . . . . 2Ch . . . . . | 644  | Daniel . . . . . Dn . . . . .     | 1434 |
| Exodus . . . . . Ex . . . . .        | 82  | Ezra . . . . . Ezr . . . . .         | 700  | Hosea . . . . . Hs . . . . .      | 1466 |
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| 1 Chronicles . . . . . 1Ch . . . . . | 594 | Ezekiel . . . . . Ezk . . . . .      | 1354 | Malachi . . . . . Mal . . . . .   | 1624 |

### NEW TESTAMENT

|                                       |      |   |      |                                   |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|---|------|-----------------------------------|------|
| Matthew . . . . . Mt . . . . .        | 1634 | Colossians . . . . . Col . . . . .      | 2008 | 1 John . . . . . 1Jn . . . . .    | 2136 |
| Mark . . . . . Mk . . . . .           | 1692 | 1 Thessalonians . . . . . 1Th . . . . . | 2020 | 2 John . . . . . 2Jn . . . . .    | 2148 |
| Luke . . . . . Lk . . . . .           | 1730 | 2 Thessalonians . . . . . 2Th . . . . . | 2032 | 3 John . . . . . 3Jn . . . . .    | 2154 |
| John . . . . . Jn . . . . .           | 1792 | 1 Timothy . . . . . 1Tm . . . . .       | 2040 | Jude . . . . . Jd . . . . .       | 2160 |
| Acts . . . . . Ac . . . . .           | 1842 | 2 Timothy . . . . . 2Tm . . . . .       | 2052 | Revelation . . . . . Rv . . . . . | 2168 |
| Romans . . . . . Rm . . . . .         | 1898 | Titus . . . . . Ti . . . . .            | 2062 |                                   |      |
| 1 Corinthians . . . . . 1Co . . . . . | 1926 | Philemon . . . . . Phm . . . . .        | 2070 |                                   |      |
| 2 Corinthians . . . . . 2Co . . . . . | 1952 | Hebrews . . . . . Heb . . . . .         | 2078 |                                   |      |
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| Ephesians . . . . . Eph . . . . .     | 1984 | 1 Peter . . . . . 1Pt . . . . .         | 2114 |                                   |      |
| Philippians . . . . . Php . . . . .   | 1996 | 2 Peter . . . . . 2Pt . . . . .         | 2128 |                                   |      |

# HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

We used to read our Bibles out of obligation. Perhaps you have too. Now we read our Bibles because it feels like coming home.

We used to read our Bibles out of fear. Maybe you know the feeling. Now we read our Bibles for a fresh breath of the truest freedom we've ever known.

We used to read our Bibles to find ourselves. Now we read our Bibles to find God.

We read our Bibles because God's Word is living and active, given to us for our salvation and sanctification, our instruction and correction, our comfort and joy.

We read our Bibles not just because we feel lost, but because without Him we are lost. We read our Bibles because we need the good news of the gospel every single day.

**The Bible is God's Word.** Every word of Scripture is living and active, breathed out by God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and written and preserved by human writers (Heb 4:12; 2Tm 3:16-17; 2Pt 1:21).

**The Bible is a historical record.** The Old Testament records the creation of the world, the fall of man, the establishment of God's covenant with Israel, and the promise and anticipation of a Savior (Gn 2:4). The New Testament tells the true story of the birth, death and resurrection of that Savior, Jesus Christ, the birth of the Church, and the promise of Christ's return (Mt 1:1).

**The Bible is meant to be read.** Because God's Word is true, even the parts that are sad or scary or difficult to understand are good news. Every page, from cover to cover, is given that we might know God (Mt 4:4).

**The Bible is for you.** No amount of knowledge or wisdom makes you more or less qualified to meet God in His Word. Nothing you are doing, have done, or will do renders you ineligible for the good news of the gospel (1Tm 2:3-4).

**The Bible is for right now.** You can read the Bible right where you are, just as you are. It is the only living and active book in the world (Heb 4:12), and we can trust the Holy Spirit to illuminate the words He has already inspired (2Tm 3:16). The Bible exists for moments like this—the moment you lay it open and look for Him (Jn 20:31).

## APPROACH GOD'S WORD

*Approach it reverently.* Because the Bible is living and active, given by God Himself, it is a profoundly powerful tool. God's Word must be approached with respect and reverence, even awe (Ps 111:10).

*Approach it confidently.* We are invited to read the inspired, complete, and sufficient Word of God with the Author Himself. You can approach the Bible, confident that it is for you and that you are not alone (Heb 4:16).

*Approach it regularly.* We can't approach God's Word only occasionally and expect our lives not to wither. God designed us to need Him, to be in an ongoing relationship with Him. One of the ways we grow in our relationship with Him is by spending regular time in His Word (Jms 4:8).

## **ENGAGE GOD’S WORD**

*Engage it expectantly.* Each page of Scripture points to Jesus. Sometimes His presence is obvious (like in the Gospels) and other times it’s perhaps more difficult to see (like in Leviticus). Keep looking, and expect to find Him there—the promised Rescuer, the healing Teacher, the suffering Messiah, and the returning Savior (Jn 1:1-4).

*Engage it emotionally and intellectually.* Engaging truth in only one way, whether with the most delicate emotions or the most advanced intellect, is to forfeit a full and true understanding of it (Ps 119:18). The gospel is a beautiful marriage of mind and spirit (Mt 22:37).

*Engage it broadly.* Reading God’s Word as a complete work is an effective way to deepen our understanding of His story. We can learn much about Scripture by reading whole books at a time, even reading shorter books repeatedly. This is not the only way to read the Bible, but it is a powerful exercise, well worth the time and effort (Ps 119:105).

## **APPLY GOD’S WORD**

*Apply it appropriately.* We would be foolish to approach God’s Word looking only for how it applies to ourselves and others, forgetting to find what it says about Him. When we read our Bibles, we shouldn’t first ask, “What does this mean to me?” but rather, “What does this mean?” (2Tm 2:15).

*Apply it responsibly.* Scripture is to be used for reproof (not injury), correction (not destruction), and training (not controlling) (2Tm 3:17).

*Apply it permanently.* When we memorize Scripture, we apply God’s Word to our hearts and minds permanently, giving us tangible promises and clear direction. It’s a way home for the home-sick (Jos 1:8).

## **READ PRAYERFULLY**

Effective Bible reading can and should begin and end with prayer. Prayer affords us the privilege of approaching God the Father, allowing us to repent and intercede, petition and praise. Through the access granted us by Jesus, we can invite the Author Himself to be our companion as we read our Bibles (Mt 6:5-13).

## **BE DOERS OF THE WORD**

James 1:22 instructs us to “be doers of the word, and not hearers only.” Our lives are tangible reflections of the gospel we believe. Not because of who we are and what we do, but because of who He is and what He’s done (Php 2:5-11).

We take God’s Word with us, written on our hearts, with the Holy Spirit as our guide. When we abide in Christ, we are renewed by the power of His Word, even when we’re not reading our Bibles (2Tm 2:7). Living out Truth is our job but it is our Father’s work, and He is faithful to complete it (Php 1:6).

## **THE BIBLE IS GOD’S STORY**

It is about His steadfast love for His people. It is about His sovereign plan, His grace, and His glory. You are meant to read it.

# THIS IS THE GOSPEL

*This saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—and I am the worst of them. But I received mercy for this reason, so that in me, the worst of them, Christ Jesus might demonstrate his extraordinary patience as an example to those who would believe in him for eternal life. — 1 Timothy 1:15-16*

## **Do you know . . .**

**You were designed on purpose**, with intention, love, and care.

**You are broken**—tragically broken. Not only by the sins you commit, but because of the sin nature in you.

**You have hope**—forgiveness and freedom for this moment and this season, for a lifetime and for eternity.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is every bit that simple, yet it is unfathomably profound. It is simple enough that a child can understand it, yet mysterious enough that the most educated theologians will always have more to learn. But don't misunderstand: the mystery of the gospel does nothing to negate its truth. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "now we see only a reflection as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known" (1 Co 13:12).

*For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but it is the power of God to us who are being saved. — 1 Corinthians 1:18*

**You bear God's image.** The vastness of the ocean and the infinite reach of the sky, the delicate lines of snow-capped mountains and the majesty of God-carved canyons—none of these bears the image of the Creator Himself. The Bible tells us "the heavens declare the glory of God" (Ps 19:1), but when God created the world, He saved the best for last: us.

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

Glorifying God by bearing His image is our greatest calling. It is a call to humanness in its purest form, when God made us in His image and called us good.

*God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed. — Genesis 1:31*

**We have all sinned.** The perfection of creation was corrupted when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. God gave them one command: "you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gn 2:17). We sin when we believe God is trying to keep the good stuff from us, when we become convinced that what we want is better than what God has for us. Adam and Eve believed that lie, and there was no undoing what had been done (Gn 3:4-5).

The consequence of that first sin was death (Gn 3:19), not only for Adam and Eve, but for all mankind. The human race is corporately guilty because of Adam's sin, and each one of us is individually guilty because of our own sin (Rm 3:23). Instead of paradise, we live in a broken, fallen world where the Enemy comes to kill, steal, and destroy (Jn 10:10).

*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
— Romans 6:23*

**Death is not the whole story.** Even before God gave Adam and Eve consequences for their sin, He promised redemption (Gn 3:15). God had a plan to make us new again, to give us life though we were dead in our sins (Eph 2:4).

In His steadfast love for His creation, God became man. Jesus was Immanuel, "God with us," walking among the people He came to save (Mt 1:23; Jn 1:1-3,14). Fully obedient to the Father and without sin, Jesus was the spotless Lamb. He was the only sacrifice that could pay the debt of our disobedience. In His immeasurable love for us, Jesus suffered a criminal's death on a cross (Rm 5:8). He took on our sins and took our place (Heb 10:10).

*He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even to death on a cross.  
— Philippians 2:8*

**Jesus is alive, and so is our hope.** After three days in the grave, Jesus rose from the dead (Mt 28:6). He left the tomb and grave clothes behind and appeared to many, then ascended into heaven. Even now, He sits at the right hand of God the Father (Mk 16:19; Heb 10:12). Death has lost its power, swallowed up in the resurrection of Christ (1Co 15:55-56).

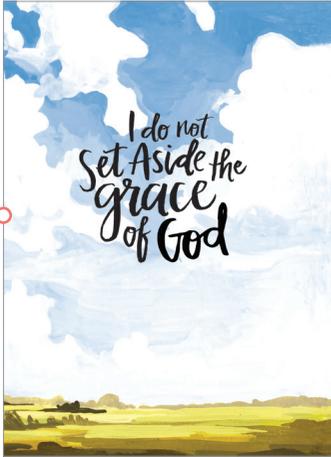
The everlasting life of Jesus is ours when we turn from our sin and trust in the love and perfection of Christ (Jn 3:16). God's Word promises "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1Jn 1:9). Our sins are charged to Him. His righteousness is credited to us (Rm 8:3-5).

Because the penalty for our sin has been paid by Christ's death, we are no longer under a curse. We have victory in this lifetime, and we have the hope of eternity with Christ in the life to come. In Christ, we can stand before God blameless and beloved. Nothing and no one can ever separate us from His love (Rm 8:38-39).

This is good news! This is the gospel.

*Since by the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive the overflow of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. — Romans 5:17*

# KEY FEATURES



## KEY VERSES

One theme verse was chosen for each individual book. Together, these 66 verses represent the complete arc of Scripture.

**KEY VERSE ART:** Each key verse has been beautifully hand-lettered by one of fifteen different artists. The key verse art serves to aid in memorization and celebrates the beauty of the gospel.

**MAPS** Placing the book in its geographical context helps us understand its cultural context.



## galatians

*I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.* 3:1

**ON THE TIMELINE** This definite date can be determined for the writing of Galatians. The possible dates range from AD 52 to 55. It likely falls after Paul's second missionary journey, to AD 54, if he wrote around the same time as the book of Romans, during his third missionary journey.

**A LITTLE BACKGROUND** The term "Galatians" was used both ethnically and geographically in the New Testament, but it is unclear where the Galatians churches were actually located. If understood ethnically, the founding of the Galatians churches is only implied in the NT. Paul's visit through the region of Phrygia and Galatia (Ph 1:8-10), in north-central Asia Minor, during his second missionary journey and again later (Ph 19:23, 19:35). A group from Galatia (Paul's friends) invaded that area in the third century BC, and it became known as Galatia.

Understood geographically, "Galatians" can refer to those living in the southern part of the Roman province of Galatia, a different area entirely. That region included the cities of Padiata, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, where Paul worked to plant churches (Ph 2:1-14; 2:20).

**MESSAGE & PURPOSE** Galatians, which may be the earliest of Paul's letters, is also his most serene, proclaiming the truth that anyone can be justified and brought into fellowship in Jesus alone. Paul wrote Galatians to clarify and defend "the truth of the gospel" (Gal 2:14) in the face of a false gospel. He did this by following his authority in his apostles, considering the OT Testament basis of the gospel message, and demonstrating how the gospel message worked practically in daily Christian living.

### DOES THANKS FOR THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

Galatians mentions individuals about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Christian life. When the Spirit's role in the history of Galatians (Gal 3:14), before Paul was commanded to "walk by the Spirit" (Gal 5:16), he "led by the Spirit" (Gal 5:18), and "keep in step with the Spirit" (Gal 5:25), we will see "walk by the Spirit" and "keep" the second mention (Gal 5:22). The ministry centered around the Holy Spirit in the history of the Holy Spirit is what is meant by "the Spirit" (Gal 2:20-22).

## GENRE INDICATOR

Because each literary style should be approached differently, we've color-coded the various genres to make them easy to locate and identify.

## INTRODUCTION

**CULTURAL CONTEXT:** Each book introduction includes a brief overview of the approximate date of writing, authorship, historical context, and relevant geography.

**MESSAGE & PURPOSE:** Each introduction also identifies main themes of the writing.

**BIBLICAL SIGNIFICANCE:** This note identifies how we can give thanks for each book's unique contribution to the canon of Scripture.

**READ AND UNDERSTAND GENESIS**

The Bible is a complete work in which every verse continues to tell one story. As you read the book of Genesis, consider reading the additional passages suggested by the article of Scripture with you.

| Headings             | Genesis 1-11                      |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Genesis 1-3</b>   | John 1:1-9; Matthew 1:1-23        |
| <b>Genesis 4-5</b>   | Colossians 1:1-6; Hebrews 3:10-12 |
| <b>Genesis 6-9</b>   | John 1:10-13; Hebrews 3:10-12     |
| <b>Genesis 10-11</b> | John 1:14-17; Matthew 1:1-11      |
| <b>Genesis 11</b>    | John 1:18; Luke 1:1-11            |

| Headings                | Genesis 12-50                          |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Genesis 12-14</b>    | Matthew 1:2; Galatians 3:6-14          |
| <b>Genesis 15-16:14</b> | Colossians 3:10-17; Hebrews 7:1-10, 12 |
| <b>Genesis 17-18</b>    | John 1:18-21; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 19-20</b>    | John 1:22-23; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 21-22</b>    | John 1:24-25; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 23-25</b>    | John 1:26-27; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 26-27</b>    | John 1:28-29; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 28-29</b>    | John 1:30-31; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 30-31</b>    | John 1:32-33; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 32-33</b>    | John 1:34-35; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 34-35</b>    | John 1:36-37; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 36-37</b>    | John 1:38-39; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 38-39</b>    | John 1:40-41; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 40-41</b>    | John 1:42-43; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 42-43</b>    | John 1:44-45; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 44-45</b>    | John 1:46-47; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 46-47</b>    | John 1:48-49; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 48-49</b>    | John 1:50-51; Hebrews 9:1-12           |
| <b>Genesis 50</b>       | John 1:52-53; Hebrews 9:1-12           |

## READING PLANS

Each book has its own custom reading plan, broken down into easy-to-read sections.

**GOING DEEPER:** Reading plans also include supplementary passages for added context and deeper understanding.

**DEVOTIONALS:** Each day of the reading plan that features an in-text devotional is marked in bold.

## CHARTS

The charts provided illustrate how different passages of the Bible connect and relate to one another, highlighting themes of a particular book and the whole canon of Scripture.

| JOB ASKED   | JESUS ANSWERED  |
|---|---|
| <b>JOB 1:21-22</b><br>When can I say to myself, "I have no pain?" | <b>JOHN 1:1-3</b><br>"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven." |
| <b>JOB 1:21</b><br>I have no pain!                                | <b>JOHN 1:14</b><br>The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven."   |
| <b>JOB 1:21</b><br>I have no pain!                                | <b>JOHN 1:14</b><br>The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven."   |
| <b>JOB 1:21</b><br>I have no pain!                                | <b>JOHN 1:14</b><br>The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven."   |
| <b>JOB 1:21</b><br>I have no pain!                                | <b>JOHN 1:14</b><br>The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven."   |
| <b>JOB 1:21</b><br>I have no pain!                                | <b>JOHN 1:14</b><br>The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven."   |
| <b>JOB 1:21</b><br>I have no pain!                                | <b>JOHN 1:14</b><br>The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven."   |
| <b>JOB 1:21</b><br>I have no pain!                                | <b>JOHN 1:14</b><br>The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven."   |
| <b>JOB 1:21</b><br>I have no pain!                                | <b>JOHN 1:14</b><br>The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as if from heaven."   |

**JOB 1:21**  
"I DON'T KNOW TAKE MY ROBESSESS LEVEL, BUT I WILL STAND ON THE BURN!"

**JOB 1:21**

## GENESIS 1

**THE CREATION**

**1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.  
 2 When the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. "Then God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. "God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. "God called the light 'day,' and the darkness he called 'night.' There was an evening, and there was a morning: one day.  
 3 "Then God said, 'Let there be an expanse between the waters, separating the water from the water.' So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse 'sky.' Evening came and there morning: the second day.  
 4 "Then God said, 'Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let the gathering of the water be called 'sea.' And God created the firmament.  
 5 "Then God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.' And it was so. "The earth produced vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the earth according to their kinds, and fruit trees with seed in it according to their kinds, and God saw that it was good. "Evening came and there morning: the third day.  
 6 "Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will serve as signs for seasons, and for days and years. They will mark the days of the month and the years, and will give light on the earth.' And it was so. "God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night—as well as the stars. "God placed them in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth, "to separate the day and the night, and to give light on the earth, and God saw that it was good. "Evening came and there morning: the fourth day.  
 7 "Then God said, 'Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.' So God created the large sea creatures and every living creature that moves and creeps on the water, according to their kinds. He also created every winged creature according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. "God blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the sea, and let the birds multiply on the earth.' "Evening came and there morning: the fifth day.  
 8 "Then God said, 'Let the earth produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that creep, and the wildfowl of the earth, according to their kinds.' And it was so. "The God made the wildfowl of the earth, the livestock, and every living creature that creeps on the ground. And God saw that it was good.  
 9 "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over the livestock and over all the earth, and over every animal of the land.' "So God

**BREAKING BREAD**

ACTS 2: LUKE 22:14-20; 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26

My gratitude was born two years before the Stock Market crashed in 1929. She spent her childhood in a home in the middle of the Great Depression, raised in a family who knew what it was to have very little. They worked hard for all they got, but it wasn't enough to get by. They sat on extra generation money, it would go long without use again. Those experiences taught her to save anything.

Now, eighty years later, she still gets her pain. Now, her love means to raise one eleven-year-old son in the 1920s. The larger handful of going through the great books and webinars because she has an abundance of resources. I've never known her to look back before offering to help someone in need.

As she has, because she had a group of believers on her generation. As she has, she has been the early Church. And she has a great deal of confidence and security, sure that God would meet all their needs. Instead of looking for possessions right out of fear, they shared freely with one another. I have a hard time looking at the way they lived without being convicted for building our culture to accommodate to become my brother's house.

What can that teach?

Every day, the early Church decided themselves to sharing anything.

Every day, they gathered together on the sabbath to eat each other's homes.

Every day, they broke bread.

Every day.

At first glance, this may give us warm, happy feelings and images of the early Church gathered together for fellowship. But they weren't sharing any need. They shared the most they could, doing around a table that for purposes, they were gathered at the table for communion.

When Jesus broke bread at the Last Supper, he commanded his disciples to continue the practice (LUKE 22:19-20). He wants us to continue to break bread together, too. In two minutes to remember Him and to practice the faith and communion with the saints. (1 CO 11:23-26)

So, we, we are a group of believers who cannot break bread, each every day. Every day, they broke bread, remembering that they had been broken on the cross for them. Every day, they remembered the sacrifice that it had been shed on the day of our second through faith.

**Break and every day, they remembered Jesus, and it changed the way they lived.**

Jesus continues to invite us to the new covenant God established through Jesus. We remember that the God Jesus died for, that He's given us life and redemption through Jesus. We remember that through faith alone we are saved, of because of what Christ has done (Eph 2:8). So as a habit to always remember His sacrifice, to abide for the glory of the early Church, and to great God together with joyful, and humble hearts.

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## LAYOUT

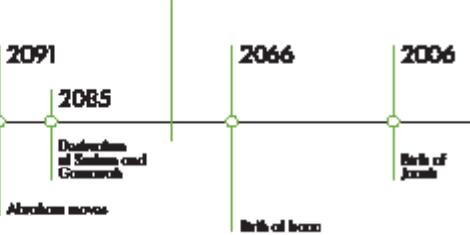
**GENEROUS MARGINS:** Pages of biblical text include extra-wide margins for note taking.

**CUSTOM BIBLE FONT:** With the release of the CSB comes a custom font made specifically for optimum ease of Bible reading.

## DEVOTIONALS

Throughout the text, find 189 written responses to Scripture. Each devotional focuses on a particular passage and seeks to point solely to God and the gospel.

**TIMELINES** Including significant biblical and world events, the timelines provide historical context for the action of the book.



# FEATURES

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| The Book of Daniel in History                              | 605 BC-535 BC  | 1436 |
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| The Book of Titus in History                               | AD 62          | 2064 |
| A Brief Historical Overview of Slavery in the Biblical Era |                | 2072 |
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# INTRODUCTION TO THE CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE®

The Bible is God’s revelation to humanity. It is our only source for completely reliable information about God, what happens when we die, and where history is headed. The Bible does these things because it is God’s inspired Word, inerrant in the original manuscripts. Bible translation brings God’s Word from the ancient languages (Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic) into today’s world. In dependence on God’s Spirit to accomplish this sacred task, the CSB Translation Oversight Committee and Holman Bible Publishers present the Christian Standard Bible.

## **Textual Base of the CSB**

The textual base for the New Testament (NT) is the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th edition, and the United Bible Societies’ *Greek New Testament*, 5th corrected edition. The text for the Old Testament (OT) is the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th edition.

Where there are significant differences among Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek manuscripts, the translators follow what they believe is the original reading and indicate the main alternative(s) in footnotes. The CSB uses the traditional verse divisions found in most Protestant Bibles.

## **Goals of This Translation**

- Provide English-speaking people worldwide with an accurate translation in contemporary English.
- Provide an accurate translation for personal study, sermon preparation, private devotions, and memorization.
- Provide a text that is clear and understandable, suitable for public reading, and shareable so that all may access its life-giving message.
- Affirm the authority of Scripture and champion its absolute truth against skeptical viewpoints.

## **Translation Philosophy of the CSB**

Most discussions of Bible translations speak of two opposite approaches: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. This terminology is meaningful, but Bible translations cannot be neatly sorted into these two categories. There is room for another category of translation philosophy that capitalizes on the strengths of the other two.

### **1. Formal Equivalence:**

Often called “word-for-word” (or “literal”) translation, the principle of formal equivalence seeks as nearly as possible to preserve the structure of the original language. It seeks to represent each word of the original text with an exact equivalent word in

the translation so that the reader can see word for word what the original human author wrote. The merits of this approach include its consistency with the conviction that the Holy Spirit did inspire the very words of Scripture in the original manuscripts. It also provides the English Bible student some access to the structure of the text in the original language. Formal equivalence can achieve accuracy to the degree that English has an exact equivalent for each word and that the grammatical patterns of the original language can be reproduced in understandable English. However, it can sometimes result in awkward, if not incomprehensible, English or in a misunderstanding of the author’s intent. The literal rendering of ancient idioms is especially difficult.

### **2. Dynamic or Functional Equivalence:**

Often called “thought-for-thought” translation, the principle of dynamic equivalence rejects as misguided the attempt to preserve the structure of the original language. It proceeds by extracting the meaning of a text from its form and then translating that meaning so that it makes the same impact on modern readers that the ancient text made on its original readers. Strengths of this approach include a high degree of clarity and readability, especially in places where the original is difficult to render word for word. It also acknowledges that accurate and effective translation may require interpretation. However, the meaning of a text cannot always be neatly separated from its form, nor can it always be precisely determined. A biblical author may have intended multiple meanings, but these may be lost with the elimination of normal structures. In striving for readability, dynamic equivalence also sometimes overlooks and loses some of the less prominent elements of meaning. Furthermore, lack of formal correspondence to the original makes it difficult to verify accuracy and thus can affect the usefulness of the translation for in-depth Bible study.

### **3. Optimal Equivalence:**

In practice, translations are seldom if ever purely formal or dynamic but favor one theory of Bible translation or the other to varying degrees. Optimal equivalence as a translation philosophy recognizes that form cannot always be neatly separated from meaning and should not be changed unless comprehension demands it. The primary goal of translation is to convey the sense of the original with as much clarity as the original text and the translation language permit. Optimal equivalence appreciates the goals of formal equivalence but also recognizes its limitations. Optimal equivalence starts with an exhaustive analysis

of the text at every level (word, phrase, clause, sentence, discourse) in the original language to determine its original meaning and intention (or purpose). Then, relying on the latest and best language tools and experts, the nearest corresponding semantic and linguistic equivalents are used to convey as much of the information and intention of the original text with as much clarity and readability as possible. This process assures the maximum transfer of both the words and the thoughts contained in the original.

The CSB uses optimal equivalence as its translation philosophy. In the many places throughout the Bible where a word-for-word rendering is understandable, a literal translation is used. When a word-for-word rendering might obscure the meaning for a modern audience, a more dynamic translation is used. The Christian Standard Bible places equal value on fidelity to the original and readability for a modern audience, resulting in a translation that achieves both goals.

### The Gender Language Use in Bible Translation

The goal of the translators of the Christian Standard Bible has not been to promote a cultural ideology but to translate the Bible faithfully. Recognizing modern usage of English, the CSB regularly translates the plural of the Greek word *ανθρωπος* (“man”) as “people” instead of “men,” and occasionally the singular as “one,” “someone,” or “everyone,” when the supporting pronouns in the original languages validate such a translation. While the CSB avoids using “he” or “him” unnecessarily, the translation does not restructure sentences to avoid them when they are in the text.

### History of the CSB

After several years of preliminary development, Holman Bible Publishers, the oldest Bible publisher in North America, assembled an international, interdenominational team of one hundred scholars, editors, stylists, and proofreaders, all of whom were committed to biblical inerrancy. Outside consultants and reviewers contributed valuable suggestions from their areas of expertise. Working with the original languages, an executive team of translators edited, polished, and reviewed the final manuscript, which was first published as the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) in 2004.

A standing committee was also formed to maintain the HCSB translation and look for ways to improve readability without compromising accuracy. As with the original translation team, the committee that prepared this revision of the HCSB, renamed the Christian Standard Bible is international and interdenominational, comprising evangelical scholars who honor the inspiration and authority of God’s written Word.

### Traditional Features Found in the CSB

In keeping with a long line of Bible publications, the CSB has retained a number of features found in traditional Bibles:

1. Traditional theological vocabulary (for example, *justification*, *sanctification*, *redemption*) has been retained since such terms have no other translation equivalent that adequately communicates their exact meaning.
2. Traditional spellings of names and places found in most Bibles have been used to make the CSB compatible with most Bible study tools.
3. Some editions of the CSB will print the words of Christ in red letters to help readers easily locate the spoken words of the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. Descriptive headings, printed above each section of Scripture, help readers quickly identify the contents of that section.
5. OT passages quoted in the NT are indicated. In the CSB, they are set in boldface type.

### Abbreviations in CSB Bibles

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| AD       | In the year of our Lord   |
| BC       | before Christ   |
| c.       | century   |
| ca       | circa   |
| chap(s). | chapter(s)  |
| cp.      | compare   |
| DSS      | Dead Sea Scrolls  |
| e.g.     | for example   |
| Eng      | English   |
| etc.     | et cetera   |
| Gk       | Greek   |
| Hb       | Hebrew  |
| i.e.     | that is   |
| Lat      | Latin   |
| lit      | literal(ly)   |
| LXX      | Septuagint—an ancient translation of the Old Testament into Greek |
| MT       | Masoretic Text  |
| NT       | New Testament   |
| ms(s)    | manuscript(s)   |
| OT       | Old Testament   |
| pl.      | plural  |
| P(s)     | Psalms(s)   |
| Sam      | Samaritan Pentateuch  |
| sg.      | singular  |
| Sym      | Symmachus   |
| Syr      | Syriac  |
| Tg       | Targum  |
| Theod    | Theodotian  |
| v./vv.   | verse, verses   |
| Vg       | Vulgate—an ancient translation of the Bible into Latin            |
| vol(s).  | volume(s)   |

*the*  
OLD TESTAMENT

It was  
very good  
indeed

# genesis



*God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed.* 1:31

**ON THE TIMELINE** Authorship of the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) has consistently been attributed to Moses, an influential Israelite leader from the fifteenth century BC. Though Genesis is technically anonymous, both the Old and New Testaments recognize Moses as the Torah’s author. Genesis was likely written during the forty years when the Israelites wandered in the desert (1446 BC–1406 BC). The events in Genesis begin at creation and conclude about 1800 BC with the circumstances leading up to the Israelites’ time in the land of Egypt.

**A LITTLE BACKGROUND** The Torah (also a Hebrew term for “law”) was seen as one unit until at least the second century BC. Some time before Christ was born it was divided into five separate books, later referred to as the Pentateuch. Genesis can be divided into two sections: the “primeval history,” or the general history found in chapters 1–11, and the “patriarchal history,” or the history focusing on God’s covenant with Abraham and his descendants, found in chapters 12–50.

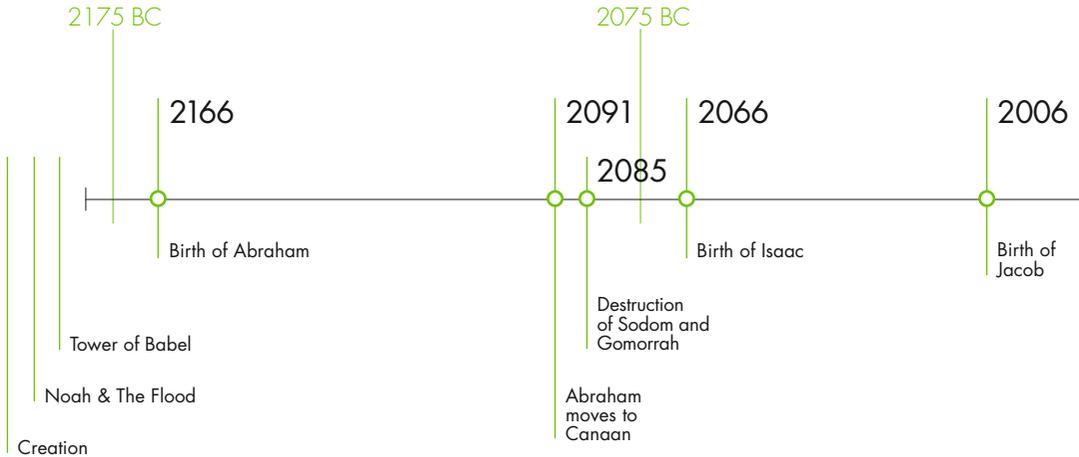
**MESSAGE & PURPOSE** Genesis is a book of new beginnings. It reveals the beginning of the heavens and the earth, of humanity and marriage, of sin and nations and languages, and the beginning of our need for a Savior. In Genesis we see that all God’s creation was, in the beginning, thoroughly good; and in Genesis we see mankind’s first sin and the consequences of that sin. All of our brokenness begins here, in the first book of the Bible, as does God’s covenant to redeem His people.

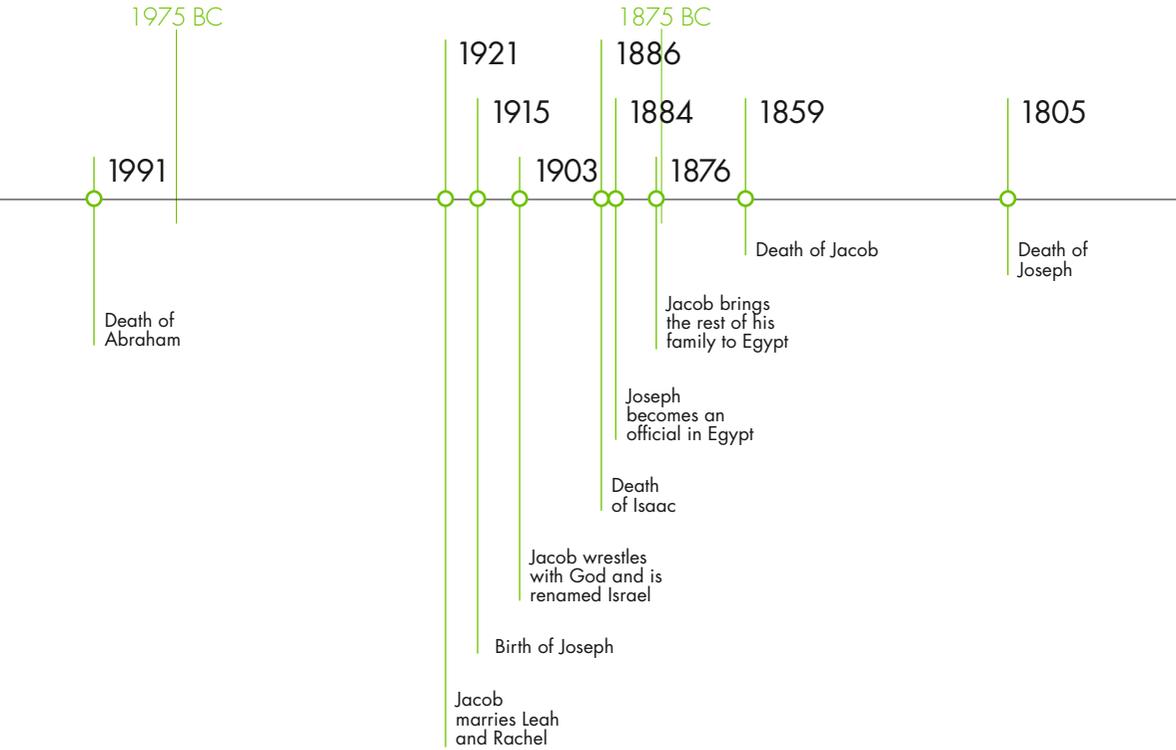
Genesis provides both the universal history of humankind and the patriarchal history of the nation of Israel. It unfolds God’s plan to bless and redeem humanity through Abraham’s descendants, remaining faithful to His people despite their unfaithfulness to Him.

## **GIVE THANKS FOR THE BOOK OF GENESIS:**

Genesis lays the groundwork for everything else we read and experience in Scripture. Through Genesis we understand where we came from, how we fell, and the beginning of God’s gracious work on our behalf. Genesis establishes our foundational understanding of God’s covenant with Israel through the giving of the Law. Without an understanding of the Law, we are unable to see our desperate need for our Savior, Jesus Christ.

# THE BOOK OF GENESIS IN HISTORY





# READ AND UNDERSTAND GENESIS

The Bible is a complete work in which many stories combine to tell one story. As you read the book of Genesis, consider reading the additional passages to discover how the whole of Scripture works together.

| Week 1  | GOING DEEPER                        |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genesis 1-3</b>         | John 1:1-5; Romans 16:20            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 4-5                | Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 12:24   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 6-8                | Psalm 144:13-14; Romans 3:10-25     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genesis 9-10</b>        | Luke 1:68-75; Revelation 10:1       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 11                 | Psalm 2; Luke 1:51                  |
| Week 2  | GOING DEEPER                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genesis 12:1-13:4</b>   | Matthew 1:1-2; Galatians 3:10-14    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 13:5-16:16         | Galatians 3:15-4:7; Hebrews 7:11-22 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 17-18              | Mark 10:23-31; Hebrews 9:15         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 19-20              | Psalm 136:23; 2 Peter 2:7-9         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genesis 21-22</b>       | Isaiah 54:1; Hebrews 11:8-12        |
| Week 3  | GOING DEEPER                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 23:1-25:18         | Ecclesiastes 12:7; Romans 9:9-23    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genesis 25:19-26:35</b> | 1 Samuel 14:47; Hebrews 6:13-18     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 27-28              | Psalm 121:5-8; Matthew 20:1-16      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genesis 29-30</b>       | Psalm 25:18; Song of Songs 1:1-7    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 31-32              | Psalm 34:7; Ephesians 3:7-12        |
| Week 4  | GOING DEEPER                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 33-34              | Psalm 44:11; Hebrews 11:20-22       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 35-36              | Psalm 116:1-2; Isaiah 43:2          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 37-38              | Psalm 77:2; Matthew 27:27-31        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 39                 | Psalm 1; Matthew 5:16               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 40-41              | Psalm 25:14; 2 Corinthians 3:5      |
| Week 5  | GOING DEEPER                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 42-43              | Romans 8:28; 1 Timothy 1:16         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 44:1-45:15         | Galatians 3:14; 1 Peter 1:10-12     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genesis 45:16-46:34</b> | Psalm 90:10-17; Isaiah 41:8-10      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 47:1-49:28         | Isaiah 63:9; Hebrews 7:23-25        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 49:29-33; 50       | Acts 2:22-24; Romans 12:19          |

## THE CREATION

**1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.<sup>A</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. <sup>3</sup> Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." There was an evening, and there was a morning: one day.

<sup>6</sup> Then God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters, separating water from water."<sup>7</sup> So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above the expanse. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the expanse "sky."<sup>B</sup> Evening came and then morning: the second day.

<sup>9</sup> Then God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry land "earth," and the gathering of the water he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, "Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds." And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth produced vegetation: seed-bearing plants according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> Evening came and then morning: the third day.

<sup>14</sup> Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will serve as signs for seasons<sup>C</sup> and for days and years. <sup>15</sup> They will be lights in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night — as well as the stars. <sup>17</sup> God placed them in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> Evening came and then morning: the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> Then God said, "Let the water swarm with<sup>D</sup> living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky."<sup>21</sup> So God created the large sea-creatures<sup>E</sup> and every living creature that moves and swarms in the water, according to their kinds. He also created every winged creature according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them: "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth."<sup>23</sup> Evening came and then morning: the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> Then God said, "Let the earth produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that crawl, and the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. <sup>25</sup> So God made the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that crawl on the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make man<sup>F</sup> in<sup>G</sup> our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth,<sup>H</sup> and the creatures that crawl<sup>I</sup> on the earth."

<sup>A</sup>1:1 Or *created the universe*   <sup>B</sup>1:8 Or "heavens."   <sup>C</sup>1:14 Or *for the appointed times*   <sup>D</sup>1:20 Lit *with swarms of*   <sup>E</sup>1:21 Or *created sea monsters*   <sup>F</sup>1:26 Or *human beings*; Hb 'adam, also in v. 27   <sup>G</sup>1:26 Or *as*   <sup>H</sup>1:26 Syr reads *sky, and over every animal of the land*   <sup>I</sup>1:26 Or *scurry*

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image;  
 he created him in<sup>A</sup> the image of God;  
 he created them male and female.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls<sup>B</sup> on the earth.” <sup>29</sup> God also said, “Look, I have given you every seed-bearing plant on the surface of the entire earth and every tree whose fruit contains seed. This will be food for you, <sup>30</sup> for all the wildlife of the earth, for every bird of the sky, and for every creature that crawls on the earth — everything having the breath of life in it — I have given<sup>C</sup> every green plant for food.” And it was so. <sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed. Evening came and then morning: the sixth day.

**2** So the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed. <sup>2</sup> On the seventh<sup>D</sup> day God had completed his work that he had done, and he rested<sup>E</sup> on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. <sup>3</sup> God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, for on it he rested from all his work of creation.<sup>F</sup>

MAN AND WOMAN IN THE GARDEN

<sup>4</sup> These are the records of the heavens and the earth, concerning their creation. At the time<sup>G</sup> that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, <sup>5</sup> no shrub of the field had yet grown on the land,<sup>H</sup> and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not made it rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground. <sup>6</sup> But mist would come up from the earth and water all the ground. <sup>7</sup> Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he placed the man he had formed. <sup>9</sup> The LORD God caused to grow out of the ground every tree pleasing in appearance and good for food, including the tree of life in the middle of the garden, as well as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup> A river went<sup>I</sup> out from Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became the source of four rivers. <sup>11</sup> The name of the first is Pishon, which flows through the entire land of Havilah,<sup>K</sup> where there is gold. <sup>12</sup> Gold from that land is pure;<sup>L</sup> bdellium<sup>M</sup> and onyx<sup>N</sup> are also there. <sup>13</sup> The name of the second river is Gihon, which flows through the entire land of Cush. <sup>14</sup> The name of the third river is Tigris, which runs east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. <sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die.” <sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be

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<sup>A</sup>1:27 Or *man as his own image; he created him as*    <sup>B</sup>1:28 Or *and all scurrying animals*    <sup>C</sup>1:30 *I have given* added for clarity    <sup>D</sup>2:2 Sam, LXX, Syr read *sixth*  
<sup>E</sup>2:2 Or *ceased*, also in v. 3    <sup>F</sup>2:3 Lit *work that God created to make*    <sup>G</sup>2:4 Lit *creation on the day*    <sup>H</sup>2:5 Or *earth*    <sup>I</sup>2:10 Or *goes*    <sup>J</sup>2:10 Lit *became four heads*  
<sup>K</sup>2:11 Or *of the Havilah*    <sup>L</sup>2:12 Lit *good*    <sup>M</sup>2:12 A yellowish, transparent gum resin    <sup>N</sup>2:12 Identity of this precious stone uncertain

# CLOSING THE DOOR ON SHAME

GENESIS 1-3; JOHN 1:1-5; ROMANS 16:20

When I read the chapters at the beginning of the Bible, where the world and all its inhabitants were as they were meant to be, a piece of me wants to pretend the story stops there.

God hung the stars, separated the waters, and created things so incredible and intricately beautiful our eyes can hardly make sense of them. “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed” (Gn 1:31). The end.

I want to stay in that story—the story of untainted perfection, the story where God made Adam and Eve, and they “felt no shame” (Gn 2:25). Can you imagine?

Eve wasn’t afraid to sing for fear someone might hear her. She wasn’t ashamed of her teeth, her accent, or the shape of her toes. She could’ve been a size 2 or 22, with green eyes and curly hair, or brown eyes and straight hair. However Eve looked, she certainly wasn’t ashamed of it! She walked around Eden with Adam, unashamed and at peace with her Maker.

Then along comes Genesis 3, and all the trombones in my head collectively “womp womp.” In disobedience, Adam and Eve sought to become like God. They made the decision that who they were wasn’t enough—they wanted more. With their sin came shame.

Genesis 3:7 says, “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked,”

so they made coverings to hide their nakedness. But all the fig leaves in Eden wouldn’t hide the sin in their souls. Adam and Eve were ashamed to be seen by God—they were ashamed of their sin.

Shame is a powerful force. Like Satan himself, it tells us all kinds of lies. But isn’t it interesting: Satan has a way of making us feel less ashamed of our sin (the thing that separates us from God), and more ashamed of ourselves (the thing that links us to Him).

When facing the world, we’re ashamed of our image, God-given though it is. When facing God, we’re ashamed of our sin. Shame is a double-headed monster from which there seems to be no escape. No wonder Eve wanted to hide!

But God has such good news for us today: there is a cure for shame of all kinds and for all time! “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus” (Rm 8:1). We can call off the impossible search for a fig leaf large enough to hide our sin and shame from God. Adam and Eve let shame in the door, but Jesus bore the shame of the whole world on the cross, taking it to the grave with Him. He defeated sin and shame, and death itself, so we can be presented blameless and unashamed to the Father.

**Jesus closed the door on shame and opened the door to repentance and freedom.** Let us live in that freedom today.

alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him.”<sup>19</sup> The LORD God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.<sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man<sup>a</sup> no helper was found corresponding to him.<sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place.<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man.<sup>23</sup> And the man said:

This one, at last, is bone of my bone  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one will be called “woman,”  
for she was taken from man.

<sup>24</sup>This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.<sup>25</sup> Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

### THE TEMPTATION AND THE FALL

**3** Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You can’t eat from any tree in the garden?’”

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

<sup>4</sup>“No! You will not die,” the serpent said to the woman.<sup>5</sup> “In fact, God knows that when<sup>b</sup> you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God,<sup>c</sup> knowing good and evil.”<sup>6</sup> The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

### SIN’S CONSEQUENCES

<sup>8</sup>Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze,<sup>d</sup> and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.<sup>9</sup> So the LORD God called out to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”

<sup>10</sup>And he said, “I heard you<sup>e</sup> in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.”

<sup>11</sup>Then he asked, “Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

<sup>12</sup>The man replied, “The woman you gave to be with me — she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate.”

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

And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

<sup>a</sup>2:20 Or for Adam    <sup>b</sup>3:5 Lit on the day    <sup>c</sup>3:5 Or gods, or divine beings

<sup>d</sup>3:8 Lit at the wind of the day    <sup>e</sup>3:10 Lit the sound of you

# LIES, SIN, AND DEFLATED BALLOONS

GENESIS 3:1-24; ROMANS 3:23; ROMANS 6:23

The grocery store near our house has a thing about balloons.

Like clowns at a circus, the cashiers whimsically bestow one on each child who rolls past the register as a reward for their excellent (or terrible) behavior. The bad news? I have two children, and inevitably, one balloon always makes a break for it in the parking lot. Somewhere between the cart corral and the car seats, one balloon—only one—will seize its opportunity to slip free.

That's when they turn on each other. Greed overcomes my children, and all they can think about is the one thing they cannot have. By the time we pull into the driveway at home, whatever affection they once shared for each other is long-forgotten, discarded for the love of self.

One such scene occurred in our home last week. The very next day I came upon the coveted balloon, hovering hesitantly just above the dining room floor—forgotten, deflated, and worthless.

This is what sin does: it lies. It promises to be shiny and colorful and inflated with excitement forever. *It promises to be worth it.* Sin tells us that God wants to keep the good stuff from us, that what we want matters more than what He has for us (Gn 3:4-5).

In Eden God told Adam, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die" (Gn 2:16-17). Man had supremacy over all of the earth, but this exclusion, this one law, caused Adam to doubt God's motives.

Adam and Eve sinned the first sin (Gn 3:6-7), and for the first time in the history of the world, we felt shame. The lie of sin—that *this* will make us like God, and that we can live apart from Him—failed to deliver. And so the original glory of man and Eden was lost (Gn 3:8-21). God's tender warning that "you will certainly die" was true for them, and it's true for us.

The human race is guilty because of Adam's sin. Each one of us is also guilty because of our own sins. Daily, hourly, even moment-to-moment, we believe the lie that God's law is holding us back, that we know better. Just as we scramble to act (or think, or fail to act), the shimmer tarnishes, the balloon deflates, and what we thought we needed—the thing that caused us to act outside of God's law—is discarded by sunrise the next morning.

**Sin wasn't worth it. It never is.**

But friends, keep reading! There is more! (And if you can't possibly bear to wait, turn to Romans 5:17 for the most glorious hint!)

- <sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent:  
 Because you have done this,  
 you are cursed more than any livestock  
 and more than any wild animal.  
 You will move on your belly  
 and eat dust all the days of your life.
- <sup>15</sup> I will put hostility between you and the woman,  
 and between your offspring and her offspring.  
 He will strike your head,  
 and you will strike his heel.
- <sup>16</sup> He said to the woman:  
 I will intensify your labor pains;  
 you will bear children with painful effort.  
 Your desire will be for your husband,  
 yet he will rule over you.
- <sup>17</sup> And he said to the man, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from  
 the tree about which I commanded you, 'Do not eat from it':  
 The ground is cursed because of you.  
 You will eat from it by means of painful labor<sup>A</sup>  
 all the days of your life.
- <sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you,  
 and you will eat the plants of the field.
- <sup>19</sup> You will eat bread<sup>B</sup> by the sweat of your brow  
 until you return to the ground,  
 since you were taken from it.  
 For you are dust,  
 and you will return to dust."
- <sup>20</sup> The man named his wife Eve<sup>C</sup> because she was the mother of all the  
 living.<sup>21</sup> The LORD God made clothing from skins for the man and his wife,  
 and he clothed them.
- <sup>22</sup> The LORD God said, "Since the man has become like one of us, knowing  
 good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live  
 forever."<sup>23</sup> So the LORD God sent him away from the garden of Eden to work  
 the ground from which he was taken.<sup>24</sup> He drove the man out and stationed  
 the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to  
 guard the way to the tree of life.

CAIN MURDERS ABEL

**4** The man was intimate with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave  
 birth to Cain. She said, "I have had a male child with the LORD's help."<sup>D</sup>  
<sup>2</sup> She also gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel became a shepherd of  
 flocks, but Cain worked the ground.<sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain presented  
 some of the land's produce as an offering to the LORD.<sup>4</sup> And Abel also pre-  
 sented an offering — some of the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions.

<sup>A</sup>3:17 Lit *it through pain*   <sup>B</sup>3:19 Or *food*   <sup>C</sup>3:20 Lit *Living, or Life*   <sup>D</sup>4:1 Lit *the LORD*

The LORD had regard for Abel and his offering,<sup>5</sup> but he did not have regard for Cain and his offering. Cain was furious, and he looked despondent.<sup>A</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you furious? And why do you look despondent?"<sup>B</sup> <sup>7</sup> If you do what is right, won't you be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."

<sup>8</sup> Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field."<sup>C</sup> And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

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

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's guardian?"

<sup>10</sup> Then he said, "What have you done? Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground!"<sup>11</sup> So now you are cursed, alienated from the ground that opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood you have shed.<sup>D</sup> <sup>12</sup> If you work the ground, it will never again give you its yield. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

<sup>13</sup> But Cain answered the LORD, "My punishment<sup>E</sup> is too great to bear!<sup>14</sup> Since you are banishing me today from the face of the earth, and I must hide from your presence and become a restless wanderer on the earth, whoever finds me will kill me."

<sup>15</sup> Then the LORD replied to him, "In that case,<sup>F</sup> whoever kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over."<sup>G</sup> And he placed a mark on Cain so that whoever found him would not kill him. <sup>16</sup> Then Cain went out from the LORD's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

#### THE LINE OF CAIN

<sup>17</sup> Cain was intimate with his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch. Then Cain became the builder of a city, and he named the city Enoch after his son. <sup>18</sup> Irad was born to Enoch, Irad fathered Mehujael, Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. <sup>19</sup> Lamech took two wives for himself, one named Adah and the other named Zillah. <sup>20</sup> Adah bore Jubal; he was the father of the nomadic herdsmen.<sup>H</sup> <sup>21</sup> His brother was named Jubal; he was the father of all who play the lyre and the flute. <sup>22</sup> Zillah bore Tubal-cain, who made all kinds of bronze and iron tools. Tubal-cain's sister was Naamah.

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

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
wives of Lamech, pay attention to my words.  
For I killed a man for wounding me,  
a young man for striking me.

<sup>24</sup> If Cain is to be avenged seven times over,  
then for Lamech it will be seventy-seven times!

<sup>25</sup> Adam was intimate with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, for she said, "God has given<sup>I</sup> me another child<sup>J</sup> in place of

<sup>A</sup>4:5 Lit *and his face fell* <sup>B</sup>4:6 Lit *why has your face fallen* <sup>C</sup>4:8 Sam, LXX, Syr, Vg; MT omits "*Let's go out to the field.*" <sup>D</sup>4:11 Lit *blood from your hand*

<sup>E</sup>4:13 Or *sin* <sup>F</sup>4:15 LXX, Syr, Vg read "*Not so!*" <sup>G</sup>4:15 Or *suffer severely*

<sup>H</sup>4:20 Lit *the dweller of tent and livestock* <sup>I</sup>4:25 The Hb word for *given* sounds like the name "Seth." <sup>J</sup>4:25 Lit *seed*

Abel, since Cain killed him.”<sup>26</sup> A son was born to Seth also, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD.

#### THE LINE OF SETH

**5** This is the document containing the family<sup>A</sup> records of Adam.<sup>B</sup> On the day that God created man,<sup>C</sup> he made him in the likeness of God;<sup>2</sup> he created them male and female. When they were created, he blessed them and called them mankind.<sup>D</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Adam was 130 years old when he fathered a son in his likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.<sup>4</sup> Adam lived 800 years after he fathered Seth, and he fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>5</sup> So Adam's life lasted 930 years; then he died.

<sup>6</sup> Seth was 105 years old when he fathered Enosh.<sup>7</sup> Seth lived 807 years after he fathered Enosh, and he fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>8</sup> So Seth's life lasted 912 years; then he died.

<sup>9</sup> Enosh was 90 years old when he fathered Kenan.<sup>10</sup> Enosh lived 815 years after he fathered Kenan, and he fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>11</sup> So Enosh's life lasted 905 years; then he died.

<sup>12</sup> Kenan was 70 years old when he fathered Mahalalel.<sup>13</sup> Kenan lived 840 years after he fathered Mahalalel, and he fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>14</sup> So Kenan's life lasted 910 years; then he died.

<sup>15</sup> Mahalalel was 65 years old when he fathered Jared.<sup>16</sup> Mahalalel lived 830 years after he fathered Jared, and he fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>17</sup> So Mahalalel's life lasted 895 years; then he died.

<sup>18</sup> Jared was 162 years old when he fathered Enoch.<sup>19</sup> Jared lived 800 years after he fathered Enoch, and he fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>20</sup> So Jared's life lasted 962 years; then he died.

<sup>21</sup> Enoch was 65 years old when he fathered Methuselah.<sup>22</sup> And after he fathered Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>23</sup> So Enoch's life lasted 365 years.<sup>24</sup> Enoch walked with God; then he was not there because God took him.

<sup>25</sup> Methuselah was 187 years old when he fathered Lamech.<sup>26</sup> Methuselah lived 782 years after he fathered Lamech, and he fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>27</sup> So Methuselah's life lasted 969 years; then he died.

<sup>28</sup> Lamech was 182 years old when he fathered a son.<sup>29</sup> And he named him Noah,<sup>E</sup> saying, “This one will bring us relief from the agonizing labor of our hands, caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.”<sup>30</sup> Lamech lived 595 years after he fathered Noah, and he fathered other sons and daughters.<sup>31</sup> So Lamech's life lasted 777 years; then he died.

<sup>32</sup> Noah was 500 years old, and he fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

#### SONS OF GOD AND DAUGHTERS OF MANKIND

**6** When mankind began to multiply on the earth and daughters were born to them,<sup>2</sup> the sons of God saw that the daughters of mankind were beautiful, and they took any they chose as wives<sup>F</sup> for themselves.<sup>3</sup> And the LORD said, “My Spirit will not remain<sup>G</sup> with<sup>H</sup> mankind forever, because

<sup>A</sup>5:1 Lit *written family*   <sup>B</sup>5:1 Or *mankind*   <sup>C</sup>5:1 Or *Adam, human beings*

<sup>D</sup>5:2 Hb *'adam*   <sup>E</sup>5:29 In Hb, the name *Noah* sounds like “bring us relief.”

<sup>F</sup>6:2 Or *women*   <sup>G</sup>6:3 Or *strive*   <sup>H</sup>6:3 Or *in*

they are corrupt. <sup>A</sup> Their days will be 120 years.” <sup>4</sup> The Nephilim <sup>B</sup> were on the earth both in those days and afterward, when the sons of God came to the daughters of mankind, who bore children to them. They were the powerful men of old, the famous men.

### JUDGMENT DECREED

<sup>5</sup> When the LORD saw that human wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every inclination of the human mind was nothing but evil all the time, <sup>6</sup> the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and he was deeply grieved. <sup>C</sup> <sup>7</sup> Then the LORD said, “I will wipe mankind, whom I created, off the face of the earth, together with the animals, creatures that crawl, and birds of the sky — for I regret that I made them.” <sup>8</sup> Noah, however, found favor with the LORD.

### GOD WARNS NOAH

<sup>9</sup> These are the family records of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among his contemporaries; Noah walked with God. <sup>10</sup> And Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

<sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with wickedness. <sup>D</sup> <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth was, for every creature had corrupted its way on the earth. <sup>13</sup> Then God said to Noah, “I have decided to put an end to every creature, for the earth is filled with wickedness because of them; therefore I am going to destroy them along with the earth.

<sup>14</sup> “Make yourself an ark of gopher <sup>E</sup> wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it with pitch inside and outside. <sup>15</sup> This is how you are to make it: The ark will be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. <sup>F</sup> <sup>16</sup> You are to make a roof, <sup>G</sup> finishing the sides of the ark to within eighteen inches <sup>H</sup> of the roof. You are to put a door in the side of the ark. Make it with lower, middle, and upper decks.

<sup>17</sup> “Understand that I am bringing a flood — floodwaters on the earth to destroy every creature under heaven with the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. <sup>18</sup> But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark with your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives. <sup>19</sup> You are also to bring into the ark two of all the living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. <sup>20</sup> Two of everything — from the birds according to their kinds, from the livestock according to their kinds, and from the animals that crawl on the ground according to their kinds — will come to you so that you can keep them alive. <sup>21</sup> Take with you every kind of food that is eaten; gather it as food for you and for them.” <sup>22</sup> And Noah did this. He did everything that God had commanded him.

### ENTERING THE ARK

**7** Then the LORD said to Noah, “Enter the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. <sup>2</sup> You are to take with you seven pairs, a male and its female, of all the clean animals, and two of the animals that are not clean, a male and

<sup>A</sup>6:3 Lit *flesh* <sup>B</sup>6:4 Possibly means “fallen ones”; traditionally, “giants”; Nm 13:31-33 <sup>C</sup>6:6 Lit *was grieved to his heart* <sup>D</sup>6:11 Or *injustice*, also in v. 13 <sup>E</sup>6:14 Unknown species of tree; perhaps pine or cypress <sup>F</sup>6:15 Or *300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high* <sup>G</sup>6:16 Or *window, or hatch*; Hb uncertain <sup>H</sup>6:16 Lit *to a cubit*

its female, <sup>3</sup> and seven pairs, male and female, of the birds of the sky — in order to keep offspring alive throughout the earth. <sup>4</sup> Seven days from now I will make it rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing I have made I will wipe off the face of the earth.” <sup>5</sup> And Noah did everything that the LORD commanded him.

<sup>6</sup> Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came and water covered the earth. <sup>7</sup> So Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives entered the ark because of the floodwaters. <sup>8</sup> From the clean animals, unclean animals, birds, and every creature that crawls on the ground, <sup>9</sup> two of each, male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, just as God had commanded him. <sup>10</sup> Seven days later the floodwaters came on the earth.

THE FLOOD

<sup>11</sup> In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the sources of the vast watery depths burst open, the floodgates of the sky were opened, <sup>12</sup> and the rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. <sup>13</sup> On that same day Noah along with his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, Noah’s wife, and his three sons’ wives entered the ark with him. <sup>14</sup> They entered it with all the wildlife according to their kinds, all livestock according to their kinds, all the creatures that crawl on the earth according to their kinds, every flying creature — all the birds and every winged creature — according to their kinds. <sup>15</sup> Two of every creature that has the breath of life in it came to Noah and entered the ark. <sup>16</sup> Those that entered, male and female of every creature, entered just as God had commanded him. Then the LORD shut him in.

<sup>17</sup> The flood continued for forty days on the earth; the water increased and lifted up the ark so that it rose above the earth. <sup>18</sup> The water surged and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. <sup>19</sup> Then the water surged even higher on the earth, and all the high mountains under the whole sky were covered. <sup>20</sup> The mountains were covered as the water surged above them more than twenty feet. <sup>A</sup> <sup>21</sup> Every creature perished — those that crawl on the earth, birds, livestock, wildlife, and those that swarm <sup>B</sup> on the earth, as well as all mankind. <sup>22</sup> Everything with the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils — everything on dry land died. <sup>23</sup> He wiped out every living thing that was on the face of the earth, from mankind to livestock, to creatures that crawl, to the birds of the sky, and they were wiped off the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. <sup>24</sup> And the water surged on the earth 150 days.

THE FLOOD RECEDES

**8** God remembered Noah, as well as all the wildlife and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. God caused a wind <sup>C</sup> to pass over the earth, and the water began to subside. <sup>2</sup> The sources of the watery depths and the floodgates of the sky were closed, and the rain from the sky stopped. <sup>3</sup> The water steadily receded from the earth, and by the end of 150 days the water had decreased significantly. <sup>4</sup> The ark came to rest in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

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<sup>A</sup>7:20 Lit *surged 15 cubits*    <sup>B</sup>7:21 Lit *all the swarming swarms*    <sup>C</sup>8:1 Or *spirit*;  
Gn 1:2

<sup>5</sup>The water continued to recede until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were visible. <sup>6</sup>After forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made, <sup>7</sup>and he sent out a raven. It went back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent out a dove to see whether the water on the earth's surface had gone down, <sup>9</sup>but the dove found no resting place for its foot. It returned to him in the ark because water covered the surface of the whole earth. He reached out and brought it into the ark to himself. <sup>10</sup>So Noah waited seven more days and sent out the dove from the ark again. <sup>11</sup>When the dove came to him at evening, there was a plucked olive leaf in its beak. So Noah knew that the water on the earth's surface had gone down. <sup>12</sup>After he had waited another seven days, he sent out the dove, but it did not return to him again. <sup>13</sup>In the six hundred and first year,<sup>^</sup> in the first month, on the first day of the month, the water that had covered the earth was dried up. Then Noah removed the ark's cover and saw that the surface of the ground was drying. <sup>14</sup>By the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the earth was dry.

### THE LORD'S PROMISE

<sup>15</sup>Then God spoke to Noah, <sup>16</sup>"Come out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you. <sup>17</sup>Bring out all the living creatures<sup>b</sup> that are with you — birds, livestock, those that crawl on the earth — and they will spread over the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." <sup>18</sup>So Noah, along with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, came out. <sup>19</sup>All the animals, all the creatures that crawl, and all the flying creatures — everything that moves on the earth — came out of the ark by their families.

<sup>20</sup>Then Noah built an altar to the LORD. He took some of every kind of clean animal and every kind of clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. <sup>21</sup>When the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, he said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of human beings, even though the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth onward. And I will never again strike down every living thing as I have done.

<sup>22</sup> As long as the earth endures,  
seedtime and harvest, cold and heat,  
summer and winter, and day and night  
will not cease."

### GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH

**9** God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. <sup>2</sup>The fear and terror of you will be in every living creature on the earth, every bird of the sky, every creature that crawls on the ground, and all the fish of the sea. They are placed under your authority.<sup>c</sup> <sup>3</sup>Every creature that lives and moves will be food for you; as I gave the green plants, I have given you everything. <sup>4</sup>However, you must not eat meat with its lifeblood in it. <sup>5</sup>And I will require a penalty for your lifeblood;<sup>d</sup> I will require it from any animal and from any human; if someone murders a fellow human, I will require that person's life.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>^</sup>8:13 = of Noah's life    <sup>b</sup>8:17 Lit *creatures of all flesh*    <sup>c</sup>9:2 Lit *are given in your hand*    <sup>d</sup>9:5 Lit *And your blood belonging to your life I will seek*    <sup>e</sup>9:5 Lit *any human; from the hand of a man his brother I will seek the life of the human.*

# A LEGACY OF FAITH

GENESIS 9–10; LUKE 1:68-75

Every spiritual giant is standing on someone else's shoulders.

That is the unexpected sermon proclaimed through Noah's life after the flood. After the dramatic events found in Genesis 6–8, the narrative pivots past Noah to his family and a long list of names identifying Noah's children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

*Family. Generations. Descendants. Clans.*

This is the drumbeat of generational language we hear in these chapters. The words father and son are mentioned nearly thirty times in just 61 verses. A chronic skimmer, I'm tempted to gloss over generational lists, but if I resist the urge and pay attention, I see the branches of Noah's family tree are loaded with significance.

Canaan was Noah's grandson (Gn 9:18). We will see that name again. (Check out the name of the place God promised Abraham in Gn 12:1-3 and the Israelites in Ex 3:17.) Egypt was another grandson of Noah. He would settle in the place where Joseph would later reign under Pharaoh (Gn 45:8) and where Jesus would flee with His parents, fulfilling an ancient prophecy (Mt 2:13-23). While it may seem like Jesus is far removed from this early story in Genesis, that isn't really the case. Noah's son Shem was a chosen branch on the family tree. From his line would come Abraham, the Israelites, King David, and ultimately Jesus, our Savior (Gn 11:10-32).

After the floodwaters receded, Noah went back to life as usual. He tended a vineyard and bounced grandbabies on his knee. For 350 years after the flood, life simply went on. Then something unremarkable happened: "So Noah's life lasted 950 years; then he died" (Gn 9:29). Despite his great triumph on the ark and his legacy of radical obedience, Noah's story ended with a funeral, just like mine will.

But the torch of faith was passed through the generations, and that flame can be traced back to this spark: "And Noah did everything that the LORD commanded him" (Gn 7:5).

**Obedience to God was the gift Noah gave to the next generation. When we obey God, we are storing away treasure for those who will come behind us.**

Noah's children and grandchildren made an impact we are still feeling today—but it didn't happen instantly. We can affect future generations, too, but we have to make peace with the marathon of life, refusing to settle for the sprint. Noah's life shows us that being serious about kingdom-building means being serious about delayed gratification. His story urges us to desire for the Lord to be glorified in His timing.

As God's people, we stand on the shoulders of those who have been faithful to obey before us. Their stories, like Noah's, remind us that when we obey, in time God builds a legacy through us.

<sup>6</sup> Whoever sheds human blood,  
by humans his blood will be shed,  
for God made humans in his image.

<sup>7</sup> But you, be fruitful and multiply; spread out over the earth and multiply on it.”

<sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and his sons with him, <sup>9</sup> “Understand that I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that is with you — birds, livestock, and all wild-life of the earth that are with you — all the animals of the earth that came out of the ark. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you that never again will every creature be wiped out by floodwaters; there will never again be a flood to destroy the earth.”

<sup>12</sup> And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all future generations: <sup>13</sup> I have placed my bow in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup> Whenever I form clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> I will remember my covenant between me and you and all the living creatures: <sup>A</sup> water will never again become a flood to destroy every creature. <sup>16</sup> The bow will be in the clouds, and I will look at it and remember the permanent covenant between God and all the living creatures <sup>B</sup> on earth.” <sup>17</sup> God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and every creature on earth.”

#### PROPHECIES ABOUT NOAH’S FAMILY

<sup>18</sup> Noah’s sons who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. <sup>19</sup> These three were Noah’s sons, and from them the whole earth was populated.

<sup>20</sup> Noah, as a man of the soil, began by planting <sup>C</sup> a vineyard. <sup>21</sup> He drank some of the wine, became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent.

<sup>22</sup> Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside. <sup>23</sup> Then Shem and Japheth took a cloak and placed it over both their shoulders, and walking backward, they covered their father’s nakedness. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father naked.

<sup>24</sup> When Noah awoke from his drinking and learned what his youngest son had done to him, <sup>25</sup> he said:

Canaan is cursed.

He will be the lowest of slaves to his brothers.

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

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem;

Let Canaan be <sup>D</sup> Shem’s slave.

<sup>27</sup> Let God extend Japheth;<sup>E</sup>

let Japheth dwell in the tents of Shem;

let Canaan be Shem’s slave.

<sup>28</sup> Now Noah lived 350 years after the flood. <sup>29</sup> So Noah’s life lasted 950 years; then he died.

<sup>A</sup>9:15 Lit *and creatures of all flesh* <sup>B</sup>9:16 Lit *creatures of all flesh* <sup>C</sup>9:20 Or *Noah began to be a farmer and planted* <sup>D</sup>9:26 As a wish or prayer; others interpret the verbs in vv. 26-27 as prophecy: *Canaan will be . . .* <sup>E</sup>9:27 In Hb, the name *Japheth* sounds like the word “extend.”

## THE TABLE OF NATIONS

**10** These are the family records of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. They also had sons after the flood.

<sup>2</sup> Japheth's sons: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

<sup>3</sup> Gomer's sons: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. <sup>4</sup> And Javan's sons: Eliphaz, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. <sup>A</sup> <sup>5</sup> From these descendants, the peoples of the coasts and islands spread out into their lands according to their clans in their nations, each with its own language.

<sup>6</sup> Ham's sons: Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. <sup>7</sup> Cush's sons: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. And Raamah's sons: Sheba and Dedan.

<sup>8</sup> Cush fathered Nimrod, who began to be powerful in the land. <sup>9</sup> He was a powerful hunter in the sight of the LORD. That is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a powerful hunter in the sight of the LORD." <sup>10</sup> His kingdom started with Babylon, Erech, <sup>B</sup> Accad, <sup>C</sup> and Calneh, <sup>D</sup> in the land of Shinar. <sup>E</sup> <sup>11</sup> From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, <sup>12</sup> and Resen, between Nineveh and the great city Calah.

<sup>13</sup> Mizraim <sup>F</sup> fathered the people of Lud, Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh, <sup>14</sup> Pathrus, Casluh (the Philistines came from them), and Caphtor.

<sup>15</sup> Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, <sup>16</sup> as well as the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, <sup>17</sup> the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, <sup>18</sup> the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the Canaanite clans scattered. <sup>19</sup> The Canaanite border went from Sidon going toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and going toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim as far as Lasha.

<sup>20</sup> These are Ham's sons by their clans, according to their languages, in their lands and their nations.

<sup>21</sup> And Shem, Japheth's older brother, also had sons. Shem was the father of all the sons of Eber. <sup>22</sup> Shem's sons were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram.

<sup>23</sup> Aram's sons: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

<sup>24</sup> Arpachshad fathered <sup>G</sup> Shelah, and Shelah fathered Eber. <sup>25</sup> Eber had two sons. One was named Peleg, <sup>H</sup> for during his days the earth was divided; his brother was named Joktan. <sup>26</sup> And Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, <sup>27</sup> Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>28</sup> Obal, Abimael, Sheba, <sup>29</sup> Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were Joktan's sons. <sup>30</sup> Their settlements extended from Mesha to Sephar, the eastern hill country.

<sup>31</sup> These are Shem's sons by their clans, according to their languages, in their lands and their nations.

<sup>32</sup> These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their family records, in their nations. The nations on earth spread out from these after the flood.

## THE TOWER OF BABYLON

**11** The whole earth had the same language and vocabulary. <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> As people <sup>J</sup> migrated from the east, <sup>K</sup> they found a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. <sup>3</sup> They said to each other, "Come, let us make oven-fired bricks." (They used brick for stone and asphalt for mortar.) <sup>4</sup> And they said, "Come,

<sup>A</sup>10:4 Some Hb mss, Sam, LXX read *Rodanim*; 1 Ch 1:7 <sup>B</sup>10:10 Or *Uruk*

<sup>C</sup>10:10 Or *Akkad* <sup>D</sup>10:10 Or *and all of them* <sup>E</sup>10:10 Or *in Babylonia*

<sup>F</sup>10:13 = *Egypt* <sup>G</sup>10:24 LXX reads *fathered Cainan, and Cainan fathered*; Gn

11:12-13; Lk 3:35-36 <sup>H</sup>10:25 = *Division* <sup>I</sup>11:1 Lit *one lip and the same words*

<sup>J</sup>11:2 Lit *they* <sup>K</sup>11:2 Or *migrated eastward*

*the*  
NEW TESTAMENT

Repent  
BECAUSE THE  
KINGDOM  
of  
HEAVEN  
HAS COME NEAR

# matthew



*From then on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near.” 4:17*

**ON THE TIMELINE** Matthew was written in the first century, around AD 60, before the fall of the temple in Jerusalem (AD 70). The events of Matthew took place during the life of Christ, between roughly 5 BC and AD 33.

**A LITTLE BACKGROUND** Though he did not identify himself in the text, the early church unanimously affirmed that the apostle Matthew authored the Gospel of Matthew. Most scholars believe that Matthew used Mark’s Gospel in writing his own. If this is correct, Matthew’s Gospel was written after Mark’s, though the date of Mark’s Gospel is also a bit of a mystery. Irenaeus (ca AD 180) claimed that Mark wrote his Gospel after Peter’s death in the mid-60s. However, Clement of Alexandria, who wrote only twenty years after Irenaeus, claimed that Mark wrote his Gospel while Peter was still alive.

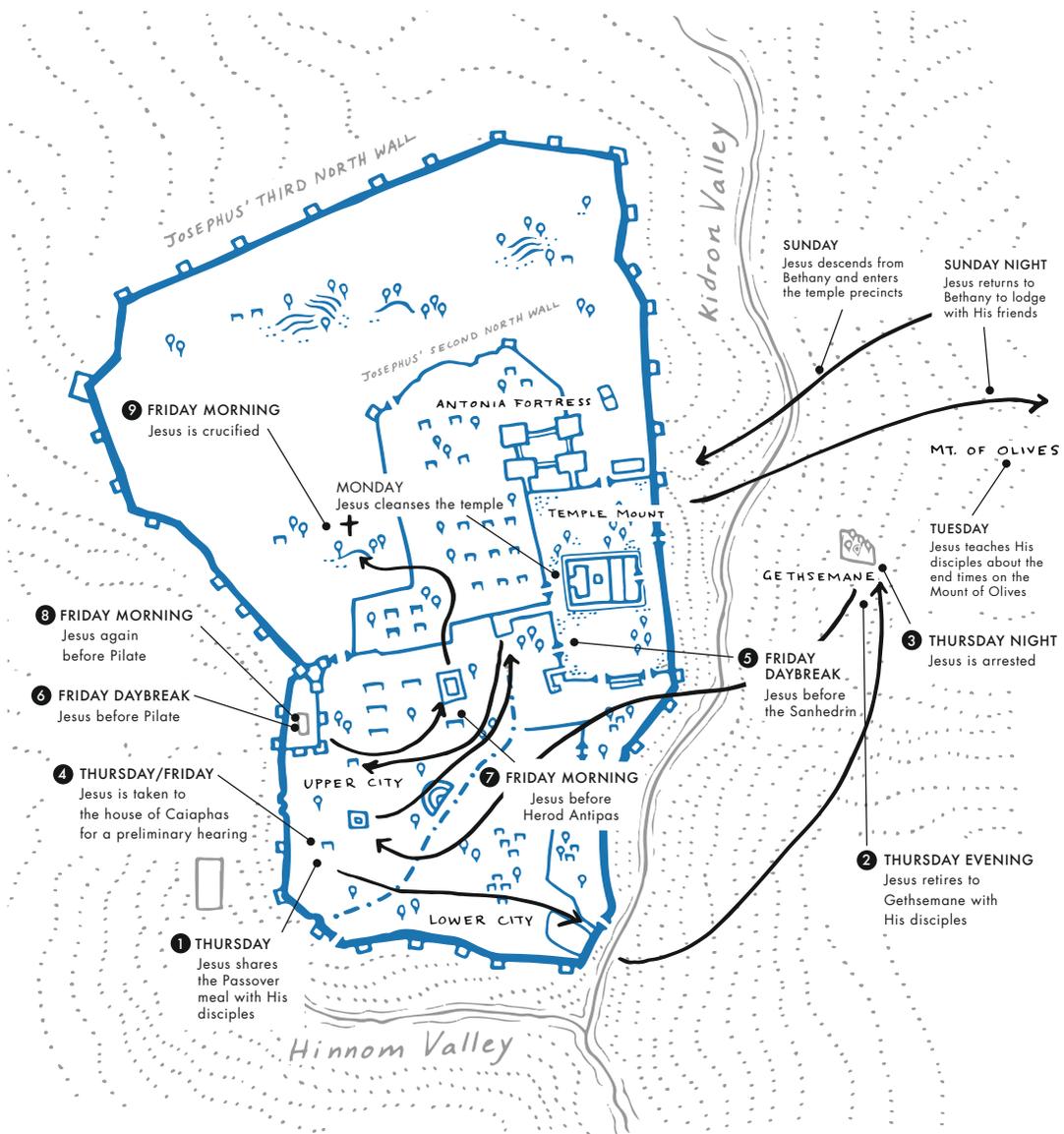
**MESSAGE & PURPOSE** It seems fitting that the first book of the New Testament begins with the words: “An account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ.” This Gospel was written from a strong Jewish perspective to show that Jesus truly is the Messiah and coming King promised in the Old Testament.

Matthew presents an eyewitness testimony of the ministry of Jesus and emphasizes certain theological truths:

1. Jesus is the Messiah, the long-awaited King of God’s people.
2. Jesus is the new Abraham, the founder of a new spiritual Israel consisting of all people (both Jews and Gentiles) who choose to follow Him.
3. Jesus is the new Moses, the deliverer, instructor, and mediator of God’s people.
4. Jesus is the Immanuel, the virgin-born Son of God who fulfills the promises of the OT.

## **GIVE THANKS FOR THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW**

As the first book in the NT, the Gospel of Matthew serves as a gateway between the two testaments. Of the NT books, and certainly of the four Gospels, Matthew makes the most direct connections to the OT. Matthew gave us God’s entire plan from Genesis to Revelation, and he referred to Hebrew prophecies about sixty times. He also looked forward by discussing not only the Messiah’s coming and His ministry, but also His future plan for His Church and kingdom.



## THE PASSION WEEK IN JERUSALEM

## Week 1

### GOING DEEPER

- Matthew 1–2** Isaiah 9:2-7; 11:1-9; Jeremiah 31:1-5
- Matthew 3–4 Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 4:1-6
- Matthew 5:1-16 Psalm 37:1-11; 2 Corinthians 7:1-10
- Matthew 5:17-48 2 Timothy 3:15-16; James 4:1-2
- Matthew 6–7** 1 Chronicles 29:11-13; 1 John 2:28-29

## Week 2

### GOING DEEPER

- Matthew 8 2 Samuel 22:1-6; Isaiah 53:4-5
- Matthew 9 Numbers 19:11-21; Hosea 2:19-20
- Matthew 10 Acts 1:1-3; James 2:1-7
- Matthew 11 Isaiah 29:18-19; 1 John 5:3
- Matthew 12 Leviticus 19:9-10; Isaiah 42:1-4

## Week 3

### GOING DEEPER

- Matthew 13:1-52 Exodus 34:35; 1 Corinthians 5:6-7
- Matthew 13:53–14:36 Deuteronomy 8:3; Isaiah 43:10-13
- Matthew 15–16 Zechariah 12:10; 2 Peter 1:16-18
- Matthew 17–18** 1 Kings 8:10-13; Jeremiah 23:1-4
- Matthew 19–20 Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Peter 3:10-13

## Week 4

### GOING DEEPER

- Matthew 21–22** Ezekiel 16:10-13; Zechariah 9:9
- Matthew 23–24 Exodus 10:21-23; Romans 8:22-23
- Matthew 25 Isaiah 54:4-6; Daniel 7:13-14
- Matthew 26 Leviticus 23:5-6; Isaiah 53:7; Jeremiah 31:31
- Matthew 27–28** Psalm 22:7-8; 1 Corinthians 15:6; 2 Corinthians 3:18

# READ AND UNDERSTAND MATTHEW

The Bible is a complete work in which many stories combine to tell one story. As you read the Gospel of Matthew, consider reading the additional passages to discover how the whole of Scripture works together.

## THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST

**1** An account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

## FROM ABRAHAM TO DAVID

- <sup>2</sup> Abraham fathered<sup>A</sup> Isaac,  
Isaac fathered Jacob,  
Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers,
- <sup>3</sup> Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar,  
Perez fathered Hezron,  
Hezron fathered Aram,
- <sup>4</sup> Aram fathered Amminadab,  
Amminadab fathered Nahshon,  
Nahshon fathered Salmon,
- <sup>5</sup> Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab,  
Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth,  
Obed fathered Jesse,
- <sup>6</sup> and Jesse fathered King David.

## FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

- David fathered Solomon<sup>B</sup> by Uriah's wife,
- <sup>7</sup> Solomon fathered Rehoboam,  
Rehoboam fathered Abijah,  
Abijah fathered Asa,<sup>C</sup>
- <sup>8</sup> Asa<sup>C</sup> fathered Jehoshaphat,  
Jehoshaphat fathered Joram,<sup>D</sup>  
Joram fathered Uzziah,
- <sup>9</sup> Uzziah fathered Jotham,  
Jotham fathered Ahaz,  
Ahaz fathered Hezekiah,
- <sup>10</sup> Hezekiah fathered Manasseh,  
Manasseh fathered Amon,<sup>E</sup>  
Amon fathered Josiah,
- <sup>11</sup> and Josiah fathered Jeconiah and his brothers  
at the time of the exile to Babylon.

## FROM THE EXILE TO THE CHRIST

- <sup>12</sup> After the exile to Babylon  
Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel,  
Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel,
- <sup>13</sup> Zerubbabel fathered Abiud,  
Abiud fathered Eliakim,  
Eliakim fathered Azor,
- <sup>14</sup> Azor fathered Zadok,  
Zadok fathered Achim,  
Achim fathered Eliud,

<sup>A</sup>1:2 In vv. 2-16 either a son, as here, or a later descendant, as in v. 8

<sup>B</sup>1:6 Other mss add *King* <sup>C</sup>1:7,8 Other mss read *Asaph* <sup>D</sup>1:8 = Jehoram

<sup>E</sup>1:10 Other mss read *Amos*

- <sup>15</sup> Eliud fathered Eleazar,  
 Eleazar fathered Matthan,  
 Matthan fathered Jacob,  
<sup>16</sup> and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Mary,  
 who gave birth to Jesus who is called the Christ.

<sup>17</sup> So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations; and from David until the exile to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the exile to Babylon until the Christ, fourteen generations.

#### THE NATIVITY OF THE CHRIST

<sup>18</sup> The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After his mother Mary had been engaged<sup>a</sup> to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> So her husband Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.

<sup>20</sup> But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

<sup>22</sup> Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

- <sup>23</sup> **See, the virgin will become pregnant  
 and give birth to a son,  
 and they will name him Immanuel,<sup>b</sup>**

which is translated "God is with us."

<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke up, he did as the Lord's angel had commanded him. He married her <sup>25</sup> but did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. <sup>c</sup> And he named him Jesus.

#### WISE MEN VISIT THE KING

**2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him."<sup>d</sup>

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Christ would be born.

<sup>5</sup> "In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet:

- <sup>6</sup> **And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
 are by no means least among the rulers of Judah:  
 Because out of you will come a ruler  
 who will shepherd my people Israel."**<sup>e</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and

<sup>a</sup>1:18 Or *betrothed* <sup>b</sup>1:23 Is 7:14 <sup>c</sup>1:25 Other mss read *to her firstborn son*  
<sup>d</sup>2:2 Or *to pay him homage* <sup>e</sup>2:6 Mc 5:2

# AN EDICT OF DEATH

MATTHEW 1-2; ISAIAH 7:14; ISAIAH 9:2-7; ISAIAH 11:1-9; MICAH 5:2

I like it when things go according to plan. More specifically, my plan. But the world doesn't revolve around me, and sometimes plans have to change. When they do, I usually remain pretty open to those changes (meaning, I hyperventilate and break out in a cold sweat).

I wonder if that's what happened to Mary after the wise men left. In the middle of the night Joseph suddenly woke her, packed up their toddler, and took their family to Egypt. I'm sure this wasn't what she'd planned for them, especially when an angel of God told them both that said toddler was the Son of the Most High (Lk 1:32).

Mary's best-laid plans couldn't hold up under this somber truth: the Messiah sent to bring life was targeted by an edict of death. It may not have been Mary's plan to flee, but she could rest assured that what was happening to their family wasn't outside of God's plan—nothing ever is.

Matthew's Gospel tells us of God's unwavering plan to save His people. Despite the wickedness and darkness surrounding the birth of Christ, nothing could thwart the redemption God had been orchestrating since the beginning of time. It was finally time for the Messiah to come.

Referencing one Old Testament prophecy after another, Matthew proves how this child from

Bethlehem is the Messiah the Jews had been waiting for—the heir to David's throne, the rightful King of Israel, the One to save His people and to bring redemption to the world. He was the fulfillment of God's ultimate plan.

**Like Jesus, we come into this world under an edict of death. His was physical. Ours is spiritual.** Through Adam we all inherit sin, and the punishment we all deserve for that sin is death (Rm 6:23). Jesus, however, being conceived of the Holy Spirit, didn't inherit this same sin nature.

**Yet, Christ accepted death for us.** Jesus took on the punishment we deserve as sinners, surrendering Himself to death on the cross—a death He willingly received for the joy set before Him: the salvation of His people (Heb 12:2).

I've always wondered whether Mary and Joseph panicked or remained steadfast in their faith in the twists and turns surrounding Jesus' early years. After all, they were real people, with real hopes, dreams, and plans for their family. But they believed their God and followed where He led, even though it may have been outside of their plan.

I pray our faith, too, would hold fast under pressure, resting on God's plans and not our own. Amen.

search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him."<sup>A</sup>

<sup>9</sup>After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was — the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. <sup>B</sup>Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

### THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

<sup>13</sup>After they were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Get up! Take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search for the child to kill him." <sup>14</sup>So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and escaped to Egypt. <sup>15</sup>He stayed there until Herod's death, so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled: **Out of Egypt I called my Son.**<sup>C</sup>

### THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

<sup>16</sup>Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage. He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, in keeping with the time he had learned from the wise men. <sup>17</sup>Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

<sup>18</sup> **A voice was heard in Ramah,  
weeping,<sup>D</sup> and great mourning,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
and she refused to be consoled,  
because they are no more.**<sup>E</sup>

### THE RETURN TO NAZARETH

<sup>19</sup>After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, <sup>20</sup>saying, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, because those who intended to kill the child are dead." <sup>21</sup>So he got up, took the child and his mother, and entered the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup>But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>Then he went and settled in a town called Nazareth to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

### THE HERALD OF THE CHRIST

**3** In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea <sup>2</sup>and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!" <sup>3</sup>For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said:

<sup>A</sup>2:8 Or and pay him homage <sup>B</sup>2:11 Or they paid him homage <sup>C</sup>2:15 Hs 11:1  
<sup>D</sup>2:18 Other mss read Ramah, lamentation, and weeping, <sup>E</sup>2:18 Jr 31:15

**A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
Prepare the way for the Lord;  
make his paths straight!<sup>A</sup>**

<sup>4</sup> Now John had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup> When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Therefore produce fruit consistent with <sup>B</sup> repentance. <sup>9</sup> And don't presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. <sup>10</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup> "I baptize you with <sup>C</sup> water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to remove <sup>D</sup> his sandals. He himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn. But the chaff he will burn with fire that never goes out."

#### THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him.

<sup>14</sup> But John tried to stop him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?"

<sup>15</sup> Jesus answered him, "Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John allowed him to be baptized.

<sup>16</sup> When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for him, <sup>E</sup> and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased."

#### THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

**4** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup> Then the tempter approached him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

<sup>4</sup> He answered, "It is written: **Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"<sup>F</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup> and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

**He will give his angels orders concerning you,  
and they will support you with their hands  
so that you will not strike  
your foot against a stone.**"<sup>G</sup>

<sup>A</sup>3:3 Is 40:3 <sup>B</sup>3:8 Lit *fruit worthy of* <sup>C</sup>3:11 Or *in* <sup>D</sup>3:11 Or *to carry*  
<sup>E</sup>3:16 Other mss omit *for him* <sup>F</sup>4:4 Dt 8:3 <sup>G</sup>4:6 Ps 91:11-12

<sup>7</sup> Jesus told him, "It is also written: **Do not test the Lord your God.**"<sup>A</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. <sup>9</sup> And he said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."<sup>B</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Then Jesus told him, "Go away,<sup>C</sup> Satan! For it is written: **Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.**"<sup>D</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him.

#### MINISTRY IN GALILEE

<sup>12</sup> When he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee.

<sup>13</sup> He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. <sup>14</sup> This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

<sup>15</sup> **Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,  
along the road by the sea, beyond the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles.**

<sup>16</sup> **The people who live in darkness  
have seen a great light,  
and for those living in the land of the shadow of death,  
a light has dawned.**<sup>E,F</sup>

<sup>17</sup> From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near."

#### THE FIRST DISCIPLES

<sup>18</sup> As he was walking along the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter), and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> "Follow me," he told them, "and I will make you fish for<sup>G</sup> people." <sup>20</sup> Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

<sup>21</sup> Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father, preparing their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup> Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

#### TEACHING, PREACHING, AND HEALING

<sup>23</sup> Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every<sup>H</sup> disease and sickness<sup>I</sup> among the people. <sup>24</sup> Then the news about him spread throughout Syria. So they brought to him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics. And he healed them. <sup>25</sup> Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

<sup>A</sup>4:7 Dt 6:16 <sup>B</sup>4:9 Or *and pay me homage* <sup>C</sup>4:10 Other mss read "Get behind me" <sup>D</sup>4:10 Dt 6:13 <sup>E</sup>4:16 lit *dawned on them* <sup>F</sup>4:15-16 Is 9:1-2 <sup>G</sup>4:19 Or *you fishers of* <sup>H</sup>4:23 Or *every kind of* <sup>I</sup>4:23 Or *physical ailment*

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

**5** When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then <sup>a</sup>he began to teach them, saying:

## THE BEATITUDES

- <sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.
- <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.
- <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the humble,  
for they will inherit the earth.
- <sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.
- <sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.
- <sup>8</sup> Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.
- <sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.
- <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

<sup>11</sup> “You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me. <sup>12</sup>Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## BELIEVERS ARE SALT AND LIGHT

<sup>13</sup> “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty? <sup>b</sup>It’s no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

## CHRIST FULFILLS THE LAW

<sup>17</sup> “Don’t think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup>For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter <sup>c</sup> or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished. <sup>19</sup>Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup>For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>a</sup>5:2 Lit *Then opening his mouth*    <sup>b</sup>5:13 Or *how can the earth be salted?*

<sup>c</sup>5:18 Or *not one iota*; *iota* is the smallest letter of the Gk alphabet.

## MURDER BEGINS IN THE HEART

<sup>21</sup> “You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, **Do not murder**,<sup>A</sup> and whoever murders will be subject to judgment. <sup>22</sup> But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister<sup>B</sup> will be subject to judgment. Whoever insults<sup>C</sup> his brother or sister, will be subject to the court. <sup>D</sup> Whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be subject to hellfire.<sup>E</sup> <sup>23</sup> So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup> Reach a settlement quickly with your adversary while you’re on the way with him to the court, or your adversary will hand you over to the judge, and the judge to<sup>F</sup> the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup> Truly I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid the last penny.<sup>G</sup>

## ADULTERY BEGINS IN THE HEART

<sup>27</sup> “You have heard that it was said, **Do not commit adultery**.<sup>H</sup> <sup>28</sup> But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

## DIVORCE PRACTICES CENSURED

<sup>31</sup> “It was also said, **Whoever divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce**.<sup>I</sup> <sup>32</sup> But I tell you, everyone who divorces his wife, except in a case of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

## TELL THE TRUTH

<sup>33</sup> “Again, you have heard that it was said to our ancestors, **You must not break your oath, but you must keep your oaths to the Lord**.<sup>J</sup> <sup>34</sup> But I tell you, don’t take an oath at all: either by heaven, because it is God’s throne; <sup>35</sup> or by the earth, because it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup> Do not swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. <sup>37</sup> But let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything more than this is from the evil one.

## GO THE SECOND MILE

<sup>38</sup> “You have heard that it was said, **An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth**.<sup>K</sup> <sup>39</sup> But I tell you, don’t resist<sup>L</sup> an evildoer. On the contrary, if anyone slaps you

<sup>A</sup>5:21 Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17 <sup>B</sup>5:22 Other mss add *without a cause* <sup>C</sup>5:22 Lit

*Whoever says ‘Raca’*; an Aramaic term of abuse that puts someone down, insulting one’s intelligence <sup>D</sup>5:22 Lit *Sanhedrin* <sup>E</sup>5:22 Lit *the gehenna of fire*

<sup>F</sup>5:25 Other mss read *judge will hand you over to* <sup>G</sup>5:26 Lit *quadans*, the smallest and least valuable Roman coin, worth 1/64 of a daily wage

<sup>H</sup>5:27 Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18 <sup>I</sup>5:31 Dt 24:1 <sup>J</sup>5:33 Lv 19:12; Nm 30:2; Dt 23:21

<sup>K</sup>5:38 Ex 21:24; Lv 24:20; Dt 19:21 <sup>L</sup>5:39 Or *don’t set yourself against, or don’t retaliate against*

on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.<sup>40</sup> As for the one who wants to sue you and take away your shirt, let him have your coat as well.<sup>41</sup> And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two.<sup>42</sup> Give to the one who asks you, and don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

<sup>43</sup> "You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor**<sup>a</sup> and hate your enemy.  
<sup>44</sup> But I tell you, love your enemies<sup>b</sup> and pray for those who<sup>c</sup> persecute you,  
<sup>45</sup> so that you may be<sup>d</sup> children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.  
<sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same?<sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary?<sup>e</sup> Don't even the Gentiles<sup>f</sup> do the same?<sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

HOW TO GIVE

**6** "Be careful not to practice your righteousness<sup>g</sup> in front of others to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward with your Father in heaven.<sup>2</sup> So whenever you give to the poor, don't sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be applauded by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.<sup>3</sup> But when you give to the poor, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,<sup>4</sup> so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.<sup>h</sup>

HOW TO PRAY

<sup>5</sup> "Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.<sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.<sup>7</sup> When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words.<sup>8</sup> Don't be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

<sup>9</sup> "Therefore, you should pray like this:  
 Our Father in heaven,  
 your name be honored as holy.  
<sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come.  
 Your will be done  
 on earth as it is in heaven.  
<sup>11</sup> Give us today our daily bread.<sup>j</sup>

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<sup>a</sup>5:43 Lv 19:18   <sup>b</sup>5:44 Other mss add *bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you,*   <sup>c</sup>5:44 Other mss add *mistreat you and*   <sup>d</sup>5:45 Or *may become, or may show yourselves to be*   <sup>e</sup>5:47 Or *doing that is superior*; lit *doing more*   <sup>f</sup>5:47 Other mss read *tax collectors*   <sup>g</sup>6:1 Other mss read *charitable giving*   <sup>h</sup>6:4 Other mss read *will himself reward you openly*   <sup>i</sup>6:6 Other mss read *openly*   <sup>j</sup>6:11 Or *our necessary bread, or our bread for tomorrow*

- <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
- <sup>13</sup> And do not bring us into <sup>A</sup>temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one. <sup>B</sup>

<sup>14</sup>“For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. <sup>15</sup>But if you don’t forgive others, <sup>C</sup> your Father will not forgive your offenses.

#### HOW TO FAST

<sup>16</sup>“Whenever you fast, don’t be gloomy like the hypocrites. For they make their faces unattractive <sup>D</sup> so that their fasting is obvious to people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> so that your fasting isn’t obvious to others but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. <sup>E</sup>

#### GOD AND POSSESSIONS

<sup>19</sup>“Don’t store up for yourselves treasures <sup>F</sup> on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>22</sup>“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. So if the light within you is darkness, how deep is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

#### THE CURE FOR ANXIETY

<sup>25</sup>“Therefore I tell you: Don’t worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Consider the birds of the sky: They don’t sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth more than they? <sup>27</sup> Can any of you add one moment to his life span <sup>G</sup> by worrying? <sup>28</sup> And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don’t labor or spin thread. <sup>29</sup> Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. <sup>30</sup> If that’s how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won’t he do much more for you — you of little faith? <sup>31</sup> So don’t worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ <sup>32</sup> For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God <sup>H</sup> and his righteousness, and all these things

<sup>A</sup>6:13 Or do not cause us to come into <sup>B</sup>6:13 Or from evil; some later mss add For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

<sup>C</sup>6:15 Other mss add their wrongdoing <sup>D</sup>6:16 Or unrecognizable, or disfigured

<sup>E</sup>6:18 Other mss add openly <sup>F</sup>6:19 Or valuables <sup>G</sup>6:27 Or add a single cubit to his height <sup>H</sup>6:33 Other mss omit of God

## SPECTACLE OR SACRED?

MATTHEW 6-7; 2 CORINTHIANS 11:2; EPHESIANS 5:22-33; REVELATION 19:6-9

Pull up a chair, girls. We're about to have a conversation about intimacy. Yep—"husband and wife" intimacy. It may very well make you blush, but I promise to keep it PG, and I promise it's all part of a very important point.

The Bible often refers to the Church as the bride of Christ (2Co 11:2; Eph 5:22-33). Our relationship with Jesus is like a marriage—but in a perfect way. He makes us beautiful, then admires us as we walk down the aisle toward Him on our wedding day (Rv 19:6-9). Perfectly pure. Impeccably white. Kind of awesome.

*So now comes that part about intimacy.*

Let's say, physically speaking, there are varying levels of intimacy. Those levels might begin with any sort of public display of affection and graduate all the way to the most intimate, behind closed doors, one-flesh moments only shared between a husband and wife. It's really nobody's business and it's deeply personal. A husband and wife are, indeed, one flesh. The intimate covenant they share, like Christ's covenant with us, is sacred.

When it comes to our relationship with God, it can be the same way. There's PDA and then there's sacred intimacy. There are grand public gestures of skywriting and singing telegrams (praying on the street corner "to be seen by people," as Matthew put it in 6:5). And then there is the love language of God: taking time in secret to show Him the only affections you're chasing after are His—pursuing Him privately, closing the doors, enjoying sacred intimacy.

Any relationship that only goes as deep as public displays, or mere physical intimacy without an emotional bond, is not true intimacy. This is what Jesus warns the crowds about in Matthew 6: "Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. Otherwise, you will have no reward with your Father in heaven" (v. 1).

**Jesus doesn't want your love to be a spectacle. He wants it to be sacred.**

In a marriage, intimacy takes intentionality. Sometimes it takes scheduling regular dates on the calendar, even committing to block out distractions and making space for \*ahem\* intimacy on a regular basis. Intimacy can be enjoyed organically, only when it is supported intentionally.

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*"But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret."*

MATTHEW 6:6

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How are you pursuing intimacy as the bride of Christ? Are you intentionally closing the doors, scheduling dates, and setting aside time in order for your relationship to deepen, or are you publicly kissing Him, then living as strangers at home?

**Is your prayer life simply a spectacle, or is it spectacularly sacred?**

will be provided for you.<sup>34</sup> Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

## DO NOT JUDGE

**7** "Do not judge, so that you won't be judged.<sup>2</sup> For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use.<sup>3</sup> Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye but don't notice the beam of wood in your own eye?<sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the splinter out of your eye,' and look, there's a beam of wood in your own eye?<sup>5</sup> Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother's eye.<sup>6</sup> Don't give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs, or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces.

## ASK, SEARCH, KNOCK

<sup>7</sup>"Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door<sup>A</sup> will be opened to you.<sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.<sup>9</sup> Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?<sup>10</sup> Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?<sup>11</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

## ENTERING THE KINGDOM

<sup>13</sup>"Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it.<sup>14</sup> How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.

<sup>15</sup>"Be on your guard against false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves.<sup>16</sup> You'll recognize them by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles?<sup>17</sup> In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit.<sup>18</sup> A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit.<sup>19</sup> Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.<sup>20</sup> So you'll recognize them by their fruit.

<sup>21</sup>"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.<sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?'<sup>23</sup> Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. **Depart from me, you lawbreakers!**'<sup>B,C</sup>

## THE TWO FOUNDATIONS

<sup>24</sup>"Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.<sup>25</sup> The rain fell, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and pounded that house. Yet it didn't collapse, because its foundation was on the rock.<sup>26</sup> But everyone who hears these words of mine and doesn't act on them will be like a foolish man who

<sup>A</sup>7:7 Lit *and it*   <sup>B</sup>7:23 Lit *you who work lawlessness*   <sup>C</sup>7:23 Ps 6:8

built his house on the sand.<sup>27</sup> The rain fell, the rivers rose, the winds blew and pounded that house, and it collapsed. It collapsed with a great crash.”

<sup>28</sup> When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astonished at his teaching,<sup>29</sup> because he was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.

#### A MAN CLEANSED

**8** When he came down from the mountain, large crowds followed him.  
**2** Right away a man with leprosy<sup>a</sup> came up and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.”

<sup>3</sup> Reaching out his hand, Jesus touched him, saying, “I am willing; be made clean.” Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.<sup>4</sup> Then Jesus told him, “See that you don’t tell anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

#### A CENTURION’S FAITH

<sup>5</sup> When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, pleading with him,  
<sup>6</sup> “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible agony.”

<sup>7</sup> He said to him, “Am I to come and heal him?”<sup>b</sup>

<sup>8</sup> “Lord,” the centurion replied, “I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.<sup>9</sup> For I too am a man under authority, having soldiers under my command.<sup>c</sup> I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.”

<sup>10</sup> Hearing this, Jesus was amazed and said to those following him, “Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with so great a faith.<sup>11</sup> I tell you that many will come from east and west to share the banquet<sup>d</sup> with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>12</sup> But the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus told the centurion, “Go. As you have believed, let it be done for you.” And his servant was healed that very moment.<sup>e</sup>

#### HEALINGS AT CAPERNAUM

<sup>14</sup> Jesus went into Peter’s house and saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever.<sup>15</sup> So he touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and began to serve him.<sup>16</sup> When evening came, they brought to him many who were demon-possessed. He drove out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick,<sup>17</sup> so that what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

**He himself took our weaknesses  
and carried our diseases.**<sup>f</sup>

#### THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS

<sup>18</sup> When Jesus saw a large crowd<sup>g</sup> around him, he gave the order to go to the other side of the sea.<sup>19</sup> A scribe approached him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”

<sup>a</sup>8:2 Gk *lepros*; a term for various skin diseases, also in v. 3; see Lv 13–14

<sup>b</sup>8:7 Or “I will come and heal him.” <sup>c</sup>8:9 Lit *under me* <sup>d</sup>8:11 Lit *recline at the table* <sup>e</sup>8:13 Or *that hour*; lit *very hour* <sup>f</sup>8:17 Is 53:4 <sup>g</sup>8:18 Other mss read *saw large crowds*

<sup>20</sup> Jesus told him, "Foxes have dens, and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

<sup>21</sup> "Lord," another of his disciples said, "first let me go bury my father."

<sup>22</sup> But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

### WIND AND WAVES OBEY JESUS

<sup>23</sup> As he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup> Suddenly, a violent storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves — but Jesus kept sleeping. <sup>25</sup> So the disciples came and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to die!"

<sup>26</sup> He said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

<sup>27</sup> The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him!"

### DEMONS DRIVEN OUT BY JESUS

<sup>28</sup> When he had come to the other side, to the region of the Gadarenes, <sup>a</sup> two demon-possessed men met him as they came out of the tombs. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. <sup>29</sup> Suddenly they shouted, "What do you have to do with us, <sup>b</sup> Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

<sup>30</sup> A long way off from them, a large herd of pigs was feeding. <sup>31</sup> "If you drive us out," the demons begged him, "send us into the herd of pigs."

<sup>32</sup> "Go!" he told them. So when they had come out, they entered the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the water. <sup>33</sup> Then the men who tended them fled. They went into the city and reported everything, especially what had happened to those who were demon-possessed. <sup>34</sup> At that, the whole town went out to meet Jesus. When they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

### THE SON OF MAN FORGIVES AND HEALS

**9** So he got into a boat, crossed over, and came to his own town. <sup>2</sup> Just then some men <sup>c</sup> brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, "Have courage, son, your sins are forgiven."

<sup>3</sup> At this, some of the scribes said to themselves, "He's blaspheming!"

<sup>4</sup> Perceiving their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why are you thinking evil things in your hearts? <sup>d</sup> <sup>5</sup> For which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?" <sup>6</sup> But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — then he told the paralytic, "Get up, take your stretcher, and go home." <sup>7</sup> So he got up and went home. <sup>8</sup> When the crowds saw this, they were awestruck <sup>e,f</sup> and gave glory to God, who had given such authority to men.

### THE CALL OF MATTHEW

<sup>9</sup> As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the toll booth, and he said to him, "Follow me," and he got up and followed him.

<sup>a</sup>8:28 Other mss read *Gergesenes* <sup>b</sup>8:29 Other mss add *Jesus* <sup>c</sup>9:2 Lit *then*  
they <sup>d</sup>9:4 Or *minds* <sup>e</sup>9:8 Other mss read *amazed* <sup>f</sup>9:8 Lit *afraid*

<sup>10</sup> While he was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with Jesus and his disciples. <sup>11</sup> When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

<sup>12</sup> Now when he heard this, he said, "It is not those who are well who need a doctor, but those who are sick. <sup>13</sup> Go and learn what this means: **I desire mercy and not sacrifice.** <sup>A</sup> For I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners."<sup>B</sup>

#### A QUESTION ABOUT FASTING

<sup>14</sup> Then John's disciples came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"

<sup>15</sup> Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests <sup>C</sup> be sad while the groom is with them? The time <sup>D</sup> will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. <sup>16</sup> No one patches an old garment with unshrunk cloth, because the patch pulls away from the garment and makes the tear worse. <sup>17</sup> And no one puts <sup>E</sup> new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. No, they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

#### A GIRL RESTORED AND A WOMAN HEALED

<sup>18</sup> As he was telling them these things, suddenly one of the leaders came and knelt down before him, saying, "My daughter just died," but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." <sup>19</sup> So Jesus and his disciples got up and followed him.

<sup>20</sup> Just then, a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years approached from behind and touched the end of his robe, <sup>21</sup> for she said to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I'll be made well."<sup>G</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Jesus turned and saw her. "Have courage, daughter," he said. "Your faith has saved you."<sup>H</sup> And the woman was made well from that moment.<sup>I</sup>

<sup>23</sup> When Jesus came to the leader's house, he saw the flute players and a crowd lamenting loudly. <sup>24</sup> "Leave," he said, "because the girl is not dead but asleep." And they laughed at him. <sup>25</sup> After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. <sup>26</sup> Then news of this spread throughout that whole area.

#### HEALING THE BLIND

<sup>27</sup> As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

<sup>28</sup> When he entered the house, the blind men approached him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can do this?"

They said to him, "Yes, Lord."

<sup>29</sup> Then he touched their eyes, saying, "Let it be done for you according to your faith." <sup>30</sup> And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus warned them sternly, "Be sure that no one finds out." <sup>31</sup> But they went out and spread the news about him throughout that whole area.

<sup>A</sup>9:13 Hs 6:6 <sup>B</sup>9:13 Other mss add to repentance <sup>C</sup>9:15 Lit the sons of the bridal chamber <sup>D</sup>9:15 Lit days <sup>E</sup>9:17 Lit And they do not put <sup>F</sup>9:18 Lit daughter has now come to the end <sup>G</sup>9:21 Or be saved <sup>H</sup>9:22 Or has made you well <sup>I</sup>9:22 Lit hour

## DRIVING OUT A DEMON

<sup>32</sup> Just as they were going out, a demon-possessed man who was unable to speak was brought to him. <sup>33</sup> When the demon had been driven out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed, saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel!"

<sup>34</sup> But the Pharisees said, "He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons."

## THE LORD OF THE HARVEST

<sup>35</sup> Jesus continued going around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every<sup>A</sup> disease and every sickness.<sup>B,C</sup> <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. <sup>38</sup> Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."

## COMMISSIONING THE TWELVE

**10** Summoning his twelve disciples, he gave them authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out and to heal every<sup>A</sup> disease and sickness.<sup>C</sup> <sup>2</sup> These are the names of the twelve apostles: First, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;<sup>D</sup> <sup>4</sup> Simon the Zealot,<sup>E</sup> and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

<sup>5</sup> Jesus sent out these twelve after giving them instructions: "Don't take the road that leads to the Gentiles, and don't enter any Samaritan town. <sup>6</sup> Instead, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> As you go, proclaim: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' <sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with leprosy,<sup>F</sup> drive out demons. Freely you received, freely give. <sup>9</sup> Don't acquire gold, silver, or copper for your money-belts. <sup>10</sup> Don't take a traveling bag for the road, or an extra shirt, sandals, or a staff, for the worker is worthy of his food. <sup>11</sup> When you enter any town or village, find out who is worthy, and stay there until you leave. <sup>12</sup> Greet a household when you enter it, <sup>13</sup> and if the household is worthy, let your peace be on it; but if it is unworthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> If anyone does not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

## PERSECUTIONS PREDICTED

<sup>16</sup> "Look, I'm sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> Beware of them, because they will hand you over to local courts<sup>G</sup> and flog you in their synagogues. <sup>18</sup> You will even be brought before governors and kings because of me, to bear

<sup>A</sup>9:35; 10:1 Or every kind of <sup>B</sup>9:35 Other mss add among the people  
<sup>C</sup>9:35; 10:1 Or physical ailment <sup>D</sup>10:3 Other mss read and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus <sup>E</sup>10:4 Lit the Cananaean <sup>F</sup>10:8 Gk lepros; a term for various skin diseases; see Lv 13-14 <sup>G</sup>10:17 Or sanhedrins

witness to them and to the Gentiles.<sup>19</sup> But when they hand you over, don't worry about how or what you are to speak. For you will be given what to say at that hour,<sup>20</sup> because it isn't you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father is speaking through you.

<sup>21</sup> "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death.<sup>22</sup> You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.<sup>23</sup> When they persecute you in one town, flee to another. For truly I tell you, you will not have gone through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.<sup>24</sup> A disciple<sup>a</sup> is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master.<sup>25</sup> It is enough for a disciple to become like his teacher and a slave like his master. If they called the head of the house 'Beelzebul,' how much more the members of his household!

### FEAR GOD

<sup>26</sup> "Therefore, don't be afraid of them, since there is nothing covered that won't be uncovered and nothing hidden that won't be made known.<sup>27</sup> What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light. What you hear in a whisper,<sup>b</sup> proclaim on the housetops.<sup>28</sup> Don't fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.<sup>29</sup> Aren't two sparrows sold for a penny?<sup>c</sup> Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's consent.<sup>d</sup><sup>30</sup> But even the hairs of your head have all been counted.<sup>31</sup> So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

### ACKNOWLEDGING CHRIST

<sup>32</sup> "Therefore, everyone who will acknowledge me before others, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.<sup>33</sup> But whoever denies me before others, I will also deny him before my Father in heaven.<sup>34</sup> Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.<sup>35</sup> For I came to turn

**a man against his father,  
a daughter against her mother,  
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;**

<sup>36</sup> **and a man's enemies will be  
the members of his household.<sup>e</sup>**

<sup>37</sup> The one who loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.<sup>38</sup> And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.<sup>39</sup> Anyone who finds his life will lose it, and anyone who loses his life because of me will find it.

### A CUP OF COLD WATER

<sup>40</sup> "The one who welcomes you welcomes me, and the one who welcomes me welcomes him who sent me.<sup>41</sup> Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet<sup>f</sup> will receive a prophet's reward. And anyone who welcomes a

<sup>a</sup>10:24 Or *student*   <sup>b</sup>10:27 Lit *in the ear*   <sup>c</sup>10:29 Gk *assarion*, a small copper coin   <sup>d</sup>10:29 Lit *ground apart from your Father*   <sup>e</sup>10:35-36 Mc 7:6   <sup>f</sup>10:41 Lit *prophet in the name of a prophet*

righteous person because he's righteous<sup>a</sup> will receive a righteous person's reward.<sup>42</sup> And whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple,<sup>b</sup> truly I tell you, he will never lose his reward."

### JOHN THE BAPTIST DOUBTS

**11** When Jesus had finished giving instructions to his twelve disciples, he moved on from there to teach and preach in their towns.<sup>2</sup> Now when John heard in prison what the Christ was doing, he sent a message through his disciples<sup>3</sup> and asked him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"

<sup>4</sup> Jesus replied to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see:<sup>5</sup> The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with leprosy<sup>c</sup> are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor are told the good news,<sup>6</sup> and blessed is the one who isn't offended by me."

<sup>7</sup> As these men were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind?<sup>8</sup> What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes? See, those who wear soft clothes are in royal palaces.<sup>9</sup> What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.<sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written:

**See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you;  
he will prepare your way before you.<sup>11</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one greater than John the Baptist has appeared,<sup>e</sup> but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.<sup>12</sup> From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been suffering violence,<sup>f</sup> and the violent have been seizing it by force.<sup>13</sup> For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.<sup>14</sup> And if you're willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who is to come.<sup>15</sup> Let anyone who has ears<sup>g</sup> listen.

### AN UNRESPONSIVE GENERATION

<sup>16</sup> "To what should I compare this generation? It's like children sitting in the marketplaces who call out to other children:

<sup>17</sup> We played the flute for you,  
but you didn't dance;  
we sang a lament,  
but you didn't mourn!<sup>h</sup>

<sup>18</sup> For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon!'

<sup>19</sup> The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated<sup>i</sup> by her deeds."<sup>j</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Then he proceeded to denounce the towns where most of his miracles were done, because they did not repent:<sup>21</sup> "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes long ago.<sup>22</sup> But

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<sup>a</sup>10:41 Lit *person in the name of a righteous person*    <sup>b</sup>10:42 Lit *little ones in the name of a disciple*    <sup>c</sup>11:5 Gk *lepros*; a term for various skin diseases; see Lv 13-14    <sup>d</sup>11:10 Mal 3:1    <sup>e</sup>11:11 Lit *arisen*    <sup>f</sup>11:12 Or *has been forcefully advancing*    <sup>g</sup>11:15 Other mss add *to hear*    <sup>h</sup>11:17 Or *beat your chests in grief*    <sup>i</sup>11:19 Or *declared right*    <sup>j</sup>11:19 Other mss read *children*