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Tyndale House Publishers gratefully acknowledges the role of Youth for Christ/USA in preparing the Life Application Notes and Bible Helps.

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Copublished by:

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Zondervan
Wheaton, Illinois 60189, USA Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, USA

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Bible. English. New International. 1997.

Life application study Bible : New International Version.

p. cm.

Includes indexes.

ISBN 0-8423-4892-1 (hardcover : alk. paper). — ISBN 0-8423-4893-X

(hardcover indexed : alk. paper).

I. Tyndale House Publishers. II. Title.

BS195.N37 1997

220.5'20814—dc21

97-2367

ISBN 0-8423-4892-1 Hardcover

ISBN 0-8423-4893-X Hardcover Indexed

ISBN 1-4143-0713-6 Hardcover Anniversary Edition

Printed in the United States of America

09 08 07 06 05

22 21 20 19 18 17 16

old

TESTAMENT

GENESIS

Creation

Noah
undated

Abram
born
2166 B.C.
(2000 B.C.)

Abram
enters
Canaan
2091
(1925)

Isaac
born
2066
(1900)

VITAL STATISTICS

PURPOSE:

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

AUTHOR:

Moses

ORIGINAL AUDIENCE:

The people of Israel

DATE WRITTEN:

1450–1410 B.C.

WHERE WRITTEN:

In the wilderness during Israel's wanderings, somewhere in the Sinai peninsula

SETTING:

The region presently known as the Middle East

KEY VERSES:

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (1:27). "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (12:2, 3).

KEY PEOPLE:

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



BEGIN . . . start . . . commence . . . open . . .

There's something refreshing and optimistic about these words, whether they refer to the dawn of a new day, the birth of a child, the prelude of a symphony, or the first miles of a family vacation. Free of problems and full of promise, beginnings stir hope and imaginative visions of the future. *Genesis* means "beginnings" or "origin," and it unfolds the record of the beginning of the world, of human history,

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

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

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

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

THE BLUEPRINT

A. THE STORY OF CREATION (1:1—2:3)

God created the sky, seas, and land. He created the plants, animals, fish, and birds. But he created human beings in his own image. At times, others may treat us disrespectfully. But we can be certain of our dignity and worth because we have been created in the image of God.

<i>Jacob & Esau born 2006 (1840)</i>	<i>Jacob flees to Haran 1929 (1764)</i>	<i>Joseph born 1915 (1750)</i>	<i>Joseph sold into slavery 1898 (1733)</i>	<i>Joseph rules Egypt 1885 (1720)</i>	<i>Joseph dies 1805 (1640)</i>
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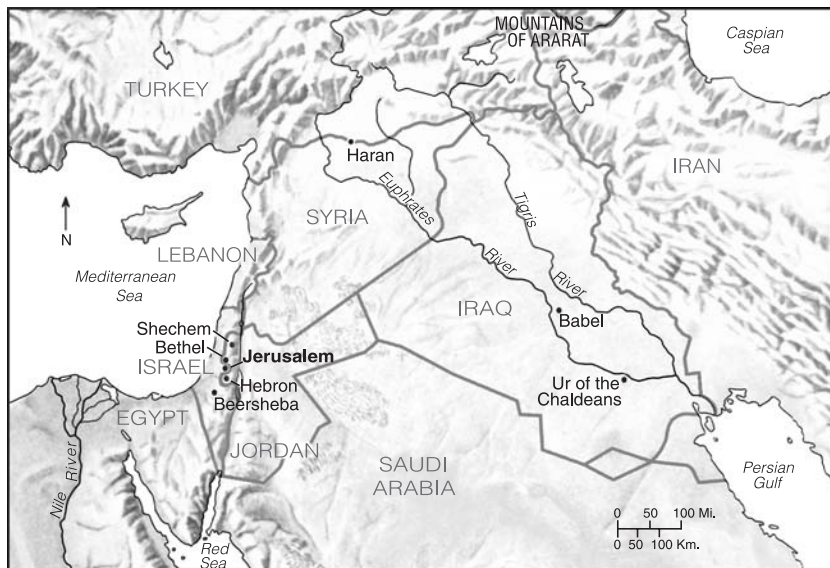
- B. THE STORY OF ADAM (2:4—5:32)**
 1. Adam and Eve
 2. Cain and Abel
 3. Adam’s descendants
- C. THE STORY OF NOAH (6:1—11:32)**
 1. The flood
 2. Repopulating the earth
 3. The tower of Babel
- D. THE STORY OF ABRAHAM (12:1—25:18)**
 1. God promises a nation to Abram
 2. Abram and Lot
 3. God promises a son to Abram
 4. Sodom and Gomorrah
 5. Birth and near sacrifice of Isaac
 6. Isaac and Rebekah
 7. Abraham dies
- E. THE STORY OF ISAAC (25:19—28:9)**
 1. Jacob and Esau
 2. Isaac and Abimelech
 3. Jacob gets Isaac’s blessing
- F. THE STORY OF JACOB (28:10—36:43)**
 1. Jacob starts a family
 2. Jacob returns home
- G. THE STORY OF JOSEPH (37:1—50:26)**
 1. Joseph is sold into slavery
 2. Judah and Tamar
 3. Joseph is thrown into prison
 4. Joseph is placed in charge of Egypt
 5. Joseph and his brothers meet in Egypt
 6. Jacob’s family moves to Egypt
 7. Jacob and Joseph die in Egypt
- When Adam and Eve were created by God, they were without sin. But they became sinful when they disobeyed God and ate some fruit from the tree. Through Adam and Eve we learn about the destructive power of sin and its bitter consequences.
- Noah was spared from the destruction of the flood because he obeyed God and built the ark. Just as God protected Noah and his family, he still protects those who are faithful to him today.
- Abraham was asked to leave his country, wander in Canaan, wait years for a son, and then sacrifice him as a burnt offering. Through these periods of sharp testing, Abraham remained faithful to God. His example teaches us what it means to live a life of faith.
- Isaac did not demand his own way. He did not resist when he was about to be sacrificed, and he gladly accepted a wife chosen for him by others. Like Isaac, we must learn to put God’s will ahead of our own.
- Jacob did not give up easily. He faithfully served Laban for over 14 years. Later, he wrestled with God. Although Jacob made many mistakes, his hard work teaches us about living a life of service for our Lord.
- Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and unjustly thrown into prison by his master. Through the life of Joseph, we learn that suffering, no matter how unfair, can develop strong character in us.

MEGATHEMES

THEME	EXPLANATION	IMPORTANCE
<i>Beginnings</i>	Genesis explains the beginning of many important realities: the universe, the earth, people, sin, and God’s plan of salvation.	Genesis teaches us that the earth is well made and good. People are special to God and unique. God creates and sustains all life.
<i>Disobedience</i>	People are always facing great choices. Disobedience occurs when people choose not to follow God’s plan of living.	Genesis explains why people are evil: They choose to do wrong. Even great Bible heroes failed God and disobeyed.
<i>Sin</i>	Sin ruins people’s lives. It happens when we disobey God.	Living God’s way makes life productive and fulfilling.
<i>Promises</i>	God makes promises to help and protect people. This kind of promise is called a “covenant.”	God kept his promises then, and he keeps them now. He promises to love us, accept us, forgive us.
<i>Obedience</i>	The opposite of sin is obedience. Obeying God restores our relationship to him.	The only way to enjoy the benefits of God’s promises is to obey him.
<i>Prosperity</i>	Prosperity is deeper than mere material wealth. True prosperity and fulfillment come as a result of obeying God.	When people obey God, they find peace with him, with others, and with themselves.
<i>Israel</i>	God started the nation of Israel in order to have a dedicated people who would (1) keep his ways alive in the world, (2) proclaim to the world what he is really like, and (3) prepare the world for the birth of Christ.	God is looking for people today to follow him. We are to proclaim God’s truth and love to all nations, not just our own. We must be faithful to carry out the mission God has given us.



KEY PLACES IN GENESIS



Modern names and boundaries are shown in gray.

God created the universe and the earth. Then he made man and woman, giving them a home in a beautiful garden. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were banished from the garden (3:23).

- 1 Mountains of Ararat** Adam and Eve's sin brought sin into the human race. Years later, sin had run rampant and God decided to destroy the earth with a great flood. But Noah, his family, and two of each animal were safe in the ark. When the floods receded, the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat (8:4).
- 2 Babel** People never learn. Again sin abounded, and the pride of the people led them to build a huge tower as a monument to their own greatness—obviously they had no thought of God. As punishment, God scattered the people by giving them different languages (11:8, 9).
- 3 Ur of the Chaldeans** Abram, a descendant of Shem and father of the Hebrew nation, was born in this great city (11:28).
- 4 Haran** Terah, Abram, Lot, and Sarai left Ur and, following the fertile crescent of the Euphrates River, headed toward the land

of Canaan. Along the way, they settled in the village of Haran for a while (11:31).

- 5 Shechem** God urged Abram to leave Haran and go to a place where he would become the father of a great nation (12:1, 2). So Abram, Lot, and Sarai traveled to the land of Canaan and settled near a city called Shechem (12:6).
- 6 Hebron** Abraham moved on to Hebron where he put down his deepest roots (13:18).

- 7 Beersheba** The well at Beersheba was a source of conflict between Abraham and King Abimelech and later became a sign of the oath that they swore there (21:31). Years later, as Isaac was moving from place to place, God appeared to him here and passed on to him the covenant he had made with his father, Abraham (26:23–25).
- 8 Bethel** After deceiving his brother, Jacob left Beersheba and fled to Haran. Along the way, God revealed himself to Jacob in a dream and passed on the covenant he had made with Abraham and Isaac (28:10–22). Jacob lived in Haran, worked for Laban, and married Leah and Rachel (29:15–30). After a tense meeting with his brother, Esau, Jacob returned to Bethel (35:1).
- 9 Egypt** Jacob had 12 sons, including Joseph, Jacob's favorite. Joseph's 10 older brothers grew jealous, until one day the brothers sold him to Midianite merchants going to Egypt. Eventually, Joseph rose from Egyptian slave to Pharaoh's "right-hand man," saving Egypt from famine. His entire family moved from Canaan to Egypt and settled there (46:3–7).

A. THE STORY OF CREATION (1:1—2:3)

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

The Beginning

- 1** In the beginning^a God created the heavens and the earth.^b Now the earth was^a formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

^a2 Or possibly *became*

1:1

^aJn 1:1-2

^bIsa 42:5; 44:24;

45:12, 18

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

speed, our galaxy still needs 200 million years to make one rotation. And there are over one billion other galaxies just like ours in the universe.

Some scientists say that the number of stars in creation is

1:3
^cPs 33:6, 9
^d2Co 4:6*

1:5
^ePs 74:16

1:6
^fJer 10:12

1:7
^gPs 148:4

1:9
^hPs 104:6-9;
 Jer 5:22; 2Pe 3:5

³ And God said, ^c“Let there be light,” and there was light. ^d ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” ^e And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

⁶ And God said, “Let there be an expanse ^f between the waters to separate water from water.” ⁷ So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. ^g And it was so. ⁸ God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

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

¹¹ Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.”

BEGINNINGS

Origin of the universe

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

Equally committed and sincere Christians have struggled with the subject of beginnings and come to **differing conclusions**. This, of course, is to be expected because the evidence is very old and, due to the ravages of the ages, quite fragmented. Students of the Bible and of science should avoid polarizations and black/white thinking. Students of the Bible must be careful not to make the Bible say what it doesn't say, and students of science must not make science say what it doesn't say.

The most important aspect of the continuing discussion is not the process of creation, but the origin of creation. **The world is not a product of blind chance and probability; God created it.** The Bible not only tells us that the world was created by God; more importantly, it tells us who this God is. It reveals God's personality, his character, and his plan for his creation. It also reveals **God's deepest desire: to relate to and fellowship with the people he created.** God took the ultimate step toward fellowship with us through his historic visit to this planet in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ. We can know in a very personal way this God who created the universe.

The heavens and the earth are here. We are here. God created all that we see and experience. The book of Genesis begins, “God created the heavens and the earth.”

equal to all the grains of all the sands on all the beaches of the world. Yet this complex sea of spinning stars functions with remarkable order and efficiency. To say that the universe “just happened” or “evolved” requires more faith than to believe that God is behind these amazing statistics. God truly did create a wonderful universe.

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

1:1f The creation story teaches us much about God and ourselves. First, we learn about God: (1) he is creative; (2) as the Creator he is distinct from his creation; (3) he is eternal and in control of the world. We also learn about ourselves: (1) since God chose to create us, we are valuable in his eyes; (2) we are more important than the animals. (See 1:28 for more on our role in the created order.)

1:1ff Just how did God create the earth? This is still a subject of great debate. Some say that with a sudden explosion, the universe appeared. Others say God started the process, and the universe evolved over billions of years. Almost every ancient religion has its own story to explain how the earth came to be. And almost every scientist has an opinion on the origin of the universe. But only the Bible shows one supreme God creating the earth out of his great love and giving all people a special place in it. We will never know all the answers to how God created the earth, but the Bible tells us that God did create it. That fact alone gives worth and dignity to all people.

1:2 Who created God? To ask that question is to assume there was another creator before God. At some time, however, we are

forced to stop asking that question and realize that there had to be something that has always existed. God is that infinite Being who has always been and who was created by no one. This is difficult to understand because finite minds cannot comprehend the infinite. For example, we can try to think of the highest number, but we can't do it. Likewise, we must not limit the infinite God by our finite understanding.

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

1:2 The image of the Spirit of God hovering over the waters is similar to a mother bird caring for and protecting its young (see Deuteronomy 32:11, 12; Isaiah 31:5). God's Spirit was actively involved in the creation of the world (see Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30). God's care and protection are still active.

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

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

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

And it was so. ¹²The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights ⁱ in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons ^j and days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made two great lights—the greater light to govern ^k the day and the lesser light to govern ^l the night. He also made the stars. ^m ¹⁷God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

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

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

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, ^a and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

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

1:14
ⁱPs 74:16
^jPs 104:19

1:16
^kPs 136:8
^lPs 136:9
^mPs 8:3; Isa 40:26

1:27
^aGe 5:2; Mt 19:4*;
Mk 10:6*

^a26 Hebrew; Syriac *all the wild animals*

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

DAYS OF CREATION



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

1:26 Why does God use the plural form, “Let *us* make man in *our* image”? One view says this is a reference to the Trinity—God the Father, Jesus Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit—all of whom are God. Another view is that the plural wording is used to denote majesty. Kings traditionally use the plural form in speaking of themselves. From Job 33:4 and Psalm 104:30, we do know that God’s Spirit was present in the creation. From Colossians 1:16 we know that Christ, God’s Son, was at work in the creation.

1:26 In what ways are we made in God’s image? God obviously did not create us exactly like himself because God has no physical body. Instead, we are reflections of God’s glory. Some feel that

our reason, creativity, speech, or self-determination is the image of God. More likely, it is our entire self that reflects the image of God. We will never be totally like God because he is our supreme Creator. But we do have the ability to reflect his character in our love, patience, forgiveness, kindness, and faithfulness.

Knowing that we are made in God’s image and thus share many of his characteristics provides a solid basis for self-worth. Human worth is not based on possessions, achievements, physical attractiveness, or public acclaim. Instead it is based on being made in God’s image. Because we bear God’s image, we can feel positive about ourselves. Criticizing or downgrading ourselves is criticizing what God has made and the abilities he has given us. Knowing that you are a person of worth helps you love God, know him personally, and make a valuable contribution to those around you.

1:27 God made both man and woman in his image. Neither man nor woman is made more in the image of God than the other.

1:28
^oGe 9:1, 7;
 Lev 26:9

²⁸God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth^o and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

1:29
^pPs 104:14

²⁹Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.^p

1:30
^qPs 145:15

³⁰And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.^q” And it was so.

1:31
^rPs 104:24

³¹God saw all that he had made,^r and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

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

2:2
^sEx 20:11; Heb 4:4*

²By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested^a from all his work.^s ³And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

B. THE STORY OF ADAM (2:4—5:32)

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

1. Adam and Eve

⁴This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

2:5
^tGe 1:11

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens—⁵and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth^b and no plant of the field had yet sprung up,^t for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth^b and there was no man to work the ground,⁶ but streams^c came

^a2 Or *ceased*; also in verse 3 ^b5 Or *land*; also in verse 6 ^c6 Or *mist*

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT MARRIAGE

Genesis 2:18–24 . . . Marriage is God’s idea
 Genesis 24:58–60 . . . Commitment is essential to a successful marriage
 Genesis 29:10, 11 . . . Romance is important
 Jeremiah 7:34 Marriage holds times of great joy
 Malachi 2:14, 15 Marriage creates the best environment for raising children
 Matthew 5:32 Unfaithfulness breaks the bond of trust, the foundation of all relationships
 Matthew 19:6 Marriage is permanent
 Romans 7:2, 3 Ideally, only death should dissolve marriage
 Ephesians 5:21–33 . . . Marriage is based on the principled practice of love, not on feelings
 Ephesians 5:23, 32 . . . Marriage is a living symbol of Christ and the church
 Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is good and honorable

From the beginning the Bible places both man and woman at the pinnacle of God’s creation. Neither sex is exalted, and neither is depreciated.

1:28 To “rule over” something is to have absolute authority and control over it. God has ultimate rule over the earth, and he exercises his authority with loving care. When God delegated some of his authority to the human race, he expected us to take responsibility for the environment and the other creatures that share our planet. We must not be careless and wasteful as we fulfill this charge. God was careful how he made this earth. We must not be careless about how we take care of it.

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

2:2, 3 We live in an action-oriented world! There always seems to be something to do and no time to rest. Yet God demonstrated that rest is appropriate and right. If God himself rested from his work, we should not be surprised that we also need rest. Jesus demonstrated this principle when he and his disciples left in a boat to get away from the crowds (see Mark 6:31, 32). Our times of rest refresh us for times of service.

2:3 That God *blessed* the seventh day means that he set it apart for holy use. The Ten Commandments emphasize this distinction by commanding the observance of the Sabbath (Exodus 20:1–17).

up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground— 7 the LORD God formed the man^a from the dust^u of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. ^v

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

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

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

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

¹⁹ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

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

²³ The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;^z
she shall be called ‘woman,’^g
for she was taken out of man.”

^a7 The Hebrew for man (*adam*) sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew for ground (*adamah*); it is also the name Adam (see Gen. 2:20). ^b12 Or good; pearls ^c13 Possibly southeast Mesopotamia ^d20 Or the man ^e21 Or took part of the man’s side ^f22 Or part ^g23 The Hebrew for woman sounds like the Hebrew for man.

2:7
^uGe 3:19
^v1Co 15:45*

2:9
^wGe 3:22, 24;
Rev 2:7; 22:2,
14, 19

2:14
^xDa 10:4

2:17
^yRo 5:12; 6:23

2:23
^zEph 5:28-30

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

2:9 The name of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil implies that evil had already occurred, if not in the garden, then at the time of Satan’s fall.

2:9, 16, 17 Were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil real trees? Two views are often expressed:

(1) *The trees were real, but symbolic.* Eternal life with God was pictured as eating from the tree of life.

(2) *The trees were real, possessing special properties.* By eating the fruit from the tree of life, Adam and Eve could have had eternal life, enjoying a permanent relationship as God’s children.

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

2:15–17 God gave Adam responsibility for the garden and told him not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Rather than physically preventing him from eating, God gave Adam a choice, and thus the possibility of choosing wrongly. God still gives us choices, and we, too, often choose wrongly. These wrong choices may cause us pain, but they can help us learn and grow and make better choices in the future. Living with the consequences of our choices teaches us to think and choose more carefully.

2:16, 17 Why would God place a tree in the garden and then forbid Adam to eat from it? God wanted Adam to obey, but God gave Adam the freedom to choose. Without choice, Adam would have been like a prisoner, and his obedience would have been hollow. The two trees provided an exercise in choice, with rewards for choosing to obey and sad consequences for choosing to disobey. When you are faced with the choice, always choose to obey God.

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

2:21–23 God forms and equips men and women for various tasks, but all these tasks lead to the same goal—honoring God. Man gives life to woman; woman gives life to the world. Each role

2:24

^aMt 19:5; 1Co 6:16; Eph 5:31*

²⁴For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.^a

2:25

^bGe 3:7, 10-11

²⁵The man and his wife were both naked,^b and they felt no shame.



ADAM

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

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

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

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

Strengths and accomplishments:

- The first zoologist—one who names animals
- The first landscape architect, placed in the garden to care for it
- Father of the human race
- The first person made in the image of God, and the first human to share an intimate personal relationship with God

Weaknesses and mistakes:

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

Lessons from his life:

- As Adam's descendants, we all reflect to some degree the image of God
- God wants people who, though free to do wrong, choose instead to love him
- We should not blame others for our faults
- We cannot hide from God

Vital statistics:

- Where: Garden of Eden
- Occupation: Caretaker, gardener, farmer
- Relatives: Wife: Eve. Sons: Cain, Abel, Seth. Numerous other children. The only man who never had an earthly mother or father.

Key verses:

"The man said, 'The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it'" (Genesis 3:12). "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

Adam's story is told in Genesis 1:26—5:5. He is also mentioned in 1 Chronicles 1:1; Job 31:33; Luke 3:38; Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45; 1 Timothy 2:13, 14.

carries exclusive privileges; there is no room for thinking that one sex is superior to the other.

2:24 God gave marriage as a gift to Adam and Eve. They were created perfect for each other. Marriage was not just for convenience, nor was it brought about by any culture. It was instituted by God and has three basic aspects: (1) the man leaves his parents and, in a public act, promises himself to his wife; (2) the man and woman are joined together by taking responsibility for each other's welfare and by loving the mate above all others; (3) the two become one flesh in the intimacy and commitment of sexual union that is reserved for marriage. Strong marriages include all three of these aspects.

2:25 Have you ever noticed how a little child can run naked through a room full of strangers without embarrassment? He

is not aware of his nakedness, just as Adam and Eve were not embarrassed in their innocence. But after Adam and Eve sinned, shame and awkwardness followed, creating barriers between themselves and God. We often experience these same barriers in marriage. Ideally a husband and wife have no barriers, feeling no embarrassment in exposing themselves to each other or to God. But, like Adam and Eve (3:7), we put on fig leaves (barriers) because we have areas we don't want our spouse, or God, to know about. Then we hide, just as Adam and Eve hid from God. In marriage, lack of spiritual, emotional, and intellectual intimacy usually precedes a breakdown of physical intimacy. In the same way, when we fail to expose our secret thoughts to God, we break our lines of communication with him.

The Fall of Man

3 Now the serpent^c was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. **3:1**
 He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" ^{c2Co 11:3; Rev 12:9; 20:2}

²The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵"For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ^{d 7} Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. **3:6**
^{d1Ti 2:14}

⁸Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid^e from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" **3:8**
^{eJob 31:33}

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

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

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

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

3:5 Adam and Eve got what they wanted: an intimate knowledge of both good and evil. But they got it by doing evil, and the results were disastrous. Sometimes we have the illusion that freedom is doing anything we want. But God says that true freedom comes from obedience and knowing what *not* to do. The restrictions he gives us are for our good, helping us avoid evil. We have the freedom to walk in front of a speeding car, but we don't need to be hit to realize it would be foolish to do so. Don't listen to Satan's temptations. You don't have to do evil to gain more experience and learn more about life.

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

But to become like God is not the same as trying to become God. Rather, it is to reflect his characteristics and to recognize his authority over your life. Like Eve, we often have a worthy goal but

try to achieve it in the wrong way. We act like a political candidate who pays off an election judge to be "voted" into office. When he does this, serving the people is no longer his highest goal.

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

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

3:6, 7 Notice what Eve did: She looked, she took, she ate, and she gave. The battle is often lost at the first look. Temptation often begins by simply seeing something you want. Are you struggling with temptation because you have not learned that looking is the first step toward sin? You would win over temptation more often if you followed Paul's advice to run from those things that produce evil thoughts (2 Timothy 2:22).

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

3:7, 8 After sinning, Adam and Eve felt guilt and embarrassment over their nakedness. Their guilty feelings made them try to hide from God. A guilty conscience is a warning signal God placed inside you that goes off when you've done wrong. The worst step you could take is to eliminate the guilty feelings without eliminating the cause. That would be like using a pain killer but not treating the disease. Be glad those guilty feelings are there. They make you aware of your sin so you can ask God's forgiveness and then correct your wrongdoing.

3:8 The thought of two humans covered with fig leaves trying to hide from the all-seeing, all-knowing God is humorous. How could they be so silly as to think they could actually hide? Yet we do the same, acting as though God doesn't know what we're doing. Have the courage to share all you do and think with him. And don't try to hide—it can't be done. Honesty will strengthen your relationship with God.

3:8, 9 These verses show God's desire to have fellowship with him. They also show why we are afraid to have fellowship with him. Adam and Eve hid from God when they heard him approaching.

¹⁰He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

¹¹And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

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

¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all the livestock

and all the wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly

and you will eat dust

all the days of your life.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity

between you and the woman,

and between your offspring^a and hers;

he will crush^b your head,^g

and you will strike his heel."

¹⁶To the woman he said,

"I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing;

with pain you will give birth to children.

Your desire will be for your husband,

and he will rule over you."

¹⁷To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,'

^a15 Or seed ^b15 Or strike

3:15

¹1 Jn 3:8

⁹Ro 16:20

SATAN'S PLAN AGAINST US

Doubt Makes you question God's Word and his goodness

Discouragement Makes you look at your problems rather than at God

Diversion Makes the wrong things seem attractive so that you will want them more than the right things

Defeat Makes you feel like a failure so that you don't even try

Delay Makes you put off doing something so that it never gets done

God wanted to be with them, but because of their sin they were afraid to show themselves. Sin had broken their close relationship with God, just as it has broken ours. But Jesus Christ, God's Son, opens the way for us to renew our fellowship with him. God longs to be with us. He actively offers us his unconditional love. Our natural response is fear because we feel we can't live up to his standards. But understanding that he loves us, regardless of our faults, can help remove that dread.

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

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

3:14ff Adam and Eve chose their course of action (disobedience), and then God chose his. As a holy God, he could respond only in a way consistent with his perfect moral nature. He could not allow sin to go unchecked; he had to punish it. If the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin seem extreme, remember that their sin set in

motion the world's tendency toward disobeying God. That is why we sin today: Every human being ever born, with the exception of Jesus, has inherited the sinful nature of Adam and Eve (Romans 5:12–21). Adam and Eve's punishment reflects how seriously God views sin of any kind.

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

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

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

“Cursed^h is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.ⁱ
 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.
 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”^j

3:17
^hRo 8:20-22
ⁱEcc 2:23

3:19
^jGe 2:7; Ps 90:3;
 Ecc 12:7

²⁰Adam^a named his wife Eve,^b because she would become the mother of all the living.

²¹The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. ²²And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life^k and eat, and live forever.” ²³So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side^c of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

3:22
^kRev 22:14

2. Cain and Abel

4 Adam^a lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. ^dShe said, “With the help of the LORD I have brought forth^e a man.” ²Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. ³In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. ⁴But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,^f ⁵but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

4:4
^fHeb 11:4

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

^a20, 1 Or *The man* ^b20 Eve probably means *living*. ^c24 Or *placed in front* ^d1 Cain sounds like the Hebrew for *brought forth or acquired*. ^e1 Or *have acquired*

3:22–24 Life in the Garden of Eden was like living in heaven. Everything was perfect, and if Adam and Eve had obeyed God, they could have lived there forever. But after disobeying, Adam and Eve no longer deserved paradise, and God told them to leave. If they had continued to live in the garden and had eaten from the tree of life, they would have lived forever. But eternal life in a state of sin would mean forever trying to hide from God. Like Adam and Eve, all of us have sinned and are separated from fellowship with God. We do not have to stay separated, however. God is preparing a new earth as an eternal paradise for his people (see Revelation 22).

3:24 The cherubim were mighty angels of the Lord.

3:24 This is how Adam and Eve broke their relationship with God: (1) they became convinced their way was better than God’s; (2) they became self-conscious and hid; (3) they tried to excuse and defend themselves. To build a relationship with God we must reverse those steps: (1) we must drop our excuses and self-defenses; (2) we must stop trying to hide from God; (3) we must become convinced that God’s way is better than our way.

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

4:2 No longer was everything provided for Adam and Eve as it was in the Garden of Eden, where their daily tasks were refreshing and delightful. Now they had to struggle against the elements in order to provide food, clothing, and shelter for themselves and

their family. Cain became a farmer, while Abel was a shepherd. In parts of the Middle East today, these ancient occupations are still practiced much as they were in Cain and Abel’s time.

4:3–5 The Bible does not say why God rejected Cain’s sacrifice. Perhaps Cain’s attitude was improper, or perhaps his offering was not up to God’s standards. Proverbs 21:27 says, “The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable—how much more so when brought with evil intent!” God evaluates both our motives and the quality of what we offer him. When we give to God and others, we should have a joyful heart because of what we are able to give. We should not worry about how much we are giving up, for all things are God’s in the first place. Instead, we should joyfully give to God our best in time, money, possessions, and talents.

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

4:7 For Cain to master the sin lurking at the entrance to his desires, he would have to give up his jealous anger so that sin would not find a foothold in his life. Sin is still crouching at our doors today. Like Cain, we will be victims of sin if we do not master it. But we cannot master sin in our own strength. Instead, we must turn to God to receive faith for ourselves and faith and strength from other believers. The Holy Spirit will help us master

4:8
^mMt 23:35;
 1Jn 3:12

⁸Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field."^a And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.^m

⁹Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

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

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

¹³Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is more than I can bear. ¹⁴Today you are driving

^a Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; Masoretic Text does not have "Let's go out to the field."



EVE

We know very little about Eve, the first woman in the world, yet she is the mother of us all. She was the final piece in the intricate and amazing puzzle of God's creation. Adam now had another human being with whom to fellowship—someone with an equal share in God's image. Here was someone alike enough for companionship, yet different enough for relationship. Together they were greater than either could have been alone.

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

Sound familiar? How often is our attention drawn from the much which is ours to the little that isn't? We get that "I've got to have it" feeling. Eve was typical of us all, and we consistently show we are her descendants by repeating her mistakes. Our desires, like Eve's, can be quite easily manipulated. They are not the best basis for actions. We need to keep God in our decision-making process always. His Word, the Bible, is our guidebook in decision-making.

Strengths and accomplishments:

- First wife and mother
- First female. As such she shared a special relationship with God, had co-responsibility with Adam over creation, and displayed certain characteristics of God

Weaknesses and mistakes:

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

Lessons from her life:

- The female shares in the image of God
- The necessary ingredients for a strong marriage are commitment to each other, companionship with each other, complete oneness, absence of shame (2:24, 25)
- The basic human tendency to sin goes back to the beginning of the human race

Vital statistics:

- Where: Garden of Eden
- Occupation: Wife, helper, companion, co-manager of Eden
- Relatives: Husband: Adam. Sons: Cain, Abel, Seth. Numerous other children.

Key verse:

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

Eve's story is told in Genesis 2:19—4:26. Her death is not mentioned in Scripture.

sin. This will be a lifelong battle that will not be over until we are face to face with Christ.

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

4:8–10 Adam and Eve's disobedience brought sin into the human race. They may have thought their sin—eating a piece of fruit—wasn't very bad, but notice how quickly their sinful nature developed in their children. Simple disobedience quickly degenerated into outright murder. Adam and Eve acted only against God, but Cain acted against both God and man. A small sin has a way of growing out of control. Let God help you with your "little" sins before they turn into tragedies.

4:11–15 Cain was severely punished for this murder. God

judges all sins and punishes appropriately, not out of vengeance, but because he desires to correct us and restore our fellowship with him. When you're corrected, don't resent it. Instead, renew your fellowship with God.

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

Adam and Eve had numerous children; they had been told to "fill the earth" (1:28). Cain's guilt and fear over killing his brother were heavy, and he probably feared repercussions from his family. If he was capable of killing, so were they. The wife Cain chose may have been one of his sisters or a niece. The human race was still genetically pure, and there was no fear of side effects from marrying relatives.

me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence;ⁿ I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.”^o

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

¹⁷Cain lay with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch. ¹⁸To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech.

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

²³Lamech said to his wives,

“Adah and Zillah, listen to me;
wives of Lamech, hear my words.
I have killed^d a man for wounding me,
a young man for injuring me.

²⁴ If Cain is avenged seven times,^q
then Lamech seventy-seven times.”

²⁵Adam lay with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth,^{e r} saying, “God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him.” ²⁶Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh.

At that time men began to call on^f the name of the LORD.^s

3. Adam’s descendants

From Adam to Noah

5 This is the written account of Adam’s line.

When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.^t ²He created them male and female^u and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them “man. ^g”

³When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth. ⁴After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. ⁵Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.^v

^a15 Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; Hebrew *Very well* ^b16 *Nod* means *wandering* (see verses 12 and 14).
^c22 *Or who instructed all who work in* ^d23 *Or I will kill* ^e25 *Seth probably means granted.* ^f26 *Or to proclaim*
^g2 Hebrew *adam*

4:14
ⁿPs 51:11
^oNu 35:19, 21,
27, 33
4:15
^pEze 9:4, 6

4:24
^qver 15

4:25
^rGe 5:3
4:26
^sGe 12:8;
1Ki 18:24;
Joel 2:32; Zep 3:9;
1Co 1:2

5:1
^tGe 1:27; Eph 4:24;
Col 3:10

5:2
^uGe 1:27

5:5
^vGe 3:19

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

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

5:1ff The Bible contains several lists of ancestors, called *genealogies*. Two basic views concerning these lists include: (1) they are complete, recording the entire history of a family, tribe, or nation; or (2) they are not intended to be exhaustive and may

include only famous people or the heads of families. “Became the father of” could refer not just to a son, but also to a more distant descendant.

Why are genealogies included in the Bible? The Hebrews passed on their beliefs through oral tradition. For many years in many places, writing was primitive or nonexistent. Stories were told to children who passed them on to their children. Genealogies gave a skeletal outline that helped people remember the stories. For centuries these genealogies were added to and passed down from family to family. Even more important than preserving family tradition, genealogies were included to confirm the Bible’s promise that the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, would be born into the line of Abraham.

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

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

⁶When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father^a of Enosh. ⁷And after he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters. ⁸Altogether, Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.

⁹When Enosh had lived 90 years, he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰And after he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹¹Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

¹²When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³And after he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁴Altogether, Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

¹⁵When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶And after he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁷Altogether, Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

¹⁸When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹And after he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. ²⁰Altogether, Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

²¹When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. ²²And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God^w 300 years and had other sons and daughters. ²³Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. ²⁴Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.^x

²⁵When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶And after he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. ²⁷Altogether, Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died.

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

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

^{a6} Father may mean ancestor; also in verses 7-26. ^{b29} Noah sounds like the Hebrew for comfort.

5:22
^w ver 24; Ge 6:9;
Mic 6:8

5:24
^x 2Ki 2:1, 11;
Heb 11:5

5:29
^y Ge 3:17



ABEL

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

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

The Bible is filled with God's general guidelines and expectations for our lives. It is also filled with more specific directions. Like Abel, we must obey regardless of the cost and trust God to make things right.

Strengths and accomplishments:

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

Lessons from his life:

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

Vital statistics:

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

Key verse:

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

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

5:25–27 How did these people live so long? Some believe that the ages listed here were lengths of family dynasties rather than ages of individual men. Those who think these were actual ages offer three explanations: (1) the human race was more genetically pure in this early time period with less disease to shorten life

spans; (2) no rain had yet fallen on the earth, and the expanse of water "above" (1:7) kept out harmful cosmic rays and shielded people from environmental factors that hasten aging; (3) God gave people longer lives so they would have time to "fill the earth" (1:28).